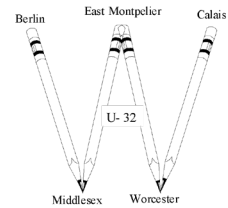


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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
Interim Superintendent



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

Present: Flor Diaz Smith, Ursula Stanley, Kari Bradley, Superintendent Roy, Susanne Gann, Zach Sullivan, Jeannie Phillips, Daniel Keeney, Mckalyn Leclerc, Mark Kline, Steven Dellinger-Pate, Alicia Lyford

- 1. Call to Order:** Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. Flor Diaz Smith spoke about perseverance in the context of budget discussion as well as configuration discussions.
- 2. Discussion/Action**
 - 2.1. Configuration Study- Brainstorming Discussion:** Jeannie Phillips reviewed the outcomes for today's meeting. Superintendent Roy had shared a memo for pre-reading to support this brainstorming, based on previous committee discussions. Jeannie Phillips opened with a connecting activity: What is one thing you pulled from the memo that feels especially relevant to today's conversation?

Zach - much of this is about non-financial aspects and non-financial politics.

Mckalyn - helpful to reframe the discussion through the outline of the memo - agrees with the idea of the topics being less about financial aspects.

Ursula- the theme of making decisions based on quality programming and student data.

Flor - the theme of opportunities for students - it is clear that people want to see opportunities for students.

Kari - this is the first time that people are suggesting to him that we should consider consolidation, not just for financial aspects but for quality of education. This might be the right time to do it.

Diane N-F - because of the rural aspect and the locations of our schools, the idea of reconfiguration does not necessarily translate to financial aspects. Diane asked - how many comments contributed to each of the bulleted items on the memo. Superintendent Roy explained how these themes were created based on previous gatherings and discussions, and surveys. Diane N-F - would be interesting to know the number attributed to the comments.

Jeannie Phillips - the feedback and quotes that were relevant to this work around configuration, that came from the community engagement opportunities around strategic planning and budget considerations regarding the current configuration - but these did not result from directly asking people to provide thoughts around the idea of configuration. Jeannie Phillips summarized committee members' reactions:

- this isn't just about money; it's about rich opportunities for students' reconfiguration that might not lead to financial savings
- reconfiguration might be around student opportunities
- tension between configuration and all schools staying open
- we have been talking about this for quite some time; the time is right to do this (in fact people are coming to the board and suggesting reconfiguration for the first time)
- the real goal is to be sure to offer quality educational opportunities to students

Affinity Mapping activity: Jeannie Phillips facilitated an activity that resulted in lists and other permanent documents to include in the meeting minutes/ records

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?

After the activity, committee members reacted to the ideas that came from the activity:

- building capacity
- what is the evidence re: EQS?
- what are the impacts on students?
- financial analysis
- list of cost/ benefit also implications on programming
- capacity/ costs/ community needs/ sustainability
- transportation/ child care/ child pick up - how does this affect sustainability? (re siblings at two different schools)
- before/ aftercare
- after school activities

Kari: is there any research about this kind of activity? people are going to want to know, if this has been tried, what happened? The committee debriefed the process:

- starting piece to whole and it is a different approach
- appreciated the silent think time
- surprised at how many new things emerged
- feels safe to do it in this manner, just putting ideas out there
- felt safe and scared at the same time
- feels rushed; the process feels rushed
- in a way we are voting on "apples and oranges"
- would there be value in doing this with the full board?

2.2. Discussion of Timeline:

Meagan Roy - December 6th was a placeholder to present something - would it make sense to do this activity with the full board on December 6th instead?

Alicia Lyford - doing this on December 6th would slow down things (in a good way) - give us time to think about what transpired tonight.

Meagan Roy - would allow more time to collect all the data that we have discussed.

Zach Sullivan - want to make sure that we stay on the timeline, and don't delay the decision-making; it's almost like we have a one-time pot of money to help bridge this big change.

Meagan Roy - Jan - May focuses on community input. Don't think we are too far off the timeline if we bring the board into the conversation in December.

Steven - sounds like the committee wants the whole board to go through the affinity piece of it so they can see what we all just saw.

Ursula - scary, we have a lot of community members who have fears about the unknown - but being able to see us go through this will help make it more transparent.

Diane N-F - if we come up with additional ideas for data in the meantime is it ok to reach out? Jeannie – yes

Meagan Roy - idea that (December 6) the board does this activity and the community watches. Will we have a mechanism - survey as they leave - so they have a part in it? Idea: world café

Alicia Lyford - unless it is really well communicated, people will feel like they did not have an opportunity to contribute. At our Dec 20 meeting, we can debrief and be able to come back to the full board to share something - does not feel like we are pushing back our timeline.

Diane N-F - provide info to the community about what this activity will look like.

Zach - will be important to share what they will see/ what they might miss if they participate online

Meagan - could be an in-person meeting without a virtual option.

Jeannie - sometimes in large groups, we have more than one smaller group of people doing the affinity mapping

An overview of the activity from tonight to share out:

- The committee brainstormed ideas related to possible configuration
- would like the board to go through the affinity mapping activity
- considered what information would be helpful

3. **Future Agenda Items**

3.1. Next Regular Meeting: December 20, 2023

3.2. Configuration Study Meeting: December 20, 2023

4. **Adjourn: The committee adjourned at 5:54**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Grace, Committee Recording Secretary