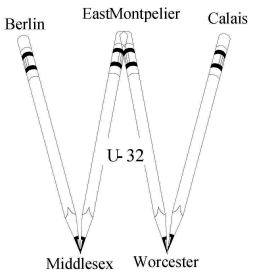
WCUUSD: Actualizing Our Strategic Vision

Excellence and Equity through Configuration



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Good afternoon. As Superintendent, I am privileged to present a vision for the future configuration of the Washington Central Unified Union School District. This is not simply a discussion about buildings; it is about **actualizing our mission** and ensuring a future of sustained educational excellence and equity for every student.

This is an opportunity **reimagine our school culture** and build new identities in a new configuration. In addition to addressing systemic challenges, we will leveraging the **Community Schools Framework**—our strategy for achieving equitable outcomes—to build a feeling of deep belonging, safety, and vitality. This addresses community feedback calling for stronger relationships and connectivity.



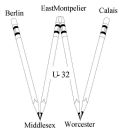
Our approach is deeply rooted in the foundational identity of the Washington Central Unified Union School District (WCUUSD), which exists to **nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity, and power to contribute to their local and global communities**.

Our Core Beliefs and Strategic Plan goals drive our work and that work centers around: **Rigorous Curriculum and Instruction** (ALL students can learn and thrive), **Well-Being** (schools are safe and valued spaces), and **Humanity, Justice, Community and Belonging** (honoring diversity, centering equity).

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We face critical challenges—declining enrollment, rising costs, and mandates under the new foundation funding model (Act 73). We must heed the urgency expressed by our community: **"Our schools can't wait."** To move forward responsibly and proactively, we must solidify a structure that guarantees the resources and opportunities our students deserve.

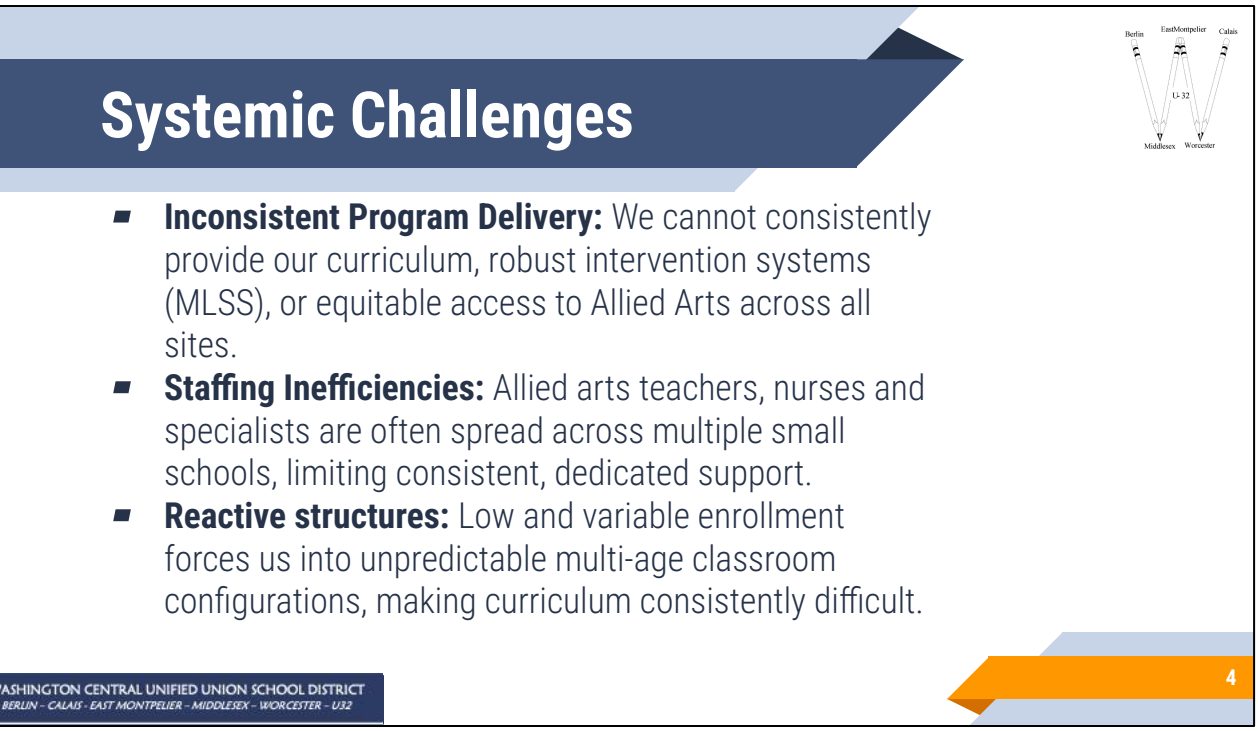
Proposed Model



- **Elementary Consolidation (FY27, 2026-2027 school year):** Consolidate our current five elementary schools into three sustainable K-6 sites
- **Grade 6 Transition (FY28, 2027-2028 school year):** Grade 6 students transition from the elementary schools to U-32, establishing a developmentally appropriate 6-8 MS and 9-12 HS structure

This plan involves two strategic, sequenced transitions designed to maximize opportunity and minimize disruption:

We will consolidate our current five elementary schools (Berlin, Calais, Doty, EMES, Rumney) into **three sustainable K-5 elementary sites**. These sites—likely Berlin, East Montpelier, and Middlesex—are selected based on current enrollments, capacity utilization, and geographic considerations. This structure allows us to move away from reactive, fluctuating configurations.



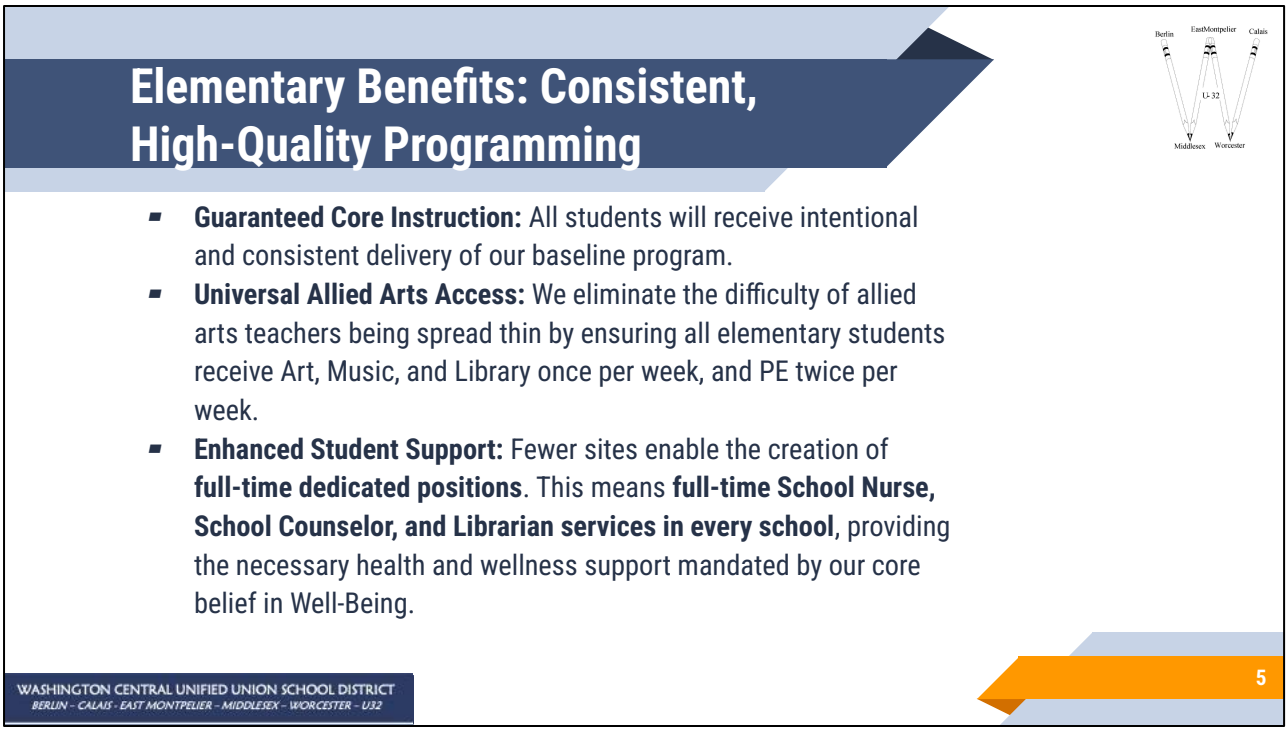
The foundational principle guiding this entire process is that **programming must drive our structural decisions**. We are prioritizing the educational experience first, designing the vision, which then drives the program, and finally drives the structure.

Our current configuration faces critical constraints that undermine equitable student outcomes.

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This model puts forth a more coherent, equitable, and sustainable educational environment that addresses these systemic shortcomings. We have all agreed on our Strategic Goals and in order to make that happen we must recognize and meet the inherent systemic challenges.

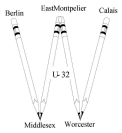
Class size commitment: Classrooms will adhere to WCUUSD Class Size D6 Policy and state minimum standards (Act 73). K-3 classes will maintain a minimum of 13 and a maximum of 20 students; Grades 4-6 will maintain a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 25 students.



This consolidation directly supports **Goal 2** of our Strategic Plan by guaranteeing equitable programmatic standards:

- **Consistent Core Instruction (5 days/week):** All students will receive intentional instruction in **Literacy** (including phonics/word study, reading, writing), **Math**, **Science**, and **Global Citizenship**.
- **Robust Allied Arts:** Students will have Art, Music, and Library classes once per week each, and PE access twice per week (40 minutes per day). This addresses the constraint of Allied Arts teachers being spread across small schools.
- **Dedicated Professional Staff:** The reduction in buildings allows the district to minimize shared positions and transition staff to full-time roles. We commit to providing **full-time School Nurse, School Counselor, and Library/Media services in every school**. This has been a point of concern for several years of both the board, staff, and community. This proposal answers that concern.
- **Targeted Support (MLSS):** The structure will support a vigorous Multi-Layered System of Support (MLSS), utilizing small groups, when possible, for more targeted and intensive interventions.
- **Professional Collaboration:** Teachers will have more frequent and significant opportunities for collaboration, joint planning time, and embedded professional learning with grade-level peers.

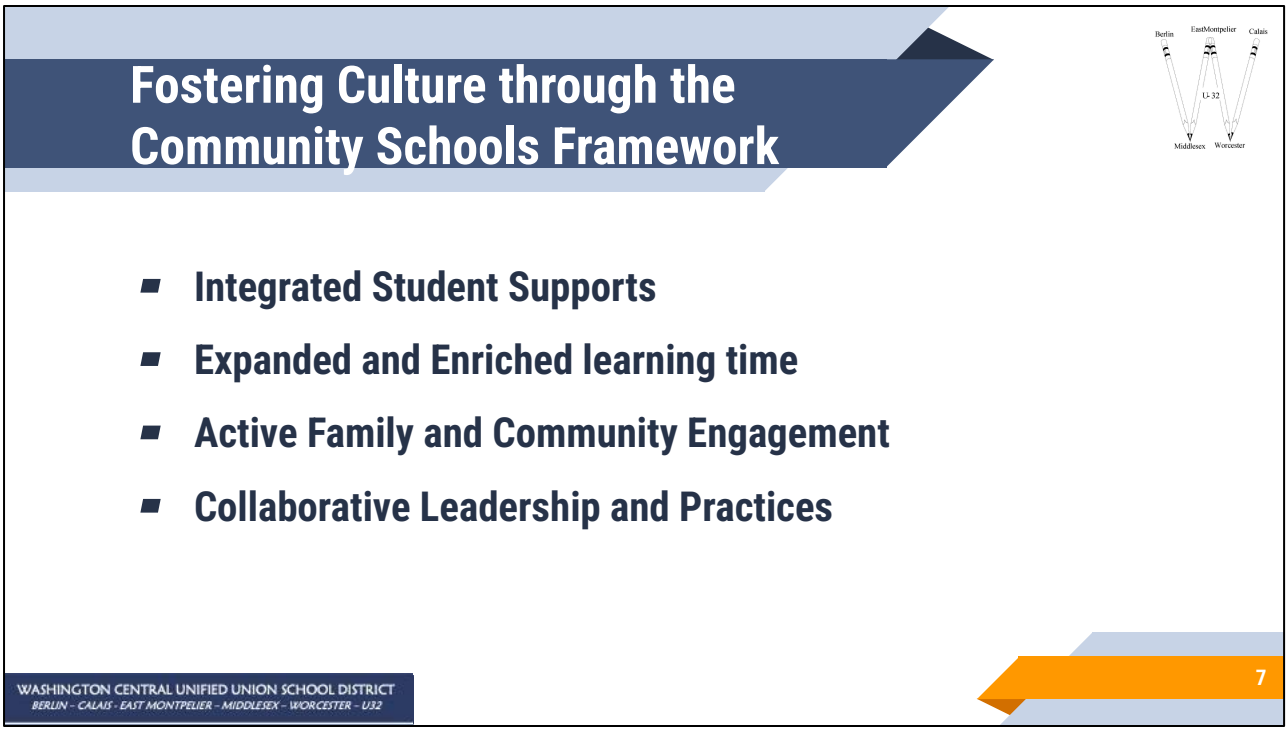
Grade 6-8 Middle School: Developmental Appropriateness



- **Grade 6 students are developmentally ready to transition beyond elementary settings.**
- **The 6-12 model provides greater access to co-curricular activities and a more diverse cohort of learners.**
- **Teachers gain opportunities for specialization through Middle Grade Endorsements.**

This transition honors the developmental needs of our students, aligning with **Goal 1** (Well-Being and Inclusivity):

The three elementary schools will give our students a larger cohort of peers prior to U-32 and can help in the transition to the larger learning environment of U-32.



Our core beliefs demand that we not just reorganize resources, but **reimagine our school culture** and build new identities in our new configuration. We are leveraging the **Community Schools Framework**—our strategy for achieving equitable outcomes—to build a feeling of deep belonging, safety, and vitality. This addresses community feedback calling for stronger relationships and connectivity.

Four pillars create school communities that provide:

1. **Integrated Student Supports:** We address out-of-school barriers by coordinating services such as medical and mental health care, providing a stronger safety net for our students.
2. **Expanded and Enriched Learning Time:** We are investing in "third space" opportunities and grant writing with the goal of providing **universal before-school and after-school programming** across all schools, expanding opportunities beyond the traditional school day.
3. **Active Family and Community Engagement:** We commit to making our schools true **centers of our communities**. Engagement is critical to preserving the depth and relational magic of smaller schools. This involves intentionally integrating the traditions of merging schools and actively involving families as partners.
4. **Collaborative Leadership and Practices:** This is the "relational glue" that comes from all the stakeholders (staff, families, students) to create new, unified school identities and cultures, ensuring that **all students belong** in the new structure.

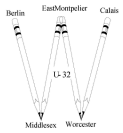


In alignment with our strategic commitment to **Transparent and Responsible Leadership**, the process forward is guided by a robust **Transition Framework**. Our goal is a **smooth transition** that is clear, predictable, inclusive, and transparent. We are moving with discipline and care.

Key Components of the Framework:

- **Phased Implementation:** We are committed to the K-6 consolidation in **FY27 (2026-2027)** and the Grade 6 transition in **FY28 (2027-2028)**. This timeline provides ample opportunity for the careful transition work needed.
- **Dedicated Leadership:** A **Transition Steering Team**, including Configuration Committee members, staff, families, and students (Grade 5-8), will be established to guide the roadmap.
- **Early Communication:** We are launching a comprehensive communications campaign with biweekly updates, infographics, and clear key messages: *"This configuration expands access to high-quality instruction, resources, and peer learning for every student."*.
- **Staffing Clarity:** We plan to finalize the Staff Assignment Plan by **March 2026** to reduce anxiety and provide clarity to our dedicated educators.
- **Student Support:** For the Grade 6 transition, we will implement specific actions like **multiple "Step-Up Days"** and **student-led orientation programs** to ensure a welcoming environment and address concerns about interaction with older students. We will replicate the careful support currently given to rising 7th graders.
- **Logistics Commitment:** We acknowledge that travel time is a key criterion. We commit to manage student travel time by adhering as closely as possible to a maximum of **45 minutes one-way for elementary students** and **60 minutes for middle/high school students**.

Seizing Opportunity



This transition is not just about efficiency; it is about student opportunity and community vitality.

We must shift from systemic inconsistencies towards sustained excellence and equity.

We stand at a critical juncture. External pressures necessitate change, and we have the opportunity to define that change ourselves, rather than wait for others to define it for us.

This configuration is a strategic action to shift WCUUSD from systemic inconsistencies toward **sustained excellence and equity**. By prioritizing program over structure and centering our core values in the transition, we ensure that we are doing what is right for **all** our students, securing a strong, connected, and student-centered future.

We must stay focused on answering the questions:

Are students learning and thriving?

Are we using our resources effectively and equitably?

Are we making progress toward our strategic goals?

We welcome your feedback and questions now, as your voices will continue to shape this necessary and urgent work.