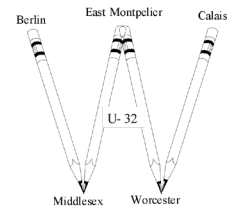


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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
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**WCUUSD Finance Committee
Meeting Agenda
11.15.23 4:30-6:00 PM
In-Person
U-32
Rm 128/131
930 Gallison Hill Rd
Montpelier, VT**

Virtual Meeting Information

<https://tinyurl.com/5yp97tya>

Meeting ID: 828 9367 8558

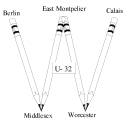
Password:044520

Dial by Your Location: 1-929-205-6099

1. Call to Order
2. Discussion/Action
 - 2.1. Configuration Study- Brainstorming Discussion-pg. 3
 - 2.2. Discussion of Timeline
3. Future Agenda Items
 - 3.1. Next Regular Meeting: December 20, 2023
 - 3.2. Configuration Study Meeting: December 20, 2023

WCUUSD Board Norms - Adopted November 18, 2020

- **Public input** –Notify the community about public forums and opportunities for public comment at board meetings.
- **Community involvement during regular meetings of the board** – Every meeting will include at least one opportunity for public comment. Public comment is an opportunity for board members to listen and ask clarifying questions. If a board member feels a concern raised in public comment warrants further board discussion, they may request that the issue be added to a future agenda.
- **Community dialogue** – The board may periodically schedule community forums that allow for dialogue, questions and answers from the board or the district leadership team.
- **Stay on time** – Start and end on time. The chair may appoint a time-keeper.
- **All voices will be heard** – Every board member gets a chance to speak. Some topics warrant having each board member speak in turn to ensure full representation.
- **Reflection** –To allow time for reflection, the chair and agenda steering committee will plan time for complex or contentious issues to be discussed at more than one meeting before the board votes, except where a decision is urgent.
- **Announcements in reports** – Announcements from the administration will appear in the reports and not as discussion items.
- **Role of the board** – At the end of each board meeting reflect on whether the board remained focused on its policy-making and oversight role during the meeting, rather than operational details that are the responsibility of leadership team.
- **Respect each other** – Listen, allow others to be heard, share concerns, assume positive intentions, be present, celebrate successes.



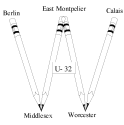
To: WCUUSD Finance Committee
From: Meagan Roy, Superintendent
Date: November 15, 2023
Re: Information for Configuration Discussion

On October 18th, 2023 the Finance Committee reviewed and discussed a number of data sets to support their study of configuration. The minutes of that discussion can be found [here](#). The following information is being provided as pre-read material to support the committee’s November 15th brainstorming.

Student Enrollment by Grade

The committee requested to view elementary school enrollment data by grade, as additional information that may be helpful in brainstorming configuration options. The following chart reflects grade level enrollment from September, 2023.

	Berlin	Calais	Doty	EMES	Rumney
K	15	11	6	20	7
1	27	12	8	22	15
2	15	11	12	19	22
3	30	9	8	23	21
4	21	12	9	31	11
5	28	14	7	20	16
6	13	7	13	33	13



Relevant Strategic Planning/Budget Input

Over the past several months, the Board and Administration has been deeply involved with community engagement. Although those engagement opportunities (surveys, community focus groups and staff focus groups) were related to Strategic Planning and Budget, a significant number of comments and themes emerged that were related to perspectives about configuration. The following is a summary of those themes, again provided to give the Finance Committee some insight into community perspectives that exist regarding configuration. This is not meant to replace input opportunities this committee will design throughout this process, but rather to inform the brainstorming process.

Consolidation to Support Quality Programming

A theme emerged that supported configuration changes not to reduce the budget, but to achieve robust programming more effectively than can currently be provided in our smallest schools.

“We need to be realistic about providing opportunities (arts, language, etc)”

“ALL our students need to have access to exciting and challenging opportunities for learning in all subjects”

“Critical Mass” Class Sizes

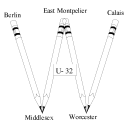
A number of commenters discussed the idea that while small class sizes seem to be something we should strive for, extremely small class sizes can be detrimental to the learning experience. It was noted that students who don’t find success socially with peers do not have options to interact with new classmates and teachers. Good instructional opportunities can be challenging to implement with class sizes less than ten.

“I support some elementary school consolidation and not for fiscal reasons, but for academic and behavior reasons. Academically, everyone is better off with other peers at their same level (bigger class sizes).”

Merger with Montpelier

Although both the WCUUSD Board and the Montpelier Board have indicated a desire to conduct their own strategic planning before considering merger discussions, there is a clear theme from some community members that it would be prudent to study a merger between the two. Several commenters specifically noted that now might be a really important time to connect the conversation, since both districts are considering their vision of the future.

“Think big. Declining enrollments — is Montpelier suffering same concern? Is it finally time to fully explore “hub and spokes” configuration of Montpelier and 5 surrounding towns (and Roxbury). Create the “Capital Region Unified School District.”



Enrollment Realities Should Prompt Consolidation/Small Schools Should Stay Open

It goes without saying that there are multiple perspectives that exist regarding how to address our declining enrollment. In this summary, I've merged these two opposing views - there are clearly members of our community who believe we need to seriously consider consolidation, and there are others who strongly support keeping our current configuration. The Board will need to wrestle with these opposing viewpoints.

“Please explore merging schools. Supporting the schools financially will become unsustainable if we do not explore this.”

Community Engagement on Configuration Options

Finally, a clear theme from across our input opportunities is that if discussions are to occur regarding configuration, they need to begin soon. There was a clear desire for transparency and opportunity for input.

“If this could/is in the cards we need to start talking about it now.”

WCUUSD Finance Committee Meeting

November 15, 2023

Outcomes:

1. Build on the questions and insights that emerged from the data protocol
2. Brainstorm configurations options for further consideration
3. Revisit the timeline for this work

Time	What	How
10 minutes	Opening moves: Framing the work	
10 minutes	Connecting prompt	What is one thing you pulled from the memo that feels especially relevant to today's conversation?
40 minutes	Brainstorm	<p>Question: Given our focus on robust student programming, sustainability, and keeping the broader community in mind, how might we creatively imagine configurations for the future?</p> <p>Process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brainstorm ideas for possible configurations on post-it notes 2. Work together to organize these ideas 3. Dot vote: which of these seem worth exploring further 4. Discuss: what information will the board need about these configurations?
10 minutes	Debrief the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What worked well about this process? ● What might we have done better or differently?
20 minutes	Next steps and closing	Affirm timeline