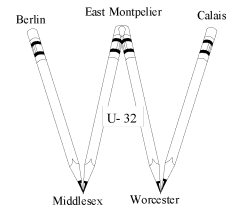


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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



**WCUUSD Policy Committee
Meeting Agenda
2.22.24
4:45-6:45 PM
Central Office, 1130 Gallison Hill Rd. Montpelier
Via Video Conference**

Virtual Meeting Information

<http://tinyurl.com/3ubtcju4>

Meeting ID: 896 7316 6140

Password: 729154

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

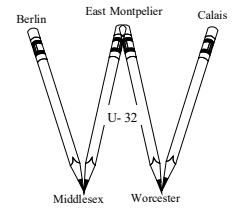
1. Call to Order
2. Approve Minutes of 1.10.24
3. Policy for Discussion
 - 3.1. School Choice
 - 3.2. Education Philosophy
 - 3.3. Teaching and Learning About Controversial Issues
4. Policies for Review
 - 4.1. D4 Title I Comparability
5. Future Agenda Items
 - 5.1. Next Meeting: March 20, 2024
6. Adjourn

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Meagan Roy, Ed.D.
Superintendent



WCUUSD Policy Committee Minutes
1.10.24
4:45-6:45 PM
Central Office, 1130 Gallison Hill Rd. Montpelier
Via Video Conference

Present: Chris McVeigh, Amelia Contrada (arrived at 5:22 p.m.), Amy Molina, Natasha Eckart

Without a quorum, those present informally discussed “school choice.” Chris McVeigh asked, are we thinking of opening school choice to everyone/ anyone, or are we thinking of having some parameters around students accepted. Amy Molina stated that it seems to make sense to have some sort of parameters. Tonight’s packet contained some model policies for the committee to consider. The policy to be considered is through the lens of school choice in the elementary schools in WCUUSD. Amy stated that she is not a fan of “first come first serve” regarding school choice. Some discussion about staff who work at one campus (but live in another town within WCUUSD) and want their child to attend that campus. Chris stated that this might be appropriate if the student’s attendance would not require the school to hire additional staffing. Natasha wondered if creating a policy at this time would be premature if our schools are going to look different in a year, based on the discussions that are currently underway with WCUUSD. Chris asked whether anyone present has any ideas about what the Finance Committee is currently discussing around some flexibility around town lines determining school attendance. (Realigning geographically rather than by town lines.) Natasha had brought that idea up at a previous meeting. The topic of transportation was discussed: currently transportation is provided to/ from the school that you are assigned to. Transportation is not the responsibility of the school except when it is part of a child’s IEP.

- 1. Call to Order: Chris McVeigh called the meeting to order at 5:24 p.m.**
- 2. Approve Minutes of 12.13.23:** The committee did not take action on this.

3. Policy for Discussion

3.1. School Choice: Natasha spoke about the idea of some parents being able to get their child to a school of their choice versus other parents who are not able for whatever reasons to work that out. This goes to the idea of equity. All of the schools should be able to provide equal opportunities to all students. Natasha stated that she feels that school choice has the potential to take students who already have privilege, to the school of their choice, and leaves behind other students. Chris McVeigh spoke about the variety of personnel and how it affects each school. Amy Molina spoke about instances where a family may want to be at a different school; it might not be about “privilege” - it could be logistical. Amelia Contrada wondered about a policy where school choice exists with parameters such that an exchange is part of the agreement. Is there a way to regulate if someone wants to attend a school it can happen if there is a “swap;” if not, it would come to the board to decide. Chris McVeigh spoke about the impact on staffing, for example, small schools can only lose one or two students before class size is affected negatively. Amy Molina suggested researching the pros and cons of school choice policy. She believes there has been much discussion around this; there are probably resources out there that would facilitate the discussion. E.g., “does it unintentionally create segregation?” This is a big topic especially when we have made a commitment as a supervisory union to look at all policies through the lens of equity. Natasha offered to gather information (reach out to NEA) to share with the committee for further discussion of this policy. Chris McVeigh asked whether we would like to discuss the cases where parents move out of the district and ask for permission to have their child continue to attend the school in the district. Natasha suggested this is a good topic for discussion, based on some of the situations the board has faced in the recent past. Amy stated that she feels there have been more requests in the past years because of the housing crisis (e.g. families that move from Berlin to Barre but want their child to remain at Berlin School.) Amy stated that in the past at U-32 when parents ask for this, it is typically granted only when the child is in their senior year, as an allowance to let the child finish their high school career. For other grades, it has not been granted (typically.) However, she feels that might be changing recently. Chris McVeigh spoke about the instances when a house is being renovated (or a house is being built) and residency is considered in the district even though they are temporarily living elsewhere. Natasha spoke again about the idea of equity - for example, with the flooding, when families are forced from their homes and cannot afford to continue to live in the district but request that the student continue to attend their school. Amelia stated that we are probably going to keep coming back to what are the parameters for the exchange and what are the extenuating circumstances. It would be helpful to create some parameters/ guidance for the board to make these decisions. Chris asked what is the financial harm of saying “yes” to a student who is already there. Natasha stated if a student has started the year with us and moves mid-year if they move out of the district, what happens to the funding (does the funding follow the student, or does the money stay in the original district.) Amy Molina shared that October 15 is the date each year when we report our student enrollment, which affects per-pupil funding for that year. However, after that year, in the following years,

