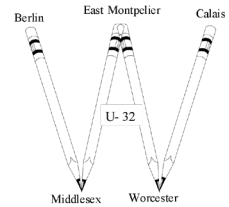


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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
6.25.25
6:15-9:15 PM
(In-Person & Virtual)
U-32 Middle & High School
930 Gallison Hill Rd
Montpelier, VT**

Present: Elizabeth Brown, Zach Sullivan, Daniel Keeney, Ursula Stanley, Chris McVeigh, Natasha Eckart, Julia Hewitt, Flor Diaz Smith, Mckalyn Leclerc, Diane Nichols-Fleming,

Others: Superintendent Steven Dellinger-Pate, Susanne Gann, Julia Pritchard, Jen Miller-Arsenault, Becca Taitistcheff, Alison Fayle, David Delcore, Honi Bean Barrett, Lila Richardson, Marilyn Martin, Noah Weinstein, ORCA Media

1. Call to Order: Flor Diaz Smith called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m.

2. Welcome

2.1. Adjustments to The Agenda: Chris McVeigh stated that he would like to include a discussion of the Doty Pre-K program to the agenda. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that this would be part of his superintendent's report.

2.2. Reception of Guests

2.3. Public Comments-Time limit strictly enforced, see note: None at this time

3. Presentations:

3.1. Climate Survey: Superintendent Dellinger-Pate shared a slide deck: *Climate Survey Summary*.

3.2. Board Q & A: Diane Nichols-Fleming stated, regarding equity indicators, was the survey designed to answer this? Is this a topic that we should dive into more deeply? Chris McVeigh asked for follow up around staff morale; the numbers had fallen slightly. Natasha Eckart asked whether the data is disaggregated by school. She spoke about student responses related to feeling safe and feeling able to go to an administrator. Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that building administrators plan to follow up on this.

Amelia Contrada asked whether there is a plan to follow up to address some of the concerning survey responses. Zach Sullivan stated that he believes it is important to follow up on the staff morale responses. Ursula Stanley asked about plans to replicate the survey on a regular basis.

4. Reports

- 4.1. **Superintendent/Central Office Leadership Team (COLT) Report:** Steven Dellinger-Pate had shared a written report. He reported that five families are currently registered for Pre-K at Doty School. He stated that we would not run a program at the school with only five students; we have offered these families a place (such as East Montpelier or Calais). Chris McVeigh asked whether the viability is programmatic or economic-related. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that the question of viability is related to both. He stated that Berlin's Pre-K program is currently at capacity; East Montpelier is not yet at capacity; Calais is not yet at capacity. Jen Miller Arsenault shared about Curriculum Camp over the summer (kicks off tomorrow). Diane Nichols-Fleming asked where special educators engage in curriculum work, specifically around UDL. Jen Miller Arsenault stated that this is part of the work plan this summer as well; however not part of Curriculum Camp. Steven Dellinger Pate stated that Shannon Knowles and Renee Bates are moving on and he would like to thank them for their service; they will be greatly missed. He stated that we have filled those positions.
- 4.2. **Community Schools Report:** Bec had provided a written report; Flor Diaz Smith invited questions or feedback from the board.
- 4.3. **Principal Report:** Becca Taitistcheff spoke about some of the closing rituals and celebrations among staff and students at U-32.
- 4.4. **Configuration Committee Update:** Flor Diaz Smith shared that the committee had considered criteria and benchmarks, and spent the last portion of the meeting discussing community engagement. Daniel Keeney stated that the theme of "consistency" continued to come up in the committee discussion today. He stated that a consistent educational experience across the district is important and needs to be made more explicit. What is each elementary school providing and what are they each feeding into U-32?
- 4.5. **Central Vermont Career Center Report:** Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that CVCC is moving forward with a bond vote for a new location - a bond vote across 18 towns. He shared that the location is in Barre. Flor Diaz Smith stated that the hope is that the new facility will serve 500 students. Chris McVeigh asked whether there are implications from H.454. Superintendent Dellinger Pate stated that the configurations according to H.454 do not necessarily include career centers at this time. There are two different options at this time about how CTEs are proposed to be organized.

