



# Colchester School District

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## **Gratitude from Superintendent Amy Minor**

I would like to take a moment to express my personal gratitude to our families for the support you have shown our employees throughout the pandemic. Your children are why we come to work every day. They inspire us to be better as we strive to find solutions for problems that we never thought we would be facing. We are grateful for the learning that takes place each day and we want our students to feel happy and proud of what they have accomplished.

I want to acknowledge how challenging navigating the pandemic has been for our families, students and especially our employees. Our teachers, nurses, administrators and support staff bring their best selves to work every day to educate, care, and support Colchester's students. The expectations and pressures on school staff to address learning loss, social-emotional well-being, and behavior challenges through a trauma-informed lens is greater than we have ever previously experienced. I have been continually impressed with their ability to find creative ways to support our students and families. I am tremendously proud of them for their persistence and commitment to educating the students of Colchester. Words cannot express my gratitude for them and all they do for our students.

Our entire community is doing its best to try to recover from the systemic stress and fatigue that the pandemic has created. We would like to thank our families for partnering with us as this school year has been much more difficult than last. In fact, this has been the most challenging year that I have experienced in education and we cannot do this work alone. Simple expressions of kindness, patience and encouragement from our community help to acknowledge the extraordinary work our employees do daily. Your support has an incredible impact.

With a heart full of gratitude,

Amy Minor

Superintendent of Schools

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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

## **Hiring: Help Us Fill Open Positions**

We need your help. Staffing has been a major challenge this school year. Please help us spread the word as we are in need of substitute teachers and nurses, support staff, behavior interventionists, and bus drivers. We also have a few unique positions open, including a systems administrator in our Technology Department. For a full list of job openings, visit [www.csdvt.org/jobs](http://www.csdvt.org/jobs) or contact HR Coordinator, Kelsey Sadewicz at [kelsey.sadewicz@colchestersd.org](mailto:kelsey.sadewicz@colchestersd.org) or (802) 264-5976.

## **Changes to Districtwide COVID Case Notification**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have dedicated ourselves to being transparent in our COVID-19 mitigation measures and contact tracing efforts. Currently, we email the entire district whenever there is a case at a school. With the normalization of the virus and the consistent rise in cases, we became aware that the communication system originally designed to be transparent, may now feel like over-communication.

In a survey offered to families and staff earlier this month, over 61% of participants requested a shift away from districtwide notifications for every positive case. After much consideration, we will be making the following changes.

- After contact tracing is complete, the district will email a positive case notification to all families and employees at the school where the case is located.
- The district has created a CSD COVID-19 Case Data chart on our website, which can be found at [www.csdvt.org/covidcases](http://www.csdvt.org/covidcases). This page will show new and total positive case counts in schools across the district and will be updated regularly.

## **Be Prepared: Sign Up For Test to Stay**

If your child is unvaccinated and identified as a close contact, they will have to quarantine UNLESS your child is signed up for the Test to Stay Program. This program allows students to take a test each morning and continue to come to school during their quarantine period. The program ran very smoothly last week with our staff welcoming an average of 50 students each day at Bayside Activity Center to process their test before school. We cannot stress this enough, if you would like for your child to be able to participate in Test to Stay, you must fill out the state-wide consent form AND a form for your child's school ahead of time. It can often take the state days to process the consent forms, therefore if you haven't already, we strongly encourage you to fill them out now.

### **Test to Stay Sign Up Forms**

1. State Consent Form: [SY22 COVID-19 Testing Program Consent Form](#)
2. School Consent Form:
  - Colchester High School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/FJHT9>
  - Colchester Middle School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/AQJYA>
  - Malletts Bay School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/78RW9>
  - Porters Point School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/6FEYG>
  - Union Memorial School: <http://simplereport.gov/register/38Z7G>

### **COVID-19 Vaccine Now Available to Ages 5+**

The COVID-19 vaccine is now available for children ages 5 years and older at state-run clinics, many health care providers and some pharmacies. Learn more, review FAQs, and make an appointment through the [Vermont Department of Health's vaccine website](#).

### **International Travel Guidance**

While there are no restrictions on stateside travel, U.S. citizens and citizens of other countries need to follow the CDC guidance for [testing and international travel](#). After returning to the United States from international travel, it is recommended that:

- All travelers get tested for COVID three to five days after travel.
- Self-monitor for [COVID symptoms](#); isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.
- If you are **NOT** fully vaccinated, in addition to the testing recommendations above:
  - Stay home and self-quarantine for a full seven days after travel, even if you test negative between three to five days.
  - If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.

For more information on international travel, please [visit the CDC online](#).

### **Important Upcoming Districtwide Dates and Reminders**

- Wednesday, December 8: Early Release Day
- Thursday, December 23 - Friday, December 31: Winter Break - No School
- For the full calendar, visit [www.csdvt.org/calendar](http://www.csdvt.org/calendar).