

REOPENING COLCHESTER SCHOOLS

A GUIDE FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR



www.csdvt.org/covid19

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LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Colchester School District's Reopening Plan is based on public health information available at this time. The plan will most likely be adjusted as new guidance from the Vermont Agency of Education, Vermont Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and other public health officials is received or as necessary to best support the health and safety of our students and employees.

Please keep in mind that Vermont Schools are opening in Step 2. Should the State move from Step 2 back to Step 1 due to a resurgence of the virus, schools will be directed to transition to remote learning for all students for a period of time. As a district, we are preparing for a variety of scenarios and, as always, we are committed to keeping you informed every step of the way.

Colchester School District (CSD) is offering the following two options for the 2020-2021 school year. **Parents and guardians will receive an email on Wednesday, July 29** with a link to fill out their student's verification form which will include selecting one of the following two options.

Option 1: In-Person Instruction

The Vermont Agency of Education released [A Strong and Healthy Start: Safety and Health Guidance for Vermont Schools](#) on June 17, 2020 and subsequently released [Hybrid Learning During the 2020-2021 School Year](#) on July 15, 2020. In both of those documents, they strongly encourage schools to focus on the return to in-person instruction stating that it, "...is the optimal approach to address both student learning needs and the larger social, emotional and health needs of students." In addition, the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) is recommending that students physically return to school.

Option 2: Virtual Instruction

We know that in-person instruction is not an option for some of our students with elevated health risks, or who have family members with elevated health risks. Any families who do not feel comfortable having their children attend school in person are not required to do so. Your students will be provided the option of online instruction.

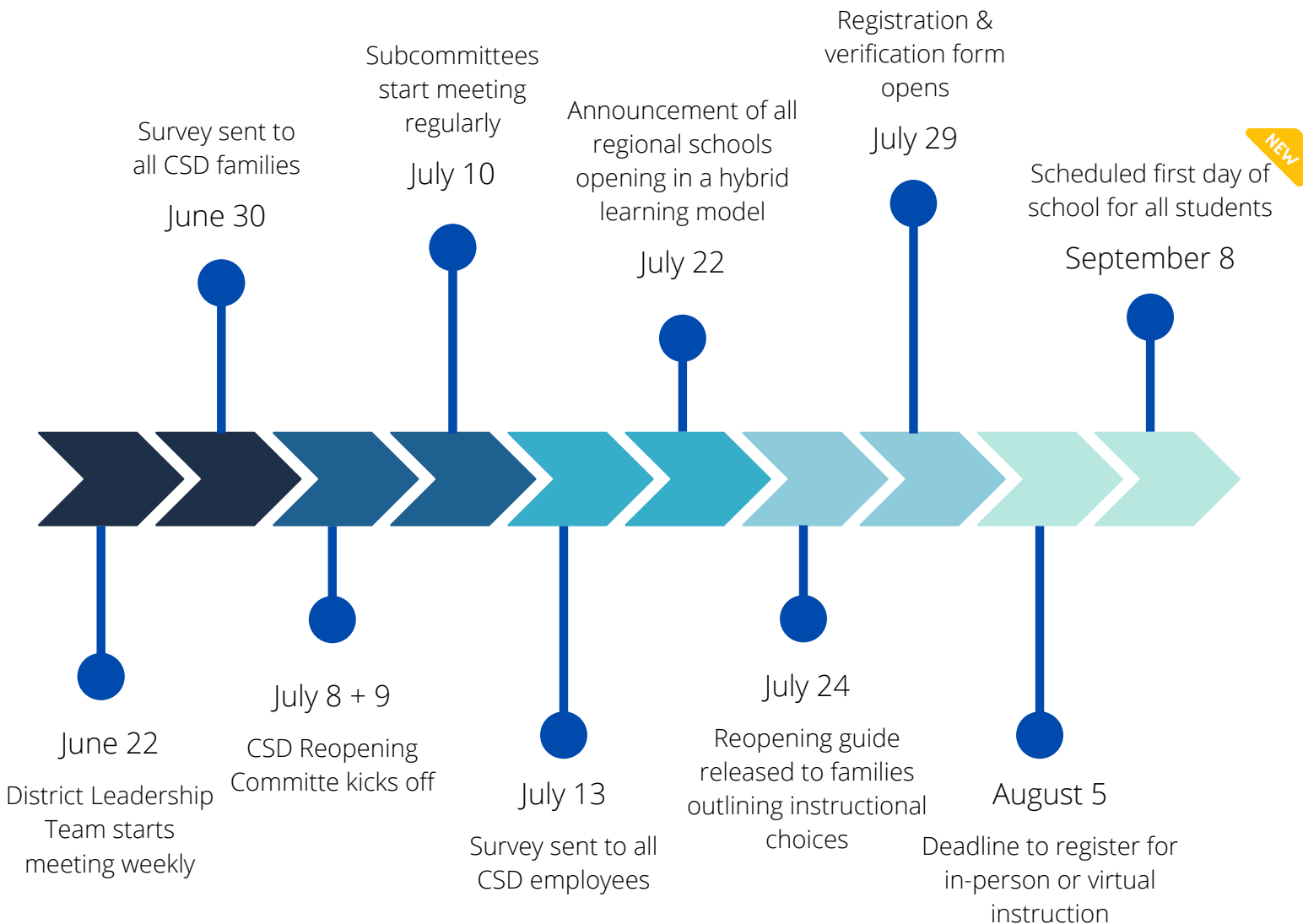
I ask that you take the time to review the Reopening Colchester Schools Plan presented in this guide to help you make the choice that is best for your children. We greatly appreciate your understanding and collaboration. Please don't hesitate to contact me or your school's principal with any questions you may have.

Amy Minor



No matter the setting, at home or in person,

WE ARE COLCHESTER.





OPTION #1

Option #1: In-Person Instruction (Opening in a hybrid model)

To start the school year, Colchester School District, along with all the districts in Chittenden County, will open in a hybrid learning model that includes both in-person and remote learning.

- Students will be broken into one of two groups with each attending in-person classes two days a week and learning remotely three days a week.
- The district is making every effort to group families together whenever possible. To do this, we are assigning students to groups alphabetically by last name and will provide exceptions to families in the same household with different last names. This is outlined in further detail on the next page.
- Students across all grades will be learning remotely on Wednesdays. We will use this day to offer individualized support to students, allow our faculty and staff to engage in professional planning and learning as needed, and to allow our custodial team the flexibility to provide a mid-week clean of our buildings with fewer people inside.
- Students enrolled in the Colchester Early Education Program at Malletts Bay School will get specific preschool information emailed to them next week (week of July 27).

Please be aware that the following group assignments are preliminary and are subject to change based on additional unforeseen guidance from the Vermont Agency of Education, Vermont Department of Health or as necessary to best support the health and safety of our students and employees and the operational needs of our district.

Option #1: In-Person Instruction (Opening in a hybrid model)

For students in grades K-8

- Students with last names starting with the letters **A - K** will be assigned to the **Blue Group** and will attend school in-person on Monday and Tuesday and will engage in remote learning on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
- Students with last names starting with the letters **L - Z** will be assigned to the **Green Group** and will attend school in-person on Thursday and Friday and engage in remote learning on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.
- If you would like to request a waiver for your student to be re-assigned to the other group, please fill out this google form: [CSD Hybrid Learning Group Waiver Request Form](#). **The deadline for waiver requests is Wednesday, August 5th.**

For CHS students in grades 9-12

- Students with last names starting with the letters **A - K** will be assigned to the **Lakers Group** and will attend school in-person on Monday and Tuesday and will engage in remote learning on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
- Students with last names starting with the letters **L - Z** will be assigned to the **Champ Group** and will attend school in-person on Thursday and Friday and engage in remote learning on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.
- If you would like to request a waiver for your student to be re-assigned to the other group, please fill out this google form: [CSD Hybrid Learning Group Waiver Request Form](#). **The deadline for CHS waiver requests has been extended to Wednesday, August 12th.**

	K-8		9-12	
	Blue (A-K)	Green (L-Z)	Lakers (A-K)	Champs (L-Z)
Monday	In Person	Remote	In Person	Remote
Tuesday	In Person	Remote	In Person	Remote
Wednesday	Remote	Remote	Remote	Remote
Thursday	Remote	In Person	Remote	In Person
Friday	Remote	In Person	Remote	In Person

Option #1: In-Person Instruction (Opening in a hybrid model)

For students to enroll in this option, they will be required to practice the following protocols.

Arrival and Transportation

- Before entering our school buildings, all students and staff will complete a daily health check which will include having their temperature taken and answering a few questions about COVID-19 symptoms and exposure. Students who are riding the bus will be asked the health check questions and have their temperatures taken as they board the bus. Any individuals determined to have a fever will be sent home immediately. Parents/caregivers must plan for this scenario and be available to pick up their child if required.
- We are encouraging families who can transport their children to do so. This will allow for better distancing on the bus for those families who rely on district transportation. We are evaluating the traffic flow at all of our buildings to better handle the increased car traffic.
- Students riding the bus will be required to wear a facial covering. They will use hand sanitizer before boarding and will be assigned a seat. All buses will be cleaned and disinfected before and after every route.
- To protect students' safety and provide for more orderly temperature taking, students will enter and exit each building through assigned entry points.

Facial Coverings and Distancing

- The AOE is requiring all students, staff, and visitors to wear facial coverings (masks). We recommend that families use this summer to try out some different styles of facial coverings so they can begin to identify which works best for their child. CSD will work to provide masks for those who cannot purchase their own.
- Face masks may be removed when eating, drinking, and outside so long as students and staff are able to maintain 6 feet of physical distancing.
- Individually-packed student meals will be served in classrooms.
- Classroom seating will be adapted to accommodate physical distancing to the best extent possible.
- There will not be any indoor assemblies that bring students together in a large group.

Option #1: In-Person Instruction (Opening in a hybrid model)

Hygiene and Cleaning

- Students and staff will be frequently reminded about the importance of proper handwashing. We will place hand sanitizer units throughout our buildings and ensure all of our bathrooms are properly stocked with soap and towels. Signage will be placed throughout the buildings to reinforce good hygiene practices.
- The entire building will undergo enhanced cleaning and disinfection on a regular basis. Frequently-touched surfaces will be cleaned often.

Classrooms

- Classroom seating will be configured with maximum allowable space between students and whenever possible, desks and tables will face the same direction.
- Employees will modify instructional plans to reduce student contact, sharing of materials or equipment and maintain appropriate social distancing to the greatest extent possible.

Personal Items

- The borrowing and sharing of any items will be restricted.
- The use of reusable water bottles will be encouraged.

Outdoor Recess (Elementary)

- Face masks will not be required outside, as long as 6 feet of distance can be maintained at all times.
- Playground equipment will remain closed.
- Students will be prompted to wash their hands before and after recess.

Visitors and Field Trips

- In an effort to strictly limit the number of visitors into our buildings, we will not be allowing classroom volunteers or visitors.
- There will be no field trips.

Option #1: In-Person Instruction (Opening in a hybrid model)

Public Use of School Buildings

- All school buildings will be open to employees, students, service providers, and essential vendors ONLY. The buildings will remain closed to the public. (The primary election on August 11 will be an exception.)
- The public may use exterior school grounds and there will be outdoor recess space for students but the playgrounds will remain closed.

What Learning Will Look Like on the 3 Remote Days

- What makes these remote days different from this past spring is students are connecting with their teacher(s) and receiving direct instruction in person two days a week. This will allow for more focused and intentional follow up and continued learning on the key content areas and skills taught during their in person days.
- These three remote learning days will be primarily asynchronous, meaning the lessons are available for students to access on their own time and at their own pace, since the teacher will be engaged in-person instruction with the other half of their class.
- Remote learning lessons will include both offline learning opportunities (eg. books and paper) and digital instruction such as pre-recorded videos and online activities.
- Students will be expected to use common digital platforms (such as Google Classroom or Seesaw) to access much of their remote learning.
- To facilitate both in-person instruction and remote learning concurrently, teachers will use most of Wednesday, the fully remote day, to plan. However, they will be available to answer questions or to support students as needed and may lead some optional synchronous or “live” activities.





OPTION #2

Option #2: Full-time Virtual Learning

As parents and caregivers, you have a choice when it comes to your child's education. For families with additional health concerns, or those not yet comfortable in sending their children to school in person, the district is preparing to offer a full-time remote learning option, also known as virtual learning.

For your student to enroll in this option, we ask that our families be aware and willing to commit to the following.

- Virtual learning is available for any CSD student with health and safety concerns, elevated health risks or a family member with elevated health risks.
- Participating in virtual schooling will require significant parent or caregiver oversight, especially for students in younger grades.
- Students enrolled in virtual learning will continue to receive special education services online through the district.
- Attendance, grading, and workload requirements will be consistent with in-person classes.
- Dates will be set for supply pickup so that students can receive any technology, textbooks or other supplies necessary to engage in virtual learning.
- School meals will be available for pick up at the school with the possibility of some delivery service. More information on meals will be available soon.

Option #2: Full-time Virtual Learning

Grades K-8 Virtual Learning Information

- Virtual learning will be facilitated by the Colchester School District.
- Students enrolled in virtual learning will be provided the same content and have the same amount of school work as those attending school in person.
- Virtual learning will be taught by a small team of CSD teachers. Details will be determined after we know how many students register and from what grades.
- Based on how many families elect to receive virtual learning, classes may be grouped across grade levels. For example K and 1st grade together or 2nd and 3rd grade together.
- Learning will be mostly asynchronous, meaning lessons will be set ahead of time and/or prerecorded. Students and families would manage their own schedule for learning.
- There will be synchronous or “live” opportunities for teachers and students to interact. Teachers will have a daily presence through Google Meet and/or Zoom.
- Although families will set their own learning schedules, the time commitment of virtual learning will mirror a typical school day using a balance of offline (books and paper) and digital instruction.
- Daily and weekly social-emotional learning lessons will be embedded in the curriculum to support the unique needs students are facing during this pandemic.
- Daily attendance is required and will be noted through participation in an online classroom activity.
- As with students learning in-person, students enrolled in virtual learning will be assessed using CSD assessment and grading practices.
- Students may transition in or out of virtual learning at a predetermined time around the trimester mark for grades K-5 and quarter mark for grades 6-8.



Option #2: Full-time Virtual Learning

Grades 9-12 Virtual Learning Information

- Classes and curriculum will be facilitated by Vermont Virtual Learning Collaborative (VTVLC).
- There will be online course options for each subject area.
- All courses are taught by Vermont licensed educators who are currently employed with a Vermont school but your student will most likely not have teachers from Colchester.
- Teachers and students interact regularly through email, telephone conversations, and various synchronous web tools. As students work through the modules of a course, they connect with their teachers to take exams online and discussion-based assessments over the phone or video conference. Students do the work at their own pace and on their own time, but are expected to stay on pace.
- Assignments are due weekly and throughout the course.
- Teachers are available during scheduled office hours and by appointment. Students are encouraged to contact their teacher when there is a need of any kind. Teachers regularly speak via telephone or video conference with students and their parents.
- Students will continue to be connected to their Homebase at Colchester High School (CHS) and they will maintain access and contact with their CHS guidance counselor.
- If a student would like to return to CHS for instruction, they must first complete their VTVLC courses. Enrollment back into CHS classes will be based on current course numbers and capacity.





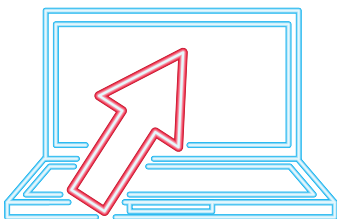
Making a Selection Decision Due: Wednesday, August 5

The form to select in-person or virtual schooling is included in your child's online Annual Registration/Verification Form which will be emailed to you on or before Wednesday, July 29.

If you have an incoming kindergartener or if your student is new to the district and you have already completed your registration form for the 2020-2021 school year, your school will reach out to you directly to confirm your choice.

Please note all forms must be submitted by the following Wednesday, August 5 to give our teams enough time to make the appropriate accommodations.

If you have more than one CSD student, you will need to complete an individual form for each of your students.



Medical

Agreements

Document Upload

Signature

Summary

child would like to receive instruction this year. For more details on both opt Colchester Schools: A Guide to the 2020-2021 School Year.

I am enrolling my student in: required

- Select -

Select -

In-person Learning at a CSD School

Full-time Remote Learning/Virtual Schooling

Previous **Next**



Special Services

- Special services meetings and other family meetings may continue to be held virtually based on the ability of the school to provide space that ensures appropriate social distancing requirements are met.
- Students who have chronic medical conditions will have their individual situation assessed by the school nurse. Health Care Plans, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), 504 Plans and any other relevant documentation will be reviewed. Schools will contact the student's parents/guardians as well as the student's physician, if needed.
- For students with IEPs, the child's IEP team will meet to determine the nature, extent, and service delivery model.
- CSD employees working with students who require instruction or related services that involve hands-on work or other interventions in close proximity may wear personal protective equipment (PPE) in order to keep themselves and the students safe. This includes gloves, masks and/or face shields.
- Evaluations that were unable to be completed due to the need for in-person testing will be completed as quickly as possible once school resumes.



HEALTH & SAFETY

When Someone is Sick

- Any individual who shows any signs or symptoms of illness must stay home.
- Students will not be penalized for missing school and are encouraged to stay home when they are not feeling well.
- Parents are encouraged to contact their school nurse if their child is home ill with any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19. Individuals should not return to school unless they are fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.
- Students and employees with any of the following symptoms of COVID-19 must remain home:
 - Cough,
 - Fatigue,
 - Fever or chills,
 - Headache,
 - Known close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19,
 - Measured temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater,
 - Nausea or vomiting,
 - New loss of taste or smell,
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
 - or Sore throat.
- Any student or employee who begins to exhibit COVID-19 like symptoms must report to the school nurse immediately.
- Isolation rooms have been identified in all schools for individuals demonstrating COVID-19 symptoms.
- The school nurse will assess the student and call a family member when it is appropriate to request that the child be picked up immediately.
- If a student or employee has symptoms of COVID-19 and has had a test, they should rest at home and not come to school until they receive their results.

CASES OF COVID-19

If Someone Tests Positive for COVID-19

- Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 or who shows any signs or symptoms of illness must stay home to recover and protect others from getting sick.
- The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) is notified whenever someone tests positive for COVID-19 in Vermont. The VDH will call their school or workplace to follow up with next steps.
- Individuals should not return to school for 10 days after symptoms first appear. Individuals must also be fever free for 72 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- People who have had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 must isolate at home and monitor symptoms for 14 days. Close contact is defined as "any individual who has been closer than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes."
- If an employee or student notifies CSD that they have tested positive, CSD will contact the VDH and follow its guidance for quarantine requirements and the potential closure of a school.
- The state does not require complete school closure due to a positive COVID-19 test. However, entire classrooms, building wings, and/or bus routes may be impacted. Decisions about closures will be made based on guidance from the AOE.
 - All areas used by an ill person will be closed off and not used until after cleaning and disinfecting.
 - When necessary and deemed appropriate, the district will communicate with staff and families to provide general information about the situation. However, information released will be limited as it is critical to maintain confidentiality.
- Students or employees returning from illness related to COVID-19 will be required to check in with the school nurse.

Quarantine Situations

- If an individual student is required to quarantine, they will be provided the option to transition into remote learning, if physically able, and those days will not be counted as absences.
- If a classroom or multiple classrooms are required to quarantine due to a positive test, impacted students will transition into remote learning during the quarantine period. If a student is physically able to participate, those days will not be counted as absences.