

# WINDHAM CENTER SCHOOL

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## Memo

**To:** WCS Staff  
**From:** Rory O'Connor  
**Date:** August 19, 2018  
**RE:** School-Year 2019-20

Dear Staff:

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year! This summer has been thoroughly enjoyable with the abundant sunshine and warm temperatures. Hopefully, we all got to enjoy this time with family and friends. As we prepare to welcome back our students in a couple of weeks, there is an incredible sense of excitement and promise for Windham Center School this year. We have the chance to start something special here as we transition to a Grade 5/6 school. We are already off to a great start by creating a vision last spring that encourages empathy, equity, and inclusion:

***Windham Center School will foster a collaborative mindset that encourages empathy, equity, and inclusion to influence the teaching and learning of all students.***

I recently had a conversation with a staff member about the intangibles needed to be a successful educator. We have all been professionally trained, taken the necessary exams, and are ultimately here because we want to shape a future to be lead by successful, empathetic individuals. Make no mistake, our work each day is critical and timely. To our students, the only thing that truly matters is heart. Heart to make a personal connection with you, heart to keep you safe, heart to give you hope, and yes, heart to hold you accountable. If we each strive toward putting forth the energy, grit, and persistence to lead with our hearts and minds, then there is no doubt that our school will be something special.

With that, we welcome our newcomers to the WCS tribe! The following lists our newly hired professionals who will join us for the 2019-20 school year:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Douglas Bennington - Grade 6 Teacher      | Krystal Mitkonis - Mental Health Counselor |
| Jamie Dumais - Grade 6 Teacher            | Cheyenne DeMattia - Paraprofessional       |
| Kate Eagen - Grade 6 Teacher              | Amy Grube - Paraprofessional               |
| Robert Hemmer - Grade 6 Teacher           | Hailey Nartiff - Paraprofessional          |
| Thomas Mechin - Grade 5 Teacher           | Lisa O'Connor - Paraprofessional           |
| Lisa Kuenzler - Special Education Teacher | Mary Reynolds - Paraprofessional           |



As we embrace one another as teammates, I am thrilled to highlight some of the school improvements we have benefitted from as a result of the restructuring of grade levels in the District. To our Unified Arts teachers: say goodbye to the carts! The following is a list of improvements to our instructional teaching space:

- Full-sized classroom for Band instruction
- Full-sized classroom for Music instruction
- Full-sized classroom for Art instruction
- Full-sized classroom for Spanish instruction
- Full-sized classroom for Health instruction
- Full-sized classroom for MTSS
- Full-sized classrooms for Digital Literacy/Video Production
- Dedicated Special Education Conference Room
- Dedicated Learning Lab for Special Education
- Dedicated Professional Learning/PLC room
- Dedicated office for Directors

The first few days of school are critical in forming positive relationships with students. One strategy that has worked very well in the past is finding a few moments to place a phone call home to establish connections with families. With that said, this is the year for forming relationships. We have the opportunity to define Center School in our own way, writing our own story each day. Bill Belichick is famous for producing championship caliber teams year in and year out. Part of his success, I believe, is in his ability to lead his team with a laser focus. Two signs exist at the entry and exit points of the locker room at Gillette Stadium that are visible to the team every single day. The signs read the following:

**When You Come Here:**

- Do your job (well)
- Work hard
- Be attentive
- Put the team first

**When You Leave Here:**

- Don't believe or fuel the hype
- Manage expectations
- Ignore the noise
- Speak for yourself

Soak up some sun, visualize the year that you want to have, seize every opportunity, and good things will happen. See you soon!

Sincerely,

*Rory*  
Rory

