

December 2, 2021

Dear Washington Central Community,

I hope this letter finds you all rested and recharged after a week away from school.

Regarding our COVID-19 cases, we learned of a few cases during the break that impacted students from U-32 and East Montpelier Elementary School. This week there are 3 cases that are impacting students at Berlin Elementary. We are currently conducting Test-to-Stay at Berlin in the impacted classrooms.

Earlier this week elementary families received information from Maria Melekos, our COVID-19 Coordinator, about an upcoming vaccine clinic at Doty Memorial School for students ages 5-11. The clinic will be held on Tuesday, December 14 from 3:45-7:00 p.m. Please see [this letter](#) for more details and a link to sign up for an appointment.

Earlier this week Hank Van Orman, our U-32 Athletic Director, shared our guidelines regarding winter sports and spectators. We will allow spectators to attend middle and high school sports competitions. Spectators must wear masks at all times. We will not allow any food in the gym or the ice rink and we will not sell concessions. Spectators who are not wearing masks properly or at all will be asked to leave, and failure to comply could result in game postponement or the removal of all spectators. If you choose to cheer on our teams, please do so respectfully and in full compliance with these guidelines. You can access the full guidelines [here](#). Please also note that the guidelines are subject to change.

On a related note, we are still exploring how we might offer an opportunity for our K-6 athletes to participate in elementary basketball this winter. Our primary considerations are structuring teams in ways that do not increase close contacts beyond those that exist during the school day and ensuring that our buildings can be fully cleaned and ready for the next school day. For the time being, we are focusing on offering practices only. We are necessarily approaching elementary athletics and co-curriculars differently than middle and high school athletics and co-curriculars because of both differences in vaccination rates among these student populations and the State's limited capacity to support contact tracing. Elementary principals will provide more information about the basketball program in the days to come.

We made it through the month of November without a snow day! I must admit that I am not looking forward to making a decision about inclement weather days, not only because I know those days can be inconvenient for families, but also because it sounds like my day will begin at about 4:30 a.m. with a slew of texts and emails between our bus

company, Roger Hill, our road commissioners, our district operations manager, and neighboring superintendents. Please know that when the weather conditions do warrant considering a school closure or delayed start, I will do my very best to make a decision that keeps our students' and staff's safety at the center, and I will communicate the decision as quickly as possible. To that end, please ensure that all of your contact information is up-to-date in Infinite Campus, our student information system, so that you receive messages in a timely manner.

Also, as the days continue to get colder, we want to make sure that our students are safe as they wait for school buses. If the temperature is below zero in the morning, you are welcome to leave your child's backpack at the bus stop as a signal to the bus driver that your child is riding the bus that day. Your child can then wait for the bus in a warm location, and the bus driver will know that they are coming.

Finally, we heard from some of you that you missed the opportunity to view *Like*, a documentary about the impact of social media on the brain. We were able to extend our screening pass through December 9. You may access the film for free through [this link](#) and you can read [this flyer](#) for more information about the film.

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