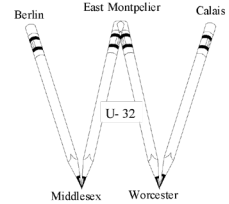


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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 5.7.25 6:15-9:15 PM (In-Person & Virtual) Calais Elementary School 321 Lightning Ridge Rd Plainfield, VT

Present: Board Members: Elizabeth Brown, Zach Sullivan, Daniel Keeney, Ursula Stanley, Chris McVeigh, Patrick Whelley, Julia Hewitt, Kealy Sloan, Flor Diaz Smith, Michelle Ksepka, Mckalyn Leclerc, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Zach Sullivan, Natasha Eckart

Administration: Superintendent Steven Dellinger-Pate, Susanne Gann, Julia Pritchard, Alicia Lyford, Jen Miller-Arsenault, Gillian Fuqua, Becca Tatistcheff, Celia Guggemos, Jarrod Weiss, Karoline May, Lisa LaPlante, Amy Molina

Others: Virginia, Will Baker, Alison, Allen Gilbert, Allison Fayle, Amanda Mackenzie, Anya Skibbie, April Davis, Barb Kennedy, Becca Gentile, Bloom, Brian Slopey, Caitlin Howansky, Carly Humke, Catherine Coteus, Christina, David Delcore, Dell Waterhouse, Ellen Knoedler, Erin Mullaney, Hannah Wirth, Honi Bean Barrett, Jen Campbell, Jill, Laura LaRosa, Lauren Chabot, Lisa Hanna, Marilyn Martin, Marisa Green, Megan McLane, Michael Duane, Michael Sherwin, Noah Weinstein, Paul, Perry Bellow-Handelman, Shannon Miller, Sonya Rhodes, Sophia Emigh, Veronica Fair, Virginia, Becca Webb, Act 166 Preschool Coordinator, Linda Gray, Kathleen (some others were present in person)

1. Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m. She read a statement to preface and set the intention for the meeting.

2. Welcome

2.1. Adjustments to the Agenda: Julia Hewitt suggested that the agenda include discussion of the lease in the open part of the meeting versus Executive Session. Flor Diaz Smith suggested that the board decide at that point in the meeting. **Daniel Keeney moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously.**

2.2. Reception of Guests

2.3. Public Comments- Time limit strictly enforced, see note: Noah Weinstein: Stated that he would like to provide an alternative proposal for the Doty School Building. He had provided this proposal in writing to the board. He shared a drawing of the proposed floor plan, which preserves more of the space of the school building for Doty students, while also accommodating Turtle Island students.

Lisa Hanna stated that the number one factor needs to be considered for Worcester students. She asked the board to consider all aspects so as not to be surprised by repercussions later - for example, she asked the board to consider parking space and student space within the building under the new proposed plan. She stated that if a thorough plan cannot be provided within the timeline, then the timeline is too short for the board to consider and take such action.

Alison spoke about the value of the program at Turtle Island. She stated that she hopes we can come up with a plan to provide space for Turtle Island to utilize at the Doty School building.

Caitlin Howansky stated that the Worcester community has spoken in great numbers to ask the board to reconsider the proposal.

Honi Bean Barrett had shared a letter to the board in support of the collaboration with Turtle Island. She stated that she has spoken with students about moving to Rumney for fifth and sixth grade, and they are curious about the new proposal but are accepting of it. She spoke about the challenge of small classes at Doty. She stated her hopes that the Worcester community will be welcoming to Turtle Island.

Sophia Emigh asked the board to only consider proposals that do not remove Worcester students from the Doty School.

Will Baker had shared comments with the board members in writing. He stated that the Worcester select board is a steward of the public assets in Worcester. He stated that the school district has not sought bids for use of the space; he noted that the school board is a steward of public education for students pre-K through 12. He stated that this proposal to evict students from Doty in order to allow space to a private entity with no RFP process, with not enough time to thoroughly consider and discuss, is not right, and is unfair. He spoke about tax-exempt status being in question under the proposed partnership between a public school and a private entity.

Lila Richardson asked the board to go ahead with the discussion of the lease in an open meeting, rather than going into Executive Session. She stated that the Executive Session for this item was not included on the agenda 48 hours in advance of the meeting. She asked (and doubts) whether this proposed partnership will, in fact, make Doty more viable. She had asked for information from the AOE to support this proposal. She does

not believe there is any guidance from the AOE under these circumstances. She does not believe that this proposal comports with common sense.

A student from Doty spoke about their feeling that it is mean for Turtle Island to want to kick students out of Doty School to use the building.

Lauren Chabot stated that the board's duty is for pre-K-12 students in our district. She asked the board to come up with a proposal that does not negatively affect Doty students. Please provide a floor plan of the space; ask for a map of the parking lot with designated spaces. She asked that the board hire a structural engineer to consider such things as inserting doors. She asked the board to seriously consider Will Baker's letter and the points made within. She stated that this is a reactive decision, and the administration should have considered this early in the fall during budget development. She stated that there has been no effort to bring together the Doty and Rumney students, as had been promised. She stated that her student would lose instructional time should this proposal go forward.

Naomi had provided a letter to the board today. She stated that she is disappointed that the proposal has not changed after the community input from the previous forum. This represents a not very lucrative rental to a private entity on a very quick timeline. She reiterated the concerns that Will Baker had indicated earlier. She asked the board to share details about the lease and memorandum of understanding so that the community can have unanswered questions addressed.

Flor Diaz Smith stated that she believes many of the concerns that have arisen will be answered during the presentation and discussion around Turtle Island Partnership.

3. **Presentation: Continuous Improvement Plan:** Jen Miller-Arsenault presented a slide deck on *Continuous Improvement Planning, May 7, 2025*. The entire meeting group was divided into smaller groups and considered the Continuous Improvement Planning document.

3.1. Community Feedback

4. Reports

- 4.1. **Policy Committee Update:** Chris McVeigh shared that the committee had met earlier today and had discussed Student Discipline policy, the Library policy, and reviewed the work plan.

5. Board Operations

- 5.1. **Turtle Island Partnership:** Flor Diaz Smith stated that Superintendent Dellinger-Pate will provide an overview; then Becca Wells will present, and she will invite Turtle Island to speak; she stated that at that time the board would decide whether to go into Executive Session. She stated that we would not be taking action on a lease tonight; we will be deciding whether to move forward with this proposal.

Superintendent Dellinger-Pate shared a brief slide deck including WCUUSD Core Values and Beliefs, a Proposal Overview, Rationale for Turtle Island at Doty, Early Childhood Education Expansion, Addressing Childcare Needs, Grades 5-6 Transition to Rumney (Principal Gillian Fuqua spoke about plans to transition to Rumney, opportunities to bring the students together), Financial Considerations, Lease and MOU Elements, Conclusion. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that at this time he would like to ask the board's opinion about whether to continue to pursue this proposal. He assured that regardless of the board's will regarding this proposal, WCUUSD will move forward with the best interest of students at heart.

Becca Webb spoke about the issue of public schools collaborating with private entities - this is not a unique situation; other Vermont schools do this. She spoke about Act 166 funding for preschool students. She stated that Doty School had not participated in the Act 166 preschool programming last year due to low student enrollment, and as it stands now, Doty would not participate next year.

Chris McVeigh asked for clarification around the education funding that follows preschool students.

Daniel Keeney asked whether there are tensions in some of the other situations, and can she share approaches that are used, resources, best practices, etc., regarding this issue. Becca stated that it varies, depending on where you are in the state - in Mt Mansfield, the primary tension has been around the number of students that can access preschool programming. She stated the importance of well-thought-out and articulated leases and MOUs. She stated that Turtle Island already has a working relationship via Act 166 for the past five years.

Diane Nichols-Fleming asked, does she have a sense of how long the planning took, and the transition into buildings took, in other cases? Becca stated that she does not know this but she can find out.

