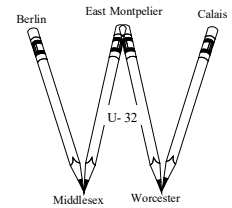


Washington Central Unified Union School District

WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

1130 Gallison Hill Road
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone (802) 229-0553
Fax (802) 229-2761

Meagan Roy Ed.D.
Superintendent



**Washington Central Unified Union School District
Community Forum
(IN-PERSON w/ Virtual Option)
Doty Memorial School
24 Calais Rd.
Worcester, VT
2.1.23 6:15-8:15 PM**

Board Members Present: Kari Bradley, Natasha Eckart Baning, Flor Diaz Smith, Mckalyn Leclerc, Daniel Keeney, Lindy Johnson, Ursula Stanley, Chris McVeigh, Maggie Weiss, Maya Elliot (student representative), Willow Mashkuri (student representative), Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Joshua Sevits, Eric Andersen

Administrators Present: Meagan Roy, Aaron Boynton, Gillian Fuqua, Kerra Holden, Jen Miller-Arsenault, Steven Dellinger-Pate, Susanne Gann

Legislators Present: Anne Donahue, Ela Chapin, Ann Cummings, Ann Watson, Andrew Perchlick

Others Present: Bekah Mandell, Kim Bolduc

1. Community Forum: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 6:25. She thanked the legislators for joining the board; introductions were made.

1.1. Evening with our Legislative Representatives: Legislators introduced themselves. Some of the topics that were discussed as legislators previewed issues that are currently on the agenda as the legislation is in session: universal meals (long term funding source), school staffing vacancies, affordable housing; school construction. Ann Cummings stated that much of her work is around: how to raise the money? She spoke about the childcare bill, housing - local planning, funding, building, workforce housing; also workforce - for example, if we provide childcare funding support for families, we still don't have the staff to fill the childcare facilities; trying to recruit young people to come to VT; CLA need and lack of enough appraisers; a lot of very complicated issues, a lot of heavy lifting to do re: money. Ela Chapin spoke about her work on the Judiciary Committee: looking at issues that affect families and children; reproductive health care as well as gender affirming health

care; issues around nondiscrimination in schools. Anne Donahue spoke about her work in Health and Human Services: field trip today at WCMH; workforce issues are prevalent in the mental health field as well. Ann Watson spoke about her work in Senate Natural Resources, as well as Government Operations: priorities around climate; bill allowing extension of COVID-19 provisions for meeting remotely; possible permanent changes to open meeting law; she spoke about unclaimed property at the state level - Berlin, Rumney and EMES are all in the database of unclaimed property; she encouraged administrators to follow up. Flor Diaz Smith invited questions or comments from the board. Maggie Weiss stated that the process for achieving licensure in VT - this is a challenge; this could affect the workforce. Are there considerations to address this? Anne Donahue noted that last year there had been some conversation around identifying barriers to licensure, especially in the mental health professions. Superintendent Roy stated that there had been some discussion in the past about moving teacher licensure from the Agency of Education to the Office of Professional Regulation. (OPR) Andrew Perchlick stated that there has been some discussion around allowing staff already in the field (e.g. Para educators) to gain licensure based on experience and with a less cumbersome process. Daniel Keeney asked about tax rate for second home owners. Ann Cummings explained that there are two categories: homestead and non-homestead; she is assuming there is a bill to divide the "non-homestead" category with more specificity. She spoke about the concept of income based education funding, and she spoke briefly about second home owners. She indicated that bills are moving more slowly this year. Mckalyn Leclerc stated that she is very much in favor of universal meals. She explained the challenges of federal COVID-19 funding coming to an end and resulting in a challenge to fund positions such as school nurses, etc. Anne Donahue expressed her frustration there is currently 0% increase in the proposed budget for designated agencies. Superintendent Roy stated that, in schools, we are not allowed to have waitlists; we are not allowed to *not* serve students - looking at how much funding schools are supporting because there are not designated agencies available to the extent that is needed; as schools we are required to meet the needs regardless. This is part of the ongoing conversation about schools taking on more and more in the social services realm. Joshua Sevits asked regarding childcare credit - will this be payment to parents, payment to centers? Ann Cummings answered that we don't know yet. She stated that the mental health services have been underfunded for years - COVID-19 brought this to the forefront. She spoke about childcare - what do we do with four year olds when they attend school on a part time basis? Re: universal meals - Ann Cummings asked, could we find a way to feed the kids that really need to be fed (versus everyone) without a stigma? e.g. using a "swipe card" that would be fairly anonymous. Andrew Perchlick indicated that the conversation about universal Pre-K continues. Kari Bradley stated that the most significant issue is the decline in student enrollment. Our population will decline by about 20% over the next three years if our trend continues. Housing and childcare are pieces of the puzzle; we represent thousands of people who care very much about these schools and we are on the precipice of huge change. Andrew Perchlick stated that he feels that being on the school board is tougher than being on the legislature. He believes that childcare in general as well as maternal/ paternal care leave are critical. Flor Diaz Smith expressed interest in building

capacity in career and technical centers. She reiterated that declining enrollment is a big worry; funding the school budget for 2024-25 is going to be a huge challenge. Re: childcare subsidies: She asked the legislators to keep in mind *all* of the families. Flor Diaz Smith invited the student representatives. Maya Elliot stated that she feels the universal meals are important, for all students, not only the ones who “can’t afford it” - now that lunch is universally free, she sees a lot more of her peers opting for meals. Willow Mashkuri spoke about mental health issues amongst high school students -they had sent a survey and received 92 responses; they are planning to present at the next school board meeting. Maya Elliot stated that she will share information from the survey with the legislators. Willow Mashkuri read aloud some of the responses from students. Ann Cummings stated that there are some college interns as well as the student pages, but aside from that there is not a lot of back and forth communication with the youth. Andrew Perchlick shared that the pages are being invited to provide testimony about their experiences at school. Maya Elliot asked the representatives to continue to have back and forth discourse with youth. Ann Watson shared that she is a teacher in Montpelier-Roxbury. Some discussion followed around the Youth Council at the state level. Chris McVeigh asked what is the best way for people to express their views with the legislators that is fruitful? Ann Cummings replied that finding time to meet in person during the work day is hard-email is a great way to reach out and begin a discussion. Andrew Perchlick suggested coming to the statehouse for 1:1 discussion; also that we did some town halls via zoom and in person last year. Ela Chapin shared that when the legislation is out of session is a more likely time to get a personal response - she suggested making phone calls and leaving messages with pages. Anne Donahue recommended that people indicate what town they are from, when they email. Ela Chapin explained that often we are a conduit to other committees. Superintendent Roy thanked the legislators for attending. She stated that February is board member appreciation and she expressed her gratitude to board members.

2. **Call to Order: (earlier)** Flor Diaz Smith would like to add “Budget Communication” to the agenda tonight.

3. **Approve the use of Fund Balance for Strategic Planning Consultation: Ursula Stanley moved to authorize the use of fund balance for the purpose of executing a contract for strategic planning consultation, not to exceed \$62,000. Seconded by Mckalyn Leclerc.** Discussion: Chris McVeigh asked whether this process will take place in time for the board to begin the process of discussion and planning to inform budget planning for 2024-25 and some of the topics such as consolidation of services etc. Kari Bradley stated that an outcome of this process will be a vision/ strategic plan - if a restructuring plan is called for, then that would be the next planning process. Superintendent Roy shared that Great Schools Partnership understands the magnitude of the amount of engagement that we want. Lindy Johnson stated that she has worked with Great Schools Partnership in the past and had a great experience. **This motion carried unanimously.**

4. Reports

- 4.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE: Lindy Johnson moved to approve the following: Jen Donovan –LTS Rumney Music, Emily Lanxner – LTS (pending provisional) for EMES Music, Max Segalla - LTS for U-32 English (1/9/23-3/10/23) Seconded by Daniel Keeney.** Eric Andersen asked whether the EMES Music long term sub situation has an impact on the volunteer for the band program. Superintendent Roy is not sure about that and will follow up with Alicia Lyford.
- 4.2. Budget Communication:** Flor Diaz Smith stated that the Steering Committee meets next week and will begin the video recording for budget communication/ explanation. Superintendent Roy shared that the legislation did pass law to change the verbiage in the ballot/ warning but WCUUSD's had already gone to the printer. Mckalyn Leclerc stated that it is very important that our communication about the budget be very clear about the percentage increase that is included in the language on the ballot.

- 5. Executive Session: Negotiations: At 7:49, Lindy Johnson moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of Negotiations, Superintendent Evaluation, and Student Enrollment Request, and to include Superintendent Roy and Susanne Gann for the Negotiations conversation, and Superintendent Roy for Superintendent Evaluation and Student Enrollment Request. Seconded by Josh Sevits, this motion carried unanimously and the board went into Executive Session.**

6. Executive Session: Superintendent Evaluation

7. Executive Session: Student Enrollment Request

At 9:40, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to leave Executive Session. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously.

During Executive Session, the Board discussed Negotiation Strategy, Superintendent Evaluation, and a Student Enrollment Request. **Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to approve the administration's recommendation regarding the Student Enrollment Request. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried 8-2, with one abstention.**

- 8. Adjourn: At 9:41 Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mckalyn Leclerc, this motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary
and Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Board Clerk