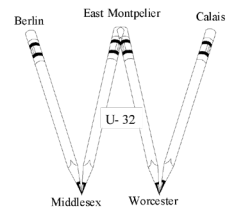


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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 Board Meeting
2.5.25
6:15-9:15 PM
(Virtual and In-Person)
U-32 Middle & High School
930 Gallison Hill Rd
Montpelier, VT**

Present: Flor Diaz Smith, Elizabeth Brown, Zach Sullivan, Daniel Keeney, Ursula Stanley, Chris McVeigh, Mckalyn Leclerc, Patrick Whelley, Natasha Eckart, Lei DeGroot, Julia Hewitt, Kealy Sloan, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Linnea Darrow

Superintendent Steven Dellinger-Pate, Principal Becca Tatistcheff, Jen Miller-Arsenault, Julia Pritchard, Lisa LaPlante

Others: Erin Mullaney, Honi Bean Barrett, Lila Richardson, Bekah Mandell, Allison Fayle, ORCA Media, Allen Gilbert, David Delcore, Scott Hess

1. **Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 6:15.** She shared that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to have a public forum, to share information about our budget.
 - 1.1. **Welcome:** Flor Diaz Smith welcomes those present and she presented a statement reflecting the core beliefs of the board as well as honoring the spirit of Black History Month, all year round.
 - 1.2. **Adjustments to the Agenda:** Flor Diaz Smith suggested moving the Executive Session to the end of the meeting. **Julia Hewitt moved to approve this agenda change. Seconded by Diane Nichols-Fleming, this motion carried unanimously.**
 - 1.3. **Reception of Guests**
 - 1.4. **Public Comments-Time limit strictly enforced. See note:**
2. **Executive Session: Student Residency Request:** (this occurred at the end of the meeting.)

3. Budget Presentation: Board members presented a slide deck: *FY26 Budget Presentation, February 5, 2025.*

3.1. Community Q & A: Flor Diaz Smith invited questions from the public. Bekah Mandell asked about the Library FTE reduction at Rumney. She asked if this is an additional decrease from the current staffing. Her understanding is that the staff at Rumney are sort of “pinch hitting” for library staffing. Steven Dellinger-Pate indicated that this reduction reflects the unfilled position from this year. Bekah Mandell stated that as these positions are part-time it becomes harder to fill them with qualified applicants. Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that the goal is always to fill the positions with certified teaching staff. Flor Diaz Smith stated that we will be posting budget information on Front Porch Forum, and she invited people to contact board members with any questions about the budget as presented. She shared that the Configuration Committee meets on Feb 10 online - this meeting information is posted on the website.

3.2. Board Operations

3.2.1. Legislative Breakfast Priorities and Questions: Patrick Whelley asked, what is our scope? Are we trying to get more information to do our jobs as board members better or are we trying to share our concerns with them, for their work in the legislature? Flor Diaz Smith stated that the idea is to establish a relationship with them and to be sure that they understand our priorities, as well as to gain an understanding of their priorities in their work. Some discussion followed briefly about the legislative breakfast from last year. Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that it was a good opportunity to establish an in-person relationship, and it was very much a back-and-forth exchange-us asking them questions, them asking us questions. Flor Diaz Smith had prepared a list of four priorities. She invited input from board members. Patrick Whelley stated that dialogue with our legislators about the regressive tax system for education funding is critical.

Diane Nichols-Fleming suggested that we speak about some of the higher-level pictures, for example, some of the unintended consequences (e.g. PCB testing) of legislation.

Natasha Eckart asked if an alternative funding proposal was presented and is there was any insight into where VSBA’s stance is on the alternative funding. She stated that Vermont NEA has presented another proposal. Is VSBA providing feedback to school board members as to their response to the alternative funding? Flor Diaz Smith stated that the foundation formula has not been presented in detail yet, so she thinks the position of VSBA is to wait to see what the details are. She does not hear from any of the members of VSBA or VPA who are in favor of a foundation formula. Flor Diaz Smith will look into this from the perspective of VSBA and Superintendent Dellinger-Pate will look into this from the perspective of VSA.

Patrick Whelley stated that there are a lot of parts in our budget that are out of our control, can we have that taken out of our budgets and have that included in ed funding?

Chris McVeigh asked whether we have an idea of the cost of some of the “unfunded mandate” items that we provide as part of our local budget. Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that the VSA is working on this as a whole.

Natasha Eckart asked for clarification under the statewide bargaining process on the list of talking points. Flor Diaz Smith explained. Some discussion followed around salaries and healthcare. The topic of healthcare costs increasing yearly in an unsustainable way was discussed. Natasha Eckart asked, with that concern, is VSBA supporting or backing any of the healthcare reform ideas that are being presented. Flor Diaz Smith stated that VSBA does not have a position at this time on that. She noted that healthcare as it is, is unaffordable for all of us as Vermonters.

There was some discussion about the one page handout from VSBA about legislative issues. Patrick Whelley clarified that we as a board are not presenting this handout at the legislative breakfast; this is not our position necessarily.

Kealy Sloan asked if there is a way for community members to engage or watch, or will we be reporting to the community. Flor Diaz Smith stated that we could prepare a summary to share; she also invited the student representatives to attend the breakfast.

4. Personnel

4.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE: Ursula Stanley moved to accept the resignation of Nicole Mintken – U-32 School Nurse, with appreciation. Seconded by Zach Sullivan. Discussion: Chris McVeigh asked, what does this do to the capacity of our school nurses at U-32? Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that we would have one school nurse at U-32 until a new hire occurs. He noted that we already have a pool of applicants. **This motion carried unanimously.**

5. Student Representatives: Lei DeGroot shared that J-term occurred in January; students enjoyed this. The U-32 newsletter shares some photos and experiences from J-term. Linnea shared about the Hadestown musical, a collaboration between U-32 and Montpelier. She stated that the shows sold out and were very popular; she noted that it was a great opportunity to collaborate with Montpelier. Lei DeGroot shared that this week is National School Counselor’s Week. He named the school counselors at U-32. Lei DeGroot shared that VPR is having a student podcast competition (due in May). He shared about a project-based learning opportunity, he shared that the middle school theater is holding auditions for their spring show. Lei shared about the Basement Teen Center in Montpelier and about VSAC’s college and career pathway event in March. Linnea provided some updates about sports events. Zach Sullivan stated that the Hadestown production was amazing. Other board members concurred!

6. Consent Agenda

6.1. Approve Minutes of 1.22.25: Patrick Whelley moved to approve the minutes from January 22, 2025. Seconded by Diane Nichols-Fleming, this motion carried unanimously.

7. **Future Agenda Items**
 - 7.1. Board Evaluation
 - 7.2. Advocating as a Board
 - 7.3. Superintendent Evaluation
 - 7.4. Conversation with students about joining National Student Board Member Association
8. **Board Reflection:** Daniel Keeney would like to clarify who board representation is on the Transportation Committee. Flor Diaz Smith stated that this is a temporary committee until board reorganization
9. **Public Comment:**(none at this time)
10. **Executive Session: Superintendent Evaluation:** (this did not occur tonight)
11. **Executive Session: Student Residency: At 7:37, Diane Nichols-Fleming moved to go into Executive Session to discuss a student residency request, and to invite the Superintendent. Seconded by Kealy Sloan. At 7:54, Ursula Stanley moved to come out of Executive Session. Seconded by Kealy Sloan, this motion carried unanimously. Diane Nichols-Fleming moved to accept the recommendation from the superintendent, to grant residency to the student as discussed. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried, with one abstention.**
12. **Adjourn: Ursula Stanley moved, Zach Sullivan seconded, to adjourn at 7:56 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary