



SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

To: WSD Board President and Board of Trustees
From: Wilmer Chavarria, WSD Superintendent
Re: **Superintendent's Report for November 2025**
Date: 11/10/2025

Dear Members of The Board,

Below please find my report for **November 2025** and refer any questions about a given item directly to me during the regularly scheduled board meeting or to the Board President and me if your inquiry is prior to the meeting.

Thank you for your work in advancing the Ends Statement of our district to form students who will "lead healthy, productive and successful lives and engage with their local and global community."

Respectfully Submitted,

Wilmer A. Chavarria, NBCT
Superintendent of Schools
Winooski School District
wchavarria@wsdvt.org



Student athletes celebrate the notable achievements of this season.

GENERAL UPDATES

- **Conclusion of Formal Significant Disproportionality Requirements**

The Winooski School District was identified with significant disproportionality in the identification of white students with an emotional disturbance during school years 2023/24 and 2024/25. The VT Agency of Education conducted a review of the district policies, practices, and procedures regarding these areas over the last two years. The WSD engaged in a root cause analysis of the factors contributing to the significant disproportionality finding and monitored the implementation and effectiveness of our district created action plan. After two years of hard work, the district received notification on 9/11/25 that we have successfully completed the requirements of our plan and would exit the determination. Please read full letter - [Sig Disprop Exit Letter.pdf](#)

- Erik Johnson will be our new Krista, but he will be working only 2 days a week until further notice due to contractual obligations in the district where he currently works. Craig Dwyer is now in charge of facilities rental and space reservations, and Miriam Greenfield is in charge of board work. For any other needs, staff are advised to reach out to their respective supervisor.

SAFETY UPDATES

- Student support pull-out spaces now have an overhead speaker installed (tied to the hallway speakers) for students and teachers to hear announcements.
- First Aid Kits have been installed for staff in the district office, JFK staff rooms and kitchen, Middle and High School staff room, after school program office and the hallway between the gymnasiums.
- Emergency contact extension numbers of the front office, nurse, attendance and main offices have been placed on each classroom phone.
- We are on schedule for completing all of our first semester mandatory drills required by the state of evacuation (fire drill), bus drill and options-based drill.
- The latest evacuation drill (fire drill) showed four minutes of improved time for all students and staff.
- Our District Safety Coordinator Craig Dwyer and School Liaison Officer Saja Almogalli attended the Governor's State-Wide School Safety Conference to share and learn about best school safety practices.



On October 30th, our *School Counselors*, in partnership with VSAC, hosted an **evening information session on postsecondary applications and financial aid**. Over forty juniors and seniors and their families attended, with many completing their *FAFSA* and *VSAC Grant* applications — a critical step toward postsecondary access and affordability.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READY

Throughout October, Winooski High School students engaged deeply in work-based learning experiences that directly align with the Winooski School District's End Statement — preparing graduates to pursue their passions and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Students explored multiple high-growth career pathways both on and off campus, including:

- **STEM and Technology:** Coding through *Girls Who Code* at UVM, *Cybersecurity Day* at Champlain College, and *VT Tech Jam*, where students networked with local tech employers and recruited a new supporter for our robotics program.
- **Health & Medicine:** Participation in the *Governor's Institute Health & Medicine Adventure Day* and the return of *Spartan Advance* and *Health Heroes UVMMC* programs to WHS, inspiring future medical professionals.
- **Engineering & Trades:** Field visits such as *Manufacturing Day* at Global Foundries to learn about apprenticeship pathways.
- **Environmental Science & Agriculture:** Hands-on learning through the *Vermont Youth Conservation Corps*.
- **Education & Leadership:** Student attendance at *St. Michael's College EdRise Conference*, where our own 2025 Vermont Teacher of the Year, Caitlin McLeod-Bluver, delivered the keynote address.

In addition, Winooski High School hosted representatives from *Burlington Technical Center* and *CTE/Essex* during family conferences to connect students with local technical education opportunities.

At the middle school level, **7th and 8th graders are preparing for a culminating event in ELA, Theater Arts, and Visual Arts**. Inspired by the novel *Summer of the Mariposas*, students will produce a performance showcasing their understanding that monsters and creatures from folklore are often reflections of real-world fears, anxieties, and challenges. Each student will write their own story featuring a "monster" that symbolizes a fear, struggle, or challenge faced by their main character — integrating creativity, literacy, and social-emotional insight across disciplines.



The soccer team that made history this year by being the first in the state finals

COLLEGE AND CAREER READY

- **To ensure compliance with state** licensing ratio regulations and maintain high-quality learning environments, WECP is actively working to fill two open support staff positions. These roles are essential to providing safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate experiences for all preschool learners. Recruitment efforts are ongoing to ensure classrooms remain fully staffed and able to meet the needs of every child.
- **21C Session 2 flyers are going out this week.** Session 2 begins the week of December 8th. The HS students in the 21C Afterschool DREAM2 Program have been attending training sessions two days a week since September in preparation for their first meeting with their mentees.
- **The Winooski Early Childhood Program (WECP)** has started hosting family engagement events to celebrate children’s learning and build strong school-to-home connections. Family engagement is a key component of kindergarten readiness and has been shown to improve children’s attendance, academic performance, and classroom behavior. In addition, WECP has launched a monthly family newsletter to keep preschool families informed and involved in classroom activities, curriculum highlights, and upcoming events.

LOCAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITY

- **Board Vice-President Nicole Mace** was recognized at the Vermont School Boards Association/Vermont Superintendents Association annual conference in October. She represented the VSBA in the Commission on the Future of Public Education until significant changes were made by the legislature. Like the VSBA, we are thankful for Nicole's dedication to Winooski and the rest of the state.
- **We are marking two milestones in our K-12 ethnic studies** curriculum development. Winooski Middle School teacher Camilla Thomassen-Tai is wrapping up a pilot middle school ethnic studies class. This quarter-long arts rotation class culminated in a student-designed culture day, during which students celebrated and taught one another about the many cultures represented here in Winooski. JFK art teachers Renee Weertman (art), Daviah Lawrence (Ethnic Studies, Social Justice and Belonging), and Matt Gile (Media Specialist) are co-planning an Art Activism unit in which students will use art they create to encourage community members to support local non-profits.
- **Business Educator Courtney Poquette**, was one of 350 educators from across the country selected to receive a scholarship to attend the National Jump\$Start Conference on Personal Finance education. She attended sessions on investing, taxes and cryptocurrency and had the opportunity to connect with other leading educators and organizations. She has a notebook full of ideas on how this new information will be implemented in her classroom.

- Three students from Winooski High School are attending the Bridging Program through Champlain Community Services (CCS). This program focuses on high school students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism to help them transition to adulthood. This academic-year program focuses on four modules: career exploration, community connection, independent living, and advocacy. The program is in partnership with Burlington, Colchester, Mt. Mansfield Union, South Burlington, and Winooski high schools, providing students with skills and confidence for a successful transition. The Winooski School District partners with Colchester School District to share transportation for this exciting opportunity for our students. All three students are thriving and experiencing various opportunities which will support them as they transition to adulthood.

Ten students in grades 3-4 from JFK recently met the HS mentors during a get to know you fun-filled hour. Offering Volleyball as part of the 21C Afterschool program continues to be a big hit. As programs come to an end for the first session, it is always validating to hear that students look forward to the class returning in the future.



Our student athletes before the game.

HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL LIVES

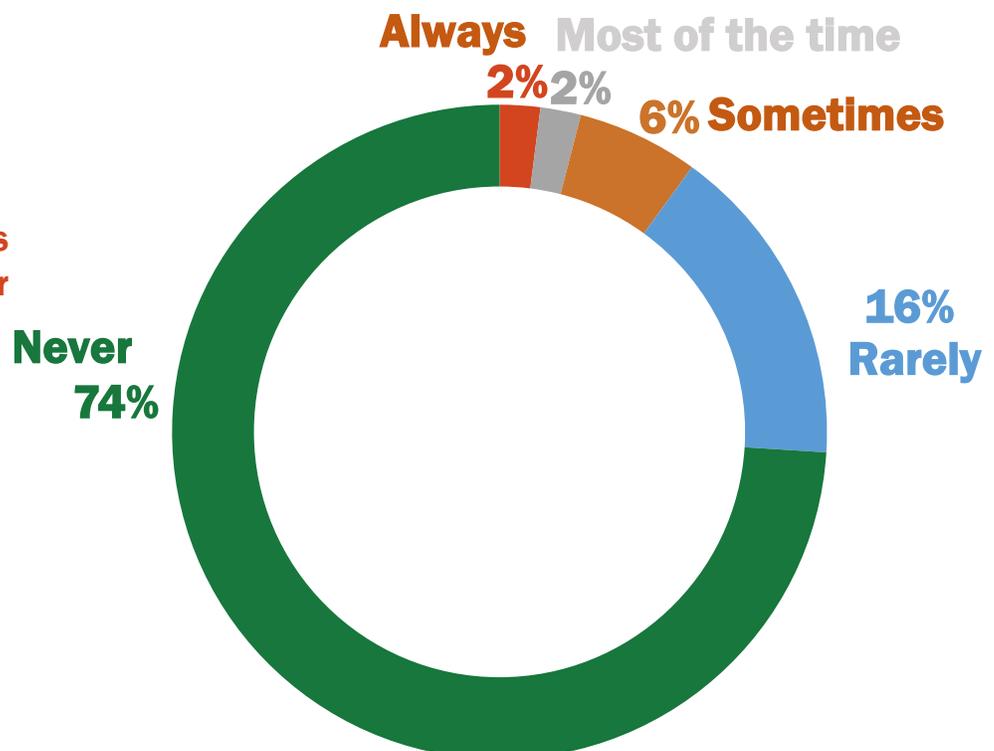
- **This fall, our Athletics program made history.** For the first time, our Girls Soccer team reached the State Finals. They worked so hard throughout the season and stepped onto that field on a cold fall night under the lights at Rutland High School ready to compete. They created opportunities, showed grit and heart, and represented our school and community with pride. While we could not find the net this time, these young women set a new standard for what is possible and they inspired our entire community. And our Boys Soccer team did it again--Four-time state champions. In previous years we competed in Division 4 and this year we moved up to Division 3. As the tenth seed they battled through the playoffs and claimed the crown. It is truly remarkable what both of these teams have done for our city and our school. Their journey reflects discipline, humility, and belief in one another. The love and support across our student body, staff, and community have been incredible to witness. This is more than soccer. It is a lesson in perseverance, teamwork, and courage. We could not be prouder.
- **Every year, Winooski School District's clinical psychologist,** MaryAnn Donnelly Debay, provides clinical supervision to one mental health intern. Gemma Naccarato is the mental health counseling intern in the Winooski School District for the 2025-26 school year and is completing the final year of her master's program in clinical mental health counseling at the University of Vermont. Gemma currently provides individual or group counseling to more than 15 students who need support in areas like emotional regulation, navigating interpersonal relationships, managing anxiety, and dealing with complex trauma. Gemma engages student clients with warmth, creativity, and playfulness. Her approach is rooted in multi-modal therapy which focuses on a holistic view of working with clients.



ENDS MONITORING: INDICATOR OF COMPLIANCE 2

In continuing with the board's Indicator of Compliance 2 review of relevant data, the Winooski Partnership for Prevention kindly offered the charts below. Indicator of Compliance 2 describes the Ends Statement's as fulfilled when "students feel a sense of belonging and connectedness at school and their communities."

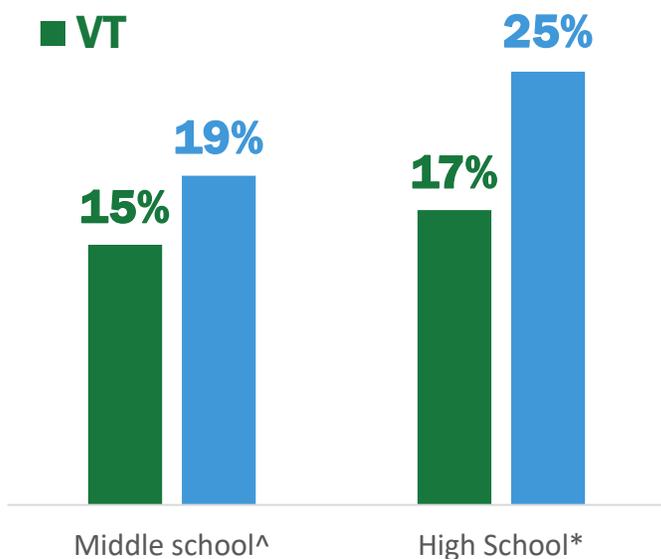
1 in 4 Winooski middle and high school students has gone hungry in the past 30 days because **there was not enough food in their home.**



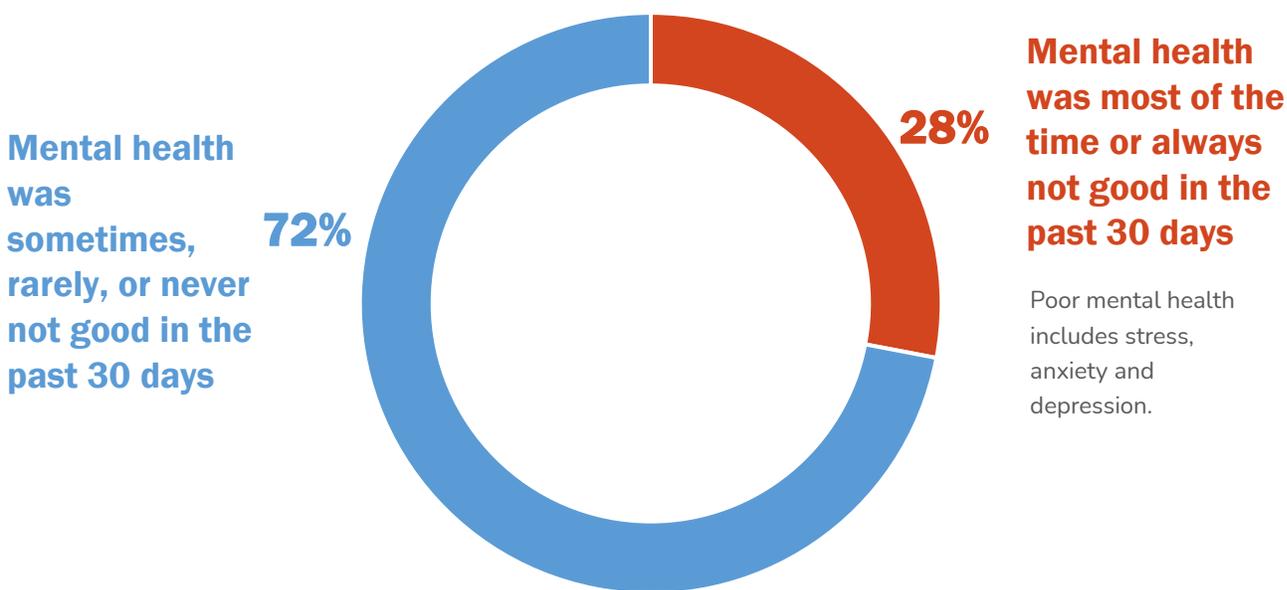
Winooski high school students are significantly more likely to have ever saw someone get physically attacked, beaten, stabbed, or shot in their neighborhood than their Vermont peers. Source: VT YRBS, 2023

^ No statistically significant difference between VT and WSD

* Statistically significant difference between VT and WSD



Over 1 in 4 Winooski middle and high school students reported that their mental health was most of the time or always not good in the past 30 days.

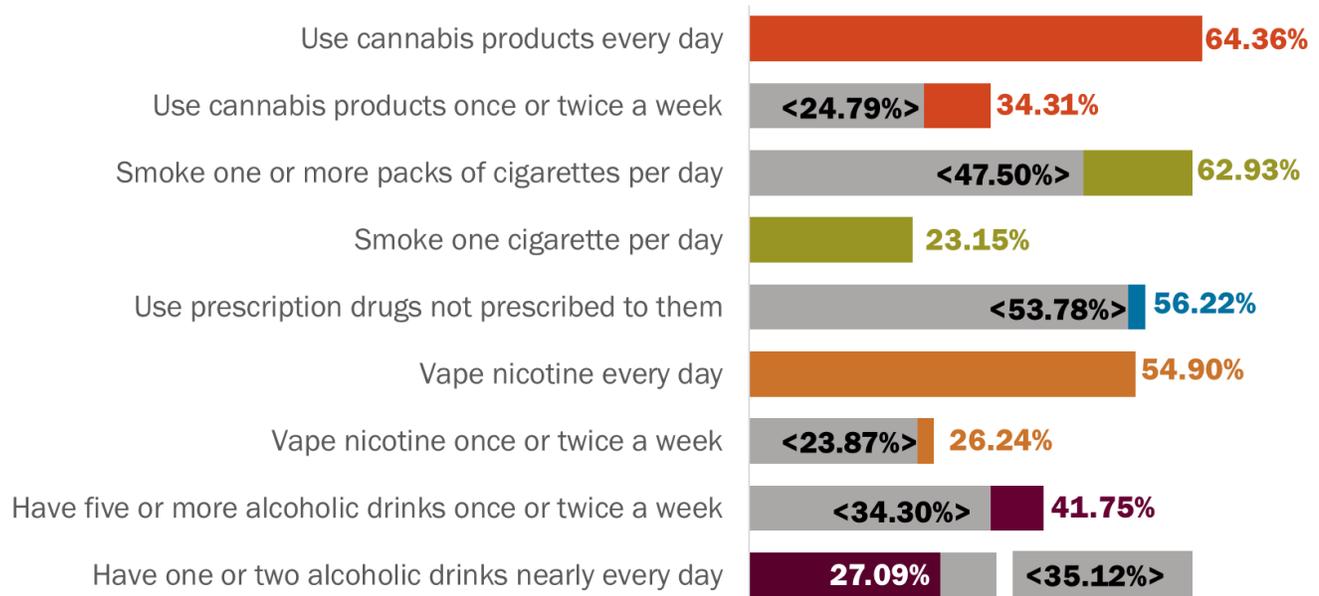


A higher percentage of Winooski middle and high school students perceived risk in the use of most substances in 2025 than in 2024.

In 2024, students were not asked about using cannabis products every day, smoking one cigarette per day, or vaping nicotine every day.

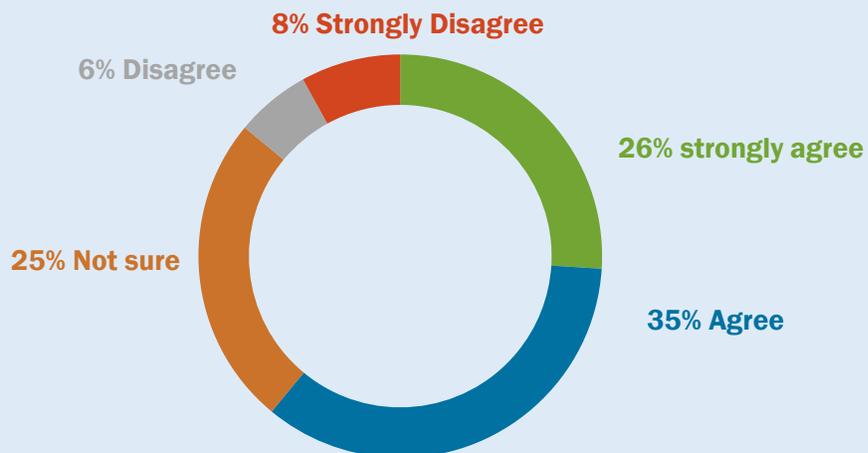
Source: WPP Youth Survey, 2024 & 2025

People greatly risk harming themselves if they:



Source: WPP Youth Survey, 2025

3 in 5 Winooski middle and high school students believe that they matter to people.





ADMINISTRATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

- 11/4 I attended the Vermont Professionals of Color Network annual event in Burlington
- 11/5 I was an invited speaker at the Burlington Technical Center
- 11/13 I am at UVM again speaking for the Educational Leadership and Policy program
- 11/14 I am at the Champlain Valley Superintendents Association
- 11/15 I am a panelist at the annual Human Rights Conference in Randolph
- 11/17 I am attending the ARSC
- 11/17 I am meeting with the City Manager
- 11/21 I am attending the VPA's administrators of Color affinity meeting
- 12/2 I am testifying at the US Senate in DC. This had been postponed due to the shutdown.
- 12/3 I am a panelist for a webinar put on by the Teachers College of Columbia University.

KEY DATES

- November 13 & November 14: JFK Teacher & Family Conferences, Early Release at 11:00 AM
- November 20: WMHS Fall Concert at 7:00 PM
- November 21: Veggie Van Go
- November 22: PTO Holiday Craft and Vendor Fair from 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- November 24-November 28: November Break

ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Below are a few items the board assigned to management along with a status update.

Item	Board Direction	Status
Student Board Member	In addition to a high school student providing public input (Eliza), the board also discussed the possibility of having student representation on the board. This had already been reviewed in recent years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School board members attended a session on student voice in governance and learned about meaningful student involvement without tokenizing. - Students that have committed to coming to all budget meetings will provide the board feedback on their experience and propose an initial plan for more sustained student representation in January. The board will move to create an ad-hoc committee based on this feedback.
Policy 2.2 Treatment of Staff	The phrase “shall not discriminate” should change to “retaliate” and future monitoring reports should define “volunteer staff”	Policy language changed for the adoption hearing. Next year’s draft definitions changed for the report.
November Budget Meeting	The board decided not to have November budget meetings, especially because the one scheduled happens during a school vacation and before Thanksgiving.	The meeting calendar for the budget is now updated and reflected on the Budget Adoption Timeline on your Google Sheets document . Google calendar invites were sent to all board members. The November 12 presentation will not include the conclusion of the Budget Context Presentation and a first draft of the budget scenarios the board requested.
Community Budget Lunch (pre-vote)	The board prefers not to have a logistically-heavy in-person event and instead explore other options--Virtual Presentation that is recorded, accompanied by a survey; potentially recruiting students for dissemination, piggy-backing on December events (school and non-school)... Maybe have a	Agenda items for a final decision was added to the November meeting agenda.

	subcommittee look at outreach options like in previous years.	
High Level Budget Parameters	<p>During the September board meeting, the board provided high level parameters for scenarios for the administration for the budget season as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level Services • Level Funding + 3.3% Inflation • Level Tax Rate (as possible) 	All scenarios have been included in the preliminary report in the budget presentation
Rescinded Policies	The board rescinded Policy 6173 and D22. The board directed the administration to publish procedures in lieu of 6173.	These policies were deleted from the website and procedures were published.