Julia Hewitt asked whether there are any other schools that have had to displace other students in order to make room for the preschool programming. Becca stated that she is not aware but can find this out.

Mckalyn Leclerc asked for follow up around a tax issue that had been brought up. Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that this is a detail that would be worked out in the lease.

Jocelyn York and Phoebe Stone from Turtle Island introduced themselves. Jocelyn York answered some of the questions and issues that had come from previous discussions. The topic of tuition for Turtle Island was clarified.

Mckalyn Leclerc asked whether there would be opportunities for the elementary age students to interact with the younger children at Turtle Island. Phoebe Stone spoke about the potential for a “Big Buddy” program between elementary age students and the childcare students.

Daniel Keeney asked whether any transportation is offered. He asked what the sense of how management might change for Turtle Island in the future, thinking about this as a sort of “pilot program.” To what degree do you believe that this is a replicable arrangement - would it be feasible elsewhere?

Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that the use of the term “pilot program” comes from WCUUSD, rather than Turtle Island. Jocelyn York stated that there has been ongoing discussion about utilizing the bus system for transportation and the possibility of partnership with the district. Phoebe Stone stated that, regarding change in management, a business plan has been prepared as part of the proposal for the Barre Elks Club.

Becca Webb spoke about the need for an on-site childcare director for at least 40% of the time.

Chris McVeigh asked whether Worcester students would be guaranteed sites in the preschool program at Doty via Turtle Island. (Yes) He asked whether Worcester children younger than preschool age would be guaranteed such a space. Phoebe Stone stated that they are open to discussing this, but cannot answer definitively at this time. Chris McVeigh asked whether Turtle Island is open to a potentially different configuration of the site. Phoebe Stone stated that Turtle Island is working around what the school district has offered. If the school district offers something different, then they will consider and are interested in collaborating.

Patrick Whelley asked about typical drop off and pick up time and how traffic would be affected. Drop off window between eight and nine, most typically around 8:30. Phoebe Stone stated that there is a clear flow of traffic and drivers go very slow, aware of young children. Pick up window generally between three and 3:30. If that becomes a difficult issue then they are willing to consider other options.

Diane Nichols-Fleming asked how much infrastructure change is needed for the licensing and what the period is. Phoebe Stone stated that there is very little infrastructure change that is needed. She stated that there are sufficient sinks and toilets to meet requirements.

Flor Diaz Smith stated that the board will continue to discuss this, and will consider whether to discuss the lease in open session or in Executive Session or both. Chris McVeigh stated that it is fitting to go into Executive Session because this is discussing a negotiation.

Chris McVeigh moved to go into Executive Session and to invite Superintendent and Gillian Fuqua for negotiating a lease. Seconded by Zach Sullivan. Daniel Keeney asked when the board would discuss the proposal. He stated that he opposes going into Executive Session at this time. Chris McVeigh agreed to table this motion; this was seconded by Zach Sullivan and approved by the board.

Mckalyn Leclerc asked whether there is some sort of legal reason to go into Executive Session to discuss the lease; why not have the discussion in open session. Flor Diaz Smith stated that there is no legal reason to go into Executive Session; it is not yet finalized and the impetus is to respect the other party that is involved in the lease. Flor Diaz Smith asked the board whether they are in favor or not to move forward with this proposal.

Patrick Whelley asked for clarification around some of the budget figures that had been provided. He asked for some hypothetical student ratio to adults, for example, at Rumney School, if 5th and 6th grade students move from Doty. Some discussion followed around staffing such as nurse, library, behavior support, depending on student population.

Susanne Gann clarified further the budget figures, which do not include transportation or other centralized services.

Mckalyn Leclerc stated that we should consider the effect on Doty regarding funds that follow students, should two grades go to Rumney School. She stated that she likes the potential for a larger fifth and sixth grade cohort and for the potential for having preschool and childcare at Doty. She stated that the very fast period is difficult, and she would like to consider not rushing to move the 5th grade students at this time.