she does not believe that the funding would follow the student if the student did not live in our district. She stated that previously, we would allow a student to finish the semester, but not typically let the student finish the entire school year. An appeal to that would come to the board. Some of the questions about funding need to be answered by Superintendent Roy or Susanne Gann. Chris McVeigh suggested the policy could be that if a student attends beyond the October 15 (student count deadline) then the student could attend for the remainder of the year, but the board would consider anything beyond that. Amelia suggested that when the board is considering extenuating circumstances, they could consider some guidelines during the Executive Session, based on: humanity, justice, and equity values. She would be interested to hear what others have to say about extenuating circumstances or parameters for the board to consider requests. Chris McVeigh spoke about the concept of “parental deception” and that this should not play a role in the objective decision-making of the board. Amy asked if there was a way to measure, is this was in the best interest of the student. Is there some data that we can consider - e.g. is staying in the original school really in the best interest of the student? Does it create access issues, truancy, etc.? Natasha stated that there should be an understanding that, to the extent possible, the parent’s responsibility is to ensure that the student attends. Chris McVeigh stated that this could be part of the agreement. Amelia asked if hearing from the student that they have the support of a teacher or mentor, to write their statement - in terms of what they value about the decision to stay at the school, how they would be supported - having direct student voice in the matter would be helpful to the board. Chris McVeigh stated that this has happened in the past with high school students. We could make this part of the process for consideration for middle and high school students. Chris McVeigh stated that there is a difference between school choice and a residency request. Should there be two separate policies? Amy suggested an interdistrict transfer (school choice) and a residency waiver are two different issues even though they have some similarities and overlapping issues.

3.2. F26 Security Cameras: This will be moved to the board for adoption.

4. Future Agenda Items

4.1. Next Meeting: February 14, 2024

4.2. will continue the discussion of school choice

5. Adjourn: The committee adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Grace, Committee Recording Secretary

**WASHINGTON CENTRAL UNIFIED
UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Board of Directors' Policy
INTRA-SCHOOL CHOICE**

POLICY: F31
WARNED: DRAFT
ADOPTED: _____
EFFECTIVE: _____

Purpose

WCUUSD places students in the District's schools based on a student's town of residence. All WCUUSD schools provide robust education programming alignment with district goals and our strategic plan. To accommodate occasions when a student might benefit from placement in a school outside the student's town of residence, it is the policy of the District to offer students the option to enroll in a school of their choice within the District. Processes for intra-district choice of school will be guided by the needs of students, space availability, and existing resources.

Definitions

1. Transfer: Enrollment in one of the five WCUUSD elementary schools – Berlin Elementary School, Calais Elementary School, East Montpelier Elementary School, Doty Memorial School, Rumney Memorial School – other than the school of residence
2. Home School: The school of residence of a participating student
3. Receiving School: The school chosen by a participating student
4. Eligible Student: Any elementary student residing in WCUUSD

Implementation

WCUUSD shall permit students to attend an in-district elementary school other than their home school based on residency according to the following:

1. Students must be eligible for enrollment in their home school attendance area in order to be eligible for enrollment
2. Transfer students must be accepted on a non-discriminatory basis
3. Transfer requests may be denied if the requested transfer would have negative impacts on class size or staffing at the sending or receiving school or due to other extenuating circumstances. The ultimate determination of approval or denial will be made by the Superintendent's Office and that determination will be considered final.
4. Each transfer student shall be assured the opportunity for continued enrollment in that school until matriculation to U-32. Students do not need to apply for subsequent years.

5. Transportation is the responsibility of the student's family and will not be provided to students participating in the in-district transfer program.
6. Requests for consideration must be made in writing by May 15th. The requests will be considered based on impacts outlined in #3 above. The Superintendent will make decisions regarding an application by June 15th and parents will be notified in writing as soon as the decision has been made.
7. A parent who disputes a decision made by the Superintendent in accordance with the above process is entitled to request Board review of the decision. The Board's determination will be considered final.
8. Students that participate in this program and attend a different elementary school than their home school of residence will be expected to remain at the new location through the remainder of the school year, unless there are extenuating circumstances to be considered by the Superintendent.
9. These protocols are not intended to apply to mid-year requests for transfer of students. The Superintendent may consider such requests if student safety or well-being is in question. Otherwise, requests for in-district transfer must be limited to timeline outlined in #6 above.

RESIDENTIAL WAIVER POLICY

At times, families living in the District with students enrolled in one of the District's schools, move outside of the District during the academic year. According to **16 VSA §1075** the District is required to provide educational opportunities for families and students living within the District. That right does not extend to families or students whose residence is outside of the District. When a family and student who have started the school year within the District leave the District during the school year, the Board has the discretion to waive any tuition for that student and family, enabling the student to remain at one of the District schools. The family of the student must petition to remain in the District after the family and student have relocated outside of the District. **Families wishing to request a waiver of tuition should contact their school principal prior to the date of their move. The procedure for filing a Petition is detailed in the Student Handbook.**

When a family and student have started the school year within the District but relocate during the school year, the written Petition for Waiver of Tuition must be filed as soon as the family knows it will likely relocate outside of the District. The Petition should not wait until the family has actually moved but must be filed when the family knows it is likely to move and will likely be requesting permission for the student to stay within the District schools without paying tuition. A family's failure to file this notice requirement as soon as possible can be a factor in the Board's and Administration's exercise of its discretion.

The written, and signed, Petition must be filed with the Superintendent who will evaluate the Petition pursuant to this Policy's guidelines and render a recommendation to the Board for its consideration.

In situations where the family relocation occurs during the second half of any school term, the Superintendent has the authority to grant the Petition without Board action to the end of the existing school term. Any waiver extending into another school term requires Board action.

When considering a Petition under this Policy, the Administration's and Board's decision should be guided by the following considerations:

1. ~~Whether the student is approaching a transition year (e.g., graduation) The student's _____ in their academic career;~~
2. Whether the student is ~~accessing an instructional program within the district that is not available to the student in the district of residence enrolled in a _____ plan, the interruption of which will, in the Administration's opinion, _____ impede the student's academic or social emotional or _____ progress;~~
3. Whether _____;
4. The Board may also consider other extraordinary circumstances applicable to the family or student in exercising its discretion.

After evaluating the Petition, the Board will render its decision in writing, identifying the reasons for its decision in granting or denying the Petition.

The Board's decision is final.

Central School District Educational Philosophy

The Mission of the Central School District is to educate, prepare, and inspire every student to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to successfully pursue their aspirations and achieve their full potential as life-long learners, thinkers, and contributors toward an equitable global society.

The Core Values of the Central School District stand as the guiding principles and cornerstones for our curriculum, instruction, and all that we believe to be the essence of a quality education. They represent how we want to live within our school communities, the priorities of teaching and learning—the knowledge, skills, and habits of our graduates—and are an expression of what is deep and enduring in our schools.

To those ends, we believe in the following Core Values:

- Inspire a life-long love of learning in our students;
- Create a respectful environment where everyone feels known, safe, and valued;
- Pursue high expectations and standards for all students, providing supports and necessary interventions for success;
- Educate the whole child by striving for educational excellence and equity in academic, artistic, physical, interpersonal, and vocational pursuits;
- Champion innovation and creativity in teaching and learning, maximizing opportunities for students to be prepared for success in their chosen pathway;
- Foster critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving in our students and staff;
- Continuously assess and improve our teaching and learning.
- Embrace the free exchange of ideas as a vital element in the development of curriculum and in classroom teaching, ensuring that critical thinking and respectful civil discourse has an important place in the learning experience of our students;
- Recognize the uniqueness and dignity of individuals of differing races, religions, classes, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identity, learning styles and abilities;
- Build upon the strengths of our diverse community.
- Foster an environment in which all students and adults take responsibility for their individual and collective behavior;
- Create a culture of collaboration, collegiality, and honest communication; and
- Cultivate graduates who become involved and contributing citizens in a democratic society.

Legal References

None

Cross References

IA: Instructional Goals

Approved: 00/00/0000

The [Great Schools Partnership](#) encourages state agencies, nonprofit organizations, districts, and schools to use or adapt our policies for noncommercial purposes in the public interest.

GSP Policy Exemplars are the products of examining, excerpting, and rewriting local district policies from public school districts nationwide and are presented here as a starting point for consideration, review, editing, and adoption.

Central School District Teaching and Learning About Controversial Issues

The Central School District respects the tremendous power of American thought that stresses the free exchange of ideas as a vital element of our democracy and supports free and thorough consideration of debatable issues as one way to accomplish this goal.

Instruction that emphasizes deep thought and the development of informed opinions based on established facts should be encouraged and supported at all grade levels. Instruction in critical thinking and respectful civil discourse has an important place in the District curriculum and in course offerings. Teaching should be objective and scholarly with an emphasis on facts and regular opportunities for discussion of student opinions at a developmentally appropriate level.

Regarding the District instructional program, the Board fully recognizes the authority of the State of _____ to establish guidelines for the district curriculum and standards. The Central School District commits to following all applicable state laws and rules.

The Central School District embraces the concept that public schools need to teach our students the full and comprehensive history of our United States, so they can make responsible decisions, avoiding the mistakes of the past, as they prepare to become contributing and involved citizens in our democracy.

Recognizing the desire to develop independence of thought, students have the following rights:

1. The right to study any issue which has political, economic, or social significance at the appropriate age level as one begins developing personal opinions;
2. The right to have free access to all relevant non-confidential information;
3. The right to express opinions on controversial issues without jeopardizing relations with the teacher, fellow students, or the school; and
4. The right to study under competent instruction in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice.

All students deserve an education that helps them understand who they are and where they come from, and gives them the confidence and skills to work and learn constructively with others --- regardless of skin color, ethnicity, social background, or ZIP code.

Our students need the freedom to learn the whole story of America, both our triumphs and the times when our nation has fallen short of its ideals. Only an honest and complete education will prepare the next generation to solve the problems of our shared future.

As teachers and students engage in controversial, debatable issues, it should be noted that the Central School District does not offer instruction in Critical Race Theory.

NOTE: *New Hampshire school districts may choose to insert the following, and other states may choose similar references to their respective state statutes.*

“Consistent with state statute, our school District curriculum offers instruction in United States and New Hampshire government and civics and among other topics, study includes instruction in how intolerance, bigotry, antisemitism, and national, ethnic, racial, or religious hatred and discrimination have evolved in the past, and can evolve, into genocide and mass violence, such as the Holocaust, and how to prevent the evolution of such practices.”

In implementing the District curriculum approved by the Board, teachers shall use the following best practice in their instructional strategies.

1. The teacher is confident that any controversial subject to be discussed belongs within the framework of the curriculum and state standards required to be taught; that the subject is significant, as well as meaningful for the students; and that through discussion, students will have the opportunity to grow their knowledge and understanding.
2. The teacher handles classroom presentations in ways that encourage critical analysis and the development of evidenced-based perspectives by students and strives to present a balance among many points of view without negating any historical truths.
3. The teacher emphasizes keeping an open mind, basing one’s judgment on credible evidence, examining closely the evidence in terms of the subject under discussion, and being prepared to change one’s perspective should new evidence come to light.

Legal References

See state specific statutory language.

Cross References

AD, Educational Philosophy

IMMB, Exemption from Required Instruction

IJJ, Instructional and Library Materials Selection

KE, Resolving Public Complaints

Approved: 00/00/0000

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Required ~~Recommended~~

WASHINGTON CENTRAL UNIFIED
UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Directors' Policy

TITLE I COMPARABILITY

POLICY: D4

WARNED: 9.3.20

ADOPTED: 11.4.20

EFFECTIVE: 11.4.20

If a school in the Washington Central Unified Union School District becomes eligible to receive Title I funds, the school district in which the school is located shall provide comparable services, staffing levels, curriculum materials and instructional supplies for Title I eligible and non-Title I eligible schools. The district shall use local and state funds to ensure equivalence among schools in staffing and the provision of curricular materials and instructional supplies. Students in all schools shall be eligible for comparable programs and supplemental supports. The district shall utilize district-wide salary schedules for professional and non-professional staff.

Administrative Responsibilities

The superintendent or his or her designee shall develop ~~written procedures for compliance with this policy and shall maintain records that are updated biennially documenting the district's compliance with this policy.~~ to ensure:

1. Compliance with the federal comparability requirements; and
2. That records documenting compliance are maintained and updated biennially;

VSBA Review Date: August 15, 2023

Legal Reference: 20 USC §6321(c).

20 USC 7801(26) (LEA defined)

Vermont Agency of Education CFP Comparability Guidance 16-V.S.A. 144