

## **COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Board of Education Meeting  
Colchester High School Media Center

Monday, January 22, 2018  
7:00 p.m. (General Session)

### **MINUTES (General Session)**

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, January 22, 2018, at the Colchester High School Media Center. Those in attendance were Board Chair Mike Rogers; Directors Lincoln White, Craig Kieny, Lindsey Cox, and Curt Taylor; Student Board Member Robert Davis; Superintendent Amy Minor; Business and Operations Manager George Trieb; Director of Special Education Carrie Lutz; Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli; and Principals Carolyn Millham and Michele Cote.

A reporter from the Colchester Sun was the only member of the audience.

#### **I. Call Meeting to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Board Chair Mike Rogers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **II. Citizen Participation**

None.

#### **III. PPS Hour of Code Presentation**

Porters Point School Principal Carolyn Millham shared how her school participated in Hour of Code which takes place each year during Computer Science Education Week. To teach and incorporate coding in the classroom they implemented a building-wide applied curriculum using apps such as Scratch Jr. The students collaborated among grade-levels to help and learn from each other. In addition to learning lessons from PPS teachers, they also invited high school students, community members in the professional field, and CSD IT staff members to come in and share the way they use coding in their everyday life. Principal Millham also shared the school's plan for continuing coding outside of Computer Science Education Week. Included in that plan is a newly formed robotics club where students get to work with two small robots that were purchased through community donations last year.

#### **IV. FY19 Budget Presentation**

Superintendent Amy Minor provided an overview of what has been presented and discussed during the previous FY19 budget conversations. She showed that projected enrollment from the study done by McKibben Demographics is steady and will remain "flat" through 2027. She presented data from the Vermont AOE showing Colchester's student to staff ratio is 6.04:1, which is above the VT average and the State's recommendation of 5.0:1. She showed several data points to illustrate the increase in need and intensity of special education students. Lastly she presented data from the middle school which showed several years of decreases in student performance on state assessments in grades 6-8. One factor for this decline may be class size. The current classes are already at the top of the Vermont Education Quality Standards which recommend middle school class size not exceed 24 students per class. Looking to the future, the current 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are

two of the largest in the district. As these students enter CMS, they could see core class sizes as high as 28 per classroom.

Superintendent Minor next provided the board with three budget scenarios to address the goal of improving outcomes at the middle school. All members seemed most interested in the scenario that would add 2.2 FTE specifically in grade 6, and add additional administrative time for the assistant principal position which is currently a 10-month position. These additions would equal approximately \$90,000 dollars. To reduce that cost, she proposed eliminating an existing position in the district to get the overall budget increase to 3.67%. The board agreed that they would need to know more about the potential staff reduction before deciding.

***Director Kieny moved to enter executive session at 8:14 pm to discuss a personnel matter as it related to the proposed FY19 budget, seconded by Director White. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.***

***Director Cox moved to exit executive session at 8:29 pm, seconded by Director Kieny. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.***

Following executive session, the board continued to discuss how to best balance the financial impacts of the tax rate with the needs of students. They spoke about the components set by the state in the education funding formula and how it is negatively impacting the tax rate this year. They agreed that with a budget increase of 3.67%, which translates to a 2.99% increase in per pupil spending, it will be hard to explain how putting those numbers in the funding formula is resulting in an estimated 10.1% tax increase. The board also discussed several ways to communicate with the community including letters in The Colchester Sun, several community meetings at various locations and times, as well as the 2018 Report to the Community mailing.

***Board Chair Rogers moved to adopt a budget of \$40,569,927 for the support and operation of the Colchester School District for the year beginning July 1, 2018, seconded by director Cox. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.***

***Board Chair Rogers moved to warn the year 2018 Annual Town School District meeting by signing the warning for said meeting, seconded by director Cox. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.***

#### **V. Approval of Minutes: January 16, 2018**

***Director Kieny moved to approve the minutes of January 16, 2018, seconded by Director White. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.***

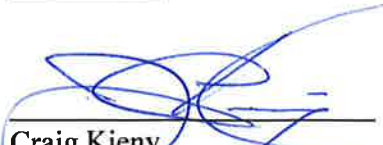
#### **VI. Adjournment**

***Director White moved to adjourn at 8:48 p.m., seconded by Director Kieny. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.***

Recorder:

  
Meghan Baule  
Communications Specialist

Board Clerk:

  
Craig Kieny  
Board Clerk