Gillian Fuqua stated that the Art & Music room may not be suitable to be transformed into the classroom space as has been discussed in the hypothetical scenario of keeping fifth and sixth grade students in that wing (something related to load bearing walls and doorways).

Julia Hewitt asked for clarification around the district leasing space to Turtle Island and losing its tax-exempt status. She would like to know the financial implications for the district. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that he has sought legal counsel, which has indicated that a request for exemption will be required (submitted to the town), and this is an issue that would be addressed in the lease.

Daniel Keeney asked Superintendent Dellinger-Pate for the long-term plan, realizing that the future is unknown regarding legislation. Seems like a clear argument that, without the element of students moving around, back and forth, etc., it is a win. He wonders

what happens after the two-year lease. What are we looking at regarding the long-term plan? Is there a possibility of reducing, for example, Turtle Island's usage of the building and putting out an RFP for early education in all of the elementary buildings?

Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that the lease would be a two-year lease with an option to renew. The numbers that we have heard from Turtle Island indicate that there is no lack of need. How do we, as a district, use available space in a way that can address the need? Some of the spaces in WCUUSD would not be suitable for all of the needs. We, for example, might say that in five of our schools, we want early childhood care, and in one of the schools, we want elder care. He stated that the loss of funding that we are going to see in any of the models that are being floated in the legislature would mean that we are going to have to think very creatively. He also noted the student enrollment projection. We are going to have to come up with other solutions and more options for our buildings so that we can maintain facilities. In his mind, this starts the process of creating solutions for our facilities, and his biggest hope is that this creates an impetus for families with young children to move to our district. This is a way to look at how to provide service to the community, and educational opportunities to our students. He noted that this is going to be an ongoing challenge for all of the schools in WCUUSD, with the possible exception of Berlin.

Gillian Fuqua noted that this is not the first time that we have considered moving students within WCUUSD (for example, kindergarten.)

Zach Sullivan asked for student numbers in the classrooms, related to literacy and math instruction. Gillian Fuqua spoke about the current model of instruction for the grades at Doty School. She stated that in the smaller classes, student grouping is less flexible.

Diane Nichols-Fleming reflected that what she continues to hear from everyone is a concern that we have not engaged the community that is impacted, from the beginning. The ideas are wonderful and the need is credible, but she feels this was a misstep.

Superintendent Dellinger-Pate reiterated that until the Friday that it became a real possibility, it was not known to be a possibility (for example, the fire marshal visited the site). This has been a fast-moving timeline but he also reminded the board that the issue of having broader early childhood opportunities at all of the schools in the district has been discussed for two years now.

Flor Diaz Smith asked board members to share their opinion on moving forward with this proposal, keeping in mind core values.

Patrick Whelley stated that he would like to hear what the Worcester representatives say first.

Julia Hewitt stated that she is opposed to moving the fifth and sixth graders to Rumney. She joined the board to represent the students in her community, and she feels that this is a disservice to the students. If we are framing this in a way that it behooves fifth and sixth-grade students, then it is an opportunity that we should consider offering to all of the students in WCUUSD. She spoke about the challenge of the traffic flow in the Doty parking lot. There is no clear sense of how parking will be reconfigured, although it has been mentioned. She noted that some of the people have provided very creative suggestions/ solutions, and she has not seen that they have been given any consideration. The proposal before us does not take into account much of what we heard at the forum, and a lot of what we have heard in correspondence.

Natasha Eckart stated that she has missed the most recent presentations and discussions and does not feel that she has enough information to offer an informed opinion tonight. She stated that we do, however, need to be thinking about alternative and creative ways to reimagine how Doty can move forward.

Mckalyn Leclerc stated that she supports welcoming Turtle Island to Doty, and she supports combining fifth and sixth-grade students at Doty and Rumney. She feels that linking these two things together - and she does not think we have to link these two things together - creates discomfort for the Worcester community, and she feels uncomfortable rushing the one piece (of combining fifth and sixth grade students.) She asked us to look one more time at what we can do about the 5th and 6th grade at Doty, at least for this next year.

