



# Colchester School District

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CSD Community,

We have said several times that adaptability is key during our planning process. The pandemic has forced us to be flexible and in turn, we've needed our families to be flexible as well. We know none of these decisions are *good* or *right*. Nothing feels particularly good or right at the moment because it's not what we're used to when we think of traditional schooling. From a school and district level, we've definitely embraced flexibility as we work to re-design how school happens. As we roll decisions out and communicate them to our staff and families we are constantly seeking feedback. In some cases, that feedback alerts us to reevaluate a decision; which is the case with the schedule at CHS. Below you'll find some new updates and answers to some common questions we're hearing.

**Question: Will you be changing the high school schedule to mirror the K-8 schedule?**

**Answer:** Yes. The high school is now officially planning for a Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday schedule. We had shared with you last week that we were reevaluating our original decision based on feedback from families. Our dedicated CHS Reopening Committee and Leadership Team again weighed all the options and are confident that they can build a successful schedule using the Monday/Tuesday, Thursday/Friday schedule. We've heard from families that aligning the high school's schedule with the K-8 schedule is preferable and while we know *none of this* is actually what we all *want*, we're going to do our best to make it work the best we can.

We have updated [Reopening Colchester Schools: A Guide to the 2020-2021 School Year](#).

Below you'll see the adjusted schedule showing that Lakers who have last names beginning with the letters A-K will now have in-person learning on Monday and Tuesday and will learn remotely Wednesday-Friday, and Champs who have last names beginning with the letters L-Z will now have in-person learning Thursday and Friday and will learn remotely Monday-Wednesday.

	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

If you'd like to request a waiver for your student to be re-assigned to the other group, please fill out the form located on page 4 of the Reopening Guide. We will be adding an extension to the original waiver deadline for CHS students. Please submit any requests by next Wednesday, August 12th. Any existing waiver requests that were submitted for the old schedule will not be used.

**Q: When is the first day of school?**

**A:** The first day of school for students is Tuesday, September 8. For some, this will be a remote learning day and their first in-person day will be Thursday, September 10.

**Q: What's the deadline to verify my student's enrollment and select in-person or virtual learning?**

**A:** The deadline is tomorrow, Wednesday, August 5. The questions asked on the [Returning Student Verification Form](#) are critically important to our planning. Please, if you haven't filled it out yet, do so as soon as possible. You should have received emails with a direct link to the form on Wednesday, Friday, and yesterday. We will continue to send reminder emails until we have a submitted form for your student(s). *If you are the parent/guardian of a new student (such as a kindergartener or an incoming student from the Islands or Georgia) and you already filled out a new student registration form, you do not need to fill out the returning student verification. Your school will contact you directly to get your instructional decision.*

**Q: What will a typical school day look like? When will we find out what specific safety protocols have been put in place at each school?**

**A:** We are still working on the details of what a "typical" school day will look like. We do know it will vary depending on what grade your child is in, whether they are in-person or remote, or if they're enrolled in full virtual learning. Building administrators are developing their draft plans for pick up/drop off, building entry, transitions throughout the school day, bus loading, health checks, lunch/recess schedules, etc. Expect to start hearing from your building principals more frequently throughout the month of August. Our goal is for our building-based teams and reopening committees to finalize logistics over the next few weeks and to communicate with families as go with the majority of communication coming prior to August 20th.

**Q: What do you mean by a "cohort"? How many students are in a cohort?**

**A:** Cohorting means grouping students and staff as consistent as possible every day by having the same group of children stay with the same staff (all day for younger children, and as much as possible for older children). This helps reduce the potential for viral spread and allows for better contact tracing if needed. Building principals will maintain structures that support students with individual needs while minimizing the intermingling of cohorts. The number of students who select in-person learning, together with other school-specific scheduling needs, will determine cohort sizes on a school-by-school basis.

**Q: When do we expect to go back to normal and have all students return for in-person learning five days a week?**

**A:** Unfortunately, we cannot predict this timeframe. Our ultimate goal is to have all students back to a traditional learning environment as soon as health experts say it's safe to do so. Until then, we're going to do the best we can with hybrid learning. We know that it will be a vast improvement of what we all experienced this past spring.

**Q: My family is planning a late summer vacation for Labor Day weekend. How can I find out where we can travel without having to quarantine so we don't miss the first couple weeks of school?**

**A:** The State of Vermont created a [cross state travel map](#) that shows what locations you can travel to without needing to quarantine upon your return to Vermont. The map is updated weekly on Fridays and is populated with raw data from Johns Hopkins University.

**Q: What about sports? How will we access school meals? Will my school have an open house? When will we get our class placement or course schedule?**

**A:** These are all good questions and we are diligently working on finalizing answers. In some cases, we're waiting for guidance to be released and in other cases, our school-based teams or reopening committees are working to develop the answer. Expect to see answers in future FAQ emails like this one. In some cases, if it's applicable, we'll also update the [Reopening Colchester Schools Guide](#).

I hope these answers are helpful to you. We are in the process of redesigning our COVID19 website to serve as a landing pad to house FAQs, links and resources for this coming school year. As soon as it's ready, we'll share it with you so you have a one-stop place to reference all of the communication we've sent out so far.

Sincerely,  
Amy Minor  
Superintendent of Schools