



Colchester School District

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June 17, 2020

Dear Colchester School Community,

Happy summer! I want to extend my gratitude for all you have done to help with the learning and engagement of our students, I know it hasn't been easy. Please know we empathize with families who have found remote learning difficult and trying. We know it caused anxieties and hardships for so many. We appreciate your willingness to work together, as we have learned so much through these past four months and we will use what we have learned moving forward into fall. The majority of this letter is dedicated to information about the planning that's happening regarding the re-opening of schools.

First, a few reminders:

- **Final Device Return Date:** If you are not choosing to keep your device for the summer, families have one more opportunity to them drop off to the CSD IT Department which is tomorrow, Thursday, June 18th from 7:00 am - 4:00 pm. Drop offs should be brought to CHS at the IT Entrance, Door D18, located next to the access road/walkway to the athletic fields. If you cannot make it tomorrow, please call our IT Department at 264-5727 to make an appointment at another time.
- **Free Summer Meals:** The district will be offering free meals to children 18 years old and under throughout the summer. The CSD Summer Meals program will run from Monday, June 22 through Friday, August 14, Monday - Friday. No sign-up is required and all meals will be first come, first served. The meals will be available at approximately 20 locations throughout the town. The meals will include a breakfast item, hot lunch and a healthy side. Menus, as well as the exact pick-up locations and times, will be emailed to families on Friday.
- **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. This funding is more important now than ever. 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/>

Next School Year

Just this afternoon, the Vermont Agency of Education released [written guidance regarding next school year](#). The document is focused on safeguarding student and staff health while operating in-person instruction. Although it is just one of several sets of guidance that are forthcoming, we here at Colchester have been awaiting its release so we can start to develop the specific plans and changes that need to be made. The simple fact is - developing CSD plans for reopening is going to take time and we ask for your patience. This will

be a slow, purposeful process, prioritizing the well-being of staff and children. It is a lot to learn and it is going to take us a few weeks to gather the information, collaborate with each other and other impacted organizations, and coordinate logistics. This work will take up much of our administrative team's focus this summer because it is a priority for our district to be prepared and ready to return to instruction, regardless of the setting. There are three main learning scenarios that we are developing plans for.

1. **Modified:** Schools are open but with changes including social distancing, alternate schedules, and maybe even a modified capacity.
2. **Remote:** At any point in the year, due to public health concerns, students may be required to learn remotely (e.g. spring 2020). Closure times may range from days to weeks or months.
3. **Hybrid/Blended:** Teaching and learning with some students at home and some in school. This may be in effect if we have large numbers of students having to quarantine or due to other health issues that require students to learn from home.

The Agency of Education specifically noted that the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve very rapidly – so the information provided in today's guidance may change. It is expected that there will be edits and updates to their guidance as new information becomes available. Our district leadership team is prepared to pivot and shift as the guidance does.

I know entering the summer while not knowing what school will look like in this fall leaves students, families, and staff with a sense of uncertainty and stress. As CSD moves through our decision-making process, I will continue to keep our community informed of the work that we are doing and the progress that we are making. As soon as any final decisions are made, we will push that information out to our school community.

In closing, thank you, Colchester. I have a new appreciation and level of pride for our students, employees and families. We will all remember the 2019-2020 school year. The CSD community came together rapidly, with thoughtful and creative solutions, so that we could continue to support our students. Remember, if you or your student needs support at any point this summer, please feel free to reach out to us. Your building administrators are working all summer and we are here if you should need us.

With much gratitude,

Amy Minor
Superintendent of Schools