Zach Sullivan stated that he thought that we were going to discuss as a board and not be asked to lock into a decision one way or the other at this time - he does not think that is productive.

Michelle Ksepka stated that she believes this is a great opportunity. She spoke about the struggle of the very small cohort of students and lack of friend groups.

Kealy Sloan stated that the partnership with Turtle Island is a great opportunity. She stated that she had not been aware of the hardship for the small fifth and sixth grade cohort until now. On the other hand, she does not know how to separate the two parts of the proposal (Turtle Island + combining grades 5 & 6). She feels that the timeline is unfortunate, but she believes that we should take this opportunity to do what it seems the fifth/6th grade teacher and the school principal think is best for the students.

Amelia Contrada stated that the complexity of the situation is real. She appreciates the efforts for transparency and engagement; she feels that it was a very thorough effort. The concerns that are articulated are based on our perspectives and frames of reference. The pros and cons that have been articulated have been subjective. She spoke about the oath that the board takes to be as objective as possible. She stated that it is ok that we

are criticized and it is ok that we are misunderstood. This is for the children; let us put faith in the resilience of our students. She stated that she is in awe of the commitment of this board. When bias cannot be avoided, we have to abstain. She stated that, considering this proposal, respect is everything. “Luck is what happens when preparedness meets opportunity.” We have amazing teachers and systems in place, which is what prepares us; we have the opportunity to make something creative and beautiful, and she thinks that we should move forward with this proposal.

Elizabeth Brown stated, connected communities are stronger communities. In education, we need to be connected. She sees opportunities for connection in this proposal. She stated that she has heard from teachers about the competence and resilience of our students. We need to take any opportunities we can to connect; it will define us as a district. We have an opportunity to wrap our arms around two communities - Doty and Turtle Island, and our entire district. She stated that she was initially worried about the quick timeline, but there is never a perfect timeline.

Zach Sullivan stated that we need to look broader at what we need to do to sustain this district. One of our most important resources is our people. We have people who are saying they do not know if they can do their jobs anymore if they do not have childcare. We need to look at our role in supporting that infrastructure. How do we bring more families in? At least not make the student enrollment trend worse? In a region that needs growth in a younger population and with families that want a child or more children but are faced with a childcare shortage, we need to consider our role. It is very hard to see how Doty will continue as a school if we continue to present the same model repeatedly. He stated that this proposal is “bringing life” into the town. He spoke about the town plan - what is the benefit here? He spoke about the AOE definition of equity. Our teachers are telling us that moving the fifth and sixth grades will provide access to greater academic rigor and opportunities. We have been told that Worcester students are less prepared when they arrive at U-32.

Patrick Whelley stated that we need to learn from this process to keep the communities that we serve at the top of mind in our decision-making and when we consider changes to our schools. He recalled during budget development comments about how we need to think more broadly about how our schools get revenue. This is an opportunity, a potential to use our assets (facilities) to ease the financial burden. We know the future financial situation is uncertain, but we know that we are going to have to be creative. This is an example of being creative. This is a different proposal than we have discussed in previous years (especially, e.g., closing schools altogether). He stated that many people have spoken eloquently on different issues and perspectives; he is in favor of moving forward with this proposal; he would like to involve the community in considering the documents, lease, and MOU.

Chris McVeigh expressed support for Turtle Island being in the district, but not with this configuration. He supports keeping Doty students in the school building. He stated that this proposed configuration, the proposed revenue from Turtle Island would not benefit Doty. The economics will be even worse next year, and this does not bode well for Doty. Turtle Island is not going to save Doty, and he does not think that it is necessarily going to solve our area's childcare needs. There has been no guaranteed access indicated. He stated that our duty as a board is to have great input into the MOU, should this proposal go forward. He stated that the use of the word "partnership" is not appropriate in this case. A lease is just a landlord/ tenant agreement.

Kealy Sloan asked whether there is an estimate for installing a door to support a different building configuration - the question is what the estimated cost is. Or is it even possible with the building structure? This is an important consideration.

