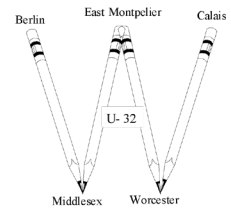


Washington Central Unified Union School District

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

November 19, 2025

U-32

930 Gallison Hill Rd
Montpelier, VT
In-Person/Virtual
5:00-6:00 PM

Present: Superintendent Dellinger-Pate, Flor Diaz Smith, Shannon Miller, Chris McVeigh, Jeannie Phillips, Deborah Bloom, Ursula Stanley, Kealy Sloan, Mckalyn Leclerc, Zach Sullivan, Elizabeth Brown, Daisy Scarzello, Anna Matheson, Andy Shapiro, Daniel Keeney, Allison Fayle, Honi Bean Barrett, Caitlin Howansky, Lila Richardson, Marilyn Martin, Noah Weinstein, Sophia Emigh, Jonathan Winston, K Brown, Stephanie Kaplan, Michael Giammusso, Gillian Fuqua, Becca Tatistcheff, David Delcore, Devon Bonady, Geoff Hewitt, Lesley, Pat G, Sam Ehrenfeld, Sudhalter, Teegan, Holly Weiss, Kathleen Bookchin, Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Mark Brown

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

2. Configuration Committee Meeting

2.1. [Agenda](#)

2.2. Vision for Configuration: Superintendent Dellinger-Pate shared a slide deck: *WCUUSD: Actualizing our Strategic Vision*, to guide the discussion around configuration. He shared that this is the presentation that he plans to share with the board later. He invited comments from committee members.

Kealy Sloan asked for an understanding of how to accommodate students through grade six in three schools. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate spoke about the use of, for example, Calais building, for a Pre-K program. He stated that we first need to discuss the budgetary implications of Pre-K.

Shannon Miller asked about students who would be transitioning from one school building to another and then to U-32 the following year. Discussion followed around middle school licensure for teachers. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate explained the two-year plan for this proposed model.

Daniel Keeney asked about further information regarding the transition plan, as he has heard people want more details about how this would look. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate spoke about the Transition Framework that is part of this proposal. Deborah Bloom suggested, for example, Select boards as part of the information sharing as they have wondered what is the

Impact to the towns. She advocated for some purposeful and mindful thinking and action around how this will affect towns. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate spoke about how the Community Schools vision is relevant to this discussion as well.

Chris McVeigh asked whether there is a plan to maintain a grade of students at each school, as per the Articles of Agreement. He asked whether this proposed plan would guarantee full-time nurse, full-time school counselor, full time library, and full-time allied arts in each school. He stated that people are wondering what they will be getting. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that for nurses, counselors and the library, this is the plan. For allied arts teachers, we are unsure, as it will depend on student enrollment. Some discussion followed around the Articles of Agreement and what would come of the buildings that are not used for students. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that it would be in the best interest of WCUUSD not to get rid of the buildings immediately; but the decision for use of each building remains to be discussed. Chris McVeigh stated that we should be very clear to the towns what this would mean to them. Mckalyn Leclerc stated that she believes it might be a relief to some of the towns to hear that the buildings will not be sold back to the town immediately. She asked about languages in the proposed schools. She also asked for more specifics about thoughtful planning for transition, especially for the students who will be moving from one school to another, to U-32 in three years in a row. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate spoke about the desire to develop a larger cohort of students and build some ownership of U-32 for students before coming here.

Anna Matheson asked for information on special education; this was a concern that was expressed at the listening sessions. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that we are bound by law and will staff accordingly so that students receive their services. He stated that we do not have it fully fleshed out yet.

Daniel Keeney asked if it is possible to get provisional licensure for sixth-grade teachers or for existing seventh and eighth-grade teachers. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that there will be time for this, and the hope is that teachers will begin the work for middle school endorsement.

Daniel Keeney asked if we are we able to commit to an increase in allied arts, given this new proposal. Gillian Fuqua stated that currently, allied arts teachers are in the building one day a week. She stated that a conceptual shift is that students will not get more minutes in the day of allied arts; however, the teachers will be shared between fewer schools and have more time in the building, and will likely have a lighter teaching schedule and offer access to additional teaching resources, e.g. integrated arts. Anna Matheson shared that in the listening sessions she heard that allied arts teachers would like to have a building to “house” their programs. She asked about after-school programs - is there an opportunity to offer allied arts-type activities during this time.

Deborah Bloom revisited the special education question. She stated that it is not true that it is more effective to provide special education services in small groups of students. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that it would provide more options, depending on children’s needs. Deborah Bloom also asked about before-school programs.

Shannon Miller stated that the Berlin community has asked some questions/ confusion about not being part of a merger, so what is our role in this? What will be different for us? She stated that the Berlin community has no desire to change its school’s administrator.

Flor Diaz Smith stated that we are all part of this, Berlin included. Shannon Miller stated that we realize this, but there is confusion, e.g., about rebranding the school when no changes are made to the school (e.g., a new school name).

Steven Dellinger-Pate shared some of the transportation information. Andy Shapiro asked for clarification on how many students are anticipated to take very long bus rides. Anna Matheson asked whether we are going to have time to discuss timelines at this meeting tonight. This will be a key piece in moving forward.

Daniel Keeney stated that it is important to get the timeline right and be very clear with people about what they are voting on. He feels it should be an explicit recommendation from the Configuration Committee to the board. He stated that he feels it is well worth the cost to hire a transition facilitation position.

Mckalyn Leclerc spoke about transportation concerns. She asked that there be a direct route from Doty to Rumney. Transportation will be a concern for Worcester residents who are used to walking their children to school or short car rides to drop off children.

Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that this is the intention (regarding Doty to Rumney), and there will be more information and work around transportation.

2.3. Transition Framework (Steven)

3. [Listening Sessions Data](#): Jeannie Phillips shared the process for gathering data from the listening sessions. She shared a synopsis of the feedback from listening sessions. Andy Shapiro proposed that the committee make a recommendation to the board that if a town votes not to close its school, then the board will not remove students from that school.

4. **Public Comments:**

Holly Weiss asked how the playground at EMES could be enhanced or improved. She asked what the cafeteria/ lunch looks like?

Kathleen Bookchin asked for clarification from the presentation. She pointed out some places that could use clarification.

Cynthia Gardner-Morse asked about issues such as culture building. She stated that it seems you are validating people's feelings while you bulldoze ahead with school closures. This is not what people want.

Caitlin Howansky expressed that she had watched all of the recordings and heard many more concerns shared than are represented in these slides. There was more of an ask for detailed answers. She hopes that in this incredibly short time frame, there will be some information sharing to address these concerns.

Mark Brown asked that any votes be held on Town Meeting Day - there is more community attendance and engagement.

Holly Weiss asked when we would know the impact on the budget for both scenarios. Steven Dellinger-Pate stated that part of his budget presentation tonight will address this, and we will continue to flesh out and share details.

Devon Bonady asked when and if the committee is planning to respond to questions and concerns that have been expressed.

Daniel Keeney stated that he feels the synthesis of the data is more positive than the concerns that he heard at the listening sessions. Many of the concerns that feel actionable have to do with not having enough information to vote. He feels that we have gone a long way tonight in this direction, but we have a long way to go.

Gillian Fuqua stated that we are currently in a state of limbo, and many of the questions and concerns that have come up are things we have thought a great deal about. The board needs to make a decision about the direction we are going so that we know which to work toward. Continuing to consider different models does not allow for the deep work that is needed in one model.

Chris McVeigh stated that the quandary is that we need to roll it out and that the communities need information to decide how they vote.

Flor Diaz Smith stated that we might not have the time to garner all the trust that we need, but we also need to be responsible for meeting the needs of our students and moving forward.

Debra Bloom asked if the board could vote to send it to the towns for a vote, and we will still have time to provide more information to the towns.

Andy Shapiro stated that an important thing for towns to know is what is the board's stance on the issue he had noted earlier - if the town votes not to close a school.

Flor Diaz Smith reiterated that the consensus of the committee is to move this presentation to the board for consideration tonight. She thanked those who had attended.

5. **Adjourn: The committee adjourned by consensus at 6:12 p.m.**