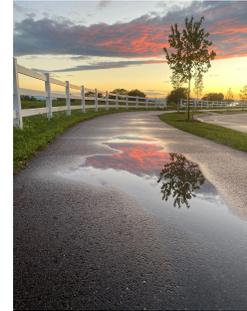


Dear Families & Caregivers,

It's almost here! We are so excited to begin the 22-23 school year. Our teachers, staff and entire school community have been working hard to make sure we and our buildings are ready to welcome you all back for what we hope will be an amazing year. We hope that you all have taken time this summer to rest, rejuvenate, spend time with friends and family and just enjoy the Vermont summer at home. I've certainly tried to do the same!



I am also grateful for the time I've been able to spend here in Washington Central, meeting & connecting with many of you. Warm thanks to those who have said hello or dropped me an email - I feel very welcome! As the year goes on, I hope to continue meeting in and getting to know our strong communities. My current focus is to learn more about the best ways to engage with all of the voices in Washington Central. I believe the best way to do this is to study the current ways we connect, the voices we sometimes miss, and adjust our methods. Stay tuned for more opportunities to meet!

In addition, my intention is to continue with weekly community letters this year. I hope to be able to share important information and happenings around our schools. Feedback is always welcome!

Health Guidance

WCUUSD will implement the health and safety guidance from the Vermont Department of Health and the Vermont Agency of Education which will reflect the current impact that the COVID19 virus is having on our community. This week, the two agencies shared [this](#) joint memo to help schools begin the school year. You can also find more detailed information about our procedures in your student's handbook, and more about Vermont's guidance [here](#). Given some of the more immediate questions that we have received, I'm highlighting some key elements of the Vermont guidance here:

- **Stay up to date on vaccinations:** Vaccines are the best tool we have to protect ourselves against COVID-19, especially from severe illness, hospitalization and death. Vermonters ages 6 months and older can get vaccinated. The Vermont DOH strongly encourages you to protect yourself by getting vaccinated as soon as possible, and get your booster shot for full protection when eligible.
- **Stay home when sick:** Whether you have symptoms of COVID-19, the flu, or another contagious illness, please stay home if you are sick and call your healthcare provider if needed. This helps keep germs from spreading, protects those who may be at risk of serious illness, and gives you a chance to get well.
- **Testing:** Students & staff exhibiting COVID19 [symptoms](#) (Fever (100.4 °F or higher), cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea) will need to stay home from school, and are encouraged to test.

We continue to have ample testing supplies, and can provide tests as needed. Contact your school nurse if you would like a test. More information can be found [here](#) about testing in Vermont.

- **If your child tests positive:** If your child tests [positive](#) for COVID19, they should stay home and isolate for at least 5 days from the date of their positive test or the start of their symptoms, whichever is earlier. They can end isolation and return to school after day 5 if their symptoms have improved AND they have had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers.
 - **If your child becomes symptomatic at school:** Our school nurses will test students who are exhibiting symptoms while at school. Students who do not have consent to test (collected this year in the annual health forms) will need to be picked up. If the LAMP or antigen test is positive for COVID-19, the student will be sent home. The student will be isolated from others and wear a mask until they are picked up by a parent or caretaker. Students who do not test positive will be clinically evaluated by our school nurses to determine whether they should return to class or be sent home.
- **Masks:** While masks are not required by our current health guidance, masking can be part of a comprehensive mitigation strategy. Individuals may still choose to wear masks based on their individual situation. Our schools continue to be mask-friendly environments. Should the VT Department of Health Guidance change and begin requiring universal masking, WCUUSD will follow those guidelines.

Welcoming our Teachers Back!

Today marks the beginning of inservice for our new faculty and staff, and we welcomed many of them this morning for some shared learning. Next Wednesday, our full faculty and staff will return to launch the school year and prepare for our students' return. The beginning of the year is always a time to celebrate, and we are looking forward to learning together. In future updates, I'll share more about our focus areas this year.

Come work with us!

Interested in joining our schools and being part of these wonderful communities in a different way? We have plenty of opportunities! Visit the [job openings](#) section of our website or www.schoolspring.com to learn more.

Meagan

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Superintendent of Schools