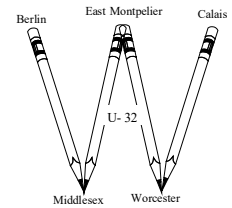


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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
School Board Meeting
(Virtual Only)
Central Office
1130 Gallison Hill Rd. Montpelier, VT
11.16.22 6:00-9:30 PM**

Board Members Present: Diane Nichols-Fleming, Ursula Stanley, Lindy Johnson, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Chris McVeigh, Daniel Keeney, Mckalyn Leclerc, Jonathan Goddard, Kari Bradley, Flor Diaz Smith, Joshua Sevits, Eric Andersen, Maggie Weiss, Student Representatives: Maya Elliot and Willow Mashkuri

Administrators Present: Superintendent Meagan Roy, Jen Miller-Arsenault, Kerra Holden, Aaron Boynton, Karoline May, Susanne Gann, Cat Fair, Gillian Fuqua, Steven Dellinger-Pate, Mark Kline

Others Present: David Delcore, Erin Mooney, Beth Parker, David Lawrence, Kate McCann, Michael Sherwin, Michelle Ksepka, ORCA Media,

1. Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. Welcome

2.1. Adjustments to the Agenda: Flor Diaz Smith noted that we will not be addressing items 8.3 and 8.4 re: policies.

2.2. Reception of Guests: Flor Diaz Smith welcomed guests.

2.3. Public Comments: Time limit strictly enforced, see note. Erin Mooney read a statement on behalf of the Educators Association at WCUUSD; the topic of the statement: affordable prescription drugs.

3. **Presentation and Discussion: *Student Achievement Monitoring Report*:** Kari Bradley introduced a slide deck student progress report from the most recent Education Quality Committee meeting. Jen Miller Arsenault and Kari Bradley co-facilitated the presentation.

What priorities come to mind following this presentation? Chris McVeigh: how is our district's experience different with free and reduced lunch & IEP students as opposed to the state as a whole. Why is there such a discrepancy between our cohort of students and the state as a whole? Jen Miller Arsenault clarified that the state data does not share that information disaggregated. Chris McVeigh: this would still be a concern, within WCUUSD - how to address the discrepancy? Joshua Sevits: the number of touchpoints that students noted as they near graduation. Is it worth thinking about how we can engage parents in the post-high school part of students' lives? e.g. career fairs only for parents. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet: graduation rates - there are other ways for students to have a successful exit from our system. (There are successes that are not included in the graduation rate.) What is the percentage of students that are *not* having successful exits from our system? Testing data: it is hard to put into context without having a benchmark. Are there other ways to benchmark the data? (e.g. numbers from neighboring districts?) Daniel Keeney: "proficiency" - measuring proficiency as if nothing extraordinary happened in the last two years within the education system (e.g. COVID-19) - the question of what was supposed to be and what is the reality? Our school's outcomes year to year - frustration with the state choosing different assessments year to year - would be useful to consistently stay with a measure so that we could compare over time. Diane Nichols-Fleming: it is up to us to identify what we want to compare for our data. How do the opportunities of learning in our district compare to districts around us? or in the state? or other states? What are the parameters around "quality" that we want to examine as an Ed Quality Committee? Ursula Stanley: larger benchmark assessments are useful but don't let us look at detail or growth data. She expressed interest in looking at our local assessments. No matter what data we use, no matter the benchmarks, we can see that there is a gap between students and those with free & reduced lunch/ IEP. We need to look at our own students and make our own decisions about what we consider "quality". Flor Diaz Smith: we have set a goal as far as budget parameter - how do we measure success; how can we leverage our qualitative data to test our assumptions in measuring what success is? Maggie Weiss: have we heard from staff about whether they feel adequately staffed to provide supports to help students be high achieving? Specifically, students who are on ESTs or 504s - how are these students going to perform if there is a daily issue of adequate support? She suggested using a staff survey (around supports that are not mandated such as they are in an IEP). Kari Bradley: teacher voice is also important in this analysis.

How did you feel about the data presentation? How could it be improved?

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet - more data, data over time, rawer data, more charts. The board is clear that we want to see the gap shrink - there has to be a better way of seeing change over time - the idea of tracking a cohort. If we want to see improvement, we need to see more granular data. We are not an island - it makes sense to compare with other districts for context. Diane Nichols-Fleming - finding the balance - how much time do we have on the agenda? How does the board want to see it? Are we looking wide or are we looking deep? Would be useful as a

board to define when is the time that the board as a whole can dig into data. Understanding priorities; then understanding what the board wants to do re: time on the agenda. Chris McVeigh - would like to see more of a narrative and some theorizing as to “why” - reasons, factors - this would help the board determine what to focus on. We are limited in some things that we are able to impact; others we cannot impact. Ursula Stanley - How often does the board want to do a deep dive with more data? Ed Quality is talking about a year long monitoring cycle. Does the board have an idea of how often they want to take this deep dive to work into the board work plan? Kari Bradley thanked the board for the rich discussion.

