

November 4, 2021

Dear Washington Central Community,

This week 640 students and staff members participated in COVID-19 surveillance testing. The results indicated no positive cases. Separate from surveillance testing, we had 3 positive cases that have impacted Rumney and Berlin. As always, close contacts were notified in a timely manner.

We implemented the Test to Stay (TTS) program for the first time this morning. I am pleased to report that it went very smoothly. TTS allows unvaccinated, asymptomatic close contacts to take a rapid antigen test each morning and to stay in school with a negative test result rather than needing to stay home from school in quarantine. Please see [this document](#) from Maria Melekos, our COVID-19 Coordinator, for more information about Test to Stay, response testing, and surveillance testing. The document includes a link to the universal consent form for TTS and response testing and information about pre-registration for these testing practices. You'll find this document and [last week's letter from Maria](#), including Frequently Asked Questions, on the COVID-19 page of our district website.

Yesterday Maria Melekos sent an email to families informing them that the COVID-19 vaccine has been approved for children ages 5-11 years. We are looking forward to hosting vaccine clinics for students in our schools. While I am disappointed that we are not scheduled to host the clinics until early January, I appreciate the VT Department of Health's prioritization of school populations that have more limited access to pharmacies and physicians than we do.

This afternoon I sent families and employees each a long and detailed letter about the cybersecurity attack that we recently experienced in Washington Central. The letter includes information about what happened, what information was involved, what we as a district are doing, and what families and employees can do. Families and employees will receive a hard copy of the letter as well. Additionally, we are notifying former students and employees through our website and local media sources.

Between our recent correspondences regarding COVID and the data security breach, you have plenty of important information to read and digest. This has been an emotional and hard week for me, and my guess is that the same is true for many of you as well. The stress related to the cybersecurity attack on top of the ongoing stress of the pandemic is a lot to hold right now.

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