



# Colchester School District

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June 2, 2020

Dear Colchester School Community,

As we enter the second to last week of school closure 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 next **Friday, June 12th** the last day of school for students.
- **Wellness Chat with Dr. Joelle van Lent:** We have scheduled a questions & answer session with Dr. Joelle van Lent to support parent wellness and discuss how we can foster resilience in the context of COVID-19. We are inviting all families to join the live Q&A on **Thursday, June 11 at 6:30pm - 7:30pm**. We will send out a direct link to the meeting next week. Please join us live or feel free to also watch the chat at a later time as it will be recorded. We can't speak highly enough of Dr. van Lent's ability to connect, listen, and provide exceptional guidance, especially during times of stress and worry. Together, we look forward to supporting you and your children as we enter the final weeks of distance learning this school year.
- **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, please complete the survey below for your student(s).
  - [Link to K-8 survey](#)
  - [Link to 9-12 survey](#)
- **Returning Academic Materials:** As we approach the end of the school year we know that many students and families are trying to figure out what to do with academic materials that should be returned to the school. These items are things like library books, classroom books, textbooks, graphing calculators, robotics kits, arabic keyboards, and music. Beginning on Monday, June 8 through Friday June 12th, each building will have a bin outside for families and students to return any academic items that you would like to return to school. Please do not place ipads, chromebooks or laptops in the bin. Journals, markers, scissors and other general supplies that do not need to be returned. If you cannot find your library books, that is okay. To limit additional stress on our families we are not imposing any fines for lost books. However, we would really appreciate you returning all that you can find because the more books we get back, the fewer we will have to replace. We realize that some library books may still be at school; these will be located and returned to the library by school staff later in June.

- **Instrument Return:** We encourage all student musicians to keep their district owned instrument over the summer so that you can practice. Seniors with district-owned instruments can drop them off at your students' school. If you are renting an instrument from Ellis Music, they encourage you to keep practicing and to keep your instrument over the summer. Their return procedures are located here: Ellis Music Return Policy/Procedures: <https://www.ellismusic.com/t-covid19.aspx>
- **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. If you would like to schedule an appointment to pick up items, please fill out the request form below.
  - [Union Memorial School: https://forms.gle/F6km5LWU6tSHXRpu9](https://forms.gle/F6km5LWU6tSHXRpu9)
  - [Porters Point School: https://forms.gle/nyCG4HyEzWj1dpJA6](https://forms.gle/nyCG4HyEzWj1dpJA6)
  - [Malletts Bay School: https://forms.gle/aPYr7EHfU1S1aC8v5](https://forms.gle/aPYr7EHfU1S1aC8v5)
  - [Colchester Middle School: https://forms.gle/2VMwq7FT9nti9gYr5](https://forms.gle/2VMwq7FT9nti9gYr5)
  - [Colchester High School: https://forms.gle/HtJGyBU9jEBuAUfv9](https://forms.gle/HtJGyBU9jEBuAUfv9)

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 Meals:** The bus delivery meal program will end on Friday, June 12, the last day of school. Our kitchens will be closed the following week for deep cleaning. We will then kick off our summer meals program on Monday, June 22nd which will run Monday - Friday until August 14th. Although we won't be using our bus routes, we are working on a plan to provide meals at numerous pick-up locations throughout Colchester. We will finalize the pick-up locations and schedule over the next couple of weeks and share it via email and our website prior to Monday, June 22nd. If your family needs additional help accessing food, please visit the list of regional resources located [here](#) on our website.
- **Senior Capstone Projects:** Colchester High School is proud to launch the inaugural exposition of the Class of 2020 Capstone Projects. Seniors engaged in community-based exploration in the fall semester which helped them identify a pivotal issue relevant to themselves and society today. In the spring semester, they researched their topics and encapsulated them into a personalized demonstration of their learning. Although the exposition was originally planned as an in-person event, they've pulled together an online gallery that captures many of our seniors' "Final Words" regarding their CHS years and links to their individual Capstone projects. The topics reflect personal passions that will undoubtedly extend far beyond their time at CHS. Their teachers and everyone in the school community are incredibly proud of these seniors. Take a look at their projects here: [Senior Capstone Projects](#).
- **Graduation:** Plans are being finalized to recognize and honor the Class of 2020. Seniors and their families are getting regular communication from the high school about graduation plans but we wanted to let our school community know as well! There will be two main points to the celebration.

First, the school is thrilled to welcome students back to CHS in their caps and gowns to walk across the graduation stage, as all previous CHS grads have done. To make this work under the current restrictions, graduates will arrive in small groups, each with 2 guests to witness the culmination of their achievement. To help close out the celebratory weekend, the high school is partnering with the Project Graduation Committee to premiere a CHS Senior Film which will highlight all the traditional aspects of the graduation. There will be speeches, musical numbers, along with photos and videos of their journey to graduation. The video will be shown in a drive-in style format - the exact date and location will be announced to our seniors very soon! Not to be forgotten, our district is also proud to honor our 2nd, 5th, and 8th graders as they transition to new buildings next year. Congratulations to everyone!

- **Next School Year:** The Vermont Agency of Education and the Department of Health are continuing to develop the guidelines for Vermont schools in the fall. 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. We are hopeful that students will be back in our hallways this fall, but it is likely that we will see a combination of remote learning and in-person instruction.
- **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