



Colchester School District

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March 4, 2021

Dear CSD Community,

Welcome back from February Break! We are thrilled to report that next year's school budget passed with 64% of the vote. We are so grateful for the community's support and are excited to continue planning for next school year. We would also like to send our sincere thanks to two outgoing school board members. Board Chair Mike Rogers who served for 14 years, and Curt Taylor who served for 6 years. We wish them the very best. With that, we would like to welcome our two newest board members, Ben Yousey-Hindes and Laurie Kigonya. The school board meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm. The meetings are open to the public and [streamed live through LCATV](#).

Hats Off to Our School Nurses

You may remember [this fun two-minute video](#) starring our school nurses that we sent to families and posted on our social media before the break. Well, the Vermont Department of Health liked it so much they shared it on their platforms and before we knew it other states were sharing it too! We may be biased, but we think our nurses deserve every ounce of exposure for the phenomenal work they've done this year. Well done!

COVID-19 Case Summary for Colchester

Since the start of the school year, the Colchester School District has had a total of 24 individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 and were determined by the Health Department to have been in school while they were infectious.

CSD 2020-2021 COVID-19 Cases

September	October	November	December	January	February
0	1	4	1	9	9

From the above cases, 12 resulted in individual close contacts being quarantined and the other 12 cases resulted in individual close contacts being quarantined as well as a classroom or program being moved to full remote learning until the end of the quarantine period.

Amy Minor
Superintendent
of Schools

George Trieb
Business & Operations
Manager

Carrie Lutz
Director of Student
Support Services

Gwendolyn Carmolli
Director of Curriculum
& Instruction

Total Number of COVID-19 Cases by School

Central Office	CHS	CMS	MBS	PPS	UMS
1	9	1	6	4	3

Out of the 24 cases, one case at UMS was deemed to have in-school transmission. We attribute the low rate of in-school transmission to our commitment to the mitigation strategies that we have put in place across the district. Masks, handwashing, physical distancing, remote meetings, and staying home when sick are all important strategies for us to use to keep our schools safe and open for learning.

Employee Surveillance Testing Participation

Month	Total Employees Tested	Number of Positives	Percent Tested
November	277	0	61%
December	329	0	73%
January	303	0	67%
February	262	1	58%

The Agency of Education will continue to offer free voluntary COVID-19 surveillance testing for school employees through June of 2021.

Vaccination Information

During Governor Scott's press conference on Tuesday, we learned that the next phase of vaccinations will include school employees, childcare employees and additional public safety employees. In Vermont, more than 80% of Vermont educators expressed that they are interested in being vaccinated through a survey distributed by the Vermont Agency of Education. We are still waiting for guidance regarding any potential vaccination requirements or exemptions that might be in place this fall for school employees and students.

See chart on next page.

COVID-19 VACCINES IN VERMONT: ELIGIBILITY STATUS



BY OCCUPATION/SETTING

PHASE 1	Long-term care residents and staff, health care workers, and first responders	All eligible
	K-12 teachers and onsite staff, child care, and expanded public safety	Est. March 8*

BY AGE GROUPS

PHASES 2-4	Individuals aged 65+	All eligible
PHASE 5A	Individuals aged 55+ with certain high-risk health conditions	Starting Mar. 8
PHASE 5B	Individuals aged 16+ with certain high-risk health conditions	Starting Mar. 15
PHASES 6	Individuals aged 60+	Est. late March*

*Projected time estimates are subject to change based on federal vaccine allocations.

Updated 3.2.21

How the Vaccine May Impact School

The vaccine's effectiveness at preventing infection is key to Vermont beginning to return to normal. However, Vermont's Safety and Health Guidance for Schools, which requires students to be physically distanced 3 feet at the elementary level and 6 feet at the middle/high school level, has not changed. We are in regular communication with the Vermont Agency of Education and will continue to monitor any changes closely. As the weather warms and we get closer to spring, we are hopeful that COVID cases will decline which may lead to us seeing a change in the State's guidance. As always, we will keep our entire school community informed every step of the way.

Be well,

Amy Minor
Superintendent of Schools