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.

1130 Gallison Hill Road
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone (802) 229-0553
Fax (802) 229-2761

WCUUSD
School Board Special Meeting
3.18.26
5:00 - 6:00 PM
(Virtual and In-Person)
U-32 Middle & High School
930 Gallison Hill Rd Montpelier, VT

Present: Superintendent Dellinger-Pate, Flor Diaz Smith, Chris McVeigh, Patrick Whelley, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Ursula Stanley, Elizabeth Brown, Daniel Keeney, Zach Sullivan, Dave Lowther

1. Call To Order: At 5:00, Diane Nichols-Fleming called the meeting to order.

2. Introductions for Twinfield Boards (Discussion)

2.1. Purpose of Meeting: Diane Nichols-Fleming stated that the purpose of the meeting is to begin conversations about the possibility of partnerships. Twinfield Board chair explained that the first intent of the meeting is to get to know one another, especially in light of a possible forced merger. It would be helpful to get to know our neighbors.

2.2. Partnership Possibilities: Daniel Keeney noted that there has been ongoing discussion about the sixth grades being moved to U32. Zach Sullivan stated that in a forced merger, it is difficult to imagine that merging, with Montpelier, will not be part of the scenario. He also spoke about various middle school populations and grades/buildings. Steven Dellinger Pate explained about the study that was recently done with Montpelier. Twinfield board member stated that his initial thought was to have some sort of subcommittee to explore this. He asked whether Twinfield could see the report that we referenced. He stated that it will be important to involve all stakeholders. Dave Lowther asked about the idea of collaborating in a more “sharing of central office resources" way, rather than moving students - even something such as an “educator exchange.” Board member asked what percentage of students are attending the Career Center. The response was 6 at Twinfield. Are the career centers drawing numbers down from the high schools? Daniel Keeney reiterated Flor’s idea to consider Central Vermont regional solutions for 6-12 grades. Daniel Keeney stated that more pointed action steps would be desired from a study of the two school systems. Twinfield board chair indicated that they are not ready to take any steps at this point, just gathering information, especially as the legislature is still in

flux. Steven Dellinger-Pate indicated that one area that continues to rise to the surface is the idea of sharing special education services as a way to benefit students. Daniel Keeney stated that what he understands from the WCUUSD board is that regardless of what action the legislature takes, we will be looking for ways to enlist/engage with other high schools in an effort to combine. Chris McVeigh asked if there are any deal breakers that would be an absolute "no" from the perspective of Twinfield. Twinfield board chair at this point indicated that there are no deal breakers because we are still in the beginning conversations and in the information gathering stage. One Twinfield board member said that a "nonstarter" would be if there was no financial savings to the communities that make up Twinfield. Question about goals and how to improve student outcomes being a central theme. Twinfield indicated that their area of interest is around the high school aspect of a possible merger. There was some discussion of Twinfield being an "SU" - supervisory union, versus WCUUSD being a supervisory district. Both superintendents noted that their schools are facing declining enrollment.

2.3. Next Steps: Bring information back to Twinfield Board to reflect on the conversation and follow up, as well as review the Montpelier/ U32 study that had been shared. WCUUSD Board will reflect on the conversation. Twinfield - have another meeting together and consider all of the stakeholders. Diane Nichols-Fleming restated the idea to expand the student into grades 6 (6 through 12 rather than 7 through 12). A link is provided for questions or feedback for any who desire.

3. Tour of School (In person only)

4. Adjourn: At 6:10, Patrick Whelley moved to adjourn. Seconded by Marty McMahon, this motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary