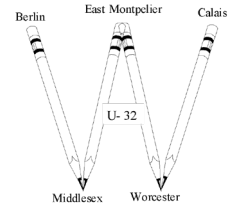


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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

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**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**

Board Members Present: Flor Diaz Smith, Ursula Stanley, Chris McVeigh, Zach Sullivan, Kealy Sloan, Daniel Keeney, Amelia Contrada, Elizabeth Brown, Patrick Whelley, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Jonathan Goddard, Mckalyn Leclerc, Natasha Eckart

Others Present: Superintendent Steven Dellinger-Pate, Susanne Gann, Jen Miller-Arsenault, Julia Pritchard, Leigh Garrity, Heidi Dimick, Alicia Lyford, Nat S, Lila Richardson, Lisa Hanna, Caitlin Howansky, Noah Weinstein, Rachel, Julia Hewitt, Carly Humke, David Book, Jaiel Pulskamp, Timothy Couture, David Delcore, David Hannigan, M Melekos, Yasmine Ziesler, Robert M, Gillian Fuqua, Dell Waterhouse, Karoline May, Jarrod Weiss, David Lawrence, Rick A, Honi Bean Barrett, Arlyn Bruccoli, Chani Waterhouse, John and Emily, Celia, Kathryn Biggam, Julie Carino

1. Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. She explained that the board had just recently approved a strategic plan. She reviewed the core beliefs and how they inform the work of the board.

2. Welcome

2.1. Adjustments to the Agenda: None

2.2. Reception of Guests: Flor Diaz Smith welcomed those present.

2.3. Public Comments-Time limit strictly enforced, see note: Flor Diaz Smith invited public comments. Nat Shambaugh - Berlin - had attended the June meeting in Berlin; and had some follow-up questions. He asked how the board intends to incorporate feedback from the June meeting into going forward. He inquired about financial modeling, which was promised by August. He stated that his understanding was that there would be a vote in November, yet he is not seeing evidence that this is imminent. He stated that he believes the board should move forward. He asked what happens when the board decides to close a school but the town votes against. Lila Richardson - the board solicited from the community in surveys, and since then we have not received data regarding financial implications of configurations. She stated that a Worcester group is beginning to put together their own data based on what they have been able to find. She noted that a copy of the document that will be addressed tonight has been emailed to the board. Several Worcester residents read from the document.

In regards to classroom and maximum capacity: She spoke about capacity at Rumney if all of the Doty students attended. Lisa Hanna spoke about configuration of classrooms if Rumney and Doty combined. She spoke about the plan to send pre-school children from Worcester to Rumney. She asked why the schools with the smallest percentage of student decline are the ones that are considered for closure. Caitlin Howansky shared a calculation that had been estimated which indicated savings of closing Doty School. She spoke about the scenario of a Montpelier merger. Noah Weinstein spoke about equity and income/ poverty issues, especially in the town of Worcester. He spoke about the possible scenario of the Worcester community voting against the closure of its school, and the possible scenario of Calais voting in favor of the closure of its school. He asked whether this four-school configuration has been considered. Rachel said there are too many unanalyzed variables for the board to make a decision; it is not possible to gather the necessary information before making a decision.

- Analysis of early childhood opportunities and trends
- Modeling K-8 in elementary schools
- Modeling merging with a nearby district
- Considering outreach to nearby schools (tuition)
- Modeling therapeutic school
- Analysis of students who are not anticipated to be successful in larger classrooms
- Analysis of staff/ teacher transfers and the impact of teacher tenure
- Healthcare, economics, etc.

She had provided a list and asked the board to consider the entire list.

3. Board Operations

3.1. School Board Worcester Interview and Appointment: The board interviewed Julia Hewitt for the Worcester board vacancy. **At 6:41, Patrick Whelley moved to go into the Executive Session. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously. At 6:45, Elizabeth Brown moved to come out Executive Session. Seconded by Kealy Sloan, this motion carried unanimously. Daniel Keeney moved to appoint Julia Hewitt to the board, representing the town of Worcester. Seconded by Mckalyn Leclerc. This motion carried unanimously, and board members applauded!**

3.2. Configuration Committee

3.2.1. Priorities / Review data:

PRIORITIES: Flor Diaz Smith circulated an updated document: *Revised Criteria 8-19-24 synthesized from the 7-31-24 Finance Committee Meeting*. She invited feedback from board members, or asked their input about what is missing as far as data or criteria: Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that at the third meeting, modeled options for budgets (the financial implications as requested) would be provided. As much as possible, a breakdown between towns will be provided. Mckalyn Leclerc had no new feedback; the feedback she had provided on Monday was incorporated into this document. Elizabeth appreciates that more has been captured from previous meetings, and appreciates the action steps and the connection to core belief. Kealy Sloan agreed that it is very comprehensive. Would like a solid definition of “equitable opportunities.” Chris asked what proposed mechanism would be incorporated to ensure sustainability. If a school is closed and there is a savings, how can that be perpetuated over time? How will we demonstrate sustainability over time? Zach - the need for a critical mass of students (e.g. for band). Daniel - change to “cost savings”

and “indirectly, tax savings.” He asked Chris McVeigh, if you have some specific measure to look at financial sustainability, let us bring it to the discussion now. Chris - examine programs, taking a hard look at the programs we offer; programs are tied to staff and that is our cost driver. Kealy Sloan asked is that more of a budget process question versus a configuration question? Chris stated if we are considering a school closure then we need to be able to say, “We think it will mean this... ___ and we think going forward it will continue to look like this... ___.” Diane - suggests adding “and are fiscally sustainable,” e.g. to “maintain enrichment opportunities....” Patrick Whelley questioned the language “enrichment opportunities that are consistent across the system...” He asked whether we should leave that open, as there might be some variance, not exactly the same programs across the buildings. He spoke about equity versus equality. Elizabeth - there are core opportunities that all programs should have (e.g. language). Chris asked can we have a list of what we envision as core, equitable opportunities at each school. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate indicated that the next presentation would be around baseline program offerings. Patrick Whelley pointed out a variance in class sizes from year to year, causing the perceived enrollment to go down. **Amelia Contrada moved to approve the criteria, as discussed tonight. Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously.** Chris McVeigh asked whether the Worcester community members who had provided the written statement could reference their data for some of the scenarios they presented.

REVIEW/DRAFT Superintendent Dellinger-Pate share 2024 slide deck: *Configuration Study:*

- 3.3. **Affirm Board Work plan:** Board members considered this plan. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate indicated that the October 2 board meeting would be moved to October 1 due to Rosh Hashanah.
- 3.4. **Affirm Superintendent Evaluation Process & Timeline:** Board members considered this document.
- 3.5. **Board Learning:** Flor Diaz Smith suggested starting with a small chunk of board learning at the September 4 meeting. We have several new board members and this is the beginning of a new year; the timing is right.
- 3.6. **VSBIT Proxy:** Ursula Stanley moved to authorize our Superintendent to represent WCUUSD at VSBIT meetings. **Seconded by Patrick Whelley, this motion carried unanimously.**

4. Reports to the Board

- 4.1. **Superintendent/Central Office Leadership Team (COLT) Report:** Superintendent Dellinger-Pate had prepared a written report for the board. He stated that the September meeting will focus on programmatic topics related to the budget and the October meeting will focus on finances. He shared that we continue to have a school nurse position vacancy and in the meantime, we will share the staff across the schools. He shared other positions that remain vacant. Mckalyn Leclerc asked, relating to the nurse position vacancy, on the days that a school nurse will not be present, will there be a substitute. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that other staff at the school are trained in those cases to administer medication. We continue to seek candidates for that vacancy. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate reminded those present that the FAQ Document (re: Configuration) continues to be updated. Diane Nichols-Fleming followed up on the discussion from the retreat, related to board correspondence.

- 4.2. **Central Vermont Career Center (CVCC) Report:** Flor Diaz Smith stated that a great way to follow the happenings at CVCC is through their Instagram account, as they post regularly.
- 4.3. **VSBA Update:** Flor Diaz Smith asked board members to look at the memo and consider it, as it will be relevant to the budget conversations. She shared the upcoming VSBA Annual Conference on October 24 and 25.

5. Finance Committee

- 5.1. **Approve District-Wide Exterior Door Re-keying Project:** Daniel Keeney moved that the Board approve the use of the capital improvement fund reserves to pay for a District-Wide Exterior Door Rekeying Project for an amount not to exceed \$35,000. Seconded by Zach Sullivan, this motion carried unanimously.
- 5.2. **Approve Contingency Increase for the Safety Systems of Vermont Contract:** Daniel Keeney moved that 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. Seconded by Kealy Sloane, this motion carried unanimously.
- 5.3. **Award Bid for U-32 Replacement Mower:** Zach Sullivan moved that the Board 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. Seconded by Kealy Sloan, this motion carried unanimously.
- 5.4. **Review and Discuss Draft FY 2025-26 Budget Timeline:** Superintendent Dellinger-Pate and Susanne Gann provided a draft document for board members to consider. Daniel Keeney asked to keep all of last year's budget resources available online, in a separate folder, for access.
- 5.5. **Substitute Rate of Pay:** This information was included in the board packet. Board members reviewed the rates, which include: Substitute (full day) \$140.00 (half day) \$70.00.

6. Personnel

- 6.1. **Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE:** Daniel Keeney moved to approve the new hires: Will Keller - MS English; U-32 Sarah Ainsworth - RISE Coordinator - U-32; Jarrod Weiss - Principal - Calais Elementary; Jacqueline Hunt - Music Teacher - Rumney/EMES; Katherine McCauley-Flippin - Interventionist - Doty. Seconded by Zach Sullivan. Chris McVeigh asked that salaries be listed on nomination forms as in the past. This motion carried unanimously. Zach Sullivan moved to approve the resignation of Amanda Morse. Seconded by Daniel Keeney. This motion carried unanimously. Kealy Sloan moved to approve the following changes in FTE: Michael Close - .6 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. Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously. Kealy Sloan moved to approve the changes in positions: Tony Snow - Dean of Students - U-32; JB Hilferty - Assistant Principal - U-32. Seconded by Zach Sullivan. **Discussion:** Daniel Keeney asked whether we could get clarification between roles of Dean of Student, and the two Assistant Principal positions. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate will provide that in writing. **This motion carried unanimously.**

7. Consent Agenda

- 7.1. Approve Minutes of 6.11.24:** Amelia Contrada moved to approve the minutes of June 11, 2024. Seconded by Elizabeth Brown, this motion carried unanimously.
- 7.2. Approve Board Orders:** Patrick Whelley moved to approve the board orders (6-12-24 - 8-21-24) for \$5,547,480.79, (6-12-24- 8-21-24) in the amount of \$403,175.15, and 6-6-24 for \$225.00, for a total \$5,949,880.94. Seconded by Kealy Sloan; this motion carried unanimously.

8. Future Agenda Items:

- 8.1.** Student representation to the board
- 8.2.** Chris McVeigh asked to have a meeting/ discussion with Montpelier about a potential merger. Some discussion followed around how complicated it is to merge two high schools, and that this is a very different scenario from tuitioning students from a neighboring town.

9. Board Reflection

10. Public Comment: Allen Gilbert had sent a letter on August 1 asking the board to consider affirming the articles of agreement related to the closure of school.

11. Adjourn: Patrick Whelley moved to adjourn; seconded by Amelia Contrada; the board adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary

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 work plan 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