



# Worcester

## CENTRAL SCHOOL

*Strive, Support, Succeed!*

### Back-to-School 2023-2024 Newsletter



#### Superintendent's Message

Dear Worcester Central School Families,

On behalf of all the dedicated staff members at Worcester Central School I would like to say welcome back to school. We are looking forward to another amazing year with our students!

Our staff worked hard in preparation for the new school year and it is so great to see all our students back in the building. The energy and enthusiasm that our students bring to a new school year creates such a positive environment.

As we begin the new school year, I would like to share some exciting news. We continue to move forward with our capital project and are working with the New York State Education Department to finalize documents so that we can move to the bid phase of the project. We have also shifted to our new student information system SchoolTool and will be launching the parent portal in the upcoming weeks. Also, I want to remind you that all students can eat breakfast and lunch for free this year as part of the Community Eligibility Provision. This is a great opportunity for our students to get two free, nutritious meals at school.

In closing, I thank you for entrusting us with your children. It takes a partnership with every member of the WCS school community to educate, shape and raise our students into productive members of society. Have a great 2023-24 school year!

Respectfully,

Tim Gonzales, Superintendent



**Welcome Back!**





## Welcome New Faculty and Staff!



Jill Kealey: Second Grade



Kayla Wolfert: Food Services Manager



Kayleigh Ricks: Elementary Special Education



Regina Pasa: School Nurse



Savannah Carter: Secondary English

### If your child is absent from school...

If your child is absent from school, you will receive an automated phone call from the district. A parent/guardian written excuse is required if your child is sick. Absences for any appointments do require a doctor's note to be considered a legal excuse. Please call us with any concerns at (607) 397-8785.

## Summer Wrap-Up: Thank you to our families for attending!



Summer Enrichment Robotics Workshop



### PRE-K ORIENTATION

On September 6, Mrs. Ballard and Mrs. Powers hosted an orientation for all Pre-K families in the "Faerie Woods." This was a time for the children to become familiar with the teachers and the classroom before the start of school.

### POPSICLES ON THE PLAYGROUND

On September 5, a very hot evening, all WCS kindergarten students and their families were invited to enjoy "Popsicles on the Playground." The children were able to meet their classmates and teachers as well as see their classroom.

## 2023-24 CLIMATE EVENT

During one of the Superintendent's Conference days, our WCS Climate Team designed an event for all staff consisting of lunch, sponsored in part by New York State Insurance Reciprocal, and collaborative team-building challenges. This was an exciting time for all members of the WCS staff to reignite their passion for the upcoming school year!



# School Calendar 2023-24

Worcester CENTRAL SCHOOL

## July 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

## August 2023

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27	28	29	30	31		

## September 2023

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30						

## October 2023

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29	30	31				

## November 2023

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26	27	28	29	30		

## December 2023

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

## January 2024

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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## February 2024

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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## March 2024

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30	31					

## April 2024

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## May 2024

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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## June 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

September 4..... Labor Day  
 September 5..... All Staff Supt. Conference Day  
 September 6..... Supt. Conference Day  
 September 7..... First Day of Classes  
 October 5..... Fall Open House (PK-12)  
 October 6..... Supt. Conference Day  
 October 9..... Columbus Day  
 November 7..... Supt. Conf. Day-Parent/Teacher Conferences  
 November 10..... Veterans Day  
 November 22-24..... Thanksgiving Recess  
 December 13..... Early Dismissal at 12:15 p.m./Prof. Development  
 December 25-Jan 2..... Holiday Break  
 January 15..... Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
 January 23-26..... Regents Exams  
 February 7..... Early Dismissal at 12:15 p.m./Conference Day  
 February 19..... Presidents' Day  
 February 19-23..... Mid-Winter Break  
 March 13..... Early Dismissal at 12:15 p.m./Prof. Development  
 March 29-April 5..... Spring Break  
 April 16-19..... ELA Tests Grades 3-8

May 7-10..... Math Tests Grades 3-8  
 May 14..... Science Regents Grades 5 & 8  
 May 15..... Early Dismissal at 12:15 p.m./Conference Day  
 May 21..... Spring Open House; School Budget Vote  
 May 24-27..... Memorial Day Break  
 June 4..... Regents Exam  
 June 13..... Last Day of Classes Gr. 7-12  
 June 14-26..... Regents Exams  
 June 19..... Juneteenth Day  
 June 24-26..... Early Dismissal at 12:15 p.m./Conference Day  
 June 26..... Last Day of School Gr. PreK-12/Rating Day  
 June 30..... Graduation, 11 a.m.

### KEY:

- Conference Day
- School Holiday/Break
- Testing/Regents
- △ First/Last Days of School
- School Budget Vote





## Annual Notifications

### Public Notice

The Worcester Central School District is in compliance with the provisions of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. This agency does not discriminate due to race, national origin, sex, age or handicap. The Title IX Officer for Worcester Central School is the Superintendent.

### Educational Services for Homeless Students

All District programs are available to homeless and/or unaccompanied youth. For more information on the services available to homeless and/or unaccompanied youth, please contact our District's Homeless Liaisons, Mrs. Melissa Leonard, Secondary Principal, or Mrs. Katie Sill, Elementary Principal at (607) 387-8785.

### Use of Video Cameras on School Grounds and Buses

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to promote and foster school safety and ensure a safe and effective learning environment. After having carefully considered and balanced the rights of privacy with the District's duty to promote discipline, health, welfare and safety of staff and students, as well as that of the general public who has occasion to use school facilities, the Board supports the use of surveillance cameras when necessary in its schools, its buses and/or on school grounds. District

surveillance cameras will only be utilized in public areas where there is no "reasonable expectation of privacy." Audio recordings shall not be utilized by the School District officials; such prohibition does not preclude the use of audio recordings by law enforcement officials in accordance with their official duties and/or as otherwise authorized by law.

### Asbestos Management Plan

Notice is hereby given to all employees, parents, students, PTO, and all other users of the facilities of the Worcester Central School District, that the District's original Asbestos Management Plan was submitted to the New York State Education Department in Albany, New York.

In accordance with EPA's "Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act" (AHERA) of 1987 (40 CFR Part 763) and the New York State Right to Know Law, annual notices pertaining to the inspection and availability of management plans have been posted in each building.

All management plan records are available for review during school hours. For further information please contact Mr. Glenn Jaquish, Building Maintenance Mechanic at (607) 397-8785, ext. 123.

### No Child Left Behind Act

As part of the federal regulations, parents of children attending Worcester Central School may request the school to provide information regarding the qualifications of teachers in

the Title I/AIS program. If you would like this information, please contact Tim Gonzales, Superintendent at (607) 397-8785.

View the District's Computer Acceptable Use Policy, ED2D Law Information, Attendance Policy, Code of Conduct, and Title I information on the District Web site at [www.worcestercs.org](http://www.worcestercs.org).

### Pesticide Notifications

NYS Education Law Section 409H effective July 1, 2001, requires all public and non-public elementary and secondary schools to provide written notification to all persons in parental relation, faculty and staff regarding the potential use of pesticides periodically throughout the school year.

The Worcester Central School District is required to maintain a list of persons in parental relation, faculty and staff who wish to receive 48-hour prior written notification of certain pesticide applications.

In the event of an emergency application necessary to protect against imminent threat to human health, a good faith effort will be made to supply written notification to those on the 48-hour prior notification list.

If you would like to receive 48-hour notification of pesticide applications that are scheduled to occur in the school, please contact Mr. Glenn Jaquish, Building Maintenance Mechanic, at (607) 397-8785, ext. 123.



## Annual Notifications

### Disclosure to the Military

Federal law requires school districts, upon request, release the name, home address and telephone number of high school students to military recruiters unless the student or the student's parent/guardian have directed the school not to release this information.

If you DO NOT want the school district to release this information to military recruiters, you must inform the district to request this in writing. You may make this request by writing a letter to Mrs. Melissa Leonard, Secondary Principal. Please include the following information: "Request NOT to Release Directory Information to Military Recruiters", Student Name, Grade, Parent and Student Signature, Date.

Once you have submitted this information, you do not need to do so again unless you wish to change your mind.

### Visitors to School

Although we encourage community involvement in school and school-related activities, please help us to ensure the safety of our children and support quality learning by following the guidelines and requirements for visitations below:

1. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
2. All visitors to the school must report to the main office upon arrival at the school. All

visitors must log into the visitor's identification system and will be issued a visitor's identification badge, which must be worn at all times while in the school building and on school grounds. The visitor must also sign out on the visitor's identification system in the main office upon leaving the building.

3. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings, are not required to register.

4. Teachers are not able to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors. Parents wishing to speak with the teacher should schedule an appointment that does not interfere with the teacher's instructional time.

5. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to an Administrator. Unauthorized persons may be asked to leave.

6. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in the code of conduct. Law enforcement may be called if the situation warrants.

### Your Rights Under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

•The right to inspect and review the student's education records

within 45 days after the day the Worcester Central School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

### Pets/Animals on Campus

The WCS Board of Education allows the use of service animals and, with prior approval from administration, animals for educational purposes on school grounds. All other animals and domestic pets are prohibited on school grounds including outdoor sporting events.



**Summer Wrap Up—** WCS Students had a blast finishing a summer enrichment Dance for Fitness session.



## Annual Notifications

- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Worcester Central School to amend a record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- The right to provide written consent before the school



discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Worcester Central School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202. The Health Office is the link between your child and health and safety. Please review the following guidelines and policies below. This ensures appropriate management of any health concerns that may arise while your child is at school. Please help us keep all of our students safe by completing necessary forms and adhering to our health guidelines.

### WCS is a Smoke-Free Zone

By law and by policy established by the Board of Education, tobacco products and electronic cigarettes and their use are strictly prohibited on school grounds. This prohibited use includes the use of such products by adults anywhere on school grounds.

Please help to keep the campus clean and safe for students while also setting an example for children.





## Important Health Office Information

### Emergency Contact Forms

Annual Health History and Emergency Forms have been mailed to all families. Please complete these forms and return them in a timely manner. Please keep your emergency contact information up-to-date. It is the only way we have of reaching you in the event of an emergency.

### Taking Medication in School

To assure the safety of our students while in school, and comply with New York state law, no medications are allowed in school without prior approval. If your child has a condition which requires them to take medication during the school day we will gladly cooperate with you and your doctor. Please bring us:

1. A provider's order indicating the name of the medication, dosage, time of administration, days to be given. If order states student can self-carry/administer medication, the provider must sign an attestation permission form;
2. Permission note from a parent or guardian;
3. Medication in the original container. This includes both prescription and over the counter medicine, including: Tylenol, Advil and cough drops. Medication must be brought to school by a parent or guardian; and

4. Completed Authorization of Another Adult to Administer Medication form.

MEDICATION CANNOT BE PROVIDED BY WCS.

### Immunization Requirements for Students

New York State Public Health Law (section 2164) requires children entering 7th and 12th grades on or after September 1, 2017 to receive a vaccine against meningococcal disease. Vaccine names are Menactra or Menveo. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) requires this vaccine to be administered to all adolescents at age 11 or 12 years and a booster dose on or after the 16th birthday.

Tdap (Tetanus diphtheria and Pertussis): Students entering 6th grade in the fall for the 2023-24 school year are required to have an immunization called Tdap.

NOTE: Religious exemptions are no longer allowed. All students must be vaccinated to attend school.



Summer Wrap Up-- WCS Climate Event



### Screening Requirements

#### Vision

All new students and students in Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten and grades 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, and 11.

#### Hearing

All new students and students in Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten and grades 1, 3, 5, 7, and 11.

#### Scoliosis

All Students in grades 5 & 7 for girls; Grade 9 for boys.

#### Health Examinations

A Health Examination including Body Mass Index and Weight Status Category information is required for all newly entering students and student in Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten and students in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11.

#### Dental Certificates

A dental certificate is requested for all newly entering students, students in Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten and students in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11.

Please call the Nurse's Office at (607) 397-8785, ext. 126 with any questions or concerns.

More information and forms can be found at [worcestercs.org](http://worcestercs.org).

## Board of Education

William Fisher, *President*  
Stacey Serdy, *Vice President*  
Peter Kwiatkowski  
Tanya Shalor  
James Conroe

Tim Gonzales, *Superintendent*

*Produced in cooperation with  
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**Back-to-School, 2023-24**

## Mark your CALENDAR

### OCTOBER

- 5** Fall Open House (PK-12) 6-7p.m.
- 6** No School - Supt. Conference Day
- 9** No School - Indigenous Peoples' Day/Columbus Day



### NOVEMBER

- 7** No School - Supt. Conference Day/ Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 10** No School - Veteran's Day
- 22-24** Thanksgiving Recess

## Emergency Closings, Delays and Early Dismissals

WCS uses SchoolMessenger to notify all students and families of emergency closures, delays and event cancellations. This system makes phone calls directly to every student's household, including cell phone numbers, as provided.

School Messenger is also used to communicate additions and changes to previously scheduled events. Please make sure your contact information is current to ensure you receive these important notifications. Please contact Peggy Nelson in the Guidance Office at (607) 397-8785 ext. 104 to update your contact information.

WCS also announces closings, delays and early dismissals on the following radio and television stations: WBNG TV, WKTU TV, WGY, WRGB, WNYT, WTEN, WRVE, WFLY, News 10 Timewarner Cable, WZOZ and WSRK.

## 2023-24 FREE SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL STUDENTS

All students enrolled at Worcester Central School can receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at no charge to your household each day they attend WCS during the school year!

All families regardless of income are still asked to complete the Household Income Verification form for the 2023-24 school year. Completion of this form is critical to determine eligibility for other state and federal programs such as:

- Title I and Title II A Reading and Math Remediation programs
- Title IV programs which provide funding for teacher professional development
- E-Rate which provides funding for technology and library services
- CROP (Creating Rural Opportunities Program), our after-school program.
- Future funding opportunities pursued through grant applications.

You only need to submit one form for all children in the household attending school in grades Pre-K - 12. If you have any further questions, please contact Jamei Martin at (607) 397-8787 ext. 101 or [jmartin@worcestercs.org](mailto:jmartin@worcestercs.org). Thank you for your support!