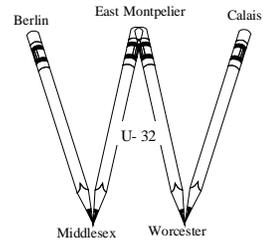


Washington Central Supervisory Union

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

William Kimball
Superintendent



WCSU exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

August 23, 2018

Dear Washington Central Families –

I want to take this moment to welcome your family to the start of the 2018 – 2019 school year in Washington Central Supervisory Union. I am very excited to continue the important work of nurturing and inspiring our children to learn and grow to meet our mission statement. Two years ago the boards provided direction to the entire supervisory union by adopting our mission and Student Learning Outcomes. The course set by the boards affects the daily work of our staff and continues to inspire us to do the very best for all students.

One of the pieces of feedback that we have received from families and the community has been to increase the effectiveness of our communications to keep families involved in their child's education. We know from educational research that the more a parent is involved in their child's education, the more likely the child will succeed in school. Therefore, it is our goal to increase communication with families, while at the same time ensuring the privacy rights of every student and family.

Starting this fall, we are expanding the use of our Infinite Campus Portal to include academic performance information for elementary students as we have been doing at U-32 for the past few years. Please be on the lookout for learning opportunities to use this online tool. Along with using the parent portal, we have asked our teachers to use the Messenger tool within Infinite Campus to contact families. This tool will deliver information to both your family portal web page as well as your e-mail. Classroom teachers and schools will continue to use their newsletters and websites to communicate general information.

We recognize that sometimes teachers and families need to communicate about individual student performance. Those conversations should happen through a phone call or face-to-face meeting. While e-mail or text messaging can be an efficient method for sending messages, we have found that in some situations these tools may not provide either intended tone or the entire context of the conversation. Also, we can better protect student privacy rights (FERPA) via a phone call and face-to-face meetings rather than via e-mail or text message. Therefore, we have asked our teachers this year to use the phone or face-to-face meetings to communicate more sensitive information. If you as a parent initiate an e-mail or text message with a teacher, please know that the teacher will follow up with a phone call or an e-mail that suggest that you find a time to connect via the phone or in person. For more information on how e-mail affects family – teacher communications please see this article from Harvard Education Letter at <https://tinyurl.com/l5qtkjq>.

I would like to reiterate it is our intent to increase the communication between families and our staff while ensuring the communication of the intended message, and protecting the privacy of all students. I have enclosed the memorandum that was sent to the staff to give you more details on how we plan to communicate with families. Please have patience with us as we navigate the use of our communication tools. Please give your feedback to the principals as to what is working and what we can improve.

Once again have a great school year, and I am so excited about the opportunities all our children have in Washington Central.

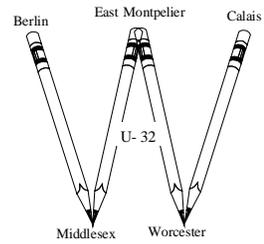
Sincerely,
Bill Kimball
Superintendent

Enclosure: Staff memo

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MEMORANDUM

TO: WCSU Staff
 FROM: Bill Kimball, Superintendent
 DATE: August 16, 2018
 RE: Technology Tools for Communication

Over the past few years, many of you have increased your communication to families about the great programs and student learning happening within our classrooms and schools. I would like to encourage each of you to continue to communicate with our families and the greater community, both individually and collectively. As you communicate to families I want to ensure that the students FERPA rights, the parents right to choose media release, and each of you as professionals are protected.

The intent of this memo is to outline the different methods of communication and outline the use of the tools we have to increase communication to both students and parents. It is highly recommended that all professionals keep a contact log to keep track of conversations with families.

Type of Communication	Audience	Best Types of Use	Do Not Use For
Infinite Campus Messenger	Individuals or groups of parents and/or students through Infinite Campus	To document and/or log communication Assignments or announcements to a group of students and/or parents Information about academic or behavior that is protected by FERPA. Examples might be student scores, missing assignments, classroom behavior	
General Classroom and School-Wide Updates (eg., Blog, Twitter, Instagram, FaceBook, Website and Newsletters)	A group of parents and/or students	Assignments, celebrations or announcements to a group of students. May or may not include photos	Sending individual student information or performance to a parent. Note: Must have media release when using any information that can identify a student (i.e. photos or class lists)

Email	A student's parents or legal guardian that has educational rights	General announcements or to schedule meetings	Sending information that may be personally identifiable about a student
Live Video Streaming	A group of parents and/or students	Assignments, celebrations or announcements to a group of students. May or may not include photos	Sending individual student information or performance to a parent. Note: Must have media release when using any information that can identify a student (i.e. photos or class lists)
Recorded Video	A group of parents and/or students	Assignments, celebrations or announcements to a group of students. May or may not include photos	Sending individual student information or performance to a parent. Note: If posting online, must have prior administrator permission
Text Messaging	Best to avoid text messaging	Specific, individualized circumstances require the use of text messaging	It is highly recommended that staff do not use their personal device to communicate about work. If you do use your personal device, and the information is requested through a legal proceeding, all the information on your device may become discoverable. If you need to text a parent, it is suggested you use e-mail or chat through Google
Phone Call or In-Person Meeting with Families	A family member or other individuals with educational rights to a student.	A conversation about personally identifiable student issues with family members.	Make sure to use a contact log to record the date, time and summary of the conversation.