



Colchester School District

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April 2, 2021

Dear CSD Community,

When we return from April Break, there will be just over seven weeks of school left. At the state and local level, there has been a lot of discussion about bringing students back for more in-person instruction days before the school year ends.

At today's press conference, Education Secretary Dan French confirmed that the Agency of Education (AOE) will be changing the distancing standard from 6 feet to 3 feet, for all students in grades K-12. They shared that they will be releasing the official guidance next week. Districts have not seen or heard anything more than what was announced today. We are anxiously waiting to see the guidance along with everyone else.

While this is welcome news, as it shows the confidence that state officials have that COVID-19 conditions will continue to improve as vaccination rates increase, this change will not automatically guarantee that all Colchester students will increase their in-person learning days for the last seven weeks of school.

We are optimistic that we can make some changes, however, once we are able to review the details and stipulations in the guidance, there will be a myriad of logistics our leadership teams will need to sort out. In many cases, class schedules may need to change, furniture will need to be purchased and reorganized, busing needs will be reassessed, lunches and other meal coordination will be altered, and we anticipate a host of other trickle-down implications. It is also important to highlight that with large class enrollment and small classroom footprints, even 3-foot spacing will come with challenges at our middle and high schools. CMS and CHS will need time to carefully plan and implement any changes to our current schedules.

Please know that we are also continuing to monitor the recent surge in COVID-19 cases and community transmission. Once we get our hands on the guidance next week, we will review it and make careful decisions that prioritize the health and safety of our students and employees while also hopefully giving our students a boost of in-person opportunities.

Calendar Updates

The last day of school is scheduled for Tuesday, June 15. Graduation for the Class of 2021 is slated for Saturday, June 12. We expect the AOE to release guidance on end-of-the-year celebrations, like graduation, later this month. We are so excited to celebrate the

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accomplishments of our students! As details are solidified, we will be sure to share them so families can plan accordingly.

The [school calendar for next year \(2021-2022\)](#) is up on our website for anyone who may need advance notice for work or other scheduling purposes. Be mindful that while the calendar is set, we won't have the statewide guidance for the fall for quite some time. As we get closer to the start of the school year, we will let you know if any changes are made to the calendar.

Meals for April Break

The CSD Food Service Program will once again be offering free meal bundles for the week of April Break. Sign up and distribution will be a bit different this time as they're working to fine-tune the process. An email with all the details will be sent on Monday morning.

Funding for Preschool Available for Families

If you have a child who will be between the ages of 3 and 5 years old before September 1, who is not enrolled in kindergarten, Vermont's Act 166 Community Partner Program allows your child to access 10 hours a week of FREE preschool/prekindergarten programming throughout next school year from over 50 qualified centers in Chittenden County. If your child attends a qualified center full-time, or for more than 10 hours a week, your annual tuition would be reduced by \$3,536. To learn more, view the list of qualified centers, and to register, visit www.csdvt.org/register and click on prekindergarten.

Be well,

Amy Minor
Superintendent of Schools