4.6. VSBA Report: Flor Diaz Smith provided some highlights from this report. She shared that the bill H.454 passed on June 20. She shared that there have been some resignations in commission leadership. She shared that there is a webinar available via VSBA that helps explain the latest information.

5. Board Operations

5.1. Turtle Island Update: Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that Turtle Island has indicated that they cannot financially sustain a program at the Doty School. He had shared this information with the board.

6. Ed Quality: Ursula Stanley provided an overview of the following two monitoring reports.

6.1. Student Monitoring Report (Winter 2025)

6.2. Student Monitoring Report (SLO) Financial Literacy, Health, and PE

Ursula asked for feedback from board members. Mckalyn Leclerc asked for clarification around the science data. Jen Miller Arsenault shared that the science VCAP exam was given to students during 11th grade history, and the students protested and it is believed that the data does not reflect their true abilities in that area.

Daniel Keeney stated that, regarding PE and Health, there is a scarcity of time, a challenge in recruiting health teachers; the question is how, across a district of five schools, is consistency sought? Mckalyn Leclerc asked for clarification around “N/A” in the health SLO data. Some discussion followed around SHAPE standards. Jen Miller Arsenault stated that this is work that needs to be completed in the future.

Ursula Stanley stated that one outcome from discussion among Ed Quality Committee is to ensure that the budget development supports PE and Health curriculum.

Daniel Keeney stated that, having not attended the meeting, some of the language in the report is hard to process or draw a conclusion from.

Ursula Stanley reviewed the proposed timeline for Student Achievement Monitoring.

Mckalyn Leclerc suggested that if the Ed Quality Committee meetings are not well attended, would we consider changing the date or time of the meeting? Zach Sullivan suggested that Ed Quality also consider the “time budget” - for example, how much time do we devote to teaching science?

7. Finance Committee

7.1. Review Capital Improvement Project Plan and Multi-year Budget: Ursula Stanley moved to approve the revised Multi-year Capital Improvement Plan, Budget and Timeline and authorize the use of capital reserve funds, not to exceed \$50,000, to develop the necessary scope and budget for the FY 2026-27 approved capital improvement projects. Seconded by Daniel Keeney. Discussion: Susanne Gann

briefly reviewed this document. She stated that we have a very solid capital improvement plan. Zach Sullivan suggested that because of the changes in H.454 and the change in Turtle Island plan, he believes we should consider sending this back to the Finance Committee for reconsideration. He stated that based on H.454 it looks likely that Doty as a school building will not meet the criteria; he wonders if we should continue to invest on capital projects such as this. Daniel Keeney asked for clarification which boiler would be considered the primary and which would be considered the “redundant” boiler. He asked whether the scope of the project remains the same. Some discussion followed around this multi-year plan and the possible implications of H.454. Diane Nichols-Fleming stated that a boiler is critical to a building, regardless of whether the building is used as a school building or otherwise. Flor Diaz Smith reviewed that this is the first stage of the project - the bid document development will come to the board later for consideration. **This motion carried. Zach Sullivan abstained from the vote.**

7.2. Authorize Superintendent to Award FY 25 Bids for Liquid Heating Fuels, Wood Chips, and Wood Pellets: Daniel Keeney moved The Board authorize the Superintendent to award bids for propane, #2 fuel oil, wood chips and wood pellets on behalf of Washington Central Unified Union School District (WCUUSD) for Fiscal Year 2025-26. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously.

7.3. Award Berlin Playground Project Contract: Ursula Stanley moved to award the Berlin playground project contract to Pettinelli & Associates, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$99,967.15. Seconded by Amelia Contrada, this motion carried unanimously.

8. Policy Committee

8.1. Committee Report: No update at this time.

9. Personnel

9.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE: Zach Sullivan moved to approve the following hires: Mary Clare Armstrong : Classroom Teacher 1.0 FTE – Berlin, Amy Young - Librarian, .30 FTE – Doty, Lilith Blackwell – Middle School English/Language Arts Teacher - U-32, Katherine Dawes – U-32 Nurse Seconded by Ursula Stanley; this motion carried unanimously. Zach Sullivan moved to accept the following resignations and to thank them for their service. Noah Fink – Special Educator-U-32, Madeleine Dougherty – Special Educator – U-32, Danielle Kent - Speech Language Pathologist – EMES, Seconded by Daniel Keeney. Discussion: Diane Nichols Fleming asked, with three resignations in the special education area, are we aware of why? Steven Dellinger-Pate explained that we are aware of other opportunities for these employees. Mckalyn Leclerc expressed concern about three resignations, and especially in light of the climate survey discussion earlier, she wonders whether an exit interview is offered. The superintendent

indicated that exit interviews are offered. **This motion carried unanimously. Zach Sullivan moved to approve Long-Term Substitute (25-26 School Year) Abel Alaniz – Music LTS – U-32. Seconded by Daniel Keeney; this motion carried unanimously.**

10. Consent Agenda

10.1. Approve Minutes of 5.20.25: Ursula Stanley moved to approve the minutes of May 20, 2025; Seconded by Julia Hewitt, this motion carried unanimously.

10.2. Board Orders: Diane Nichols-Fleming moved to approve the board orders in the total amount of \$1,293,995.13. Seconded by Zach Sullivan, this motion carried unanimously.

11. Future Agenda Items

12. Board Reflections: Mckalyn Leclerc expressed that she is concerned about the coming changes and the comments expressed from board members around supposed inevitability of closing of one of the schools. She cautions board members to not predetermine the situation. Zach Sullivan shared that a constituent from East Montpelier had not wanted to go on record because they felt that community members from another town would directly contact them with a “we know who you are” tone. He stated that we do not hear comments from some of the constituents on record but that he hears many comments off record asking why Doty School remains open.

Julia Hewitt cautioned the board against assuming that the loudest voices in the room don't have ideas that we should take seriously.

Chris McVeigh cautioned against using words such as “activist” in a negative connotation. He stated that if there are constituents who do not feel comfortable sharing opinions then we should address this, as we want all voices to be heard. Chris McVeigh spoke about end of year presentation from the Pilot program. He shared that it is an amazing program.

Diane Nichols-Fleming suggested that we create an agenda item around community engagement - how to figure out how to have all voices heard. She stated that from the VSBA webinar, the law does not explicitly state that small schools will be closed. We as a board not only need to figure out what to do, how to move forward, but we also need to engage the community to be sure that we have all voices at the table.

Flor Diaz Smith stated that one of the items in the retreat is to work together to support each person having a voice and to provide continuity.

13. Public Comments: Time limit strictly enforced, see note: None

- 14. Executive Session for Residency Exemption Request: Julia Hewitt moved at 8:17 to go into Executive Session, and to include the Superintendent, to consider a residency exemption request. Seconded by Zach Sullivan, this motion carried unanimously. At 8:28, Ursula Stanley moved to come out of executive session and seconded by Chris McVeigh. Diane Nichols-Fleming moved to accept the administration's recommendation regarding student residency request. Daniel Keeney seconded. Approved unanimously.**
- 15. Executive Session for Personnel: Diane Nichols-Fleming moved at 8:29 to go into Executive Session not to include any additional people to consider personnel. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. This motion carried unanimously. At 8:36, Ursula Stanley moved to come out of executive session and seconded by Chris McVeigh. No action was taken.**
- 16. Adjourn: Ursula Stanley moved to adjourn at 8:37. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. Approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary
Diane Nichols-Fleming, Board Clerk