



# Colchester School District

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Dear CSD Community,

We are officially welcoming the first day of spring this Saturday and with any luck, this will be our last newsletter with a “winter” designation. As weather permits, our schools are ready to resume taking advantage of the district’s 21 outdoor classrooms. Early next week is calling for near 60-degree weather! As the weather warms, expect students will be outside each day and plan accordingly for extra clothing, outerwear, sunscreen, etc...

## Calendar Update

Originally, when this year’s school calendar was first approved, this coming Friday, March 19 was scheduled as a staff professional development day with no school for students. This fall, we changed it to a school day and we want to confirm that school will be in session for students this Friday.

*(Also, in case you’re wondering, the last day of school is currently Tuesday, June 15th!)*

## Elementary Summer School Opportunities

As part of our COVID recovery plan and ongoing efforts to bolster learning opportunities for elementary students over the summer, we are excited to share that we are expanding our elementary summer school offerings for students identified as needing more support. This summer, our program will offer half-day, in-person learning, five days a week, for five weeks. The focus of this half-day program will be to strengthen academic and social skills for current K-5 students by targeting literacy and mathematics instruction, all while having some summer fun! Our goal is to run programs at UMS, PPS, and MBS from 8:30 am - 12:30 pm starting in July. Additionally, the district will be able to provide free breakfast, lunch and transportation for enrolled summer school students.

Once we finalize the details of the program, we will work together with classroom teachers, special educators and building principals to reach out to families regarding the enrollment process. Stay tuned, more details will be available in April.

## Free School Meals

The USDA has extended the waiver for schools to provide free breakfast and lunch through September. This is great news for this coming spring and summer. We have started working on our plan to provide meals for April Break and what our summer meal program will look like. We’ll send out more information as the plan is finalized but in the meantime, know that meals will continue to be free for all students through the end of the school year.

**Amy Minor**  
Superintendent  
of Schools

**George Trieb**  
Business & Operations  
Manager

**Carrie Lutz**  
Director of Student  
Support Services

**Gwendolyn Carmolli**  
Director of Curriculum  
& Instruction

### **CSD Family Night: March 23 at 6:30 pm**

The fourth installment of the CSD Family Night Series will take place Tuesday, March 23 from 6:30 - 8:00 pm. The series offers a chance for families to connect with community experts on a variety of topics. All sessions are free and open to any caregivers.

Tuesday's session will be guided by Joelle Van Lent, a clinical psychologist, who will offer general support in navigating the difficulties of this pandemic. She'll provide insights on how stress impacts children and how we can support their resilience. [Here's the zoom link](#) and here's the full [Family Night Series flyer](#) for more information.

### **Outstanding Professional Award Presented to CHS Administrator**

We are proud to announce that our very own Jean Shea, director of student support services at Colchester High School, has been awarded the Outstanding Professional Award by [KidSafe Collaborative](#). If you've ever walked through CHS, you've seen her standing in one of the main hallways answering questions, welcoming students to the school, checking in with them and of course, making them laugh. But behind the scenes, she is an undercurrent of advocacy, wellness and success for so many of our students. The Colchester Sun recently spoke with Ms. Shea about the award and you can [read that article here](#). Congratulations, Ms. Shea!

### **Lead Testing Results for PPS**

You may remember that the State of Vermont passed a new law in 2019 requiring all schools and child care providers to test their drinking water for lead. Samples of water from every tap in the district that was reasonably expected to be used for drinking or cooking were collected and sent to the Vermont Department of Health Laboratory for analysis. Initial testing at Porters Point School showed 3 taps with results at or above the action level of 4 part per billion (ppb). The district took immediate action to remediate the taps and we were recently notified of our follow-up test results which show that all of the taps sampled had results below the action level and no further action is necessary.

Lead exposure poses a special risk to children because they absorb lead into their systems more easily than adults do. Lead can slow down growth, impair development and learning, and can cause behavior problems. While the major source of lead poisoning in Vermont children is paint, lead in plumbing pipes and fixtures can add to a person's overall exposure. Drinking water in schools and homes may contain lead from old pipes, plumbing fixtures (such as fountains and faucets), or the solder that joins pipe sections together.

For questions about the water testing process, or about the law and its requirements, please dial 2-1-1. You can view school and child care results, remediation and any follow-up testing at [leadresults.vermont.gov](http://leadresults.vermont.gov). To learn more about lead hazards and lead poisoning prevention, visit [healthvermont.gov/lead](http://healthvermont.gov/lead). If you want to test your home drinking water for lead, find a list of certified drinking water labs at [tinyurl.com/certified-lab](http://tinyurl.com/certified-lab).

Be well,  
Amy Minor  
Superintendent of Schools