4. Reports to the Board

- 4.1. Student Report:** Mya and Willow reported to the board. They shared recent happenings such as the fall sports banquet, theater performances, athletic events. They shared that this week begins peer mentoring with high school students partnering with elementary age students.
- 4.2. Superintendent/Central Office Leadership Team (COLT) Report:** Meagan Roy had provided a written report. She highlighted issues around school safety and cyber security. She invited questions or feedback from the board. Flor Diaz Smith thanked the administrators for the format of the report.
- 4.3. Principal Report:** (included above)
- 4.4. VSA/VSBA Conference Debrief:** Flor Diaz Smith had shared an email with the board to debrief from the conference. Flor Diaz Smith shared some of the take a way/ analogies: How boards govern from the fire tower as opposed to managing and being in the fire. What do kids bring “in the backpack” from home and their unique experiences? Ursula Stanley shared from her experience at the conference. She shared that some students spoke about their involvement with school boards at a deeper level. For example, students meeting in teams or sub-committees (e.g. equity). She spoke about the student -created “Listen Up.” Maya and Willow spoke about a greater desire from more students to be involved; they suggested providing opportunities for students to participate during the school day or via electronic means (versus attending board meetings at nights). Flor Diaz Smith shared that all of the resolutions were approved at the meeting.
- 4.5. Central Vermont Career Center Report:** Jody Emerson will be coming to the December 7th meeting and presenting its budget. This will be the first time that the towns are going to vote for the Career Center budget.

5. Board Operations

- 5.1. Superintendent Evaluation Rubric:** The rubric which comes from a VSBA template was shared with board members. Meagan Roy shared that the Steering Committee had created a column in the rubric to include possible indicators for each item. **Ursula Stanley moved that the board accept the Superintendent Evaluation Rubric. Seconded by Daniel Keeney.** Discussion: Daniel Keeney asked, what would be the timeline to provide feedback or ideas for the indicators column. He asked what is the timeline for this? Kari Bradley

shared that this will likely be shared in January so that the board could discuss this in February and have it wrapped up before Town Meeting Day. He noted that any suggested changes to the rubric can be shared within the next month. **This motion carried unanimously.**

5.2. Staff Appreciation: Diane Nichols-Fleming indicated that administrators had shared that the second Wednesday of the month would be ideal for joining staff meetings. She reminded the board that this is a “listening tour” for the board - a time to hear from staff and listen. She shared her gratitude for all of the work that is happening in all of the buildings. She also noted that she appreciates the administrators’ reports that provide information and opportunities for board members to join building celebrations.

5.3. Mailing School Ballots: Flor Diaz Smith had shared a model letter for board members to attend each town’s select board meeting to ask their approval for mailing ballots. Lindy Johnson: East Montpelier; Chris McVeigh: Middlesex; Daniel Keeney: Calais; Jonathan Goddard: Berlin; Mckalyn Leclerc: Worcester. **Chris McVeigh moved to provide mail ballot options for the school district for all registered voters for 2023-24. Diane Nichols-Fleming seconded. This motion carried unanimously.**

5.4. Visioning: Meagan Roy spoke about the idea of strategic planning, specifically authentic community engagement to inform long term planning. She and Flor Diaz Smith had shared a memo with the board explaining the desire to engage with a consultant to facilitate the work. Chris McVeigh stated that if the goal is to engage the community, should we involve community members in the initial process of framing the questions. Meagan Roy stated that part of the process that the consultant does is create the process of how to engage the community. However, both she and Flor Diaz Smith stated that if the date that is agreed upon works for a couple of community members to join, that would be ok. Some discussion followed about when would be the most appropriate time to invite the community into the process. **Ursula Stanley moved that the board accept the working group for the RFP for the visioning and planning. Seconded by Eric Andersen. This motion carried unanimously.**

6. Presentation: Budget Draft # 1-Level Service Budget

6.1. Review and Discuss FY 2023-24 Budget Draft # 1: Superintendent Roy and Susanne Gann presented a slide deck explaining the first draft for budget development, representing a “level service” budget.

6.2. Budget Parameters: Flor Diaz Smith had provided a memo for board members to consider, in preparation of discussing budget parameters. Mckalyn Leclerc asked what standards there are around support staff to student ratio. Superintendent Roy stated that she can provide information to the board about support staff but she is not sure she can provide comparative data. Kari Bradley spoke about the idea of class size, with the idea that sometimes class size can be “too small.” Superintendent Roy stated that the point at which class size affects students negatively is when the class gets very large, for example, in the 30s. This is typically not an issue in Vermont. She stated that in 2020, Washington Central had indicated that ten was the minimal class size; she intends to update this next month.

