



Colchester School District

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May 22, 2020

Dear Colchester School Community,

I hope you have had a chance to enjoy the wonderful weather we are having this week. On behalf of everyone at Colchester School District, we want to thank you for everything that you have done to support our students over the last two months and we wish you and your family a wonderful Memorial Day Weekend.

Here are some updates and information from around the district.

- **Last Day of School:** The Vermont Agency of Education has approved a snow day waiver for Colchester Schools which makes **Friday, June 12th** the last day of school for students. As they do every year, our teachers will participate in professional development in the days following the last student day. Now more than ever, it is incredibly important to involve our teachers as we plan for the fall.
- **Returning Academic Materials:** We are developing a process to safely collect school-owned materials that were sent out with students. Items that we're looking to get back include textbooks, graphing calculators, library and classroom books. Please start to think about what materials you have that might need to be returned and keep an eye out for dates and times to drop them off.
- **Personal Item Retrieval from School Buildings:** We would like to give an opportunity for students and families to retrieve any items that students may have left behind when our buildings closed back in March. To do this safely and with the proper precautions in place, our buildings are remaining closed to the public and we will instead schedule appointments for pick-up June 8th through June 12th. This will help us control how many people are in the buildings at a time. Next Tuesday, May 26, each school will send a survey out which will allow families to request an appointment. All items that are left in the buildings after June 12th will be either donated to charity or discarded depending on the condition of the item.
- **Summer Use of District-owned Devices:** Normally, we collect district-owned devices at the end of each school year so they can be updated, repaired and cleaned over the summer. This year, however, we are giving students and families the option to keep the device through the summer. If you have a district-owned device, you will get a survey next week asking what the barcode is and if you would like to keep it for the summer or turn it in, the choice is yours. Please keep an eye out for the survey and be sure to complete it so we know your plans.
- **District Art Show:** The art teachers from across the district are proud to announce that the show will go on! We are excited to celebrate the achievements made through the visual arts by our CSD students during the 2019-2020 school year. A K-12 online gallery is being created and will go live for public viewing on Tuesday, May 26th. You'll be able to find the link on the district and school websites and social media.

- **Graduation:** We are three weeks away from graduation and the excitement and anticipation are starting to build. If you haven't already, take a walk down Blakely Road in front of the schools to see the senior signs, they look phenomenal! Given the circumstances, a traditional graduation ceremony will not take place for the Class of 2020. However, a committee made up of seniors, parents, faculty, and administrators has been soliciting feedback and developing recommendations for this year's ceremony and celebration. Earlier today, seniors and their families received more detailed information from CHS on what they can expect for graduation.
- **Summer School & Summer Meals:** Our teams are currently doing lots of planning for both of these areas. We expect that we'll be able to provide more detailed information next week.
- **Next School Year:** The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recently released a document with considerations that schools should make when planning to reopen in the fall. These considerations got a lot of media attention and have many families concerned about what school will look like in the fall. I encourage our families to pause, at least for the time being. As we all know, recommendations and guidelines are designed to be fluid; to ebb and flow with the current status of COVID-19 at any given time. The CDC's considerations come several months before school would open in Vermont and it is important to note that specific guidelines for Vermont schools have *not yet been determined*. It could be more remote learning, in-person learning, or a combination of the two. While I know our students, families, and employees are anxious to know what school will be like in the fall, we are again faced with balancing the need to plan, with waiting to use the most updated public health data. The Vermont Agency of Education and the Department of Health will continue to work closely to develop what our guidelines will look like. The CSD leadership team is reviewing this information from the CDC as well as information on how other schools around the world have approached the reopening of school in a way that is safe for students, employees, and families. Our work over the next several months will be to use the guidance that the Agency of Education eventually provides to develop procedures specific for Colchester.
- **Laker Lane Construction:** This past week crews started their work to reconfigure the intersection of Blakely Road and Laker Lane. This project will add turn lanes in all directions and is being overseen by Colchester Public Works. If you'd like more information you can visit: <https://colchestervt.gov/298/Blakely-RoadLaker-Lane-Intersection-Proj>
- **Census:** The census only happens once every ten years and is pivotal to getting resources where they are needed. It will directly impact how much federal funding Colchester will get for things like housing, infrastructure and social service programs. If you haven't done so, we urge you to complete the Census as soon as possible. Visit this link to complete it online: <https://my2020census.gov/>

Be well,

Amy Minor
Superintendent of Schools