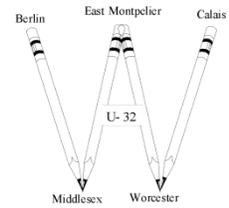


# Washington Central Unified Union School District

*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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August 21, 2020

From: Bryan Olkowski, Superintendent of Schools  
To: Washington Central Unified Union School District

Dear Families, Students, and Staff Members,

The clock is ticking closer to September 8, when all of us (students, teachers, staff, administrators & families) can finally begin the slow, and hopefully steady, return to 'normal'. It won't seem normal at first, though. We'll be learning in cohorts (groups), eating lunch in our classrooms, sanitizing our hands (a lot), wearing face masks, and taking a wide range of other precautions. But at least for a few hours a day, we'll be back together again.

Here is my update for the week of 8/21. I'm feeling good about how well plans are coming together for a safe return to in-person learning and, for those who will be learning remotely, a smooth and seamless (if virtual) return to class. Here's where we stand as of this week:

1. Let's start with a 'feel good' story: We got an email earlier this week from Kelly Bushey, our Director of Special Services. In it she told us about a local (Middlesex) resident, who had offered to donate a sizable amount of fabric for face masks. Kelly and Amy Young took her up on the offer and went right to work making masks. After a full days work (and only 40 masks), they realized they needed more help. So they put out a call for cutters and stitchers, and before they could blink they were joined by Casey Provost, Lisa Laplante, Gillian Fuqua, Alicia Lyford, Jen Miller-Arsenault, and Michelle Ksepka; all of whom began turning yards of fabric into face masks. It's just another example of the teamwork and dedication I have seen over and over again in the short few weeks I've been here. We are fortunate - and I am grateful - to have such a giving and positive group of people, and it gives me confidence that we will meet every challenge the year ahead may bring.
2. Our [back-to-school website](#) continues to be updated with new information - some of it coming directly from the Agency of Education and Department of Health and some from our task forces, who have been working all summer to plan for a safe return to school. I encourage everyone to visit the site periodically, including the FAQ page, to make sure you have the latest reopening information.
3. A number of people have inquired about bus service and transportation for the upcoming year. Here's what we know so far: The bus system will remain available to transport students to and from school from their home(s) or daycares **only**. If your child is planning to ride the bus, you must provide your school offices with those addresses before the start of school. In previous years we had the ability to offer more flexible transportation options for families, but given the current situation, we are limited to home/daycare pick-up and delivery only. We will also be extending the health and safety practices that will be in our schools to the bus system. To that end, students will have assigned seats and

designated bus schedules in order to keep them safe and to allow for contact tracing if needed. (These practices are addition to face masks, bus cleaning, and social distancing when possible). Students will not be able to ride different buses to alternative locations (e.g. to a friend's house, an appointment location, a weekly music lesson, parent/caregiver's job in Montpelier, etc.) during the 20/21 school year. In such cases, parents/caregivers will have to make alternate arrangements, which may require that students get picked up from school. We appreciate your understanding and support in ensuring that the bus system is a safe and viable option for transporting students.

4. Inservice days for teachers, staff, food service providers, and the custodial staff begin on Monday, August 24. We will be using the two weeks before the opening of schools to prepare for in-person and remote learning, along with professional development focused on health and safety protocols and practices; curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices; and social emotional challenges. Our various task forces have been hard at work all summer preparing for a successful reopening, and a comprehensive - and intentional - inservice plan will be key to our success. Our inservices will include a balance of in-person and virtual meetings and learning opportunities along with a balance of synchronous and asynchronous work. The teacher days are scheduled from 8:00-3:30. The para-educator days are scheduled from 8:00-3:00. I am enormously grateful to the teachers, support staff, and administrators who have contributed to the development of our inservice planning and/or provided feedback on earlier drafts. It really does take a village!
5. Finally, we have revised the 2020-21 school year calendar to reflect both our late start and the impact it will have on the rest of the school year. You can view or download the [updated calendar](#) here.

Once again I'd like to thank everyone who's worked so hard this summer to plan for a safe and healthy school reopening. It's been a great deal of work, but I'm feeling better each day about where we are and how well things are coming together. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions. Most of your questions can be answered by looking through the various school update pages on [safelearning.u32.org](http://safelearning.u32.org), but if you don't find what you're looking for, just click on the 'contact us' button.

Sincerely

Bryan Olkowski  
WCUUSD - Superintendent of Schools