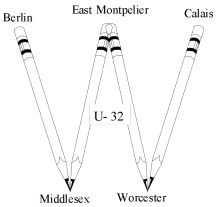
Washington Central Unified Union School District

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
5.6.26
6:15-9:15 PM
U-32
930 Gallison Hill Road
Montpelier, VT 05602
(In-Person & Virtual)

Present: Superintendent Dellinger-Pate, Flor Diaz Smith, Daniel Keeney, Chris McVeigh, Patrick Whelley, Ursula Stanley, Elizabeth Brown, Zach Sullivan, Diane Nichols-Fleming, Julia Hewitt, Natasha Eckart, Marty McMahon, Andrew Boye, David Lowther, Barry Bernstein, Jen Miller-Arsenault, ORCA Media, Julia Pritchard, Emily Alfano, Ainsley Burroughs, Alicia Lyford, Allison Fayle, April Davis, Cecilia Guggemos, David Delcore, David Hershey, David Lawrence, Dena Brown, Denise Wheeler, Emi Harlow, Heidi Dimick, Karoline May, Lila Richardson, Lisa Hanna, Phoebe Stone, Rachael, Veronica Fair, Giuliana Jenson, Heather Clark Warner, Katy Marshall, Jody Emerson, Cynthia Gardner-Morse, Dell Waterhouse,

1. **<u>Call To Order:</u> Diane Nichols-Fleming called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m.**
2. **<u>Welcome:</u> Daniel Keeney read a resolution from the board:he moved that:**
   On this 6th day of May, 2026,
   Whereas our future as a community depends on well-educated community members; and
   Whereas educating those citizens well depends on committed and talented educators; and
   Whereas those talented and committed educators rely on a dedicated staff to operate our schools and support their occupants; and
   Whereas the Washington Central District is proudly committed to continually improving the education it provides to its students;
   Whereas in this current moment of uncertainty and change in our state's education system, Washington Central educators have continued to show up for students and families every day and demonstrate their commitment and dedication with clear and unambiguous passion for their work;
   Therefore be it resolved by the Board of Directors for the Washington Central Unified Union School District here and now thank our district teachers and staff for their service, and celebrate

them during this Teacher Appreciation Week. Seconded by Michelle Ksepka, this motion carried unanimously.

2.1. Adjustments to The Agenda (none)

2.2. **Reception of Guest:** Diane Nichols-Fleming welcomed those present.

2.3. **Public Comments:** Giuliana Jensen, East Montpelier resident, spoke with concerns about how the preschool decision is brought back up to each board meeting. She stated that keeping this discussion ongoing is creating division in the communities. She urged the board, at some point we need to move forward and we are spending too much time on this one issue. Katy Marshall, Middlesex resident, thanked the board for its service. She affirmed the administration's decision from January. She stated again that the board's role is to create a stable and equitable system. East Montpelier parent spoke about the preschool program. She stated that it is May; parents/ families have made plans and we are considering reopening a decision that was made in January. She spoke about equity and the importance of consistency. Jody Emerson, Superintendent of Central Vermont Career Center, spoke about a proposed plan for CVCC to expand its campus to U32 campus. She stated that the CVCC Board has not yet considered this plan but she wanted to give the WCUUSD Board a heads up that this is the beginning of this conversation.

3. **Presentation:** VSBA Facilitation of Board Roles: Debbie Singiser facilitated a board discussion: *WCUUSD Board Training, May 6, 2026, VSBA*. She will share the slide deck with the board. The board participated in an interactive discussion about the role of the board.

3.1. **Board Goals:** Diane Nichols-Fleming would like to incorporate board goals into the workplan.

4. **Board Operation:**

4.1. VSBA Resolutions: This information had been shared in the board packet. Diane Nichols-Fleming noted that there had been interest expressed previously in having a resolution around early college. Zach Sullivan expressed interest in working with a subcommittee to create a resolution related to early college. This would have to be ready for the first board meeting in June. Daniel Keeney, Marty McMahon also expressed interest. Natasha Eckart asked whether resolutions can come from individuals or whether they come from the board as a whole. Answer: board as a whole. **Chris McVeigh moved to create an advisory committee to be presented to the board at the first meeting in June: appointing Zach Sullivan, Daniel Keeney, Marty McMahon and any other board members that might be interested. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously.**

5. **Personnel:**

5.1. Approve New Teachers, Resignations, Leave of Absence, and Changes in FTE: Flor Diaz Smith moved to approve the following hires: Elijah Hawkes – U-32 Interim Principal; Ilana Williams – 1.00 FTE, Classroom Teacher (MS Science) – U-32; Sarah Berry – 1.00 FTE, Classroom Teacher (Music) – Calais/EMES; Jenna Hallstrom – 1.00 FTE SLP - WCUUSD. Seconded by Chris McVeigh, this motion carried unanimously. Ursula Stanley moved to accept the following resignations: Sarah Ainsworth, Rise Coordinator, U-32; Sarah Cousins, SLP, WCUUSD; Cairsten Keese, School Counselor, U-32; Liza Semler, Work-Based Learning Coordinator; William Poderzay, Special Education Teacher, WCUUSD. Seconded by Zach Sullivan. Discussion: Natasha Eckart asked whether these positions will be filled. Superintendent Dellinger-Pate noted that they might not all be filled, as we are using attrition when possible to reduce staff/ budget. **This motion carried unanimously. Diane Nichols-Fleming asked for the board's approval to move public comments and reflections before Executive Session. Seconded by Ursula Stanley, this motion carried unanimously.**

6. **Proposed Executive Session: Student Residency Requests: At 9:13, Daniel Keeney moved to go into Executive Session and to include Steven Dellinger-Pate, to consider student residency exemption request. Ursula Stanley moved; Elizabeth Brown seconded; by unanimous approval the board came out of Executive Session at 9:18. Zach Sullivan moved to approve the recommendation from the administration regarding the student residency exemption request. Seconded by Patrick Whelley, this motion carried unanimously.**
7. **Proposed Executive Session: Personnel: At 9:19, Daniel Keeney moved to go into Executive Session and to include Karoline May, Gilian Fuqua, Steven Dellinger-Pate, to discuss personnel. Seconded by Natasha Eckart, this motion carried unanimously. Elizabeth Brown moved; Michelle Ksepka seconded; by unanimous approval the board came out of Executive Session at 10:17 p.m.** No action was taken.
8. **Future Agenda Items** Sashly Felix had provided a hyperlink to a future agenda items document
9. **Reflections:** Natasha Eckart appreciated the training and indicated that two hours was too long to have board business to do as well. She asked that the board stay true to the times in the agenda. David Lowther reiterated Natasha's sentiment. Elizabeth Brown appreciated the training and stated that she believes communication is critical. She spoke about terms such as "consistency" and "stability" and that it might be a good exercise for the board to consider what these terms mean to the board? Superintendent Dellinger-Pate stated that he appreciated the training tonight and appreciated the board comments.
10. **Public Comments:** Cynthia Gardner-Morse presented a petition with signatures from 190 residents asking that Calais children be allowed to attend Calais School, whether preschool or other grades. She asked the board to consider online comments in the petition. She asked the board to consider equity, about marginalized students, about graduation rates. Dell Waterhouse, from Worcester, spoke about the residents of Worcester who are committed to coming together to support keeping Doty School open. Linda Gray from Calais stated that many of the people who attend these meetings are very busy and are attending these meetings

to share how important it is for the young students to attend preschool in their communities. She asked the board to not pit one town against the other. Barry Bernstein, East Calais, spoke about the fact that "best educational outcomes" is defined differently by different people. Vermonters are feeling that they are losing out on their small communities. He stated that the process to get to this point has not been great; he hopes the board will reconsider. Emily Alfano, East Montpelier resident, had submitted a letter to the board yesterday with over 200 signatures asking the board to stay with the decision that had been made and move along. She stated that what is needed is to have some stability and some faith in that if the board makes a decision, even a hard decision, it will stay with it.

11. **<u>Adjourn:</u>The board adjourned by consensus at 10:20 p.m: motion by Daniel Keeney; seconded by David Lowler, approved unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary