

March 10, 2022

Dear Washington Central Community,

Earlier this week Maria Melekos, our COVID-19 Coordinator, and I sent a [letter](#) to staff and families regarding pending changes in our COVID-19 practices. One of the most significant changes is that **all schools in Washington Central will become mask optional beginning Monday, March 14**. In alignment with CDC guidance, we plan to remain mask optional as long as the [CDC community level](#) in Washington County remains low or medium.

We've been spending time preparing for these changes both logistically and emotionally. There have been many conversations with staff and students, including our youngest students, many of whom have only experienced school as a place where people wear masks. I appreciate that many of us are feeling both excited and worried about some of the changes. I hope that we can navigate this next step together openly, honestly, respectfully, and kindly.

This week we have had 6 reported cases of COVID-19 across the district: 2 at Berlin, 1 at Calais, and 3 at U-32.

Each spring we participate in the statewide assessment program in literacy, math, and science. Specifically, we administer the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) in Grades 3-9 for literacy and math. We also administer the Vermont Science Assessment (VTSA) in Grades 5, 8, and 11. We use the statewide assessment results as one set of data as we analyze our students' performance and our teaching and learning practices at the school and district levels. We are making preparations here to administer those assessments later this spring and will share more details with you in the weeks to come. In the meantime, if you are interested in learning more about Vermont's comprehensive assessment program, you can find the information [here](#).

As always, please reach out at [jmillerarsenault@u32.org](mailto:jmillerarsenault@u32.org) or (802) 229-0553 if you have any questions or concerns.

Warmly,  
Jen Miller-Arsenault  
Interim Superintendent