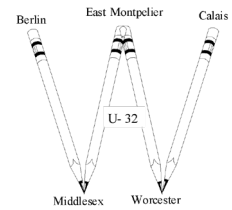


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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



**Washington Central Unified Union
School District
School Board Meeting
8.21.24 6:15-9:00 PM
U-32
Rm 128/131
930 Gallison Hill Rd
Montpelier, VT**

Virtual Meeting Information

<https://tinyurl.com/bduhp355>

Meeting ID: 849 3594 9997

Password: 297072

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

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Call to Order | 6:15 PM |
| 2. Welcome | 15 minutes |
| 2.1. Adjustments to the Agenda | |
| 2.2. Reception of Guests | |
| 2.3. Public Comments-Time limit strictly enforced, see note | |
| 3. Board Operations (Discussion/Action) | 90 minutes |
| 3.1. School Board Worcester Interview and Appointment - pg. 4 | |
| 3.2. Configuration Committee | |
| 3.2.1. Priorities / Review data | |
| 3.3. Affirm Board Workplan - pg. 6 | |
| 3.4. Affirm Superintendent Evaluation Process & Timeline | |
| 3.5. Board Learning | |
| 3.6. VSBIT Proxy - pg. 14 | |

4. Reports to the Board 20 minutes
 - 4.1. Superintendent/Central Office Leadership Team (COLT) Report - pg. 16
 - 4.2. Central Vermont Career Center (CVCC) Report
 - 4.3. VSBA Update

5. Finance Committee (Discussion/Action) 15 minutes
 - 5.1. Approve District Wide Exterior Door Re-keying Project - pg. 21
 - 5.2. Approve Contingency Increase for the Safety Systems of Vermont Contract - pg. 22
 - 5.3. Award Bid for U-32 Replacement Mower - pg. 23
 - 5.4. Review and Discuss Draft FY 2025-26 Budget Timeline - pg. 24
 - 5.5. Substitute Rate of Pay - pg. 40

6. Personnel 5 minutes
 - 6.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE – pg. 41

7. Consent Agenda(Discussion/Action) 10 minutes
 - 7.1. Approve Minutes of 6.11.24 – pg. 53
 - 7.2. Approve Board Orders

8. Future Agenda Items

9. Board Reflection

10. Public Comment

11. Adjourn

NOTE: To ensure the board has time to conduct its business, the board will adhere to a strict 1.5 minute public comment time limit per person. Microphones will be muted when time is up. If there is not enough time on the agenda for all members of the public wishing to comment at the beginning of the meeting, there is additional public comment at the end of the meeting.

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, and celebrate successes.

AGENDA KEY

Agenda Section	Examples	Role/ Responsibility	Description
Call to Order	n/a	Board Chair or designee	Formal opening to meeting. Superintendent calls to order during annual reorganization
Public Comment			Opportunity for public comment on items not on the agenda. Board will adhere to a strict 1.5 minute public comment time limit per person. Microphones will be muted when time is up. If there is not enough time on the agenda for all members of the public wishing to comment at the beginning of the meeting, there is additional public comment at the end of the meeting.
Executive Session	Personnel Student Matter Negotiations		Only for discussion of items covered in VSA §313. Formal actions not taken in Executive Session
Reports to the Board	Superintendent/ COLT Student Report	Administration	Both regular/recurring reports and one-time reports happen here. One-time reports are determined by the Board workplan or requested by the will of the Board. Generally, reports invite clarifying questions but not formal discussion/action
Committee Reports	Finance Policy Education Quality	Board	Chair of the committee reports on substance of most recent committee meeting. Generally, reports invite clarifying questions; any discussion or action items would be listed in the respective section of the agenda
Discussion Items		Board with input from administration	Items on the agenda specifically for discussion of the Board. Chair can seek input from audience during discussions. Generally not intended for action (although nothing prevents the Board from taking an action)
Action Items	Personnel approvals	Board	Items formally on the agenda for Board action. Discussion can occur after a motion is on the table
Consent Agenda	Board Orders Minutes	Board	Designed for items that need proforma approval and/or are sufficiently routine. Board acts on all items in the Consent agenda and does not discuss any item unless it is pulled out during Agenda Adjustments

From: <juliamhewitt@icloud.com>
Date: Sat, Jun 15, 2024 at 12:23 PM
Subject: Worcester School Board Vacancy
To: <fdiazsmith@u32.org>
Cc: <mleclerc@u32.org>, <neckart@gmail.com>

Dear Flor Diaz Smith:

Since I retired from full time teaching, I have been considering serving as a Worcester representative to the Washington Central Unified Union School District school board. I understand that a Worcester seat is still vacant and am writing to express my interest in serving in this capacity on behalf of the residents of all our communities.

I am a strong advocate for public education and believe that my 33 years of service as a public school educator and my passion for community involvement would be an asset to the board. I've attached a copy of my resume should you be interested.

I look forward to hearing about next steps.

Sincerely,
Julia Hewitt
802-498-4301

Julia M. Hewitt

458 Hampshire Hill Road • Worcester, VT 05682
juliamhewitt@icloud.com • 802-498-4301

Education

Goddard College, Plainfield, VT
Connecticut College, New London, CT

MA, Education, 2017
BA, English, 1983

Professional Experience

CT State Community College - Middlesex
Middletown, CT

2019 - present

Adjunct English Professor. Teach courses in Composition and Composition & Literature in both in-person and online synchronous formats. Responsible for developing course syllabi and creating all course material.

Cabot School; Cabot, VT

1985 - 2018

Teacher of English. As a one-person department in a small, rural, preK-12 school, coordinated all aspects of high school English program, including budget, curriculum, and proficiency-based assessment. Collaborated with special educator and social studies teacher to design and implement arts-infused project-based learning expeditions.

The Green Mountain Writing Project, The University of VT

2002 - 2016

Co-Director. Collaborated with director and co-directors of GMWP, an affiliate of the National Writing Project, to coordinate the summer institute, an invitational summer 6- credit graduate course for teachers from kindergarten through college levels, the primary goal of which is to promote best practices in writing instruction and increase student proficiency in writing.

Elmcrest Psychiatric Institute
Portland, CT

1983 - 1985

Clinical Educator. In an institutional psychiatric setting, taught individualized English and social studies classes to a diverse client population, ages 12-18.

Other Affiliations

Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice Volunteer

2015 - present

Worcester, VT Historical Society Board Member

2017 - present

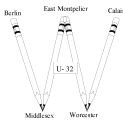
Old Meeting House Justice in Action Committee Member

2023 - present

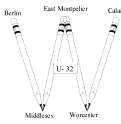
Worcester, VT Neighbor Network Member

2024 - present

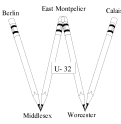
References available upon request.



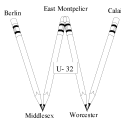
Focus Areas	#1: Educational and Academic Outcomes #2: Communication and Engagement with the Community #3: Long Term Planning				
	Presentation/Board Learning	Reports	Discussion	Action	Committees
August 8 4:00-8:30 Retreat #2 <i>(Board & Superintendent)</i> Trapp Family Lodge	Open Meeting Law Strategic Plan and Board Goals			Board goals Board Workplan	Finance: Budget timeline; year-round budgeting concept
August 21 6:15 Business Meeting In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131	Configuration Study	Superintendent/COLT Report (Strategic Planning update #1 per A23)	Board Interviews Configuration Data and numbers.	Affirm Board Workplan Affirm Policies F3 and F4 Affirm Superintendent Evaluation Process & Timeline	<i>Finance Configuration: August 19</i>
September 4	Board Learning/ School Board Member Orientation and Board Handbook				<i>September 4</i> Ed Quality: EQC Goal, Student Monitoring Report (Spring data) Finance Mtg #1: Approve budget development timeline & priorities September 9 Steering Committee September 10 Finance Committee September 11 Policy: Develop policy review draft



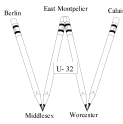
<p>September 18 6:15 Business Meeting</p> <p>In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>	<p>Strategic Planning - Board Focus Group</p>	<p>Superintendent/COLT Report (Superintendent goals)</p>	<p>Review VSBA Resolutions Policy (as needed) Budget development timeline & priorities</p>	<p>Approve budget development timeline & priorities Make a Decision to vote on Configuration Priorities Affirm Policy Workplan cycle Appoint Board member Proxy for VSBA Annual Meeting</p>	<p>September 20 Finance Mtg #2: Configuration Study</p>
<p>October 2 6:15 Community Meeting</p> <p>Location: Calais Elementary</p>	<p>Local Presentation - SEL (Rumney) Board Learning - Lynn, Lynn, Blackman & Manitsky</p>			<p>Negotiations - contract approval Communication & Engagement Planning</p>	<p>October 2 Ed Quality: Post Secondary Outcomes October 8 Finance: Review & approve FY25 Budget assumptions for fund transfers October 14 Steering Committee Policy Oct. 9</p>
<p>October 16 6:15 Business Meeting</p> <p>In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>	<p>Board Budget Training</p>	<p>Superintendent/COLT Report (Strategic Planning update #2 per A23) Principal Report Student Report Career Center Report Education Quality Monitoring Report</p>	<p>Policy (as needed)</p>	<p>Approve FY25 Budget assumptions for fund transfers Policy (as needed)</p>	<p>October 18 Finance Mtg #2: Configuration Study</p>
<p>November 6 6:15 Community Meeting</p>	<p>Local Presentation - SEL (Doty) <u>Community Meeting</u> <u>Topics:</u></p>			<p>Communication & Engagement Planning</p>	<p>November 6 Ed Quality: Student Monitoring Report (Fall 2023 Data),</p>



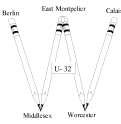
<p>Location: Doty Memorial</p>	<p>Connecting our Vision to Budget Realities</p>				<p>EQS November 12 Finance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorize Superintendent to Award Bids for Liquid Heating Fuels • Review and Discuss FY25 Budget Draft #1 <p>Nov 11 Steering Committee Policy: Nov 13</p>
<p>November 20 6:15 Business Meeting</p> <p>In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>	<p>Monitoring Student Achievement</p> <p>Budget draft #1</p>	<p>Superintendent/Central Office Report (Strategic Planning update #3 per A23) Principal Report Student Report Career Center Report</p>	<p>Board feedback on FY25 budget draft #1 (Board parameters) Policy (as needed)</p>	<p>Policy (as needed)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Send Letters to Select Boards Mailing Ballots.</p>	<p>November 15 Finance Mtg #2: Configuration Study</p>
<p>December 4 6:15 Community Meeting</p> <p>Location: Berlin Elementary</p>	<p>Local Presentation - SEL (EMES) Strategic Planning Status Update Configuration Study Brainstorm</p>	<p>Parking lot prequalification</p>			<p>December 4 Ed Quality: Financial Literacy</p> <p>December 10 Finance: Review FY25 Budget Draft 2 FY 23 Audit Report Fund Balance Projections</p> <p>December 9 Steering Committee Policy: Dec 11</p>



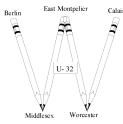
<p>December 18 6:15 Business Meeting</p> <p>In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>	<p>CVCC Budget Presentation (Jody Emerson @ 6:15) Budget Presentation</p>	<p>Superintendent/Central Office Report (Equity Indicators Draft) Student Report</p>	<p>Board feedback on FY25 budget draft Policy Education Quality</p>	<p>Status of Mail in Ballots Approve participation in Winooski Valley School Choice Lottery</p>	<p><i>December 20</i> Finance Mtg #2: Configuration Study</p>
<p>January 8 (Tentative) 6:15 Community Meeting</p> <p>Location: Rumney Memorial</p>	<p>Local Presentation - SEL (Berlin)</p>		<p>Review of school board vacancies Budget warning language (including Clerk pay) Annual report format Policy (as needed) Superintendent Evaluation Timeline</p>	<p>Approve school choice numbers <u>Communication & Engagement Planning</u></p>	<p>Ed Quality: No Meeting <i>January 14</i> Finance: Review FY25 Budget Drafts 2-3 and prepares for community forum presentation Reflection: Board will award U-32 ERU Project to contractor at Feb 1 Board meeting <i>January 13</i> Steering Committee <u>Policy: scheduled for 1/8/</u></p>
<p>January 22 6:15 Business Meeting</p> <p>In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>	<p><u>Forum Topic</u> Final Budget Presentation</p>	<p>Superintendent/Central Office Report (FY23 Audit report; Strategic Planning update #4 per <u>A23</u>; Grade Retention/Acceleration procedures<u>D2</u>) Student Report Career Center Report Principals Report</p>	<p>Budget communication</p>	<p>Final Draft Budget Budget warning language (including Clerk pay)</p>	



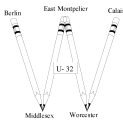
<p>February 5 6:15 <i>Community Meeting</i></p> <p>Location: U-32</p>	<p>Local Presentation - SEL (U-32)</p>		<p>Executive Session: Superintendent Evaluation (Superintendent Reflection)</p>	<p>Superintendent Search Update</p>	<p><i>February 5</i> Ed Quality: Health /Physical Education Bid award for Berlin Fire Alarm Panel</p> <p><i>February 11</i> Finance: Develops Board Communication & Outreach Plan; Audit Report Review and Approve Project Manager Contract</p> <p><i>February 10</i> Steering Committee: Superintendent Evaluation Policy: Feb 12</p>
<p>February 19 6:15 <i>Business Meeting</i></p> <p>In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>	<p>Board Self Evaluation?</p>	<p>Superintendent/Central Office Report (Hiring Procedures;) Principal Report Student Report Career Center Report</p>	<p>Executive Session: Superintendent Evaluation</p>	<p>Policy (as needed) Accept FY23 Audit report</p>	<p><i>February 21</i> Finance Mtg #2: Configuration Study Bid award for U-32 baseball field project Bid award for District Combined Projects</p>
<p>March 3 <i>Annual Meeting</i></p>	<p>Board Budget Presentation</p>				
<p>March 5 (Tentative) Business meeting was</p>	<p>Board Reorganization</p>				



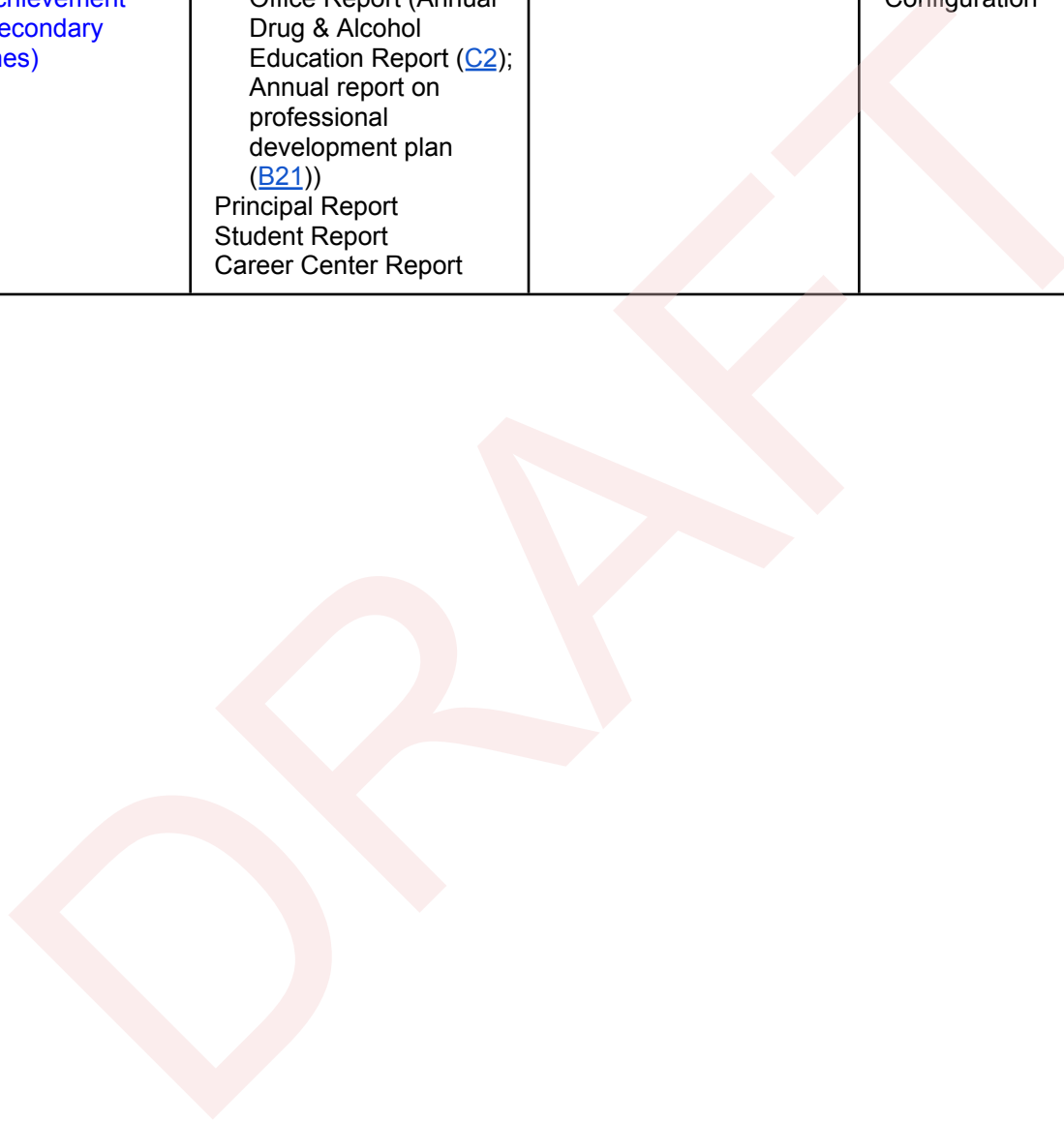
<p>scheduled after Town meeting (3.4.25)</p>					
<p>March 19 6:15 <i>Business Meeting</i></p> <p>In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>	<p>Board Reorganization Presentation of Strategic Plan Updates</p>	<p>Superintendent/Central Office Report - Rule 4500 Principal Report Student Report Career Center Report</p>	<p>Reflect on budget process</p>		<p>Ed Quality: No Meeting March 11 Finance: *only if needed for budget revoke* March 10 Steering Committee & Superintendent Evaluation Bid award for District-wide Safety and Security Project March 12 Policy</p>
<p>April 2</p> <p>5:00-6:00 New Board Members</p> <p>6:15 <i>Community Meeting</i></p> <p>Location: EMES</p>	<p>SEL Presentation - Calais Strategic Plan Configuration Simulations</p>		<p>Superintendent Evaluation (Executive Session)</p>		<p>April 2 Ed Quality: Student Monitoring Report (Winter 2024) April 8 Finance: Quarterly financial report; Reflect on budget process April 14 Steering Committee Policy: April 9</p>
<p>April 16 6:15 <i>Business Meeting</i></p> <p>In Person</p>	<p><u>Presentation Topic</u> Student achievement (winter assessments)</p> <p>Climate Survey Results</p>	<p>Superintendent/Central Office Report (ELL procedures C4; Home Study procedures C6); Title I comparability</p>	<p>Policy (as needed)</p>	<p>Policy (as needed) 23-24 Calendar Approval Last Day of School, 23-24</p>	<p>April 17 Finance Mtg #2: Configuration Study</p>



<p>Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>		<p>D4; Quarterly Financial Report,) Principal Report Student Report Career Center Report</p>		<p>Adopt Strategic Plan</p>	
<p>May 7 6:15 <i>Community Meeting</i></p> <p>Location: Calais Elementary</p>	<p>Equity Indicators Presentation</p>			<p><u>Communication & Engagement Planning</u></p>	<p>May 7 Ed Quality: Transferable Skills May 12 Steering Committee <u>Policy</u> May 13 Finance May 14 Policy</p>
<p>May 21 6:15 <i>Business Meeting</i></p> <p>In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>	<p><u>Board Learning Finance</u></p>	<p>Superintendent/Central Office Report (Quarterly Financial Report; Seclusion & restraint procedures <u>C34</u>) Principal Report Student Report Career Center Report</p>	<p>Policy (as needed)</p>	<p>Policy (as needed)</p>	<p>May 22 Finance Mtg #2: Configuration Study May 28 Ed Quality:25-26 <u>Work Calendar, EQC Goal, Post Secondary Outcomes</u></p>
<p>June 4 5:00-8:30 pm <i>Board & Administrative Retreat</i></p> <p>Location: TBD</p>					<p>June 10 Finance June 9 Steering Committee June 11 Policy Committee</p>



<p>June 18 6:15 Business Meeting</p> <p>In Person Location: U-32 Rm 128/131</p>	<p><u>Presentation</u> Student achievement (post-secondary outcomes)</p>	<p>Superintendent/Central Office Report (Annual Drug & Alcohol Education Report (C2); Annual report on professional development plan (B21)) Principal Report Student Report Career Center Report</p>	<p>Policy (as needed)</p>	<p>Policy (as needed) Configuration</p>	
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXHIBIT B VSBIT PROXY OR CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

- **In order to vote at the VSBIT Annual Meeting on October 25, 2024, Exhibit B must be completed prior to the meeting.**
- If you will be sending a person to the Annual Meeting to represent you, complete the first selection, option **(a)**, by checking the box and listing the name of your representative and their title. **This person must be present, with a copy of this form, in order to vote.**
- If you will not be attending or sending a representative to the Annual Meeting but wish to cast a vote, complete the second selection, option **(b)**, by checking the box and in doing so, naming the VSBIT Board as a proxy to cast a vote on your behalf.
- If your school district is a participating member of **both** the VSBIT Multi-Line Program **and** the VSBIT Unemployment Program, a separate Exhibit B form must be filled out for each program.
- **In either case, sign and date the bottom of the form and either bring it to the meeting or mail it ahead to:**

**VSBIT
Annual Meeting
52 Pike Drive
Berlin, Vermont 05602**



EXHIBIT B

VSBIT PROXY OR CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

LET IT BE KNOWN THAT: Washington Central Unified Union SD _____, member of
(Name of Member School District/Supervisory Union)
the VSBIT Unemployment Program, a body corporate and politic, created and existing under the
laws of the State of Vermont, does hereby:

Certificate of Authority

(a) appoint as its authorized representative to appear and vote on its behalf at any and all meetings of the members of the Vermont School Board Insurance Trust, or any adjournment thereof, the following person:

Name

Title

Email: _____

Note: If option (a) is selected, the person listed above must attend in-person to vote.

OR

Proxy

(b) appoint as its true and lawful attorney, the Board of Directors of the Vermont School Boards Insurance Trust, by majority vote, with the power of substitution for it and in its name to vote at the Annual Meeting of the Vermont School Boards Insurance Trust, to be held on the 25th day of October, 2024 or at any adjournment thereof, with all the powers it should possess if personally present through its authorized representative.

Please sign and date this section once you have chosen (a) or (b):

Dated at _____, Vermont, this ____ day of _____, 20__.

This action is valid for one year [365 days] from the date of enactment, or until it is superseded by subsequent action of the member filed with the Trust.

Name of Member District

BY: _____

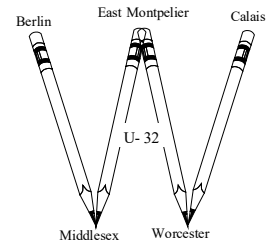
TITLE: _____

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

Steven Dellinger-Pate
Superintendent



Dear

To the Board and Communities of WCUUSD:

Working together, the Board and the communities that comprise the Washington Central Unified Union School District have the responsibility to determine how to provide the highest quality education for our students. Numerous factors inform - and impact - that determination, including the configuration of our schools. It is that topic we will be addressing at three separate meetings in the coming month.

As a board and as a community, it is my hope that we will approach this task with our shared values and core beliefs in mind: humanity, justice, community and belonging; rigorous curriculum and instruction; well-being; transparent and responsible leadership; and community engagement and relationships.

It is my strong belief that a number of factors - staffing, budgets, rising costs, and declining enrollment - not to mention our first-ever failure to pass a school budget - make now the time to have this discussion and to plan. Regardless of where we stand on the issue of reconfiguration, we know that the time has come to seriously evaluate - and reevaluate - how and where we are educating our students. By addressing these questions now - honestly and transparently - we hope to decide on a course of action, and a budget, that will allow us to do what is best for our students and affordable to our taxpayers.

At the next, three board meetings (August 21, Sept. 4 and Sept. 18), we will be presenting fiscal, programmatic, and facilities-related data based on both our current configuration and a proposed reconfiguration. Each of these meetings will be preceded by a meeting with the configuration committee to preview the data and get feedback. The goal of these meetings/presentations is to provide the most accurate information possible, on which a decision of this magnitude can be made.

Specific topics for these three meetings will include:

On August 21, we will take a comprehensive look at our current and proposed configuration of students, staff, administration, and classrooms. We will look at both staff utilization and projected needs; we will review student demographics; and we will share historical budget and tax information. Our goal in doing this is to determine the optimal staffing structure given our current and potential future configuration. Much of our work in assessing the district's optimal staffing structure will rely on the latest research available on school size; classroom size; and on our own AOE Education Quality Standards.

On September 4, we will take a deeper dive into the programmatic component of reconfiguration. We will look at how our current and proposed configuration would impact curriculum (including delivery of programs when class sizes are too small to offer a particular course or activity), interventions, service delivery, allied arts, transportation, co-curricular and after school programs. As part of this analysis, we will look at social emotional learning and the overall well-being of students in both configurations. It is my hope that the information gained in this meeting will help us get a clearer picture of what the

programming possibilities will look like under both configurations. I will be up front here and say when it comes to educating our children, more is more and more is better.

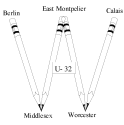
The September 18 meeting will be devoted to reviewing the fiscal (budgetary) and capital components of reconfiguration. With information gained from the previous two meetings, we should be able by that time to present two budget scenarios: one for our current configuration and one for the proposed configuration. However, I do need to note - while we can control what we will spend as well as how and where we spend it, there are factors beyond our control that nevertheless impact our budget and the taxes we all pay. To that end, we will also provide the most up to date tax information that is available to us. Finally, we will spend some time discussing how the decisions we make now could impact the potential for future mergers down the road.

It is not lost on any of us that reconfiguration could result in closing our smallest schools. For years, we have celebrated the value and personalized education our small schools are able to provide. There is no doubt among any of us that small schools offer benefits that cannot easily be measured or defined by grades or test scores. That said, it is also becoming apparent that taxpayers are no longer able - and in some cases, no longer willing - to fund the operation of five elementary schools. When that happens, we have to begin cutting programming. So part of the question before us is: Can we retain and preserve the benefits and personalized education of our small schools; provide the programs, curriculum, and co-curricular activities that our students want, need, and deserve; and can we do so in a fiscally responsible and affordable manner? If the answer is yes, we need to decide which configuration will best allow that to happen.

As we approach these three discussions - in addition to our core values and beliefs - we need also to keep in mind the goals of our strategic plan, which are:

1. Build and nurture a culture of well-being and inclusivity.
2. Challenge, empower, and engage each student through evidence-based instructional strategies and curriculum and varied educational opportunities.
3. Foster and commit to responsible leadership that engages the community and communicates transparently.

We encourage your attendance, input, and thoughtful consideration at these meetings. They will inform the path we follow into the future as we strive to be the best that we can be for the benefit and well-being of everyone in our district.



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

Capital Improvement Project Updates

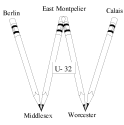
The total approved budgets for capital projects for work in FY 2024-25 was \$2,190,727, including the multi-year, districtwide security system project and the Doty generator project. All project budgets are on target at this time. We do not anticipate requesting funds beyond the total approved amount, with a possible exception for the Doty generator project. We will know more about this need in the next couple of weeks. Bill Ford and Chris O'Brien report some challenges this construction season, with more than typical unanticipated obstacles as well as weather events that have caused some delays at Doty and Calais. This means that the projects will continue to be worked on right up until the substantial completion date of 8/23/24. Bill and Chris continue to work closely with E.F. Wall to ensure that this date is met.

Finance

Each year the close out of the financials for the fiscal year converges with the needs of starting a new fiscal year. Payroll, Accounts Payable, the General Ledger and HR were closed in July. Thanks to Tom Hamlin, Penny Andrews, Holly Poulin, Shannon Knowles and Heidi Dimick for their efforts to complete the transition, especially when they are all new to their position.

The auditors from our accounting firm, RHR Smith, have done the initial planning for the FY 2023-2024 audit and will likely complete the onsite review of materials in late September. This is a slightly different process than in previous years. We anticipate receiving a first draft to review in November, and presenting the final audit to the Board in January. The preparation for this involves multiple account reconciliations, journal entries, pulling financial reports, copies of leases, contracts, invoices, procedures and many other documents for review. New teacher training is scheduled for August 21st and 22nd. HR, Payroll and the IT team will be available to new teachers in a college-fair style meeting, to answer any outstanding questions they may have. Lots of thanks to Heidi, Holly and Penny for their efforts to ensure a smooth welcome to new employees.

At the end of July the Business Office hosted a Google Meet with building administrative assistants to go over the process for distribution of the new security badges across the district, a new app available for bus routes, future changes to the chart of accounts and a new process for the payment of stipends through payroll. The support team was asked to give us their questions and advice to help make these changes smoothly. Thank you to Tim Couture, Chris O'Brien and Tom Hamlin for presenting and thank you to the building folks for attending and asking some great questions. We hope to host these meetings every other week this year, to share information, build relationships, learn from each other, plan, problem solve and help advise operational decisions. The next meeting is scheduled for August 13th.



Human Resources

Personnel projections for this fiscal year continue to be updated to reflect new hires to the District, including salary and benefits. Savings identified through staffing changes in administrator positions allowed the District to continue to support the U-32 Buildings and Grounds Director position this fiscal year.

The elimination of the Director of Technology position created a need to reassign the position responsibilities to current staff or a managed service provider. As of July 1, 2024, the Operations Manager position will be responsible for providing supervision to the IT team and any Managed Service Providers the District contracts with. The team worked with the previous Director of Technology to develop a request for proposal to send to managed service providers with the intent to sign a contract for services necessary to support a variety of needs, but primarily cyber security. Proposals are due to the Operations Manager August 16, 2024

Recruitment Update

We were fortunate to fill several of our openings for the 2024-2025 school year. However, recruitment efforts are still underway for the following positions,

Licensed Positions:

- Library Media/Technology Integration (2 openings)
- School Nurse
- Special Education Teacher
- Physical Education/Health Teacher

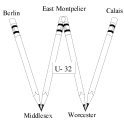
Support Staff:

- Paraeducators
- Assistant Cook
- Food Service Worker

We hope to have these positions filled in the very near future. Additionally, the District is always looking for Substitute Teachers and has onboarded some substitutes for the 24-25 school year.

Technology

The IT team has been working on installing new equipment to upgrade and add technology throughout District locations. The team has added 90 new Chromebooks for Grade 5 students and 70 for U-32 students. We have also added 22 new staff laptops for the elementary schools and 23 new staff laptops for U-32. 74 projectors are being installed in our schools this year. The team has also replaced over 100 wireless access points to improve wireless service throughout the District, and are adding 3 new outdoor wireless access points at U-32 to provide wireless access on the school grounds. The new cameras at U-32 required the installation of 3 new switches to provide additional ports.



Student Support Services

Julia Pritchard, Director of Student Support Services, is teaming with the consultants from the Ability Challenge to develop a work plan for the upcoming year that is aligned with the District Strategic Plan. The Ability Challenge conducted a comprehensive needs assessment of WCUUSD's special education programs last year and made recommendations to improve our inclusive programming in support of all learners, especially those with disabilities and other diverse learning needs.

Curriculum Update

Each summer we invite teachers and administrators to participate in “Curriculum Camp.” Curriculum Camp is one of the most impactful and productive ways to engage in important work related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. In recent years our Curriculum Council, a representative group of teachers and administrators from across all of our schools, has identified the areas of focus for Curriculum Camp.

This summer we had three areas of focus, all of which are aligned with the implementation of Act 173, Vermont’s law related to the effectiveness and equity of services and support provided to students, and our district’s strategic plan. Curriculum Camp objectives included:

- Analyze and revise Transferable Skills performance indicators based on the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Framework;
- Analyze and revise Transferable Skills performance indicators to ensure that they explicitly address executive functioning; and
- Revise or select new elementary writing assessments and update our Local Comprehensive Assessment Plan.

Again this year Curriculum Camp was an incredible and productive learning experience that resulted in work that will build on the good work that we already have in place related to the aforementioned objectives. Most immediately, we will share information about the work with our educators as part of our mandatory annual training, and we will connect with the Curriculum Council about how to implement it more fully in all of our schools.

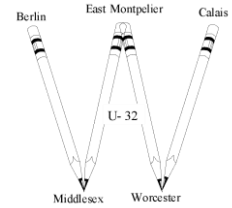
Huge thanks to the 10-11 teachers and administrators who attended each session! The thoughtfulness, curiosity, and commitment with which they approached the work in service to our school community is greatly appreciated.

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

Steven Dellinger-Pate
Superintendent



TO: WCUUSD Finance Committee & School Board
FROM: Susanne D. Gann, Business Administrator
RE: Approve Districtwide Exterior Door Rekeying Project
DATE: August 9, 2024

Summary: As the WCUUSD 2024 Security System Project has progressed, it has become clear that standardized practices for badge and key distribution have not been followed across the District buildings. Since we start this year with a new badge entry system at all the schools, with a common service provider, it is recommended that the District rekey each building to allow for certainty in tracking of who has access to all of our buildings. The anticipated balance in the capital improvement fund at the end of FY 25 is \$1,010,101.

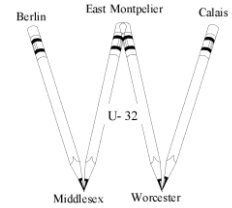
Recommended Board Action: The Board approve the use of the capital improvement fund reserves to pay for a Districtwide Exterior Door Rekeying Project for an amount not to exceed \$35,000.

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Steven Dellinger-Pate
Superintendent



TO: WCUUSD Finance Committee & School Board
FROM: Susanne D. Gann, Business Administrator
RE: Approve Contingency Increase for Safety Systems of Vermont Contract
DATE: August 16, 2024

Summary: In March the Board awarded Safety Systems of Vermont the contract for the WCUUSD 2024 Security System Project in an amount not to exceed \$430,531, which included a 10% contingency amount of \$39,140. Change orders approved to date have included the addition of cameras and door card readers in some areas not previously identified as well as some unanticipated wiring. This has utilized the full 10% contingency previously approved by the Board.

It is our request that the Board approve an additional 10% contingency of \$39,140 to allow the approval of necessary change orders for timely completion of the project while the contractor is still here. Currently there is \$9,663 in additional wiring and equipment needed to complete the project, but given the large scope and the number of individual locations for equipment it is reasonable to expect there may be more needed.

The Project Manager and the Director of Facilities have closely monitored the progress of the project and are pleased with Vermont Safety Systems knowledge, skills and methods. The Project Manager has done, and will continue to do, due diligence on confirming that anything added is above what was called for in the bid documents, and are legitimate unplanned costs.

The original budget for this project was \$600,000 plus soft costs for the project manager. \$532,902.40 has been expended to date, including current open purchase orders, leaving \$67,097.60 remaining.

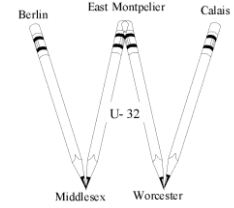
Recommended Board Action: The Board approve increasing the allowed contingency for the Safety Systems of Vermont contract by \$39,140, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$469,671.

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Steven Dellinger-Pate
 Superintendent



TO: WCUUSD Finance Committee & School Board
FROM: Susanne D. Gann, WCUUSD Business Administrator
RE: Award Bid for U-32 Replacement Mower
DATE: August 9, 2024

Summary: U-32 currently has a 2006 Toro Wide Area Mower with a 10' mower deck scheduled for replacement in FY 2024-25, with an anticipated replacement cost of \$61,000. Staff solicited bids from local vendors to replace the Toro wide area mower with a mower of comparable size.

Company	Vehicle Description	Net Cost After Trade
Grassland Equipment & Irrigation Corp.	2024 Ventrac Kubota Tractor 4520Y with Wide Area Mower and accessories (\$45,055.76 less \$3,200 trade in)	\$41,855.76
Champlain Valley Equipment, Inc.	2024 Ventrac Kubota Tractor 4520Y with Wide Area Mower and accessories (\$51,652.40 less \$2,000 trade in)	\$49,652.40
United Ag & Turf	2024 John Deere 1600 Turbo Commercial Wide Area Mower and accessories (\$71,500.29 less \$3,300 trade in)	\$68,200.29

Recommended Board Action: The Board move to authorize the Superintendent to purchase a 2024 Ventrac Kubota Tractor 4520Y with Wide Area Mower and accessories from Grassland for an amount not to exceed \$41,855.76.



Dear Local School Officials,

For many school districts, communities, and taxpayers, the FY25 school district budgeting cycle was the most challenging in anyone's memory. In fact, it is not over. As property tax bills arrive in mailboxes across Vermont, the reality of steep increases in those bills will sink in.

The Vermont education funding system is complex. Local decreases in spending don't always result in decreased local taxes. However, if overall education spending declines statewide and the legislature does not place additional burdens on the Education Fund, the overall tax burden will be reduced. For most local school officials, responding to taxpayer concerns regarding the increased costs of public education while providing high-quality, equitable educational opportunities for students and their families is an ongoing effort.

Vermont cannot endure an FY2026 budget cycle like FY2025. Without successful efforts to significantly reduce the rate of increase in school district spending proposals for FY2026 as compared to FY2025, more budgets could fail, leading to statewide proposals designed to suppress spending rather than address costs. This would likely result in increased disparities in education funding across the state.

The Vermont Commission on the Future of Public Education recently began its work on what we expect will be a historic effort to improve the education delivery system through better organization, greater affordability, and more equity. The Commission's work will extend through December 2025, but we can anticipate that a legislative response will continue into the 2026 session.

In the meantime, the challenges of FY2026 lie before local education leaders. With that framing, the Vermont School Boards Association, the Vermont Superintendents Association, and the Vermont Association of School Business Officials are providing you with support as you prepare your FY2026 budget. The accompanying resource is our first step in that effort.

Thank you,

Sue Ceglowski, Executive Director, Vermont School Boards Association
Chelsea Myers, Executive Director, Vermont Superintendents Association
Heather Bushey, President, Vermont Association of School Business Officials

FY2026 School District Budgeting Resource

August 2024

Background:

Budgeting for FY2025 brought unprecedented challenges for Vermont's school districts, with approximately a third of budgets voted down on Town Meeting Day in 2024. Rising costs of healthcare and special education, deferred maintenance, and increased salary and benefit costs, among other factors, contributed to steep budget increases and expanding concerns about the cost of education in Vermont. All the while, student needs, particularly in mental health, and statewide initiatives continue to grow and place demands on the Education Fund and taxpayers.

Despite efforts by local school officials to address fiscal pressures while attending to increasing student needs in FY25, school districts will face continued cost pressures in FY26. This document serves as a resource to provide indicators to aid in early budgeting efforts.

Urgency:

It is paramount that school district officials (school board members, superintendents, business managers, and principals) understand as much as possible about the FY26 budget cycle. We urge districts to begin their budgeting cycles as early as possible using the information provided in this resource.

Cost Drivers:

In order to respond to fiscal pressures, it is important to have a solid understanding of cost drivers.

Cost of Personnel

The majority of school district expenses are personnel costs. In simple terms, the factors that contribute to personnel costs are:

- 1) The number of personnel employed. This factor is most significantly within local control.
- 2) The salaries and wages paid to those employees and the rate of annual growth of those wages and salaries.

- 3) The costs of benefits provided to employees and the rate of annual growth in these costs.

Table 3: Pupils enrolled per staff in the public school system (2019)

	Count (#)	National Rank
US Average	7.45	-
Northeast Average	6.1	-
Connecticut	5.3	48
Maine	4.8	50
Massachusetts	6.9	36
New Hampshire	5.5	47
New York	6.2	43
Rhode Island	6.9	35
Vermont	4.4	51

Data source: Digest of Education Statistics⁴⁴; Analysis by JFO

⁴⁴National Center for Education Statistics (2019). "Digest of Education Statistics, Table 203.72, Table 213.2". https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current_tables.asp

Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Increases

FY2023 spending on salaries and wages totaled \$991 million. Assuming this increased by 6% in FY24 and FY25, every 1% increase in salaries and wages in FY2026 would result in an additional \$11.1 million of cost to the State's Education Fund. That is a significant contributor to increased education spending across the state.

It is critical that school boards and administrators view collective bargaining in the context of their essential work - what boards are trying to achieve for both students and taxpayers. To be successful in any negotiation, a board needs to be clear about where it wants to go and why. Boards and negotiating councils should understand and be able to clearly articulate any barriers within the current contract that make it difficult for the administration to achieve the district's instructional and financial goals. For more information, see the VSBA's [Negotiation Toolkit](#), [Guide to Collective Bargaining](#), and [this excerpt from *The Essential Work of Vermont School Boards*](#).

Health Insurance

Given that no structural changes are expected to happen with the VEHI plans in the coming year, we anticipate that FY26 will bring another year of double-digit rate increases similar to last year.

Spending on health insurance premiums (only) was \$211 million in FY2023. Assuming this increased by 12.5% in FY2024 and 16.4% in FY25, then a 17% increase in FY2026 would cost an additional \$42 million to the State Education Fund.

Inflation

Based on current data on the New England consumer price index from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, inflation is about 4%.

For comparative purposes, the New England Economic Project (NEEP) price index for the last several years is presented below.

- 2023 = 3.4%
- 2024 = 3.0%
- 2025 = 3.2%

Special Education Costs

Special education costs have been increasing nationally and in Vermont. According to [a compilation of survey data from the Agency of Education](#) for a report to the General Assembly on February 27, 2024, special education costs were predicted to increase by approximately \$40 million between FY2024 and FY2025.

FY2026 represents the continued transition set forth in Act 173 to the Uniform Base Amount for the Census Block Grant for Special Education. Along with a fiscal transition from a reimbursement model to a block grant model, Act 173 outlined a number of best practices that school districts were tasked with implementing. These best practices include:

- ensure core instruction meets most needs of most students;
- provide additional instructional time outside core subjects to students who struggle, rather than providing interventions instead of core instruction;
- ensure students who struggle receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers;
- create or strengthen a systems-wide approach to supporting positive student behaviors based on expert support; and

- provide specialized instruction from skilled and trained experts to students with more intensive needs.

Facilities

Containing costs associated with facilities and operations will also be challenging, given significant deferred maintenance needs in most of Vermont's schools. In [a report to the Vermont House Education Committee](#) in January 2024, the Agency of Education stated that immediate facilities needs for the state totaled \$228,613,264 and placed total costs at \$6,352,324,952. These figures, according to the Agency, are likely an underestimate.

Given the cost pressures ahead in FY2026 and short and long-term facilities needs, local school officials will likely be faced with decisions around the pros and cons of reducing, maintaining, or increasing investment in facilities in the upcoming budget year. These decisions will be made more challenging since we will not have seen the recommendations from the State Aid for School Construction Working Group established by Act 149 of 2024 nor will the School Facilities Master Plan Program established by the Act have been initiated. Additionally, the work of the Commission on the Future of Public Education which on a larger scale will inform state policy around the number of school buildings operated, will not be completed until December of 2025.

Tuition

Tuition represents a significant portion of costs for some districts. When districts are trying to reduce costs, it is not an area with flexibility.

According to statewide data, districts paid a total of \$83.3 million in tuition to approved private providers (excluding pre-k providers) and another \$14.3 million went to out-of-state schools in FY23. Overall tuition costs increased 5% from FY2022 to FY2023. For every student educated outside the public education system, it drives up the cost per pupil within the system. This directly increases property tax rates.

The statewide average announced tuition of Vermont union high schools for 2024-2025 is \$19,774. Districts must pay the full tuition of approved independent schools in Vermont functioning as an approved area career technical center, or an independent school meeting education quality standards, which may exceed the average announced tuition.

Components of [Act 183 of 2024 \(H.887\)](#) Impacting FY26 Budgeting:

In 2024, the Vermont General Assembly passed the yield bill which contained two primary levers that will impact budgeting in FY2026. The first is the way in which the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) is applied and the second is the reinstatement of the excess education spending threshold.

Common Level of Appraisal

Section 13 -15 of Act 183 adjust the application of the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) in FY2026. The intention is to make the pre-CLA property tax rates closer to the post-CLA property tax rates. The ultimate tax rates will not change, except in cases when a district has a per pupil spending below the yield.

The new legislation moves the CLA calculation from this:

$$Actual\ local\ homestead\ property\ tax\ rate = \frac{District's\ per\ pupil\ spending}{HS\ yield} / Local\ CLA$$

To this:

$$Actual\ local\ homestead\ property\ tax\ rate = \frac{District's\ per\ pupil\ spending}{(HS\ yield * Statewide\ Average\ CLA)} / \frac{Local\ CLA}{(Statewide\ Average\ CLA)}$$

[Image Credit: Joint Fiscal Office]

For more information about this change: [Overview of CLA Change in the Yield Bill from the Joint Fiscal Office](#)

What does this mean for your community? All things being equal, this change will increase the district (pre-CLA) tax rate, but leave the local homestead rate (post-CLA) rate the same. The presentation linked above shows an example of the change in rates.

Act 183 specifies that the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Taxes, shall provide outreach to the field and the general public about the new CLA adjustment on or before September 1, 2024.

Excess Education Spending - 32 V.S.A. § 5401(12)

The excess education spending threshold has been reinstated beginning in FY2026. The excess spending threshold in FY2026 will be 118% of the statewide average district per pupil education spending for FY2025 plus NEEP inflation.

Section 20 of Act 183 repeals the exemption of voter-approved bond payments from the excess spending threshold. For all bonds approved by voters prior to July 1, 2024, voter-approved bond payments toward principal and interest will not be included in education spending for purposes of calculating the excess spending threshold. This means that for any bonds approved after July 1, 2024, voter-approved bond payments toward principal and interest will be included in education spending for purposes of calculating the excess spending threshold.

The Vermont Agency of Education’s August 1, 2024 estimate of the excess spending threshold is:

Estimated Excess Spending Threshold for FY26		
Using FY25 estimated ed spending		
& FY25 NEEP inflation adjustment		
	Statewide average FY25 ed spending	13,229.01
	Estimated NEEP Inflator	3.19%
	NEEP Inflated FY25 est ed spnd	13,651.02
	2024 Act 183 defined 118%	118%
	Estimated FY26 Excess Spending Threshold	16,108.20

The penalty for exceeding the excess spending threshold is double taxation of the amount above the per-pupil excess spending threshold. [32 VSA Section 5401(12)]

Ballot Language

Per Act 183, ballot language will shift in FY26 to:

“Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend \$ _____, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? The _____ District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will

result in per pupil education spending of \$_____, which is _____% higher/lower than per pupil education spending for the current year.”