Flor Diaz Smith spoke about Para educator and support staff practice. Superintendent Roy again indicated that some research has been shared about Para educator staffing patterns and that Act 173 addresses issues around Para educator staffing; and that she will bring more information to the board at the December budget development meeting. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet stated that the parameters Flor Diaz Smith had shared reflect his same opinions about budget parameters. Joshua Sevits asked whether the list of parameters is ordered by priority. Flor explained that the list is not necessarily in order of priority. Kari Bradley stated that #6 and #7 are less important to him and in his mind are within the purview of administrators. Chris McVeigh spoke about positions that are ESSER funded and the long term planning around building them into the budgets. Ursula Stanley would like to include social emotional learning/ skills/ supports in the parameters. Superintendent Roy stated that the leadership team sees that as part of MTSS. Diane Nichols-Fleming asked whether item #7 is alluding to consolidating; she wants to be sure that the board is not giving the board that direction. Flor Diaz Smith stated that the intention is to give the administration the freedom to think creatively around student enrollment, class size, staffing, etc. Chris McVeigh asked that if class size consolidation was a topic of discussion then he would like for this to be intra-school versus inter-school. Superintendent Roy stated that the way she sees the “creativity” parameter is giving permission to consider how do we structure ourselves, including considering staffing? She noted that if the administration goes through the exercise of working to meet the board’s parameters and does not think there is a tenable solution, they will come back to the board and share this. The creativity piece provides the opportunity to think about tenable solutions. Diane Nichols-Fleming stated that she wants the community to know that we are being as transparent as we possibly can. If we are talking about enlisting more community engagement, then it will be important for us to communicate transparently. She appreciates the superintendent’s statement that the administration will come back to the board and explain that the parameters are not tenable if that is the case. Jonathan Goddard stated that with increased community engagement, we might be better able to explain to the community the impetus for a higher budget rather than “threading the needle” with the smallest budget possible that might not meet the needs of all students. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet reiterated what Jonathan Goddard expressed. He asked when the threshold penalty is calculated. Susanne Gann stated that it is based on the budget compared to equalized pupils. She explained that the threshold penalty is on hold at the moment though. Kari Bradley stated that if we are aiming to come in below the rate of inflation, we also need to realize that our community’s ability to pay may have been stretched thinner this year. Ursula Stanley indicated that she is comfortable with the 6% parameter as a starting point, with the understanding that the administration might come back and indicate that this is untenable. Mckalyn Leclerc suggested that if 6% is an impossible ask, then it seems to make more sense to set the initial parameter at 7%. **Chris McVeigh moved to accept the budget parameters 1 through 5 as indicated in the memo as discussed tonight. Seconded by Daniel Keeney.** Discussion: Flor Diaz Smith clarified, that the board is accepting of the administration to think creatively. Chris McVeigh

indicated that, as Kari Bradley had stated, he does not feel that using “creativity” as a parameter is within the purview of the board. Ursula Stanley asked what is the impetus behind leaving out the parameter around cyber security. She also noted that she had been part of the discussion and that she had agreed to leaving the “creativity” parameter. **Chris McVeigh agreed to amend the motion to include #1-#5, plus #7. This amendment was accepted by Daniel Keeney. This motion carried unanimously.** Superintendent Roy thanked the board for the direction and the work on the parameters.

7. Finance Committee

7.1. Discussion/Action

- 7.1.1. Approve Use of Capital Funds for EMES Doors:** Ursula Stanley moved that the Board approve the use of the capital improvement fund reserved for EMES to pay for the replacement of interior doors for an amount not to exceed \$8,371. **Seconded by Lindy Johnson, this motion carried unanimously.**
- 7.1.2. Authorize Superintendent to Award Bids for Liquid Heating Fuels:** Ursula Stanley moved that the Board authorize the Superintendent to award bids for propane and #2 fuel oil on behalf of Washington Central Unified Union School District (WCUUSD) for Fiscal Year 2023-24. **Seconded by Mckalyn Leclerc, this motion carried unanimously.**
- 7.1.3. Calais Wood Chip Boiler:** Lindy Johnson moved that the Board authorize a revised total budget from the capital reserve funds, not to exceed \$475,000, for replacing the wood chip boiler at Calais Elementary School with a pellet boiler system. **Seconded by Eric Andersen.** Discussion: Chris McVeigh stated that if there is any consideration of consolidation of schools, he has concerns about spending this amount of money. If there is a sense of consolidation on the horizon, then he is not in favor of this. Susanne Gann shared that this is the oldest system in the state; there is not an immediate concern that it will fail, but this is in the spirit of maintaining our facilities. Daniel Keeney shared that the cost went up on this project because the scope of work changed. Superintendent Roy shared that while we consider all, and other options, we are still in the position of maintaining our current assets and facilities. **This motion carried unanimously.**
- 7.1.4. Approval of ERU Prequalified Contractors:** Eric Andersen moved that the Board prequalifies Alliance Group, Avonda Air Systems, Sheet Metal/Thomas Mechanical, Vermont Mechanical and VHV as bidders for the U-32 ERU replacement project. **Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously.** Flor Diaz Smith thanked Chris and Bill Ford for the work that they continue to do.

8. Policy Committee

- 8.1. Policy Memo:** Chris McVeigh thanked Superintendent Roy for spelling this out in a memo to the board. Chris McVeigh shared from the Policy Committee meeting

yesterday: regarding the weapons and firearms policy, there is an intention to give more discretion to building administrators, but this policy is not ready for board review tonight. He invited comment or discussion on Policy F2: Non-Discriminatory Mascots & Branding. Ursula Stanley asked for clarification about the tracking changes notation in the document. Chris McVeigh stated that the committee had discussed whether to incorporate timelines for board response to complaints. He asked what would be the will of the board around timelines. Ursula Stanley stated that she approves having a time frame between the time when a complaint is made and the board holds a hearing. Flor Diaz Smith stated that she appreciates the 45-day timeline because it allows for some flexibility. Superintendent Roy guesses that the 45-day timeline in the model policy is due to the experience which led to the policy development, which was some contentious and drawn out situations around mascots and branding. Chris McVeigh stated that the Policy Committee will bring back a time frame at the next meeting. Daniel Keeney and Ursula Stanley had suggested using language around “good faith” or “expedient” rather than indicating actual days as a time frame in the policy.

8.2. First Reading for Policy to be Adopted on 12.21.22: F2 Non- Discriminatory Mascots Branding: The board had a first read and discussed this as noted above.

8.3. First Reading for Policy to be Adopted on 12.21.22: C5 Weapons and Firearms (this was not included tonight.)

8.4. First Reading for Policy to be Adopted on 12.21.22: Building Access: (this was not included tonight.)

8.5. School Choice Policy: Discussion about community input: Chris McVeigh invited input from the board on behalf of the Policy Committee, around community engagement in a School Choice Policy. Kari Bradley suggested that the committee draft a policy first so that the community has something concrete to respond to and engage with. Lindy Johnson indicated that there have been some drafts of these policies in the past.

9. Consent Agenda

9.1. Approve Minutes of 10.19.22, 11.2.22: Chris McVeigh moved to approve the minutes of October 19 and November 2, 2022. Seconded by Jonas Eno-Van Fleet. Mckalyn Leclerc clarified spelling of a name on November 2 minutes: *Bekah Mandell*. **This motion carried unanimously with this correction.**

9.2. Approve Board Orders: Lindy Johnson moved to approve the board orders dated 10-22-22 through 11-16-22, in the amount of \$846,589.50 Seconded by Eric Andersen. Discussion: Kari Bradley shared that his son is listed in the board orders as receiving a scholarship; he had graduated several years prior and Kari Bradley expressed gratitude but noted that he had nothing to do with this scholarship award/ decision. **This motion carried unanimously.**

10. Personnel

10.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE: Lindy Johnson moved to approve the hire of Annalissa Kirby – Special Education Teacher – Berlin. Seconded by Daniel Keeney; this motion carried unanimously.

10.2. Update on Vacancies: Superintendent Roy shared that filling this most recent position brings us to a better position in professional positions. We are continuing to seek an SLP position, and we continue to seek custodial and foodservice positions. Additionally, there are some long-term sub positions that are being sought. Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that he is teaching a section of math.

11. Executive Session for Negotiations: At 9:02, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing negotiations, and to include Superintendent Roy and Susanne Gann. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously and the board went into Executive Session. At 9:12 Jonas Eno-Van Fleet moved to leave Executive Session. This motion carried unanimously.

12. Future Agenda Items

12.1. Board Goals and Calendar: Superintendent Roy shared the upcoming board calendar. The December 7th meeting is at Calais School.

12.2. Central Vermont Career Center Budgeting: Jody Emerson will present this at the December meeting.

12.3. December 21 will be a virtual meeting; the second draft budget will be presented based on tonight's discussion.

12.4. Address the mail in ballot issue (board members will report from their local town select board meetings).

13. Board Reflection: Daniel Keeney asked for some background around the Equity in Scholar position. Superintendent Roy shared that she will address this at the December 7th presentation.

14. Public Comments: Flor Diaz Smith invited public comment.

15. Adjourn: The board adjourned by consensus at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary