

November 11, 2021

Dear Washington Central Community,

The Agency of Education's COVID testing plan includes three kinds of testing: surveillance testing, Test to Stay (TTS), and response testing. We have been implementing surveillance testing since mid-September. Last Thursday we began implementing TTS. Next week we will also begin offering response testing for students to test out of their quarantine period. The administration of these tests has gone relatively smoothly so far. However, it takes a lot of staff time to make this happen. In addition to our COVID-19 Coordinator and our school nurses, we are training our principals and some Central Office personnel, including me, to help with the implementation of the testing protocols. Also, regarding TTS in particular, while we are excited to provide an option that generally allows our students to stay in school, we have come to realize this week that the change in practice--allowing kids to stay in school and take a rapid antigen test rather than automatically sending them home to quarantine--takes some getting used to for students, families, and staff members alike.

The TTS training is coming just in time, as we are experiencing a high number of cases in our schools this week. Specifically, this week we have had 12 cases that have impacted Berlin (9), Rumney (1), and U-32 (2). The number of cases in Vermont remains high, and our schools are definitely being impacted. Please continue to do your part to keep our school community safe and healthy.

Current students and employees should soon receive a hard copy of the notification that I emailed last week regarding the data breach. The notification includes a phone number that current and former students and employees can call in order to enroll in free identity theft and/or credit monitoring services with First Watch Technologies. I enrolled this week. The process was quite seamless and took less than 15 minutes. Please note that the deadline to enroll is February 5, 2022.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to watch the documentary *Like* at one of our faculty meetings. *Like* focuses on the impact of social media in our lives and the effects of technology on the brain. After watching the documentary, we engaged in a thoughtful discussion of the film. We would like to invite you to do the same! Washington Central is currently hosting an on demand virtual screening of the documentary through Monday, November 15. On Tuesday, November 16 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. parents and caregivers are warmly invited to a community discussion of the film via Zoom. The discussion will be facilitated by district staff members who teach media literacy and internet safety. Please see your school newsletter for more information and links to both the film and the community discussion.

Finally, on this Veterans Day, I extend my deepest gratitude to those in our school community who have served in our United States Armed Forces. Thank you.

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

Warmly,

Jen Miller-Arsenault
Interim Superintendent