Commission on the Future of Public Education

Act 183 of 2024 (H.887) established the Commission on the Future of Public Education. The law states the purpose of the Commission as:

“The Commission shall study the provision of education in Vermont and make recommendations for a statewide vision for Vermont’s public education system to ensure that all students are afforded substantially equal educational opportunities in an efficient, sustainable, and stable education system. The Commission shall also make recommendations for the strategic policy changes necessary to make Vermont’s educational vision a reality for all Vermont students.”

The Commission met for the first time on July 15, 2024, and the Steering Committee, composed of six members of the Commission, met for the first time on July 23, 2024.

Act 183 requires several reports from the Commission until it sunsets on December 31, 2025. The following are the deadlines:

- September 15, 2024 - a formal, written work plan, which shall include a communication plan to maximize public engagement
- December 15, 2024 - a written report containing its preliminary findings and recommendations, including short-term cost containment considerations for the 2025 legislative session
- December 1, 2025 - a written report containing its final findings and recommendations for a statewide vision for Vermont’s public education system and the policy changes necessary to make that educational vision a reality
- December 15, 2025 - proposed legislative language to advance any recommendations for the education funding system

The Commission members are:

Zoie Saunders, Interim Secretary of Education*

Jennifer Samuelson, State Board Chair*

Craig Bolio, Tax Commissioner*

Senator Ann Cummings, Senate appointee*

Representative Peter Conlon, House appointee*

Nicole Mace, Vermont School Boards Association representative*

Jay Nichols, Vermont Principals' Association representative

Michael Lechlitter, Vermont Superintendents Association representative
Jeff Fannon, Vermont-NEA representative
Elizabeth Jennings, Vermont Association of School Business Officials representative
Meagan Roy, Census-Based Funding Advisory Group representative
John Castle, Vermont Rural Education Collaborative representative
Oliver Olsen, Vermont Independent Schools Association representative

*Steering Group

Resources and Strategies:

Many districts have embarked on cost-mitigation measures while maintaining high-quality and equitable education for students. The following resources might be helpful to district leadership and governance teams as you prepare for the upcoming budget season.

Board and Superintendent Roles and Responsibilities in Budgeting

School boards play a key role in ensuring the school system has sufficient resources to achieve its goals and make progress toward the district's vision. The board must propose a budget and ensure its approval by the electorate. In light of the challenging budget season ahead, we offer you a list of best practices for boards and superintendents to consider:

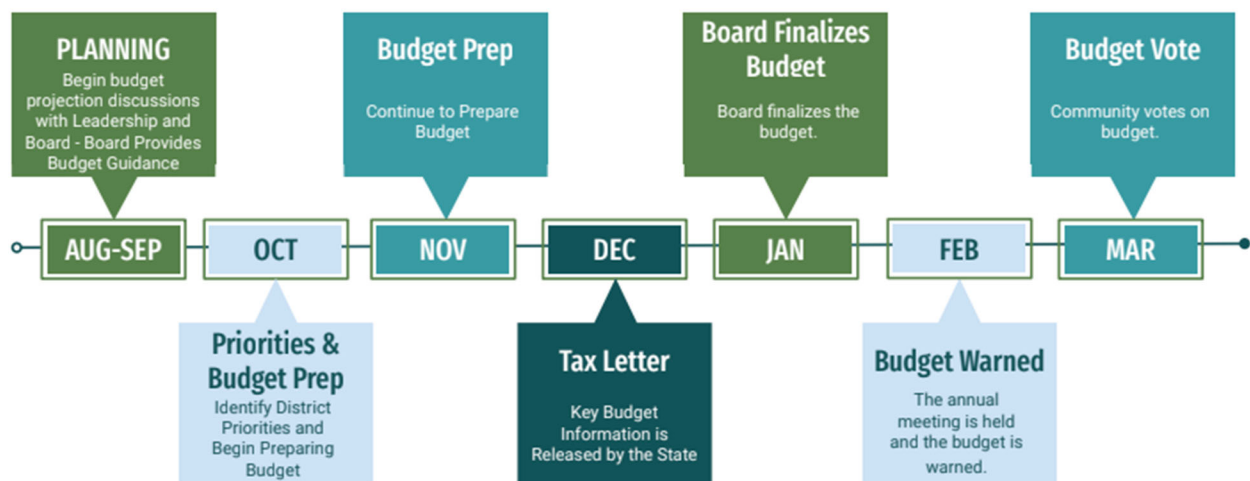
- The board provides the superintendent with high-level budget guidance or budget parameters, including previously stated district priorities and goals.
- The superintendent works with district and school leaders to draft a budget that meets board guidance/parameters.
- The superintendent informs the board of the staffing and operational changes made to produce the draft budget that aligns with the board's guidance or parameters.
- The superintendent educates the board as to how the draft budget will meet the stated district priorities and/or goals for the coming year.
- The board is responsible for assuring that the final proposed budget will meet the district's priorities and is fiscally responsible.

For more information see this [Excerpt from *The Essential Work of Vermont School Boards*](#) on proposing a budget and securing voter approval.

Questions that board members may want to focus on when reviewing and approving the budget include:

1. Does the budget spending meet the district's stated priorities and/or goals?
2. Does the budget include class sizes that are within the district's class size policy and procedures and state guidelines?
3. Does this budget allow the district to meet [Education Quality Standards](#) and [District Quality Standards](#)?
4. Are we appropriately addressing facility needs?
5. Does proposed spending on staff costs (salaries and benefits) achieve the district's stated priorities and/or goals?
6. How does our cost per student compare to other similar districts in our region?
7. How does this budget impact tax rates in our communities?

Here is an example of a high-level budget timeline:



Staffing and Enrollment

Vermont faces continued declining enrollment with one of the lowest staff-to-student ratios in the country. The following tools might support your discussion and analysis of enrollment trends and staffing levels:

[Staffing and Enrollment Trends Tool from Edunomics](#)

[Example Enrollment Report - Kingdom East School District](#)

[AOE Memo: Managing Staff Attrition](#) (Please note: this resource was published in 2017, but still has relevant information.)

Class Size Policy

Vermont law currently does not set minimum class sizes; however, pursuant to [Act 153 of 2010](#) all school districts must have minimum and optimal average class sizes policies. “The policies may be supervisory union-wide, may be course- or grade-specific, and may reflect differences among school districts due to geography or other factors.”

A Class Size Model Policy can be found in the Vermont School Board Association’s Model Policy Manual D6. Local school districts have adapted this model to include their own minimum, ideal, and maximum class sizes (see, for example, [Barre Unified Union School District](#)). The example provided is in line with the maximum class sizes adopted by the State Board of Education in 2014 (20 for K-3; 25 for 4-12).

Ensuring that you have a Class Size Policy and that it has been updated is an important tool for budgeting. It allows for consistency in practice across the system and revisiting the policy engages the school board and community in an important dialogue on quality and efficiency.

School Configuration and School Size

We anticipate that challenging conversations will surface about the number of schools operated in Vermont as a whole and in local school districts. Great care must be taken to involve your community, understand the specific processes unique to your district around reconfiguration or school closure, and put student learning first. Any decisions should be grounded in your district’s core beliefs and be clear on what the district wants for its students. Meaningful engagement with the community requires a clear process, transparency, and data-informed decisions.

Some school districts have already begun this process for FY2026. For example, Washington Central Unified Union School District has conducted enrollment analyses, presented a series of options, and started community conversations. Learn more about their process in this [detailed board packet](#) that includes an FAQ for the community.

Administrative Costs

Given the central office’s function to fulfill state bureaucratic requirements and school district operational requirements, the demands on the central office are relatively consistent from district to district, irrespective of student enrollment. When administrative positions are cut from budgets, some of their responsibilities are often

federal and statewide requirements. Cutting administrative personnel can mean that more responsibilities are placed on principals and teachers.

We suggest reviewing the necessity of any specific position(s) not according to where in the school system they are situated.

Collaborative Professional Learning

October 9 & 10 - The Vermont Superintendents Association and Vermont Association of School Business Officials will be conducting their second annual joint training on October 9 & 10 at the Killington Grand. Superintendents and business managers are encouraged to attend together to strengthen the business manager/superintendent partnership, collaborate on strategies to address cost mitigation, understand trends nationally and locally, and work on strengthening skills in communication with the public.

October 24 & 25 - The Vermont Superintendents Association and the Vermont School Boards Association will host the annual conference on October 24 & 25 at the Lake Morey Resort. A pre-conference workshop will be available on October 24 for school board officers and superintendents to learn more about anticipated fiscal trends and to collaborate on strategies to address cost mitigation. Workshops will be available on October 25 that focus on effective communication and equitable budgeting practices.

WASHINGTON CENTRAL UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE - DRAFT
FY 2025 - 2026

August – Preliminary Budget Preparation

- Business Administrator to prepare budget documents and materials for Leadership Team and Finance Committee review in August.
 - Business Administrator and Superintendent review proposed Budget Development Timeline.
 - 6th - WCLT reviews proposed Budget Development Timeline.
 - 6th - WCLT discusses FY 26 Food Service Staffing Plan in preparation for baseline budget.
 - 7th - WCLT discusses goals, plans and grant-funded positions that will impact the budget development.
 - 8th - WCLT discusses how to collect staff input for the budget development.
 - 9th – Packet materials finalized for the WCUUSD Finance Committee.
 - 13th - Finance Committee reviews draft Budget Development Timeline
-

September - Preliminary Budget Preparation, Budget Training, Baseline Budget, Configuration Proposal

- Grant Managers and the Business Administrator review staff funded by grants and begin to plan for the impact on the General Fund Budget.
 - Building Administrators review current special education staffing needs and begin planning for FY 26 special education staffing needs.
 - 6th – Packet materials finalized for the WCUUSD Finance Committee.
 - 10th - Finance Committee reviews and approves Budget Development Timeline, parameters/priorities and baseline budget.
 - Budget Meetings with Principals. Early discussions with individual buildings on any new or reduced services and staffing requests for FY 26 Budget Draft #1.
 - 11th - WCLT develops a plan for faculty and staff communication and engagement for FY 26 budget.
 - 18th - WCUUSD Board Budget Training.
 - 18th - WCUUSD Board reviews and approves Budget Development Timeline and parameters/priorities.
 - 18th - WCUUSD Board receives the Baseline Budget to inform draft discussions.
-

October – Develop and Present WCUUSD FY 26 Budget Draft #1.

- 4th - Packet materials finalized for the WCCUSD Finance Committee/Board.
 - 8th - Finance Committee reviews and approves the FY 26 Dental premiums.
 - 8th - Finance Committee reviews and approves the FY 26 budget assumptions for fund transfers for the HRA, Food Service, Community Connections and Capital funds.
 - th – WCLT finalizes Special Ed staffing levels.
 - th - WCLT receives the seniority list from HR for consideration.
 - th – WCLT budget planning meeting. Review of EQS, resource distribution and baseline budget estimates. District-level discussions on new or reduced services and staffing requests to finalize for FY 26 Budget Draft #1.
 - th - WCLT reviews and approves the FY 26 Food Service budgets.
 - 16th - WCUUSD Board reviews and approves FY 26 Dental Premiums.
-

November – Develop and Present WCUUSD FY 26 Budget Draft #2.

- st – Community Engagement Meeting – Connecting Our Vision and the Budget. This is a budget input session to inform the community and provide an opportunity for input.
 - th – Inaugural meeting with Budget Ambassadors.
 - th - WCLT budget planning meeting to debrief feedback and consider any adjustments as a result of the Community input.
 - 8th - Packet materials finalized for the WCUUSD Finance Committee/Board.
 - 12th - Finance Committee reviews FY 26 Budget Draft #2.
 - 20th - WCUUSD Board reviews FY 26 Budget Draft #2 and provides feedback to Administrators. Monitoring report: Student achievement (fall assessments).
 - th – WCLT budget planning meeting to debrief feedback and consider any adjustments as a result of the WCUUSD Board input.
 - Administrators have conversations with any people that *may* be affected by a reduction in force.
-

December – Develop and Present WCUUSD FY 26 Budget Draft #3.

