



# Colchester School District

Administrative Offices, 125 Laker Lane, PO Box 27, Colchester, Vermont 05446

Phone: (802) 264-5999 • [www.csdvt.org](http://www.csdvt.org) • Fax: (802) 863-4774

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April 9, 2021

Dear CSD Community,

Below are some updates related to the new guidance that was released this week.

## **Increases to In-Person Learning**

The updated guidance from the Agency of Education (AOE) was released yesterday. As expected, the most significant change is the distancing requirement at the middle and high school level from six feet to three feet. In anticipation of this change, over the past few weeks administrators have been planning for various scenarios of what the guidance could say. During that time we have heard from many school community members who feel passionately about increasing the school capacity to have more students in classes at a time, and we have also heard from equally passionate groups advocating to keep things the way they are for the final weeks of school.

To ensure that what we are hearing isn't anecdotal or simply a loud minority, we emailed surveys to families, students, and employees to get their direct feedback. We've received a great response so far. If you haven't filled yours out yet and would like to share your opinions, please do so by the end of the weekend.

Our administrative teams have been reviewing the guidance, talking with other school leaders in the region, and working through the long list of logistics connected to different scenarios of how we can increase in-person learning opportunities. This work will continue into next week as we also take into consideration the survey results. Our goal is to share a finalized K-12 plan, that outlines learning through the school year, by the end of next week.

## **New Travel Guidance**

Effective today, the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) no longer requires quarantine for unvaccinated individuals who travel outside of Vermont. Instead, if unvaccinated adults or children [travel outside Vermont](#), they must be tested within three days of returning to Vermont.

You do not need to quarantine while waiting for results. The test must be a "current infection" test (such as a PCR test), and cannot be an antigen test (also known as a rapid test). The two closest testing sites are 32 Malletts Bay Avenue in Winooski and 405 Pine Street in Burlington. Both are run by VDH and allow you to [schedule appointments online](#) ahead of time.

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**Amy Minor**  
Superintendent  
of Schools

**George Trieb**  
Business & Operations  
Manager

**Carrie Lutz**  
Director of Student  
Support Services

**Gwendolyn Carmolli**  
Director of Curriculum  
& Instruction

## **Daily Health Screenings**

The new guidance released by the AOE continues to require all students, their families, and staff to comply with and ensure daily monitoring of COVID-19 exposure and symptoms with an emphasis that assessments of exposure and symptoms should be completed before departing for school. Schools are no longer required to conduct temperature screenings upon arrival. Any parent or guardian who has dropped their child off at school this year knows that arrival is a complex process that takes many employees to manage a lot of moving parts. We do anticipate simplifying our processes to align with the updated guidance, however, expect any changes to take effect *after* April Vacation. We will communicate any changes to arrival procedures next week.

## **Use of School Grounds**

The new guidance allows for community use of school grounds. With this summer-like weather, we encourage you to take a walk on the track, stroll through the trails in our woods, or play on some of our awesome playgrounds. Just please continue to be vigilant and heed the advice of the Health Department; masks of faces, six-foot spaces, uncrowded places.

Be well,

Amy Minor  
Superintendent of Schools