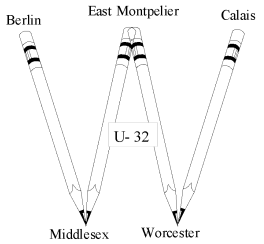
Washington Central Unified Union School District

WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

1130 Gallison Hill Road
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone (802) 229-0553
Fax (802) 229-2761

Steven Dellinger-Pate
Superintendent



Mission: WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity, and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

2024-2030 Prioritized Work (Strategic Plan Goals):

1. Build and nurture a culture of well-being and inclusivity.
2. Challenge, empower, and engage each student through evidence-based instructional strategies and curriculum and varied educational opportunities.
3. Foster and commit to responsible leadership that engages the community and communicates transparently.

Key Assumptions Driving Our Work

- **Declining Enrollment:** LTW ADM is estimated to decline by 166.97 as of December 9. This represents a reduction in our State allocation of approximately $2,750,000.
- **Spending Threshold:** Updated late November to be $16,470 per pupil.
- **Staffing and Salaries:** Statewide salary pressures (+6.8% from FY24 to FY25) and our staff-to-student ratios must inform decisions.
- **Benefits:** Health insurance costs continue to rise significantly (16% in FY25, 12% in FY26). VEHI announced the average premium increase of 7.3% for FY27 on October 21. This will be formally set in January.
- **Facilities:** Upcoming maintenance and capital needs will require choices between using reserves or increasing operating costs.
- **Tuition:** Declining enrollments from sending districts and external placement costs must be planned for.
- **Inflation:** Regional forecasts remain between 2.5–3.2% over the next three years.

- **Federal Funding:** Possible reductions in Title and grant programs may shift costs to the general fund.
- **Reserves and Debt:** Use of surpluses or reserves, along with ongoing debt obligations, will impact financial flexibility.

Meeting our Parameters and Priorities (Finance Committee Discussion p.10, and Board Discussion p.4)

- **Student Outcomes First:** All budget decisions will be tied to clear outcomes for learners.
- **Equity Lens:** We will ensure that every student has access to opportunities, resources, and support.
- **Data-Informed Decision Making:** Budget priorities will be guided by evidence, not intuition.
- **Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability:** Our decisions must strengthen the financial health of both our schools and our community.

Budget Draft	Expanded Pre K programming	Multi-Layer System of Supports	Elementary class size and grade level configuration	MS/HS Programming: Class sizes and course offerings	Community Schools	Facilities/ Capital Projects	Under the Threshold	5% increase to per pupil expenditure
#1					Grant funded			
#2a					Grant funded			
#2b					Grant funded			
#3					Grant funded			

Budget #1 (presented 11/19/25): 5 elementary schools; 7-12 U-32

Budget #2a (presented 12/10/25): 5 elementary schools; 7-12 U-32

Budget #2b (presented 12/10/25): 3 elementary schools; 7-12 U-32

Budget #3: TBD

Explanation of each parameter

Expanded PreK	**Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) Education:** Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM (25 hours per week) for 35 weeks. **Locations:** Five programs will be established to accommodate community needs and utilize available space within elementary schools, with minimum enrollment of 8 students and a maximum of 20 students per program, depending on the licensed capacity of each classroom.
Elementary class size and grade level configurations MS/HS Programming: Class sizes and course offerings	**Optimizing Class Size:** To address the challenges of providing a consistently articulated curriculum in a setting with a robust classroom community, the administration recommends that we adhere to the WCUUSD Class Size D6 Policy and state minimum standards (Act 73): Pre-K = no more than 20 students K-3 = Minimum 13, Maximum 20 4-6 = Minimum 15, Maximum 25 7-12 = Minimum 17, Maximum 25 **Optimizing Classroom Configurations:** Plan multi-grade classrooms proactively to ensure consistent curriculum delivery and effective use of teacher expertise, rather than creating them reactively due to low enrollment. Administration recommends single grade level courses and the following grade level configurations when single grade classes do not meet minimum class size: PreK (3- and 4-year old, some 5-yr-old) K (no multigrade) 1 - 2 3 - 4 5 - 6 7 - 8 9 - 12
Community Schools	**Funding for activities and position** 1.0 FTE is currently funded by a grant for FY27. The grant is a fixed dollar amount that may have to be supplemented slightly with increases to salary and benefits. In FY28 the position is not funded
Facilities and Capital	FY27 Transfer: $650,000 approved in May (for reference FY26 transfer = $500,000)

Planning	September approved final budget for projects: The Board authorized the completion of the recommended projects as identified in the September 17 packet for an amount not to exceed $1,226,901 and approve the District moving forward with bid document preparation and bidding as necessary.