*****NOTE: Revenue information for budgets becomes available between December 1-15.**

- 6th - Packet materials finalized for the WCUUSD Finance Committee/Board.

- 10th - Finance Committee budget discussion.
 - th – WCLT budget work session.
 - 18th - Community Presentation and Board Budget Discussion
 - st – **Grand List and Common Level of Appraisal information available from Agency of Education**
-

January – Budget Meetings to Finalize Warning, Budget and Town Meeting Materials

- nd – WCLT budget planning meeting. Final changes, if any, made to the FY 26 Budget.
 - rd – WCUUSD Board reviews school board vacancies, language for the warning and annual report format.
 - 10th - Packet materials finalized for the WCUUSD Finance Committee.
 - 14th - Finance Committee Budget Discussion.
 - 15th - WCUUSD Board reviews FY 24 audit.
 - 15th - Community Presentation. WCUUSD Board discusses FY 26 Budget, finalizes and approves.
 - **15th - Final FY 26 Budget warned and other materials to the printers and Town Clerks.**
-

February

- Administrators work with the Director of Facilities to complete Capital Project Request Forms.
 - Business Administrator begins Five-year Capital Improvement budget conversations with the Director of Facilities and Superintendent.
 - Administrators have conversations with any people that *are* affected by reduction in force.
 - 7th - Packet materials finalized for the WCUUSD Finance Committee.
 - 11th - Finance Committee develops WCUUSD Board Communication and Outreach Plan.
 - 19th - WCUUSD Board reviews and approves Board Communication and Outreach Plan.
-

March

- WCLT prepares for hiring season and reviews para and new staffing requests.
 - 3rd - Annual Meeting at U-32.
 - 4th - Town Meeting Day Budget Vote Via Australian Ballot.
-

April

- WCLT reviews and approves Capital Improvement Project Plan and Multi-year Capital Improvement Budget.
 - WCUUSD Board reviews and approves Capital Improvement Project Plan and Multi-year Capital Improvement Budget.
 - Board identifies priorities and initiatives to direct the next budget plan.
-

May

- 9th - Finance Committee reflects on FY 26 Budget Development Process.
 - 13th - WCUUSD Board reflects on FY 26 Budget Development Process.
 - CFP and IDEA B grant budget developed.
-

June

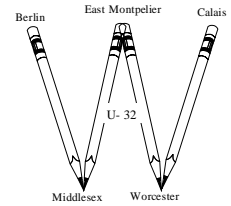
- th - School Board Retreat
- Administrators complete CFP and IDEA B grant applications in the GMS program and submit end of year reimbursement requests.

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

Steven Dellinger-Pate
 Superintendent



SUBSTITUTE RATE OF PAY Effective 7-1-2024

	<u>Full Day</u>	<u>Half Day</u>	<u>Hourly</u>
Substitute	\$140.00	\$70.00	
Nurse *	\$225.00	\$112.50	
Food Services			\$20.00/hour (Step 1, Cat 1)
Custodial			\$20.00/hour (Step 1, Cat 1)
Office			\$21.00/hour (Step 1, Cat 2)
Maintenance & Mechanic			\$22.00/hour (Step 1, Cat 3)
Students (High School) - (minimum wage)			\$13.67/hour Eff. 1-1-2024
Summer Technology Help: Students / Returning / College			\$13.67/hour
Board Recorders			\$80 / meeting up to 3 hours \$26.67 / hour beyond 3 hours

Full Day – Time worked over 3.5 hours in a day
 Half Day – Time worked 3.5 hours or less in a day

* Requires proof of RN/LPN License

WCUUSD School Board

Superintendent Personnel Summary and Recommendations

1. New Hire Nominations (for 24-25 school year)

Will Keller - MS English U-32

Sarah Ainsworth - RISE Coordinator - U-32

Jarrod Weiss - Principal - Calais Elementary

Jacqueline Hunt - Music Teacher - Rumney/EMES

Katherine McAuley-Flippin – Interventionist - Doty

2. Retirement

3. Re-Hires

4. Resignations

Amanda Morse - Special Education - Berlin (request to be released from contract)

5. Extended Leave of Absence Request:

6. Change in FTE:

Michael Close - .2 FTE to .8 FTE - Music Teacher - U-32

Kristina Snook - .2 FTE to .4 FTE - Art Teacher - Berlin

Callie Weller - Calais Elementary School has a combined Pre-K/K classroom this school year requiring five days/week coverage. This change will result in the need for the teacher covering that classroom to have an increase in FTE from .84 to 1.00

7. Long-Term Substitutes (24-25 School Year)

8. Change in Position (24-25)

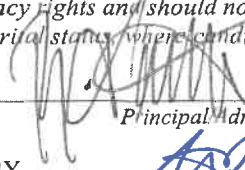
Tony Snow - Dean Of Students - U-32


JB Hilferty - Assistant Principal - U-32

TEACHER NOMINATION

POSITION: RISE Coordinator	FTE: <u> 1.0 </u>
REASON FOR VACANCY: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retirement/Resignation <input type="checkbox"/> New Position <input type="checkbox"/> Leave of Absence	
SCHOOL BUILDING: U-32	
SEARCH COMMITTEE COMPOSITION: <input type="checkbox"/> Administrators <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teachers <i>(numbers and groups represented)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Support Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/Community Members <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION: <i>(College, degree, date obtained)</i>	B.A. Elementary Ed (minor in Psychology), Johnson State College, December 2005. M.Ed, Southern New Hampshire University, August 2022.
PROCESS OVERVIEW AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: <i>(objective, not subjective, narrative of skills and experience of the recommended candidate & summary of reference check results)</i>	Sarah was a very strong applicant for the Dean of Students position. She was ultimately the runner-up in that search. In place of convening an additional committee, and in the interest of time, we wish to nominate Sarah for the RISE Coordinator position. We believe she is the best possible candidate for the position.
CANDIDATE RECOMMENDED TO SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD: NAME: Sarah Ainsworth <i>(resume and cover letter attached)</i>	

(If the board has additional questions about the candidate or other applicants, this should be discussed in executive session due to privacy rights and should not include information that would not be asked as a part of an interview process such as marital status, where candidate lives, etc.)

NOMINATED BY  7/22/24
Principal Administrator Date

RECOMMENDED BY  8/14/24
Superintendent Date

BOARD APPROVAL DATE: _____

TEACHER NOMINATION

POSITION: Principal
FTE:

REASON FOR VACANCY: x Retirement/Resignation New Position Leave of Absence

SCHOOL BUILDING: Calais Elementary

SEARCH COMMITTEE COMPOSITION: 2 Administrators 2 Teachers
 2 Support Staff 2 Parents/Community Members

Internal /External , 4 Applicants and 1 was internal

EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION: Ohio Dominican University, Master’s of Educational Leadership
Notre Dame College of Ohio, Teacher licensure - Social Studies
Ohio State University, Bachelor’s in Communication

PROCESS OVERVIEW AND REASONS

FOR RECOMMENDATION: After careful consideration and thorough interviews conducted by our search committee, which included staff, community members, and Steven Dellinger-Pate, we appointed Jarrod Weiss as Calais Principal. Among the four highly qualified candidates, including one internal applicant, Jarrod was chosen for his ties to our community and his extensive background in education and public service. His proven commitment to these areas aligns with our values and goals, making him an ideal fit for this role.

CANDIDATE RECOMMENDED TO SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD: NAME: Jarrod Weiss
(resume and cover letter attached)

(If the board has additional questions about the candidate or other applicants, this should be discussed in executive session due to privacy rights and should not include information that would not be asked as a part of an interview process such as marital status, where candidate lives, etc.)

NOMINATED BY [Signature] 7/16/24
Principal/Administrator Date

RECOMMENDED BY [Signature] 7/16/24
Superintendent Date

BOARD APPROVAL DATE: _____

TEACHER NOMINATION

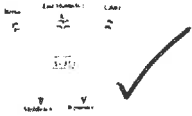
POSITION: <u>Interventionist</u>	FTE: <u>1.0</u>
REASON FOR VACANCY: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retirement/Resignation <input type="checkbox"/> New Position <input type="checkbox"/> Leave of Absence	
SCHOOL BUILDING: <u>Tooty</u>	
SEARCH COMMITTEE COMPOSITION: <i>(numbers and groups represented)</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administrators <u>(1)</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teachers <u>(2)</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Support Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parents/Community Members <u>(1)</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION: <i>(College, degree, date obtained)</i>	
PROCESS OVERVIEW AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: <i>(objective, not subjective, narrative of skills and experience of the recommended candidate & summary of reference check results)</i>	<u>on file</u>
CANDIDATE RECOMMENDED TO SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD: <i>(resume and cover letter attached)</i>	NAME: <u>Katherine McAuley-Flippin</u>

(If the board has additional questions about the candidate or other applicants, this should be discussed in executive session due to privacy rights and should not include information that would not be asked as a part of an interview process such as marital status, where candidate lives, etc.)

NOMINATED BY: 6/26/2024
Principal/Administrator Date

RECOMMENDED BY: 8/14/24
Superintendent Date

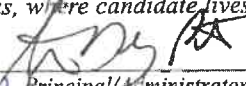
BOARD APPROVAL DATE: _____




TEACHER NOMINATION

POSITION: Music Teacher	FTE: <u>0.2</u>
REASON FOR VACANCY: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retirement/Resignation <input type="checkbox"/> New Position <input type="checkbox"/> Leave of Absence	
SCHOOL BUILDING: U-32	
SEARCH COMMITTEE COMPOSITION: <input type="checkbox"/> Administrators <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teachers <i>(numbers and groups represented)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Support Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/Community Members <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Internal /External , 3 Applicants,	
EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION: <i>(College, degree, date obtained)</i>	Bennington College, B.A Composition, June 2002. Bennington College, M.A.T. Music, June 2003.
PROCESS OVERVIEW AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: <i>(objective, not subjective, narrative of skills and experience of the recommended candidate & summary of reference check results)</i>	Michael is currently contracted as 0.6 FTE. Due to the scheduling logistics at U-32, we require 0.8 FTE. Michael is willing to accept this increase in his contract, and we would like to offer him the additional 0.2 FTE at this time.
CANDIDATE RECOMMENDED TO SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD: NAME: Michael Close <i>(resume and cover letter attached)</i>	

(If the board has additional questions about the candidate or other applicants, this should be discussed in executive session due to privacy rights and should not include information that would not be asked as a part of an interview process such as marital status, where candidate lives, etc.)

NOMINATED BY  6/23/24
Principal/Administrator /Date

RECOMMENDED BY  6/21/24
Superintendent /Date

BOARD APPROVAL DATE: _____

July 22, 2024

Dear Superintendent Dellinger-Pate, My supervisors Julia Pritchard and Jen Miller-Arsenault, and Members of the WCUUSD School Board,

I respectfully submit my letter of resignation after seven years of service.

During my tenure I have supported students at Rumney Memorial, Doty Memorial, Berlin, U-32 High School, ESY, and in our district virtual learning academy. My stewardship has included serving as a special educator for kindergarten, grades five, six, and nine, as well as all grade levels during the virtual learning year and grades 7-12th in our Extended Summer Year program. In 2019, I added instructional coaching to my professional learning and joined our district's coaching program. I was also the first district employee to voluntarily move to another school.

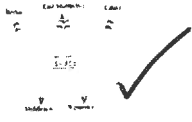
During these seven years, I am beyond thankful for the opportunity to have expanded my learning by earning a master's degree, taking Northeast Online Teaching Institute's Methods I and II, several Jim Knight Teaching, Learning, Coaching Conferences for instructional coaching, completing transcript and supervision components of my principal's endorsement, various self-directed learning opportunities, and pursuing my doctoral candidacy the past few years. These opportunities have developed my capacity to pursue district coaching in another district.

In closing, I want to extend my sincere thanks to Steven Dellinger-Pate and our district leadership team. The guidance and encouragement from past and current leaders have shaped my own leadership lens. Additionally, I want to thank our board members, personnel and, most importantly, the students for providing me inspiration, joy, and energy during my service for the past seven years. This has been an eventful and rewarding career experience!

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda R. Morse

Amanda R. Morse



TEACHER NOMINATION

POSITION: Music Teacher		FTE: <u>0.2</u>
REASON FOR VACANCY: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retirement/Resignation <input type="checkbox"/> New Position <input type="checkbox"/> Leave of Absence		
SCHOOL BUILDING: U-32		
SEARCH COMMITTEE COMPOSITION: <u> </u> Administrators <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teachers <i>(numbers and groups represented)</i> <u> </u> Support Staff <u> </u> Parents/Community Members <u> </u> Other: Internal /External , 3 Applicants,		
EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION: <i>(College, degree, date obtained)</i>	Bennington College, B.A Composition, June 2002. Bennington College, M.A.T. Music, June 2003.	
PROCESS OVERVIEW AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: <i>(objective, not subjective, narrative of skills and experience of the recommended candidate & summary of reference check results)</i>	Michael is currently contracted as 0.6 FTE. Due to the scheduling logistics at U-32, we require 0.8 FTE. Michael is willing to accept this increase in his contract, and we would like to offer him the additional 0.2 FTE at this time.	
CANDIDATE RECOMMENDED TO SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD: NAME: Michael Close <i>(resume and cover letter attached)</i>		

(If the board has additional questions about the candidate or other applicants, this should be discussed in executive session due to privacy rights and should not include information that would not be asked as a part of an interview process such as marital status, where candidate lives, etc.)

NOMINATED BY [Signature] 6/23/24
Principal/Administrator Date

RECOMMENDED BY [Signature] 6/21/24
Superintendent Date

BOARD APPROVAL DATE: _____

TEACHER NOMINATION

POSITION: Dean of Students		FTE: <u>1.0</u>
REASON FOR VACANCY: X - Retirement/Resignation ___ - New Position ___ - Leave of Absence		
SCHOOL BUILDING: U-32		
SEARCH COMMITTEE COMPOSITION: ___ Administrators <u>x</u> Teachers <i>(numbers and groups represented)</i> ___ Support Staff ___ Parents/Community Members ___ Other:		
EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION: <i>(College, degree, date obtained)</i>	MAT, University of Vermont, May 2017 B.A History, California Polytechnic University, Humboldt, May 2009	
PROCESS OVERVIEW AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: <i>(objective, not subjective, narrative of skills and experience of the recommended candidate & summary of reference check results)</i>	Tony is our current RISE coordinator and has been mentored by the outgoing Dean of Students during the time he's held this position.	
CANDIDATE RECOMMENDED TO SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD: <i>(resume and cover letter attached)</i> NAME: Anthony "Tony" Snow		

(If the board has additional questions about the candidate or other applicants, this should be discussed in executive session due to privacy rights and should not include information that would not be asked as a part of an interview process such as marital status, where candidate lives, etc.)

NOMINATED BY [Signature] 7/19/2024
 Principal/Administrator Date

RECOMMENDED BY [Signature] 7/24/24
 Superintendent Date

BOARD APPROVAL DATE: _____

TEACHER NOMINATION

POSITION: Assistant Principal		FTE: <u>1.0</u>
REASON FOR VACANCY: X • Retirement/Resignation ___ • New Position ___ • Leave of Absence		
SCHOOL BUILDING: U-32		
SEARCH COMMITTEE COMPOSITION: <u>x</u> Administrators ___ Teachers <i>(numbers and groups represented)</i> ___ Support Staff ___ Parents/Community Members ___ Other:		
EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION: <i>(College, degree, date obtained)</i>	St Lawrence University, B.A. History (Minor - Education), May 1999. Nova Southeastern University, M.Ed, Teaching/Learning w/concentration in Tech Integration, December 2014.	
PROCESS OVERVIEW AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: <i>(objective, not subjective, narrative of skills and experience of the recommended candidate & summary of reference check results)</i>	JB most recently served as the Dean of Students at U-32. He has proven himself to be an outstanding educator and administrator. He has developed strong respectful relationships with students, even while holding students accountable. JB has earned the respect of his colleagues, and I have no doubt that he will continue to do so as he moves into his new AP role at U32.	
CANDIDATE RECOMMENDED TO SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD: <i>(resume and cover letter attached)</i>	NAME: John "JB" Hilferty	

(If the board has additional questions about the candidate or other applicants, this should be discussed in executive session due to privacy rights and should not include information that would not be asked as a part of an interview process such as marital status, where candidate lives, etc.)

NOMINATED BY [Signature] 6/13/24
 Principal/Administrator Date

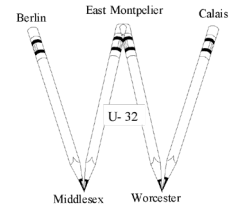
RECOMMENDED BY [Signature] 6/21/24
 Superintendent Date

BOARD APPROVAL DATE: _____

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



**Washington Central Unified Union
School District
School Board Meeting
6.11.24 6:15-7:45 PM
U-32
Rm 128/131
930 Gallison Hill Rd
Montpelier, VT**

Board Members Present: Flor Diaz Smith, Ursula Stanley, Mckalyn Leclerc, Chris McVeigh, Zach Sullivan, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Kealy Sloane, Daniel Keeney, Natasha Eckart, Michelle Ksepka, Amelia Contrada, Elizabeth Brown

Others Present: Superintendent Meagan Roy, Susanne Gann, Principal Steven Dellinger-Pate, Gillian Fuqua, Celia Guggemos, Chani Waterhouse, Alicia Lyford, Allison Fayle, Anya Skibbie, Brenda Vernile, Deborah Bloom, Elise Walsh, Ellen Knoedler, Harriet Buchucchio, Honi Bean Barrett, Jamie Moorby, Dena Cox, Julia, Kathleen Bookchin, Kerra Holden, Krysta Zabriskie, Lila Richardson, Maggie Ericksen, Robert M, Russ and Marla Edson, Scott S, April Davis, Caitlin Howansky, David Lawrence, Dell Waterhouse, Ginnie Humphreys, Jennifer Chambers, Thomas Hanna, Vanessa Weinstein, Will Baker, Joran Nobler, Lisa Hanna, Deborah Bogart, Rosemary Leach, Sarah, Heather Scandale

- 1. Call to Order:** Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.
- 2. Welcome:** Flor Diaz Smith thanked Superintendent Meagan Roy for her work at WCUUSD. She also thanked Mark Kline for his work and wished him well as he retires.
 - 2.1. Adjustments to the Agenda:** Mckalyn Leclerc asked if we could allot a longer period for public comments. Flor Diaz Smith stated that we have allotted 30 minutes (as opposed to 15 minutes.)
 - 2.2. Reception of Guests:** Flor Diaz Smith welcomed the guests present and thanked them for their participation; she invited public comments at this time and reminded them of the two-minute time limit.
 - 2.3. Public Comments:** Jordan Nobler read a letter from Worcester community members that had been shared with the board. He asked to consider creative solutions; believes the board is moving too quickly toward school closures of Doty and Calais. Five asks: (1) create new timeline, (2) concrete data that will illuminate pros and cons, (3) get “real” about equity, (4) explore other options (e.g. community schools) beyond school closures, (5) engage with communities authentically (more channels to engage with the board). Lisa Hanna asked for more details that are specific about the public forums. Specific data points that will address questions that have already been asked. Discuss shared community engagement plan.

Language in “phase 3” in the document that has been shared assumes predetermined outcomes (speaks about RIFs). Deborah Bogart stated some of the Worcester community does not own a cell phone and is not connected online so misses FPF news - there needs to be a better way to communicate and include all. Noah Weinstein asked what are projected net tax savings? How would potential net savings affect actual tax burdens? What is the cost per student breakdown per school? What are class size recommendations? Will there actually be cost savings? What are opportunities for students if consolidation occurs? Has WCUUSD explored merging with Montpelier? What does research say about students being bussed to attend schools in towns outside their own? Does the board have any thoughts about what they would do if Worcester or Calais does not pass a school closure vote? Chani Waterhouse expressed a heartfelt thanks to Superintendent Roy for her vision and her expertise. She shared that Worcester does not have declining student enrollment. Pre-merger, Doty had lowest per pupil spending for 6 out of 7 years leading to merger. Pre-merger, Doty students performed well academically compared to peers, most notably students on free/ reduced lunches and on IEPs. “The writing on the wall” for Doty - what does this mean? What is the writing? She thanked the board and honored their work, having served on the Doty board in the past. Rosemary Leach s heard there is cost savings but in the goals for reconfiguration there is no mention of cost savings. She stated that the main thing in Worcester that would make people consider school closure would be a huge cost savings; that being said, she really does not want to consider Doty closing. Sarah stated we are here in support of our school; it is not an “us” versus “them” - she feels that the school is crucial as far as a hub to our community. For the sake of moving forward, our goal is for the betterment of our kids, excited about creating a new future. Would be in favor of considering other creative options versus closing schools. Very excited for the June 26 meeting. How can we all “win” together? Deborah Bloom had sent an email to the board in May, had asked to slow down the timeline. She shared Flor Diaz Smith’s response to her email. She stated that she fears that the hypothetical models we are considering will have the greatest impact on the neediest of communities. Caitlin Howansky feels the timeline is incredibly rushed and not sufficient to consider the future impact of the students currently in the school and the children in the community who are not yet school age. She stated that it is important to hear from all of the residents; she herself cannot make it to a meeting at this time. Flor Diaz Smith stated that the board is listening to the questions and is creating a FAQ document. The aim that has been created from the work of the committee is the September date; this does not have to be static, we can change our mind when we get there. Chris McVeigh reiterated that the timeline has been created, but we can allow for more time if that is what is needed. He invited people to attend the forums later this month and to come with concrete solutions, and prepared to brainstorm.

3. Board Operations

3.1. Review Communications Plan: Flor Diaz Smith shared that the Configuration Committee had met before this meeting. She reviewed:

- The goal of the public forum is to listen 70% and share information less than 30%
- We will create a goal as a board: what are we going to focus on? We want to listen, we are open to new ideas, we are going to gather data, some questions will go into the “parking lot,” and some questions will be able to be addressed based on the criteria that has been created.

