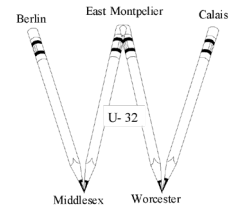


Washington Central UniUnion School District

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

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Meagan Roy Ed.D.
Superintendent



Washington Central Unified Union School District School Board Meeting U-32

930 Gallison Hill Rd. Montpelier, VT
12.20.23 6:15-9:30 PM

Board Members: Flor Diaz Smith, Chris McVeigh, Kari Bradley, Maggie Weiss, Mckalyn Leclerc, Ursula Stanley, Daniel Keeney, Zach Sullivan, Amelia Contrada, Kealy Sloan, Josh Sevits, Jonathan Goddard, Student Representative Willow Mashkuri

Others: Superintendent Meagan Roy, Steven Dellinger-Pate, Jen Miller-Arsenault, Kerra Holden, ORCA Media, Alicia Lyford, Gillian Fuqua, Jessica Wills, Karoline May, Celia Guggemos, Jen Donovan, Lisa Hanna, Mark Brown, Michael Sherwin, Scott Hess, Tom Hamlin, Veronica Eldred, Xavier Montalvo, Ainsley Burroughs, Allison, Betsy Parah, Brian, Brittany Perry, David Delcore, Jared Weiss, Allison Fayle, David Lawrence, Honi Bean Barrett, Shannon Perry

1. **Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.** She expressed gratitude to the students at this time of year for sharing their learning and their experiences with us; she expressed gratitude to the staff and to the board members.
2. **Welcome**
 - 2.1. **Adjustments to the Agenda:** Add 2.4 Student Report, and add 5.6 Appoint Board Clerk. **Ursula Stanley moved to approve the proposed amendments. Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously.**
 - 2.2. **Reception of Guests**
 - 2.3. **Public Comments-Time limit strictly enforced, see note**
 - 2.4. **Student Representative Update:** Willow Mashkuri shared that the weather related cancellations had affected the visit to the school that had been scheduled; she is planning on this to reschedule for January and she will update the board. Willow stated that students have a new year, new semester approaching; she shared some of the happenings right now with students - sports, exams, etc. Zach Sullivan asked how the new cell phone policy is going - she indicated that overall she feels that students are taking it in stride.

3. Presentations:

- 3.1. **Central Vermont Career Center Budget Presentation (Jody Emerson):** Jody Emerson, the Superintendent/ Director of the Central Vermont Career Center, provided a slide show overview of the CVCC. She invited questions or comments from board members. Some discussion followed around staffing challenges. Josh Sevits stated that he had gone to the open house and was very impressed! Brittany Perry asked about special education services at the career center: is differentiation built into the programming at the tech center? Jody Emerson stated that there are times when we have to meet certain standards and are not able to differentiate. She noted that U-32 provides a special educator two days a week to provide support at the center.
- 3.2. **WCUUSD Budget Presentation:** Superintendent Roy provided an update and the next version of the proposed budget for 2024-25. Some discussion followed around the proposal to combine Pre-K and kindergarten with Rumney and Doty, including the opportunity to provide “wrap-around care” so that there is a full-time option for preschool (with a half-day program but half-day of community connections care). Diane Nichols-Fleming asked, as we consider configuration, do we have an idea of child count in the coming years? She also noted that for some working parents, having before or after Pre-K, care still does not cover the entire workday. Chris McVeigh stated that the idea that the smaller schools take a disproportionate amount of the resources at WCUUSD does not make sense to him; he spoke about the resources that are required at high school. Some discussion followed around math skills proficiencies in the younger grades.
- 3.3. **Public Input:** Flor Diaz Smith invited questions or comments. Honi Bean Barrett asked whether it has been considered to combine kindergarten with first grade at the schools versus combining the kindergarten classes at Rumney and Doty. Karoline May stated that the Rumney staff had considered this and were not in support of this. Gillian Fuqua shared the student population at Doty and indicated that both a K/1 and the second grade class at Doty would be smaller than recommended class size. Bekah Mandell clarified that we do not know yet which school would be losing a teacher, since seniority is determined across WCUUSD.

