

October 7, 2021

Dear Washington Central Community,

This week 633 students and staff members participated in COVID-19 surveillance testing, and we had one positive case that impacted U-32. On Tuesday we learned from Secretary of Education Dan French that school nurses now have access to the state's immunization registry. That means that they may check directly on the COVID-19 vaccination status of students. If your child is eligible for the vaccine and you have not yet completed the attestation form, you no longer need to do so. Going forward, the school nurses will access the state immunization registry when they need to engage in contact tracing.

Maria Melekos, our COVID-19 coordinator, has signed our district up to participate in the "test to stay" program. Essentially, "test to stay" means that we will have increased resources to offer families to keep unvaccinated, asymptomatic students in school after an in-school exposure. We will be utilizing rapid antigen tests in school to assess these students daily instead of having them have to quarantine at home for 7-14 days. We should also be able to offer PCR testing for symptomatic students before we send them home. We are still waiting to hear from the state about how and when we will begin this program. We are so fortunate in Washington Central to have full time school nurses in each of our schools. "Test to stay" will allow more students to stay in school, and it will be a heavy logistical lift for our school staff. We are bound to encounter some logistical hurdles, and, in advance, appreciate your patience when we implement the program. We will share more information when we have it.

Last week I shared information with you about our newly forming Humanity and Justice Coalition and invited you to apply to be a founding member. If you are interested, please complete [this application](#) by October 15, 2021. Please refer to [last week's Community Letter](#) for more details.

We still have some key positions open in our school system. While some of those positions require teacher licensure, others do not. We welcome applicants for our paraeducator, food service, and custodian positions. We are also looking for more substitute teachers. Washington Central is a great place to work! Please consider joining our team!

Tomorrow our teachers and administrators will be engaged in professional learning together. The day promises to be rich, productive, and collaborative. Some of the topics that we will be exploring together include using data to plan instruction, developing instructional coaching skills, learning about intersectionality in our work, increasing our

skills related to various technology tools and platforms, and planning engaging instruction for all learners.

The foliage is gorgeous right now and the weather forecast for the weekend looks spectacular. I hope that you are all able to carve out some time to enjoy the season and appreciate the sheer beauty of our beloved Green Mountain State.

As always, please reach out if you have any questions or concerns. I can be reached at jmillerarsenault@u32.org or 229-0553.

Warmly,

Jen Miller-Arsenault
Interim Superintendent