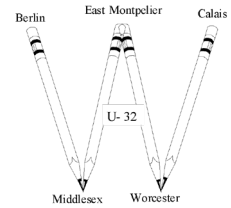


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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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WCUUSD Configuration Committee Minutes 2.10.25 4:30-6:00 PM Virtual

Present: Superintendent Dellinger-Pate, Flor Diaz Smith, Rebecca Tatistcheff, Kealy Sloan, Shannon Miller, Anna Matheson, Matthew DeGroot, Daisy Scarzello, Julia Hewitt, Jeanie Phillips, Daniel Keeney

Others: Lila Richardson, Allen Gilbert, Travis M, Noah Weinstein

1. Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

2. Configuration Committee Initial Meeting

2.1. Agenda: Flor Diaz Smith introduced Jeanie Phillips. Introductions were made.

Debrief from previous configuration process:

Flor Diaz Smith shared some notes from the previous meeting. We were not able to show the opportunities that would be created from the desired configuration; the timeline felt rushed.

Daniel Keeney stated that there was a lack of an articulated method during the last process. We did not have a consensus “best approach” and the problem was being able to draw the thread from the beginning of the process to the discussions along the way; disappointed with the lack of ability to articulate two clear choices (including pros and cons) to the community at large.

Kealy Sloan stated working in tandem with the budget was a good idea conceptually but made it difficult in practice for administration to do the budget development work as well as provide information to the configuration committee; we ran out of time. There was not enough information. Would like to be clear about what information is needed and then present it in a clear way

Anna Matheson stated communication is important as there was a lot of information that was presented but not always in the most “digestible way” to those who do not keep very close attention to what is going on. A goal for her would be to take this complex information and distill it in a way so that the general population can dig in and understand what is presented. Would like to have an opportunity to close the gap that felt like “the school board against the community.” There is a way to bring the in person conversation together in a way that feels inviting and friendly rather than “us versus them.”

Superintendent Dellinger-Pate would like to create a better understanding of what we are doing as a committee so that it does not look like something coming strictly from the administration.

Matthew DeGroot asked if there is a way to access information from previous meetings. I feel like I need to educate myself to get up to speed. Flor Diaz Smith shared the “Strategic Planning/ Configuration” online folder.

Jeanie Phillips reviewed what she heard from this sharing: accessibility of information, clarity, creating through lines, building consensus within the team, engaging the community.

Define “configuration”:

Flor Diaz Smith had provided a written draft; Jeanie Philips had searched online for other resources including an AI definition. These were shared with the group.

Daniel Keeney had worked on drafting what configuration might mean to this committee. He suggested three possible approaches:

1. Fairly narrow definition of configuration, not unlike the AI definition
2. Defining configuration more broadly to include all of that plus “expanded activities” (what our schools do for our students as well as our communities)
3. Throwing out the word “configuration” and thinking more broadly about what we want this committee to do - more fully centering strategic planning, thinking about how we reimagine our district; therefore we are not predisposing ourselves to configuration.

Julia Hewitt asked what other word besides “configuration”? reimagining/ reimagination

Becca Tatistcheff stated when you start with “configuration” it can decenter the strategic planning - if we center a vision, a design process, then the vision drives program which drives structure. If what we are really asking is “what does education look like for young people?” and then matching it to configuration.

Shannon Miller stated to be careful about giving this committee a name that is so “friendly” that it does not communicate its purpose. So that others know, if they want to attend, be involved, follow the work, etc.

Flor Diaz Smith asked what we want for our students. How do we make that possible?

Anna Matheson reflecting on the definition: is there a way to bring the two ideas together so that the design and the definition both mesh/ support each other?

Jeanie Phillips stated that the larger question is “where do we start”? Are we starting with our philosophy or are we starting with “configuration” - what is our starting point?

Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that we built our budget this year around what programs do we want for our students.

Kealy Sloan said considering the criteria that we had created - (1) this is what we want and (2) this is what the possible impacts on the communities will be

Jeanie Phillips reviewed how the criteria were created from survey data from the community - the board adopted the criteria last fall.

Flor Diaz Smith shared and reviewed the criteria chart - the criteria linked to core beliefs.

Shannon Miller asked about the item: “intentional, consistent access to ...” She noted, that this is not within the scope of the work of this committee.

Becca Tatistcheff stated we could have a series of actions but we do not know the outcome; we cannot predict the outcome. We might expect an outcome (e.g. high achievement). We are creating some theories of action. The difference between the conditions we want to set versus the outcomes that will follow.

Matthew DeGroot stated there is a statewide conversation about configuration. Whether or not we call ourselves the configuration committee, the conversation is going to take place. It makes sense to talk about what are our values. What do we want from our education system? Talking about values and outcomes is important because of the way that we support learning naturally comes from the outcomes that we want and the values we have in education. It is worth talking as a group to be sure that we are aligned in what we value about education, and what we think our communities value about education.

The group considered “Configuration Proposal should include:

Some discussion of using the AI generated definition of “configuration.”

Daniel Keeney agrees and would like a broader definition of configuration - needs to include expanded programming, but more importantly, the process of design and linking whatever changes we propose to specific problems or a specific direction. He stated that

the criteria document has come a long way but also has a long way to go; he looks forward to continuing the process of working from this document.

Daisy Scarzello stated we need to focus on the educational philosophy and community needs.

Shannon Miller said it is important to remember that we have a school configuration right now - one possible answer is that it is good right the way it is. At this point, a statewide conversation is happening - change is coming. This might be a way to decide how we want things done or what we want done, rather than waiting to be told what we have to do (from the state level).

Flor Diaz Smith would like to talk about communications and to create a very small steering sub-committee for this group.

Communications: Julia, Anna

Steering subcommittee: Shannon, Matt, Daniel, Flor, Daisy

Build consensus on the conditions of the work

Wednesday, Feb 19 in-person meeting

Closing

Public Comment:

Lila Richardson stated to make the work more accessible to the public - make the video recordings available to the community. There is a chart of meeting resources that lists the dates of meetings but does not list the time or location - that information should be included on the chart. When the committee starts talking about more specifics, offer a Q&A for public comment - that is helpful (rather than just making comments with no response) there should be more information about the Community Schools Grant and what is going on with that. That is a big piece of the configuration consideration.

Noah Weinstein commented that figuring out what we want for our schools first and then figuring out the structure.... one criterion that should be part of the consideration, many people in Worcester want a school in their town. "Would you rather...." people are going to feel differently about that. (E.g. the question of a part-time school nurse in order to keep a school in our town). He thinks it would be interesting for the community to see multiple scenarios versus just one scenario to present to the board. Then again people can come to the "would you rather...." consideration, rather than having only one singular option.

Kealy Sloan will edit the criteria list based on the meeting discussion today.

Julia Hewitt stated that would we like to think about how to change the room configuration for the next meeting to address the feeling of “us versus them”? Flor will try to address this before the next committee meeting (which is before the WCUUSD Board meeting.)

Lila Richardson said it would be helpful to have a list of the members of the committee- also is there a way to write to the entire committee - a group list?

3. Adjourn: The committee adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Grace, Committee Recording Secretary