

December 9, 2021

Dear Washington Central Community,

This week we have had 7 cases of COVID-19 that have impacted our schools: 2 at Berlin, 2 at East Montpelier, 1 at Rumney, and 2 at U-32.

I would like to remind you that, in partnership with Shaw's Osco Pharmacy, we will be hosting a vaccine clinic at Doty Memorial School for students ages 5-11. This clinic will be open to students who are receiving their first or their second dose of the vaccine. Pre-registration is required. You can find the details [here](#).

Last year our teachers, paraeducators, and administrators participated in a book study of *Onward: Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators* by Elena Aguilar. Aguilar focuses on habits and dispositions that can strengthen emotional resilience. Some of the habits include understanding emotions, being present in the moment, and cultivating compassion. Some of the dispositions include acceptance, curiosity, and perseverance.

The book is organized by month. December's habit is focusing on the bright spots and the disposition is empowerment. Aguilar writes: *We can hone our attention to focus on our strengths, assets, and skills. This helps us to generally feel better and enables us to respond to challenges more effectively. Focusing on our strengths also boosts our levels of self-efficacy, and we feel more empowered to influence our surroundings.* She reminds us to look for the light, especially when the days are short.

Focusing on the bright spots resonates with me. It strikes me as deeply compatible with both proficiency-based education--affirming what students can do and providing specific, actionable feedback so that they get even stronger--and instructional coaching--again, focusing on what is wanted and going well as a way to do even better work. I am working hard to focus on the bright spots, even when we are all so stressed, and I am finding that, for me, it is making a difference. Aguilar invites us to consider how our days would be different if we saw more bright spots, and I appreciate the invitation.

Just a reminder that you can find information about COVID-19, past community letters, and other important announcements at www.wcsu32.org and, 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