4. Reports to The Board

- 4.1. **Student Report:** (this was provided earlier)
- 4.2. **Superintendent/Central Office Leadership Team (COLT) Report:** Superintendent Roy invited questions or comments from the written report. She asked the board to consider the draft document *Equity Policy Indicators*. Diane Nichols-Fleming asked whether other affinity groups (aside from Families of Color Affinity Group) are in existence at WCUUSD. Kealy Sloane asked for some clarification around ILI study, which is noted in the draft. Kari Bradley stated that we would need to grow our skills in creating and considering climate studies. Superintendent Roy noted that student interview has been brought up as an important metric. Diane Nichols-Fleming asked how we could use our equity lens to consider the things that are already in place at WCUUSD. Kealy Sloane stated that she appreciates this process. Maggie Weiss stated that there is value in having time to work as a

board member collaboratively with administration and staff; it provides a better understanding of what is being done to work on equity. Superintendent Roy spoke briefly about class size. We have indicated a minimum of 12, and we do have several classes that fall below this minimum; one of the impetuses to consider configuration is to address the challenge of class sizes that fall below 12.

4.3. VSBA Report: Flor Diaz Smith invited board members to read the newsletter updates from VSBA.

4.4. Education Quality Update: Ursula Stanley shared that the committee had tackled Education Quality Standards and scientific inquiry. The committee will create a schedule of reporting to the board.

5. Board Operations

5.1. FY25 Budget Draft: Board members discussed this topic after having participated in the presentation earlier this evening. Diane Nichols-Fleming asked for clarification about the Berlin behavior coach position. Some discussion followed around the various changes in positions at the schools in counseling, support staff, behavior, etc. Chris McVeigh followed up with Gillian Fuqua about the proposed decrease in FTE of nursing positions at Doty. Daniel Keeney asked for more details about a decrease in school nurse positions. Superintendent Roy stated that she envisions a school nurse leadership model that will help distribute FTE across WCUUSD as needed to best serve the students. Kari Bradley suggested wrapping up questions and allowing board members to make a statement about the budget to move along the process. Diane Nichols-Fleming stated that questions are required to come to an informed opinion. Maggie Weiss expressed concerns about reducing counseling and nursing positions. She questions whether they are meeting student needs. Amelia Contrada stated that she appreciates the complexity of ESSER funding and declining enrollment. She appreciates everyone coming together to create a collaborative solution; she is ready to support this budget. Dan Keeney stated that he represents the town that is facing the largest tax increase and the greatest amount of cuts and he feels the need to provide scrutiny. Ursula Stanley stated that she appreciates all of the work that administrators have put into this budget and she is ready to support as it is. Josh Sevits expressed frustration with the situation the small towns face; it is not a situation they can control; that the federal government has decided to spend money in other ways and we have to face the challenge. He stated that he is ready to support this budget. Mckalyn Leclerc expressed frustration that the budget and staffing patterns presented tonight do not seem to reflect the concerns that had been expressed when the previous version was discussed. She has concerns around nursing and counselor positions being cut, especially at Doty. She noted that if Gillian Fuqua feels that the proposed staffing is adequate at Doty, there might be savings across WCUUSD if other schools had similar staffing patterns. Gillian Fuqua spoke about staffing solutions at Doty. Kealy Sloan thanked the administrators for the work and for their time in providing explanations; she is ready to pass the budget as it is presented; she

has faith that the administrators are prepared to support their students. Kari Bradley spoke about the position we are in at this time to benefit from the tax calculations; he feels there might be a cliff going forward; however, at this time he is prepared to support this iteration of the budget. Zach Sullivan expressed concern about characterizing Calais as a school that takes more than its share of resources. He would like to look at how to use the nurse resources across the district to benefit all of the students. He supports the budget as it is presented. Diane Nichols Fleming asked for clarification about some of the position reductions at Rumney. She asked for clarification about some of the proposed staffing patterns at U-32. She stated that it is helpful for board members to hear perspectives from each town and to recognize that we are all here to support all of the students. She stated that she is prepared to support the budget as it is presented. Chris McVeigh stated that he trusts that if Doty and Rumney decide to combine Pre-K and kindergarten, he hopes that the two programs will be split between the two schools. Steven Dellinger-Pate spoke about paraprofessional positions that remain unfilled, and that these positions do remain, as they are part of students' IEPs. Jonathan Goddard stated that we are no longer in a pre-pandemic position and that we should not necessarily go back to those staffing positions, as the needs of our students have changed. He stated that if we are cutting counseling and nursing positions, he does not think it reflects student needs. He stated that at this time he is not prepared to support this budget as a whole. Kealy Sloan asked that we frame the conversation in the reality of the student population at each school - when we are reducing positions we are right-sizing across WCUUSD. Flor Diaz Smith stated that she appreciates the expertise of the administration and that she trusts their recommendations. That being said, she is nervous about education funding overall. She feels that we are considering the bare minimum in reductions when we think about long-term planning; however, she is hopeful about the configuration study and the work we are doing around visioning and strategic planning. She is ready to support this budget. She feels that we have enough support across the board and she does not wish to ask the administration to come back with yet another version of the budget. Amelia Contrada stated that there is grief in this process; there is so much out of our control. We care so much about nurses and counselors and the needs of our students and families, and yet we need to trust the administrators. We need to come to terms with ourselves for making a decision that carries some cognitive dissonance but have faith that the needs can be met.

- 5.2. Board Budget Communication Plan:** Superintendent Roy spoke about the budget communication last year; the steering committee this year is considering sending a post card budget information mailing to include a very brief overview and a QR code.
- 5.3. Mail in Ballots for the WCUUSD Annual Meeting**
- 5.4. Winooski Valley School Choice Agreement: Ursula Stanley moved to allow Superintendent Roy to sign the Winooski Valley School Choice Agreement. Seconded by Dan Keeney, this motion carried unanimously.**
- 5.5. Superintendent Evaluation:** Kari Bradley shared that a survey will go out after the new year; will be compiled and the results will be shared with the board during Executive

Session, and then shared with Superintendent Roy. He stated that the goal is to have 100% participation.

- 5.6. Flor Diaz Smith asked a board member to step in as clerk in the place of Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, until board reorganization in March 2024. **Kari Bradley nominated Josh Sevits as clerk. Seconded by Chris McVeigh; this motion carried unanimously.**

6. Finance Committee:

- 6.1. **Award Doty Generator Bid:** Ursula Stanley moved to approve awarding the Doty Generator Project contract to Local Electric, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$81,400. Seconded by Zach Sullivan, this motion carried unanimously.
- 6.2. **Approve Pre-Qualification Criteria for Security Project:** Ursula Stanley moved that the Board establish the recommended prequalification criteria that contractors must meet to be included on a selected list of pre-qualified bidders for the 2024 Security System Project. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. This motion carried unanimously.
- 6.3. **Approve Pre-Qualified Contractors for FY 24 Combined Construction Projects:** Ursula Stanley moved that the Board establish the recommended prequalification criteria that contractors must meet to be included on a selected list of pre-qualified bidders for the 2024 Security System Project. Seconded by Kealy Sloan, this motion carried unanimously.
- 6.4. **FY 24 Fund Balance Projections- Capital Fund:** Susanne Gann explained this report to the board.

7. Policy Committee: This is tabled for tonight, in light of the late hour

- 7.1. **Second Reading for Policies to be Adopted on December 20, 2023**
 - 7.1.1. **B20: Personnel, Recruitment Selection and Background Checks**
 - 7.1.2. **D34: Library Media Center Selection & Reconsideration**
 - 7.1.3. **A30: Policies and Procedures (formerly A2)**
 - 7.1.4. **A20: Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation & Distribution**
 - 7.1.5. **A22 Notice of Non- Non-Discrimination**
- 7.2. **First Reading of Policy**
 - 7.2.1. **F26 Security Cameras**

8. Consent Agenda

- 8.1. **Approve Minutes of 11.15.23, 12.4.23, and 12.6.23:** Diane Nichols-Fleming moved to approve the minutes of 11-15-23, 12-4-23, and 12-6-23. Seconded by Kealy Sloan, this motion carried unanimously.
- 8.2. **Approve Board Orders:** Ursula Stanley moved to approve the board orders 11-16-23 through 12-20-23 in the total amount of \$883,584.73. Seconded by Zach Sullivan, this motion carried unanimously.

9. Future Agenda Items

- 9.1. **2023-2024 Board Work Plan**

10. Board Reflection: Chris McVeigh expressed thanks to Jonas Eno-Van Fleet for the work that he has done on the board over the years. Board members expressed gratitude.

11. Adjourn: The board adjourned by consensus at 9:32.

Respectfully submitted, Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary