



Colchester School District

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September 4, 2020

Dear Colchester School Community,

Welcome back for the 2020-21 school year! It's hard to believe that school will officially begin on Tuesday. We are incredibly delighted to have our students and educators back in school again, particularly after such a challenging spring and summer. Even though this school year will look different than how it has in the past, I have complete faith that our students, staff, and families will make the coming year productive and engaging for all.

I want to thank the many CSD employees and families who have gone above and beyond this summer to ensure that we are ready to receive your students on Tuesday. The buildings are clean and we could not be more excited to see your learners' smiling faces both in our classrooms and virtually!

General Health and Safety Statement

Please remember that each morning, by sending a student to school or to the bus, the parent/guardian of that student is certifying that:

- The student is well and does not have any COVID-19 symptoms (including a fever),
- They have not been in contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive, and
- That they have not traveled to a location that requires quarantine.

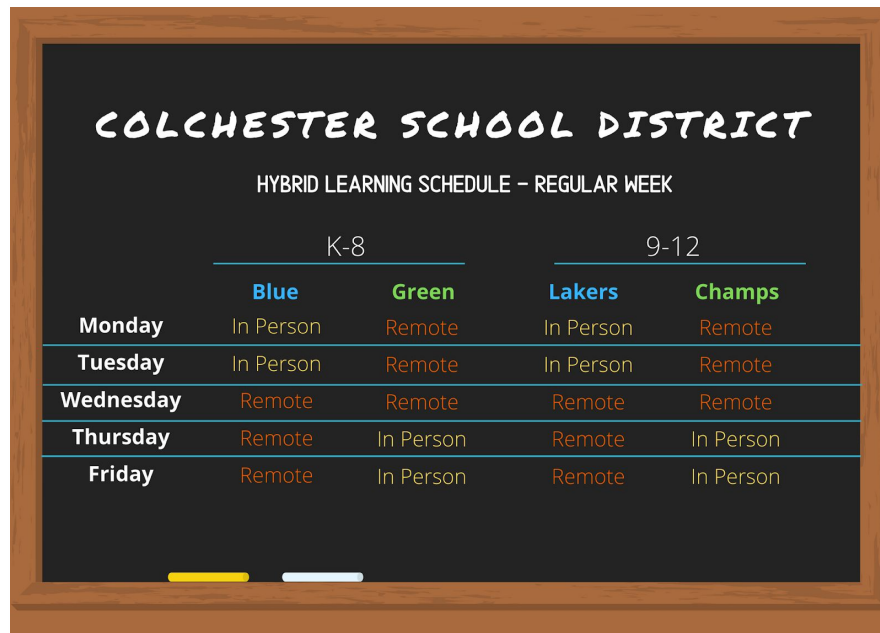
For more information on when or why your child should stay home and for how long, please see our [COVID-19 Symptomatic & Positive Cases Guide](#). All of our students and employees will complete health screening, including a temperature check, prior to entering our school buildings each day. It is mission-critical to follow this guidance if our schools are to remain open. Thank you for taking these extra precautions to keep the entire Colchester community safe.

Schedule for the First Weeks of School

Since Monday is a holiday (Labor Day), there will be no school that day. Our first day of school will be on Tuesday. To make sure students in the Blue & Laker groups get two days of in-person instruction, they will attend classes in-person on Tuesday **and** Wednesday of next week.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT				
First Week of School Schedule (Labor Day Holiday)				
	K-8		9-12	
	Blue	Green	Lakers	Champs
Monday 9/7	No School	No School	No School	No School
Tuesday 9/8	In Person	Remote	In Person	Remote
Wednesday 9/9	In Person	Remote	In Person	Remote
Thursday 9/10	Remote	In Person	Remote	In Person
Friday 9/11	Remote	In Person	Remote	In Person

Starting the next week, we will begin to follow our regular schedule of the Blue/Laker group attending on Monday and Tuesday, and the Green/Champ group attending on Thursday and Friday, with everyone learning remotely on Wednesdays.



COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT				
HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE – REGULAR WEEK				
	K-8		9-12	
	Blue	Green	Lakers	Champs
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

Full-time Virtual Learners

K-8 students who have enrolled in virtual learning will also begin school on Tuesday, September 8 and we have a fantastic team of CSD teachers leading these classes. In grades K-5, each grade has one class of virtual learners and in grades 6-8, each grade has a 2-person team of teachers. CHS students in grades 9-12 will receive their courses through Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC). Classes for VTVLC begin on Monday, September 14. Here's the link to the [CSD Virtual Learning Family Guide](#) and the [introductory slideshow](#) that was distributed to families enrolled in the fully-virtual option.

Meals & Free/Reduced Application

Yesterday the district announced the wonderful news that thanks to some late Federal funding, breakfast and lunch will be **FREE for ALL students**. Students who are learning in person can pick up a meal at school (but are not required to, feel free to bring one from home if you prefer). Students learning remotely can pick up their meal from one of the 20 designated locations around Colchester. [Pick up times and locations are listed here on our website](#).

We don't know how long this funding will last, so we still want to encourage families to apply for free/reduced meals. The application is quick and easy. You can access the application at <https://www.myschoolapps.com>. The application is available in: English, Spanish (Español), Arabic (العربية), French (Français), Filipino (Tagalog), Vietnamese (tiếng Việt) and Chinese (Mandarin (官話)). The paper application is available in [Nepali](#) (नेपाली).

Masks/Facial Coverings

[In Vermont, masks are required to help prevent the spread of COVID-19](#). All students, employees, and families will be **required** to wear a facial covering while in school as well as outside where physical distancing cannot be maintained. Cloth facial coverings and/or masks will be provided to any student who needs one. Students and staff are encouraged to provide their own cloth facial coverings or masks as long as it covers their nose, mouth, and chin. The Vermont Department of Health has a facial covering/mask [resource guide](#) that provides links to where facial coverings/masks can be acquired locally and directions on how to make your own. In addition, [MBS created this video](#) to help demonstrate how to wear a mask. The video was designed with students in mind, but adults are sure to get some good tips as well!

Transportation

Per the Vermont Agency of Education and Vermont Department of Health, parents/guardians are encouraged to transport their student(s) or have them walk/bike to school, whenever possible, to minimize the number of students on the bus and at stops. As a result, please be patient with us over the first two weeks of school as we adjust our arrival and pick up procedures. We anticipate that there will be traffic backups and potential delays at each of our buildings as we all adjust and build new routines for the first two weeks of school. Our bus routes were just sent out and can be [located here](#). We are confident that our efficiency will improve as we all get used to this new routine. A few bus reminders:

- Check your child for symptoms and take their temperature before they go to the bus stop. If your child is sick or has a temperature 100.4 F degrees or higher, have them stay home. See our guide on [symptoms and when to stay home](#) for more information. Please **DO NOT** send your student to the bus stop alone without taking their temperature first. Whenever possible, we are asking for an adult to be present at the bus stop.
- Masks are required at all times on the bus.
- Students will have assigned seats to maximize physical distancing on the bus. The bus driver or bus aide will instruct students where to sit.
- Sanitizer will be available for students to use immediately upon boarding the bus.
- Buses will be cleaned between each route and at the end of day.

Positive Case Communication Guide

For more information on how we will respond to positive cases, please review our [COVID-19 Symptomatic & Positive Cases Guide](#). In general, if there is a positive case in one of our schools we will:

- Notify parents/guardians and employees that a person with COVID-19 has been identified to have been at the school.
- Encourage families to answer calls from the Health Department and participate in contact tracing.
- Clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared equipment including frequently touched surfaces using a product effective against COVID-19.
- Students and employees who were in close contact will be notified by a contact tracer with Health Department and will be given instructions on quarantining and how to monitor their health.
- Students and employees who have positive test results for COVID-19 will be required to isolate at home.

Travel

For families who have vacationed or traveled outside the State of Vermont or those who are moving in right before the start of the school year, you must pay close attention to the quarantine requirements set by the State. If your student has been outside of Vermont in the 14 days prior to their first in-person day of school, please review the [cross state travel map](#) to determine if quarantining is required based on the area you were in. The map is updated weekly on Fridays and is populated with raw data from Johns Hopkins University. You can [read more about quarantining at the Vermont Department of Health website](#). If your student will need to quarantine at the beginning of the school year due to restricted travel, please contact the main office at your school.

District Planning Documents

In case you need a refresher, here are a few documents that we provided this summer to help prepare our families whose students are returning for in-person learning. First is the [Multiple Layers of Protection Infographic](#): this goes over many of the mitigation tactics that we're using to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Second is our [Reopening Colchester Schools Guide](#): this was released in late July and gives an overview of the hybrid learning model and the fully virtual learning model. Both of these documents and lots of other information can be located on our COVID-19 website: www.csdvt.org/covid19. Additionally, all of our schools have made videos or flyers, sent home newsletters, or hosted virtual meetings. These efforts have hopefully answered many of the building-specific questions that you might have.

In closing, we are all looking forward to a time when COVID is in the past and things can become more normal. Thank you for all that you do to support Colchester Schools and the success of your children. I wish you and your family a wonderful Labor Day weekend.

Sincerely,

Amy Minor

Superintendent of Schools