

# 2017

REPORT *to the*  
COMMUNITY

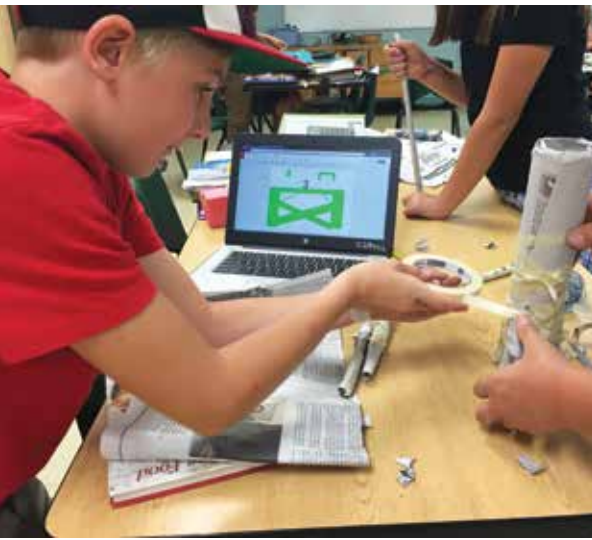




# VOTING INFORMATION

**Voting Day** ▶ **Tuesday, March 7** ▶ **Colchester High** ▶ **7 AM - 7 PM**

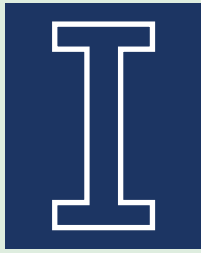
There is no deadline to register to vote. You can register on any day, up to and including the day of the election.



- ✓ Prior to voting, residents can register in person at the Town Clerk's Office or online at <http://olvr.sec.state.vt.us>.
- ✓ Voters can request an absentee ballot and track its status via the "My Voter Page" at <https://mvp.sec.state.vt.us>, in person at the Town Clerk's Office, or by phone at 264-5520.
- ✓ Early/Absentee voting is easy and convenient! Residents can submit ballots until the end of business hours on Monday, March 6, 2017.

You can find up-to-date election information at [www.colchestervt.gov/325/elections](http://www.colchestervt.gov/325/elections).

# A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



I am incredibly honored to be the Superintendent of Colchester Schools, where our focus truly is every child, every school, every day. I am excited to share this first edition of Colchester School District's Report to the Community with you. Colchester School District (CSD) is a highly rated school district embedded in a close-knit community, and that deserves to be celebrated!

This report outlines some of the investments, both tangible and not, that you as a community member contribute towards. When compared to other districts in Chittenden County and the Vermont State average, CSD consistently spends considerably less money per equalized pupil and yet our assessment scores routinely rank above average. Our leadership team and school board are committed to keeping costs low while maintaining high-quality schools that will continue to make Colchester a town families choose to live in.



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services, ensuring that our learning environments and opportunities are equitable and rigorous for each individual learner, and creating a cohesive district that is united. We are committed to providing the highest level of service to our learners while also being strong stewards of our fiscal resources.

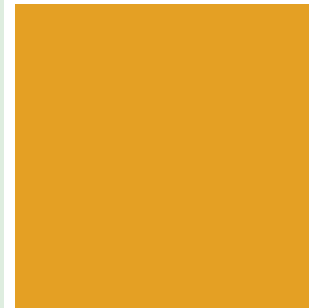
Colchester School District remains an essential component of this vibrant community and helps to make the town of Colchester a highly desirable place to live, work, and play. I invite you to visit our redesigned website ([www.csdvt.org](http://www.csdvt.org)) to learn more about our schools, staff, and the vast opportunities we are proud to provide to our students.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the Colchester community,



*Amy Minor*

AMY MINOR  
*Superintendent of Schools*



## Renovating the Performing Arts Center

With support from the Colchester community, renovations to the Performing Arts Center at CHS are complete! Students throughout the district now have a modern and professional space to expand their aspirations and creativity through opportunities like chorus, band, theater, dance, and public speaking. Updates include new lighting and sound

technology, acoustic panels, seating, flooring, curtains, and an upgrade to the ventilation system. The Performing Arts Center continues to be a space for the entire community to experience art and theater. To those who use the space, both students and community members alike,

the renovation has provided a variety of new options to reinvigorate their imaginations and offer training and experiences for their future.



## Beginning the Process with a Strong Preschool

Investing in early education is a key component to the success of our young learners in Colchester. Research shows that students who attend high-quality preschool programs are less likely to need specialized services or struggle in school later on. CSD prides itself on our commitment to early education that is rooted in a hands-on, experiential learning environment where children are encouraged to ask questions and test theories in order to expand their knowledge. In addition to the district-run preschool for three and four-year-olds, CSD also partners with Headstart and 49 private childcare centers who meet the curriculum criteria requirements to teach our preschoolers. In total, Colchester provides 278 young learners (that's 90% of the next two kindergarten classes!) with this important early education.



## Providing 1:1 Devices to Improve Learning



environmental nature in a way that encourages them to be responsible and respectful community members. Our faculty helps students to understand both the positive and negative impacts the internet and social media can have on our society. CMS has also partnered with the Tarrant Institute, which adds another exciting component to this initiative. The Tarrant Institute works with schools to provide focused professional development for teachers, at no cost to the district. Their work with CMS is specifically focused on the newly embedded 1:1, student engagement, student-led conferences, proficiencies based learning, and middle school best practices.

This fall, CSD was proud to unroll a 1:1 device initiative at Colchester Middle and High Schools. Using a mixture of laptops and Chromebooks, this initiative increases the ability of our faculty to personalize the learning experience for each student and helps foster our students to become global citizens by expanding their knowledge of social, political, economic and

## Implementing PBIS

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework that improves social and academic outcomes by creating a positive, safe, and orderly learning environment for all students. Expectations for behavior were explained at the beginning of the school year and students are positively acknowledged by staff when they're seen abiding by the expectations. At PPS they are awarded "warm and fuzzy" balls, and at MBS they get "fish chips" to feed the school's mascot, Oscar the Osprey.



The benefits of PBIS are vast. Teachers, parents, and students are all on the same page about rules and expected behaviors. Data shows that school spirit and climate are positive in part because students spend more time in class, with fewer out of class referrals.

## Integrating Technology from Day One

CSD recognizes our students will need comprehensive technology skills for their future careers. Our faculty begins integrating technology into their curriculum from day one at each of our elementary schools. At UMS, there are Chromebooks and iPads in each classroom and students get exposed to blogging as early as kindergarten.

Classroom teachers are able to enhance their curriculum by taking students on the ultimate virtual field trip, traveling all over the world with Skype technology. They

regularly visit with other schools to learn about their studies and culture. The use of technology doesn't stop at the student level; every teacher at UMS maintains a blog to keep our families involved and informed about the exciting happenings inside the classroom.





## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

CHS graduates attend some of the finest colleges and universities in the nation, including:

- Harvard
- Tufts
- Macalester
- Pomona
- Dartmouth
- Middlebury
- Smith
- McGill
- West Point
- Air Force Academy
- Coast Guard Academy
- Brown
- Cornell
- Clarkson
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Worcester Polytechnic Institute
- Syracuse
- Vassar
- Drexel
- Castleton University
- Champlain College
- University of Vermont
- Colby-Sawyer
- Saint Michael's College
- Ithaca College
- Southern New Hampshire University

## % Students Scoring At or Above the Vermont Standard

Grade	SBAC English Language Arts (Fall 2016)		SBAC Math (Fall 2016)		NECAP Science (Fall 2016)	
	CSD	VT	CSD	VT	CSD	VT
3	62%	53%	72%	55%	—	—
4	62%	52%	71%	49%	59%	47%
5	64%	57%	64%	42%	—	—
6	52%	55%	44%	40%	—	—
7	59%	57%	46%	45%	—	—
8	72%	58%	47%	43%	29%	22%
11	72%	56%	53%	37%	44%	30%

78% of CSD staff provide direct instruction to students



76% of CSD teachers have a Master's Degree



76% of CHS students take part in extracurricular activities

10 AP classes offered at CHS (Statistics, Chemistry, Calculus, Biology, US History, European History, Art, English Literature, English Language, Physics)



96% CHS graduation rate



28% of K-12 students receive free or reduced lunch



3 fresh and local fruit and vegetable options available to students every day

## Total CSD Enrollment by Grade Level

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
159	158	163	168	168	153	155	146	152	140	173	165	190

## A Word from Our Alumni



**Beth Moore,**  
CLASS OF 2016

"Balancing school and my love of music had always been a challenging thing for me. At Colchester High School, I had supportive teachers and so

many musical opportunities. They worked with me to manage my academic workload so I could pursue my musical goals both in and outside of school."

**Rob Chase,** CLASS OF 2015



"Coming from Grand Isle, I was afraid I wouldn't be able to make new friends or transition from a class of 25 to a class of 170, but Colchester was the perfect place for me. I played football and baseball, did speech and debate, and I was even in a school play and a couple of movies. I could not have done everything I did anywhere else. Now I have a full Army ROTC Scholarship to WPI, where I study electrical engineering and play varsity baseball. I still miss the friendships and experiences I made at Colchester, but the habits and lessons I learned help me every day."

# THE BUDGET

**O**n January 17, the Colchester School Board approved a budget of \$39,133,767 for fiscal 2018. This represents an increase of 3.22% over the current year spending plan. This approval, which correlates with our district initiatives, permits the school board and administrators to advance academic planning, properly staff the district to support student needs, and address the concern of its aging facilities. We are excited by the progress being made in the current year and are eager to continue to improve the services we provide to our students, families, and community.

## Managing Our Facilities

Our most valuable resource is our facilities. As they age, it is essential to have a management plan which ensures the buildings remain safe, functional, and continue to provide a strong learning environment for students.

### PROJECTS SLATED FOR NEXT YEAR

- Completion of the Colchester Middle School Roof
- Partial roof replacement at Malletts Bay School
- Repair of parking lots at Colchester High School, Colchester Middle School, and Malletts Bay School
- Boilers at Malletts Bay School

## Commitment to Special Education

Special Education services allow Colchester to meet legal obligations under the Individuals with Disability Act. IDEA ensures that students with disabilities receive equal educational opportunities. In 2016-2017 Colchester Schools piloted a new model of delivering support services that increased our ability to meet the needs of all learners.

### FAST FACTS ABOUT SUPPORT SERVICES

- 22% of Colchester's students receive additional educational services.
- FY'18 anticipated expenditures are estimated at \$7.9 million, which is 20% of the total budget.
- CSD remains below the state average for special education spending. In 2016 we spent 10% less on special education than the statewide average.

## How Would This Proposed Increase Affect You?

Property Value	FY 2017	FY 2018	Annual Increase
\$100,000	\$1,411	\$1,468	\$57
\$150,000	\$2,117	\$2,202	\$85
\$200,000	\$2,823	\$2,937	\$114
\$250,000	\$3,528	\$3,671	\$143
\$300,000	\$4,234	\$4,405	\$171
\$350,000	\$4,940	\$5,139	\$199
\$400,000	\$5,646	\$5,873	\$227

**RUNNING THE NUMBERS** ▶ If a home in Colchester is assessed at \$250,000, the homeowner would pay \$143 more annually.

## THE DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES...

### FY'17 BUDGET

Last year, the school budget increase was 4.1%; however, outside factors contributed to overall taxes declining by 1.892%.

### FY'18 BUDGET

This year, the proposed school budget increase is lower than last year at 3.22%, but due to those same factors, taxes are estimated to increase by 4.032%.

### SUMMARY

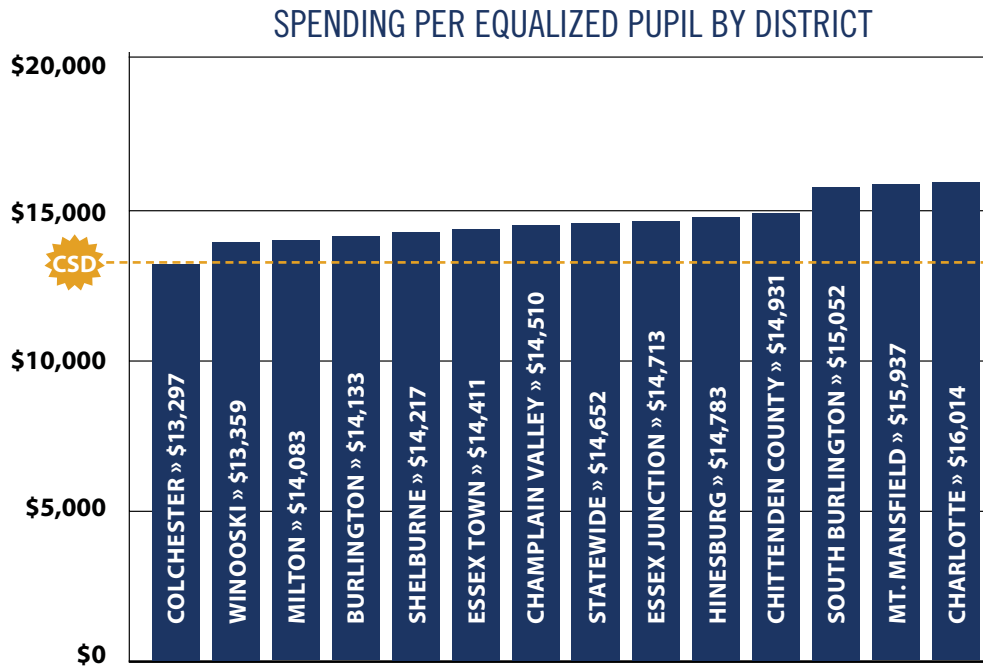
The average tax increase over the last two years is **1.07%**.



# HOLDING THE LINE ON SPENDING

## FY '17 Spending Per Equalized Student

Colchester School District spends less per pupil than the vast majority of districts in Chittenden County. Even with spending less, CSD students consistently rank in the top quarter of schools in the county on statewide assessment exams.



## Income Sensitivity Tax Cap

Income sensitivity is a form of tax assistance which allows homeowners to pay property taxes based on their income, rather than the value of their home.

### HOW DOES INCOME SENSITIVITY WORK?



#### EXAMPLE 1

For a home valued at \$250,000, the owner should pay \$3,671 in taxes. If their household income is \$60,000, income sensitivity would reduce their tax bill by \$2,247, making their total education tax payment \$1,424.

TAX RATE IS 1.468

#### EXAMPLE 2

For a home valued at \$300,000, the owner should pay \$4,405 in taxes. If their household income is \$70,000, income sensitivity would reduce their tax bill by \$2,744, making their total education tax payment \$1,661.

70%

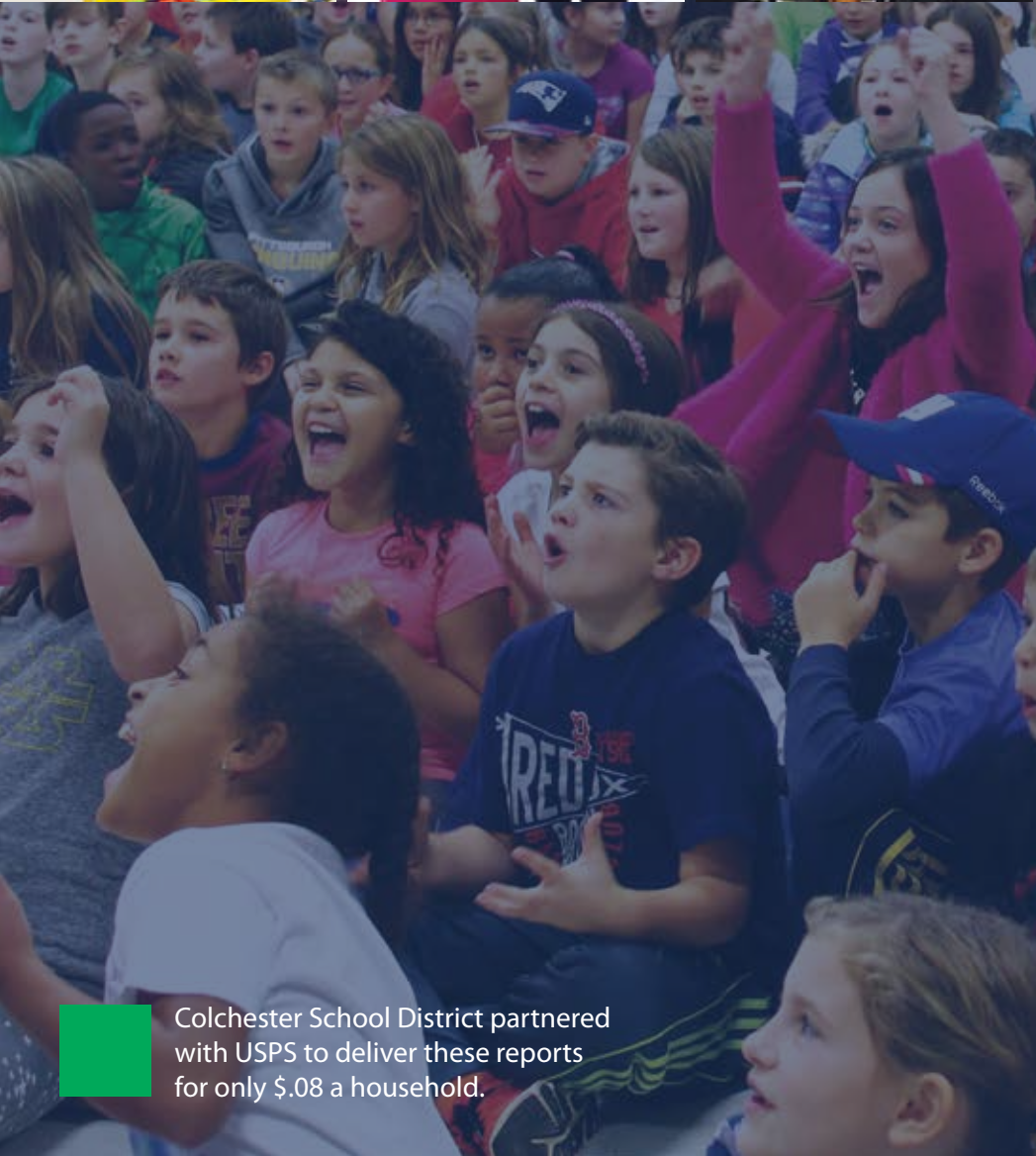
Approximately 70% of Colchester homeowners will receive property tax assistance in 2017. That's 2 out of 3 people.






125 Laker Lane, PO Box 27  
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RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER  
COLCHESTER, VT 05446



# OUR MISSION

The mission of Colchester School District is to partner with our community to educate each of our students to become engaged, productive citizens who lead successful, balanced, and healthy lives.

[csdvt.org](http://csdvt.org) | 802.264.5999 |  

Colchester School District partnered with USPS to deliver these reports for only \$.08 a household.