



Colchester School District 2019-2020 Early Release Day Fact Sheet

What do we mean when we say “*professional development for faculty*”?

Professional development (PD) provides the training, resources, and practice to ensure that our educators offer the highest quality of instruction, assessment, and curriculum for our learners. While the value of professional learning is of great importance in the CSD community, it is also a requirement according to the Vermont Agency of Education. As found in the Education Quality Standards, all Vermont schools must engage in “*professional learning for all professional staff and embedded into the school day*” (2121.3).

How will early release days affect the school calendar?

The calendar currently allows for 176 student instructional days and 8 professional learning or in-service days. The following four early release days will be added to the existing calendar.

- Wednesday, September 25, 2019
- Wednesday, December 4, 2019
- Wednesday, February 5, 2020
- Wednesday, April 8, 2020

Will buses run on early release days? If so, when will they run?

Yes, Mountain Transit will transport students home via their regular bus route.

Dismissal times will be:

- 12:00 p.m. for Colchester Middle School and Colchester High School
- 12:45 p.m. for Malletts Bay School, Porters Point School and Union Memorial School

What child care opportunities are available on early release days?

We understand the difficulty and challenges that early release days may present to families. When making early release day arrangements for your child, please remember that although CSD does not directly provide supervision for students on these afternoons, Colchester Parks and Recreation will be offering after-school programs to any interested families. Expect to see more information this summer from the Parks and Rec Department about how to sign your child up for this after-school care.

Do other districts in Vermont use early release/late start structures to provide more effective PD?

Yes, this is a common model and many school districts have moved to regular early release or late start days to provide more effective professional development. Most districts in Chittenden County provide weekly, monthly, or quarterly early release PD time.

Why the additional professional learning time?

In today's education, teachers are expected to continually learn, apply, reflect, and re-adjust the implementation of all they are doing. We expect them to “chunk” learning in small doses for their students, ask students to apply that learning, constantly check for understanding, and make necessary instructional adjustments. Our previous Professional Development model was not consistent with this approach to teaching and learning. Meeting for full days every three or four months does not support teachers' ability to continually reflect and adjust their instruction based on student needs.

Additionally, the world for which we are preparing our students has changed dramatically in recent years and will only continue to do so. According to the documentary *Most Likely to Succeed*, 65% of today's grade-school children will end up in jobs not yet invented; the current length of a job for a millennial is 2.6 years, and millennials will have 15-20 jobs over the course of their working lives.

To ensure that future generations will have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to thrive in this new world, educators and states are responding by making significant shifts in how we educate our students and structure their learning.

At CSD, we are in the middle of implementing some of these shifts. We ask our teachers to develop learning targets aligned with national standards that still include personalize instruction and explore flexible pathways for each student. This important work requires focus and continual reflection; which is best done in regular sessions, not in sporadic full-day workshops.

What kinds of PD are faculty and staff engaged in during early release days?

Teachers are engaged in embedded, ongoing professional learning that is collaborative, reflective and responsive. This supports continuous growth of instructional practices and has a direct impact on student learning. Some of the work for this year includes:

Learning, collaborating and planning for:

- Instructional Practices
- Learning Targets
- Equity
- Technology integration
- Vertical Teams
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- Personalization

As a district, we are committed and excited to share the professional learning that occurs during early release days with our school families. You can expect to hear about our ongoing PD work through social media, teacher blogs, and newsletters.