She reviewed the structure of the meeting: the majority being an interactive process; how to use the information that we gather from the forum? She reiterated that September is an aim but we do not want to tie our hands to that if needed. She spoke about the budgeting process being year -round. Chris McVeigh stated that the goal of the forums is to have dialogue with the communities, to have ideas going back and forth, concerns, ideas for different structure, all with the idea that we are facing difficult economic times with overall declining enrollment and increase in expenses. He assured people that there is no option that is chosen; we are looking for open dialogue. He thanked Worcester folks for being engaged and invited them to remain engaged and attend the forum. Flor Diaz Smith spoke about the idea of “World Cafe” for the forum interactive process. She noted that we had agreed to share some information before the meeting so people could consider it. Natasha Eckart asked, could we think about other ways to get information available to community members in paper form, outside of electronics, so that they can consider the information before the meeting. Superintendent Roy stated that we have some of the previous presentations, in PDF form, in video form, etc.; we can talk about how to share this information in advance of the meeting. Regarding World Cafe: having some structure to the conversation creates a process so that everyone can have a voice. She noted that some of the early Strategic Planning meetings were structured as such. She briefly explained the World Cafe process. Some discussion followed about dividing board members for forum meetings, including some discussion about offering an online option - would this be on the same night? Zach Sullivan stated that it could be spreading the board members thinly. Suggestion to have the online offering on a different night since people might not be able to attend the June 26. Diane Nichols-Fleming stated it is more about the structure of the meeting versus the number of board members who attend each. Mckalyn Leclerc proposed that two members from each town be at their town forum. Natasha Eckart stated that she feels it is important that both she and Mckalyn attend the Worcester town forum. Daniel Keeney emphasized that, for as many board members as there are, there are many different ways of approaching this problem. Nobody intends to go into the forum with a defensive posture; we are looking forward to exploring and visualizing change with folks who show up. Hopes for a lot of positivity. It is in everyone’s best interest to have all of the best possible options on the table for consideration. Flor Diaz Smith stated that she feels that it is important for other members of the board to attend the Worcester forum to get their perspective. Chris McVeigh stated that since we are planning multiple forums, it would be important to combine towns at future forums, for a different perspective, “cross-pollination.” He also noted that he believes for the towns that are potentially affected, it will be important to have the board representatives from their towns to be present. Zach Sullivan noted two issues - (1) we have not spent time considering other options, and (2) give airtime to the idea of transforming Berlin, e.g., childcare. Do we need to have two separate sets to consider both? Flor Diaz Smith stated that the purpose of the June community forum is to be open to conversation, using the parameters that have been set, to hear from the community versus sharing simulations that have been created. Diane Nichols-Fleming asked for clarification around what is meant by “parameters.” (This list was created from work at a previous board meeting.) Superintendent Roy suggested that, at the forum, asking the question “these are the parameters that have been set. What else? What are responses to these parameters?” Diane Nichols-Fleming stated that sometimes when thinking about what you want, you think more about what you don’t want - is it important to ask the question, what are you afraid of? What are you afraid that you will lose?

Natasha Eckart stated that we have heard from the community - here are the things that you say we might gain, but here are the things that we could lose. Ursula Stanley - what are you afraid would be lost? What concerns do you have? (Not to belabor the “fear” concept.) Kealy Sloan said the flip side of the question could be “What are your concerns with the status quo?” There is a reason we are exploring these things and it is because of the last few years of budgeting. She would like to understand what is substantively different with a longer timeline. What are the costs? Chris McVeigh suggested following up “What are you concerned about” with “Why?” What would make the potential transition easier for your community/ for your students? If there is closure, there is an incredible sacrifice that the community is asked to make? What will you gain in return? Ursula Stanley suggests asking, if consolidation happened, what would you hope for the students/ what would you want for them? Michelle Ksepka suggests - what opportunities would you want to see for your children? Superintendent Roy suggested that the questions be shared back with the board so that they can consider the meeting. Amelia Contrada stated that the first forum is not to share simulations or data based on the letters/ data we have received, could we categorize what we have already heard as a way of prepping, in the spirit of staying with a data-focused way of synthesizing; to acknowledge that we have the bare bones of how to get started. Flor Diaz Smith suggested having chart paper to collect “parking lot” issues/ questions. Some discussion about the FAQ document - can this be a living document? Kealy Sloan said since the first forum is about getting more ideas, how are we looking at streams of answers on the two proposals that had originally come out, versus having an open community forum? This could be dissatisfying to people who attend the forum and feel we are not addressing the elephant in the room (not addressing the two proposals/ simulations.) Superintendent Roy clarified that her understanding is that the committee had pivoted and decided this first forum would not be used to talk specifics about the two simulations. Daniel Keeney suggested after the community forum, the Configuration Committee meet and create a rubric for preliminary consideration for some of the brainstormed solutions. Then whatever rises to the top, we ask the administration to do their best to model. Mckalyn Leclerc likes the idea of a rubric but would like people to know it in advance. Flor Diaz Smith stated that the parameters that have been agreed upon would be the gist of the rubric. Daniel Keeney stated that having a very specific rubric in advance might stifle creativity. Natasha Eckart stated we had originally indicated in our parameters that finances were not one of them; now we are changing this and saying finances are part of it - if we are asking the community to give ideas, there should be something more tangible than just the parameters. Are these the right parameters? She does not think they are; she thinks there are other things we should be considering as well. She stated that asking the community to come up with ideas for what they want to look at feels like saying, “You didn’t like what we came up with, so what do you want?” She thinks it is important: if we are asking the community for their ideas then we need to be willing to carefully consider their ideas. Superintendent Roy suggested using the checklist that had been used in the past when considering models, and possibly adding to the checklist. She suggested a balance of structure and openness. She feels that we have the pieces already in place to provide a rubric for consideration. Flor Diaz Smith asked how many board members would attend June 26. She stated that we would do our best to have board members representing their towns at the forum. The Steering Committee will meet to iron out the logistics for the June 26 forums.

4. Reports to the Board

- 4.1. **Student Report:** Natasha Eckart shared that the middle school track team went to states; she shared some of the student records that were achieved. She expressed great pride in the middle school track and field team. Principal Dellinger-Pate shared some of the end-of-year activities, e.g. Senior Awards; Unity Day (Move up Day) which is led by upperclassmen, Sports Banquet, Girls Lacrosse will be playing for the championship this weekend at Norwich, graduation on Friday. Daniel Keeney shared that the Art Show was held last Friday.
- 4.2. **Superintendent/Central Office Leadership Team (COLT) Report:** Superintendent Roy shared a written report. She shared that Heidi Dimick has had a great impact in the short amount of time she has been at the central office. Superintendent Roy shared that we are continuing to work on reporting procedures to the board. Daniel Keeney asked if there was a place where board members could access procedures. Superintendent Roy stated that we have not yet published our procedures manual but that is something that we intend to do.
- 4.3. **Central Vermont Career Center (CVCC) Report:** Flor Diaz Smith shared some of the updated information.
- 4.4. **Configuration Committee Update:** (this had been discussed at length at tonight's meeting)
- 4.5. **Education Quality Committee Update:** Ursula Stanley has included the memo that outlines the work of the committee from the previous meeting. She reviewed the discussion about equity indicators.
- 4.6. **VSBA Update:** Flor Diaz Smith stated that there is an action alert right now and she encouraged board members to write to their local representatives. Superintendent Roy stated that the Yield Bill that was vetoed has a blue ribbon committee in place to follow up; she also encouraged board members to contact their representatives, as this will be a very important issue.

5. Finance Committee: Susanne Gann shared that we will end the year with a healthy fund balance, better than had been projected. She had provided an updated quarterly financial report.

- 5.1. **Award Revenue Anticipation Note (RAN) and Reinvestment Bid:** Daniel Keeney moved that the board approve the revenue anticipation note for an amount not to exceed \$2,938,750 and investment bid with Union Bank and authorize the Board Chair, Board Clerk and District Treasurer to sign the necessary loan documents. Seconded by Zach Sullivan, this motion carried unanimously.
- 5.2. **Award Wood Chip Bid for FY 25:** Kealy Sloan moved to award the bid to supply and deliver wood chips for WCUUSD for the Fiscal Year 2024-25 to Cousin Au Forest Products for \$74/ton, and to award the bid to supply and deliver wood pellets for WCUUSD for the Fiscal Year 2024-25 to Vermont Renewable Fuels for \$295/ton. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously.
- 5.3. **Authorize Superintendent to Award Bids for Fuel for FY 25:** Ursula Stanley moved to 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 2024-25. Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously.

6. Personnel

6.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE: Ursula Stanley moved to approve the following: Amy Koenigbauer – U-32 Pilot Program, Anna Gerretson – U-32 Social Studies Teacher, Cat Fair - U-32 Assistant Principal for Special Education Discussion: Diane Nichols-Fleming asked for clarification for the position of Assistant Principal/ Special Education Director at U-32. Steven Dellinger Pate shared plans for a principal search for Calais Elementary School. Some discussion followed about the transition plan. A contract begins on July 1. Superintendent Roy stated that the board's role is to take action yes or no on hires and the administration's role is to ensure a seamless transition. Michelle Ksepka pointed out that the name and the salary are missing from one of the nomination forms. Natasha Eckart asked for specifics about one of the positions. This information needs to be shared in the Executive Session. Elizabeth Brown stated that this is an important year for the little school of Calais. She hopes that there will be many opportunities for the community to have a voice in the hiring process. Ursula Stanley amended the motion to include Anna, Amy; and Dane. Kealy Sloan accepted the amendment. This motion: **Approve the following: Amy Koenigbauer – U-32 Pilot Program, Anna Gerretson – U-32 Social Studies Teacher, carried unanimously. Michelle Ksepka moved to accept the following resignations: Kevin Richards – U-32 Social Studies Teacher, Julia Pritchard – U-32 Special Services Coordinator Seconded by Natasha Eckart. Discussion: There was some clarification as to why Cat Fair's resignation is not included. Her contract ends so there is no need. This motion carried unanimously.**

7. Consent Agenda

- 7.1. Approve Minutes of 5.22.24** Kealy Sloan moved to approve the minutes of May 22, 2024. **Seconded by Mckalyn Leclerc. Discussion: Natasha Eckart noted that she was not present at that meeting. This motion carried, with this noted edit.**
- 7.2. Approve Board Orders:** Ursula Stanley moved to approve the board orders from 5-16-24 through 6-12-24 for \$884,233.59 **Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously.**

8. Future Agenda Items:

8.1. School Board Retreat : August 8, all day, (12-6) retreat

Flor Diaz Smith invited community input. Meg Dawkins had sent a letter requesting unpaid leave of absence in February 2025; this was not included in tonight's board packet and agenda. Superintendent Roy forwarded the information via email to board members at this time. **Mckalyn Leclerc moved to approve leave of absence as requested by Meg Dawkins for February 2025. Seconded by Amelia Contrada, this motion carried unanimously.** Noah Weinstein shared concern around timeline of community forum - this is during summer when people are on vacation - would it be possible to have at least one forum before the end of the school year (e.g. before next Tuesday.) What was the decision about how to include people virtually? Daniel Keeney shared that the idea is to have a virtual session on an alternate day (aside from June 26) and the committee will plan for this.

Lisa Hanna asked, before June 26 - make very clear what the goals for the meeting are. Very important for the community to have parameters. Clarify for the community whether money and finances frame this conversation, or not. Honor the 150+ people who have signed a letter that has specific questions; this is significant number of people who have already provided questions. She asked that the viability of options be considered with equity, in the way that the previous models were considered. What we would gain by a longer time frame - feels like so much is “parking lot” all the time - people are desperate for answers, if we don’t have answers before we are asked to engage, then we need the answers and then an opportunity to engage again and again. Another person asked if there was a way for folks who can’t come in person or virtually, to answer the same questions that will be on the tables, so they can have input, and that the outcome of the meeting be shared as quickly as possible, even if it is a photo of the chart paper, etc. Childcare is a barrier for some. She asked to consider offering childcare. Heather Scandale asked about EQS and class size. She stated that her daughter is in a class of 27 students, a multi-age class. She asked how this occurred this year; are we required to follow the EQS? Flor Diaz Smith suggested first reaching out to the teacher and then reaching out to the building principal. Heather Scandale stated that she does not believe that class size issues are a school-specific question but more a WCUUSD issue.

9. Executive Session: Student Residency: At 8:17, Chris McVeigh moved to go into Executive Session, and invited Superintendent Roy and Principal Dellinger-Pate, to discuss a personnel issue. Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously. At 8:23, Chris McVeigh moved to come out of Executive Session. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously. Michelle Ksepka moved to approve the new hire (Cat Fair) as presented. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously. At 8:26, Michelle Ksepka moved to go into Executive Session and to invite Superintendent Roy, for a student residency hearing. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously. At 8:44, the board came out of the Executive Session in a motion made by Ursula Stanley and seconded by Daniel Keeney. Diane Nichols-Fleming moved to accept residency request #1. Seconded by Kealy Sloane. One in favor; this motion failed. Chris McVeigh abstained from this vote. Daniel Keeney moved to accept residency request #2. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously.

10. Adjourn: Daniel Keeney moved Kealy Sloan seconded to adjourn at 8:47 p.m. This motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary