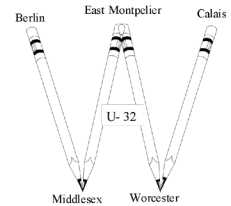


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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 Configuration Committee Meeting

June 25, 2025

U-32

930 Gallison Hill Rd

Montpelier, VT

In-Person/Virtual

5:00-6:00 PM

Present: Superintendent Dellinger-Pate, Flor Diaz Smith, Daisy Scarzello, Julia Hewitt, Daniel Keeney, Lila Richardson, Noah Weinstein, Chris McVeigh, Gillian Fuqua, Jeannie Phillips, Becca Taitistcheff, Honi Bean Barrett, Anna Matheson, Marilyn Martin, Deborah Bloom

1. Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Configuration Committee Meeting

- 2.1. Configuration criteria benchmarks:** Steven Dellinger-Pate presented configuration criteria benchmarks that will shape the configuration plan proposal. He asked the committee, when considering the criteria, what else would help in the work ahead. Becca Taitistcheff stated that criteria such as “class size falls within ___” and “travel time falls within ___”
- 2.2. Questions and Feedback:** Daniel Keeney stated that what we need to do is reach a conclusion around a measurable goal. The information feels a little too abstract in this form, for the community to consider and digest.

Daisy Scarzello asked, in the time that remains for the committee, how do we bridge this information with what has been offered for ideas from the community to create a proposal? Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that it will be helpful to create solid criteria and for the administration to come back with a proposal based on the criteria, for further consideration/ questions/ feedback. For example, the structure of classrooms (small classes, multi-grade classes) - if we created criteria around this.

Chris McVeigh asked whether the question is around consistency in curriculum or a consistency in classroom structure. Which one is the greater good? Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that they are fully linked. We have curriculum for grade levels but there is not

consistency for when multi-grades are created. Flor Diaz Smith suggested adding another column to the criteria chart.

Julia Hewitt cautioned the committee against assuming that teachers are not nimble enough to adapt curriculum to accommodate multi-grade classrooms as needed.

Andy Shapiro asked whether there is a good summary for Act 454. This is likely to override a lot of the decision-making - seems like we are “in the weeds” about decisions when there is a sweeping legislation that will override many of them ultimately.

Flor Diaz Smith stated that the timeline for 454 is long and so some of the decisions and discussions need to continue, for example, class size criteria. Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that, for example, the conversation about merging with Montpelier is something that is taken out of our hands according to 454 so this is an aspect of discussion that is not within the scope of this committee at this time.

Andy Shapiro stated that it seems like we are going to do a lot of work and then it is all going to change based on someone else’s idea about how to optimize. It seems like a lot of transition for schools, teachers, students, and families in the years ahead.

Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that we would have to consider how to create a consistent and stable system at this time and not make sweeping changes.

Daniel Keeney stated that the subject of “consistency” has been the crux of the discussion for him. He stated that the idea of middle school model seems like one that we can continue to examine; this is a consistent theme and something that can carry forward regardless. Becca Taitistcheff clarified what is meant by the use of the word “model” when considering, e.g. “middle school model.” She stated that the superintendent had come to us with a process; we have criteria and data; benchmarks/ guidelines around what students need, so that we can consider criteria including middle school opportunities, we can come back to the leadership team with guidance for their creation of a proposal.

Gillian Fuqua stated that it is important to say, for example, in our model, we do not want any student on a bus for longer than __ minutes and take to the community for feedback for the administration to consider.

Jeannie Collins suggested that the committee had asked the administration to come back with suggested specific criteria for consideration. Chris McVeigh stated that it would be helpful to know also “this is the cost” associated with such criteria, for example if no student is to be on the bus for longer than 45 minutes.

Daisy Scarzello stated that we need to make allowances for time to transition. She stated that we need to at some point trust the expertise of the administration and move forward to allow for transition time. She expressed her frustration with the decision-making around Doty - the decision was made; she prepared her children for the transition; the decision was walked back.

Daniel Keeney suggested better data and more granularity: for example, of the five elementary schools, which is closer than the standard we would like to achieve, and how can we move toward this across the board? What are our peer schools offering and how can we replicate? What can we glean from other districts? Superintendent Dellinger-Pate invited committee members to send him feedback and he will continue to update the criteria document that he had shared earlier.

Plan for community engagement sessions: Flor Diaz had created a document, which she shared with the committee. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate and Becca Taitistcheff spoke about “Transcend” as a resource for design thinking, innovation, school models, change management. U-32 is currently working with them.

Public comment: Andy Shapiro stated that this strikes him as a nearly impossible task - we have two more hours as a committee. He stated that at this time in the process it feels like the administration coming with a proposal and us not having an opportunity to react.

Honi Bean Barrett stated that she appreciates the desire for consistency. She spoke about her experience as a teacher at Doty; she stated that providing timelines for staff would be helpful; e.g. not knowing in the spring what is the future of the next school year is very unsettling. She spoke about the challenge of not having grade-alike colleagues that other larger schools have.

Lila Richardson agreed with the statement that the timeline is concerning. She agreed that what people really want to hear is, for example, are we going to move students to create a new middle school configuration? She spoke about the impact of moving sixth grade students from the elementary schools to U-32, e.g. regarding class size and small school sustainability.

2.3. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned by consensus at 6:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Committee Recording Secretary