Daniel Keeney stated that it is extraordinary that this opportunity has landed in our laps. He is not comfortable with the characterization that this process has not been transparent. He feels that this has been a good, albeit rushed, process. He stated that this is a possible way to anchor this town, and the entire board, not just the Worcester board representatives, has the interests of Worcester students in mind.

Gillian Fuqua stated that, regardless of the configuration, there will be a replacement of a door and a firewall installed. She stated that this proposed building configuration is the only one that is feasible.

Ursula Stanley stated that she is in support of this proposal and that we, as board members, are stewards for all of our students. The Turtle Island conversation is very recent, but the conversation about how to think creatively and configure has been years-long. She referred to communication in 2024, expressing broad support for preschool options, schools as community centers, and younger students in their community schools. She stated that we have to move quickly. We are in a position where we have to look at transitioning students to a nearby school; however, she noted the opportunities for the students in a larger peer group. This proposal supports our community, our district (she noted that 40% of Turtle Island children are from our district). This brings a preschool option back to Doty.

Michelle Ksepka moved to support the proposal as presented in the memo, May 6, 2025 by Superintendent Dellinger Pate and Gillian Fuqua. Seconded by Zach Sullivan. Discussion: Diane Nichols-Fleming stated that we have identified as a core value community engagement and transparency. She is not in support of this because she feels that more people should have been at the table for the discussion. We are hearing from community members about the impact; we need a bigger table.

Patrick Whelley asked why we are not discussing the lease first. Flor Diaz Smith stated that we are not ready to work out the details of the lease until the next board meeting; we first need to take direction to continue to move forward. Patrick stated that he is not comfortable indicating that he supports the partnership until we know what the partnership looks like.

Patrick Whelley moved to amend the motion to approve moving forward in the process, but short of supporting the proposal (since we do not know the details of the lease). Seconded by Chris McVeigh. This motion to amend was rescinded.

Zach Sullivan stated that it is important to take action to indicate whether to move forward, so that students can know.

Patrick Whelley stated that he believes this decision-making process is in the wrong order.

Daniel Keeney suggested that we could take this action contingent on an acceptable lease and MOU.

Chris McVeigh proposed working on the lease and the MOU at a community forum so that they can have a voice in the documents before the board takes action.

Daniel Keeney suggested a friendly amendment adding: contingent on an acceptable lease and MOU. Seconded by Patrick Whelley. This amendment was carried unanimously. The original motion with amendment was voted upon: *to support the proposal as presented in the memo, May 6, 2025, by Superintendent Dellinger Pate and Gillian Fuqua, contingent on an acceptable lease and MOU.* Three nays, 1 abstention, 10 in favor - this motion carried. The board considered the lease, item by item.

Diane Nichols-Fleming asked, if there is needed construction, who is responsible? Steven Dellinger-Pate - we are responsible; however, there is not a significant amount needed. He will provide details when they are available.

Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that he has used leases from two other school districts, and this draft mirrors theirs. \$19/ square foot, not including utilities, which would include general custodial duties.

Daniel Keeney asked, regarding property tax, if an exemption is not offered, have we quantified what that amount would be? Superintendent Dellinger-Pate reviewed what legal counsel had advised him on this. He will ask for further clarification about the possible/ hypothetical dollar amount of tax burden should that be the case.

Chris McVeigh asked for clarification around language in the lease. He asked, who bears the legal cost, should it come to that, regarding the exemption from property tax?

- 5.2. **Advocating as a Board:** Flor Diaz Smith had provided a memo to board members. The board will address this later.
- 5.3. **Board Retreat Reminder and Update:** June 4 beginning at 5 p.m.; another retreat in August.
6. **Policy Committee: Chris McVeigh moved to table this. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously.**
 - 6.1. **Second Readings**
 - 6.1.1. **Procurement Conflict of Interest**
 - 6.1.2. **B30 Staffing & Job Descriptions**
 - 6.1.3. **A32 Board Goal Setting & Evaluation**
 - 6.1.4. **A34 Board Relations with School Personnel**
 - 6.1.5. **A24 Board/Superintendent Relationship**
7. **Personnel**
 - 7.1. **Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE:**
Zach Sullivan moved to accept the following resignations, with appreciation. Elizabeth Marks – Social Studies Teacher – U-32; Nancy Robinson - .20 FTE Health Teacher - Berlin; Arlyn Bruccoli – Library Media/Technology Specialist – EMES. Seconded by Michelle Ksepka. Discussion: Zach Sullivan stated that the reconfiguration of positions such as Library Media/ Tech Specialist has repercussions, and it is worth noting. Flor Diaz Smith clarified that the position had not been reduced in full-time equivalency; it had been shared between two campuses. This motion carried unanimously. Zach Sullivan moved to approve the hiring of long-term substitute: Josselyne Blakely – LTS-School Counselor – U-32. Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously.
8. **Consent Agenda**
 - 8.1. **Approve Minutes of 4.16.25, 4.30.25: Ursula Stanley moved to approve the minutes from April 16, 2025, and April 30, 2025. Seconded by Daniel Keeney, this motion carried unanimously.**
9. **Future Agenda Items**
 - 9.1. **Advocating as a board**
 - 9.2. **MOU/ Lease: Turtle Island: (Draft of MOU will be posted tomorrow, and there will be an opportunity for community input)**
 - 9.3. **Early college admission/ high school student count**
 - 9.4. **Policies**

10. Board Reflections: Flor Diaz Smith stated that she is proud of the work of this board.

11. Public Comments: Time limit strictly enforced, see note: Lisa Hanna read a statement regarding the board's discussion and action re: Turtle Island. She spoke about the decision to move a fire door. She stated that she is appalled that there were no questions about what student life at Doty will look like next year. She indicated that she respectfully disagrees with the Doty 5/6 teacher's opinion as stated earlier tonight.

Lauren Chabot corrected that 27% of children served by Turtle Island represent families from WCUUSD. She stated that this is not a service to families of WCUUSD. She reiterated Mckalyn Leclerc's position that Turtle Island at Doty School and moving grades 5 and 6 should be two separate conversations. She asked if the education and experience of Doty's 5 and 6 grade students are concerns, then why has this not been discussed in the past? Why has no one been concerned about Doty's 5th and 6th-grade students before this Turtle Island issue?

Lila Richardson expressed disappointment that many concerns and other possibilities were not addressed. She stated that there would be deficits felt at the school under this proposal. She stated that feedback for the MOU is simply a feedback form. This level of community involvement is adequate.

Flor Diaz Smith stated that the Steering Committee would meet and discuss the agenda and the forum for community input for the MOU.

Sophia expressed concern and disappointment with the board's decision; she stated that multiple viable proposals have been brought forward. Why are the other configurations not on the table for consideration?

Allison Fayle, teacher at Doty, stated that there are teachers who are not happy with this proposal; she stated that teachers are expected to use evidence-based practice, and there is a great deal of research about the experience of students with fragmented school attendance, such as the ones being imposed on Worcester students. She stated that the student enrollment numbers and class configurations in grades five and six at Doty have been mischaracterized. She reiterated that she does not feel it is necessary to move grades five and six from Doty.

Kathleen asked why Doty was considered for Turtle Island when other schools were not. Steven Dellinger-Pate indicated that it was considered but not viable at this time. Kathleen expressed disappointment that Principal Fuqua is no longer present at the meeting to hear from the community. She expressed concern about a two-year lease. She stated, Do not ask the community to come to the table; do not pit our communities against each other. If we feel this is so important for the fifth and sixth grade students, why haven't we addressed this

in the past? She spoke about Superintendent Kimball stating that ten years ago that he could tell Worcester students when they arrive at U-32 because they are less prepared. She suggested that ALL of the schools combine for grades five and six. She supports a middle school. She asked the board to move thoughtfully.

12. Executive Session: Student Residency Request (not tonight)

13. Adjourn: Ursula Stanley moved and Patrick Whelley seconded: the board adjourned by consensus at 10:46.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary

