



Colchester School District

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May 6, 2020

Dear Colchester School Community,

Earlier today Governor Scott relaxed the “Stay at Home” rules to allow small gatherings and outdoor recreation. The guidance suggests that families only connect with others from “trusted households” such as family, neighbors, and friends known to be following the recommendations from the Department of Health regarding precautions such as social distancing and hand washing.

On the heels of today’s announcement, on Friday, May 8th at an 11:00 am press conference, we anticipate the Governor and the Agency of Education to offer more specific guidance as it relates to end of the school year gatherings and graduations. Our middle and high schools have already formed committees to solicit input and develop alternative plans for their respective graduations. It is our hope that this announcement from the Governor will provide our committees with a more directed framework to construct their ceremonies around. In addition to end of the year celebrations, we are also hoping for guidance on summer schooling and programming.

We know this news has been long-awaited. The district’s leadership team will be watching the press conference and hearing the new guidance at the same time that you are. As soon as we have had the opportunity to react and think about how those decisions will impact the students in Colchester, we will share it with you.

In the meantime, here are a few updates and reminders for families:

- **Kindergarten Registration:** Registration for incoming kindergarteners for the 2020-2021 school year is open! The screenings and information night that were originally scheduled for this month have been canceled, however, we’re hopeful that we’ll be able to reschedule or create alternative plans. If you have a child who will be entering kindergarten, please register them online at www.csdvt.org/register.
- **Free Breakfast and Lunch:** CSD is still providing free breakfast and lunch to all children ages 18 and under, no application or prior approval is needed. Please spread the word to anyone you know. Since our buildings closed on March 19, we have provided over 56,4820 meals! For route information and menus, visit www.csdvt.org/district/about/covid.php
- **Meals from VT Foodbank & VT National Guard:** The Vermont Foodbank, working with FEMA and the VT National Guard, is distributing Meals Ready-to-Eat (MRE) on Friday, May 8 at Allen Brook School located at 497 Talcott Rd in Williston from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. These meals are for anyone in need of food. Those who come will receive a seven-day supply of MREs for each member of the household. For more information visit the [Vermont Foodbank’s website](http://Vermont Foodbank's website).

- **Curriculum:** As we progress through the Continuity of Learning phase, the focus of our remote learning instruction will be meeting the standards and proficiencies that teachers have identified as critical for students to learn during this period. Teachers at all grade levels have established weekly office hours to support students and families with the lessons for these essential elements and high-leverage concepts.
- **Technology Support:** If you need support, please email helpdesk@colchestersd.org with a brief explanation of the issue. This creates a formal ticket in our system and a specialist will contact you as soon as possible. We request that you include a phone number so we can call you back. The other option is to call the helpdesk directly at (802) 264-5727.
- **2020 Census Reminder:** The Census only happens once every ten years and is pivotal to getting resources where they are needed. It will directly impact how much Colchester will get federal funding for things like housing, infrastructure and social service programs. If you haven't done so, please complete the Census today! <https://my2020census.gov/>
- **Spring Sports:** The Vermont Principals Association announced that the spring sports season for our middle and high school athletes has been canceled as a result of COVID-19. We know this was difficult for our students to hear. At this point, no decision has been made about fall sports but we are hopeful that we will see our students back on our fields at some point soon.
- **Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week:** Thank you to all of the families and students who contributed to the many ways we've shown our support to our employees this week. A little goes a long way and hearing from the community means a lot during this difficult time. We miss our students tremendously. We would also like to express a huge thank you to all of the adults that are supporting our students as they learn from home.

Be well and keep doing the best you can.

Amy Minor

Superintendent of Schools