

# COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting  
Remote Meeting

Tuesday, January 5, 2021  
7:00 p.m.

## MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, January 5, 2021. Governor Scott signed H.681 into law, making temporary changes to Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Part of those changes allow school districts to hold school board meetings remotely with no designated meeting location. LCATV provided coverage through a live stream and citizens were provided online and telephone options to participate in the meeting. Those in attendance were Board Chair Mike Rogers; Directors: Craig Kieny, Lindsey Cox, Curt Taylor and Nic Longo; Student Board Member Julia Correll; Superintendent Amy Minor; Business and Operations Manager George Trieb; Director of Curriculum Gwendolyn Carmolli; Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz; and Principals: Heather Baron, Michele Cote, and Chris Antonicci.

### I. Call to Order

Board Chair Mike Rogers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### II. Citizen Participation

None.

### III. Approval of Colchester School District Announced Tuition Rates

Action

Each year, districts are required by law to announce their anticipated tuition for students attending Colchester Schools from other districts that do not have a high school or middle school. The majority of tuition students attending CSD are from the Grand Isle Supervisory Union and the town of Georgia.

*Director Cox moved to approve the announced tuition rate for FY 2022 at \$14,400 for elementary grades (k-6) and \$16,900 for secondary grades (7-12), seconded by Director Taylor. The motion passed unanimously.*

### IV. Second and Final Reading of the Flagpole Requests Policy: E11

Action

This new policy comes at the recommendation of the district's attorney. It outlines the criteria and decision-making process for requests to raise a flag on school grounds. The board reviewed the draft policy at the last meeting, this is the second reading. Student Board Member Julia Correll asked for clarification on how the board could extend the length of time that a flag can be up. Superintendent Amy Minor pointed to the policy where it states flags may be flown for a maximum of three months, however, the board may determine to renew a previously-approved flag to fly upon a written request from the original applicant. This time limit is to provide opportunity for other flags to be raised. Directory Taylor voiced concern about the amount of time that would need to be dedicated to reviewing and approving requests.

Director Cox asked for the rationale as to why the policy states only request from CSD students or student groups would be considered. She made statements that supported adding employees to be allowed to make requests as well. Superintendent Minor stated that was an intentional decision made by the district's attorney and she would ask for their intent.

*Director Cox moved to postpone the approval of the final reading until a future meeting. The motion passed unanimously.*

**V. Approval of Contract Agreement with Association of Colchester Administrators Action**

The board reviewed the contract agreement with the Association of Colchester Administrators (ACA). Terms are a three-year deal with an average 3% salary increase. All other terms of the contract will remain the same except for administrators moving to the statewide healthcare plan.

*Director Taylor moved to approve the collective bargaining agreement with the Association of Colchester Administrators as outlined. The motion passed unanimously.*

**VI. FY'22 Budget Discussion Informational**

Superintendent Amy Minor reviewed the priority list that was presented at the December 15 meeting. She noted that the singular goal of all of the requests made by administrators is to increase achievement and engagement for all students. She noted that these priorities are part of the big picture and are not necessarily all things that administrators are requesting for this budget cycle. By showing the list in three priority groups he hoped to help illustrate what the district needs to grow and how administrators are forecasting needs for Colchester students.

- **Priority A** includes maintaining current staffing levels; adding 1 FTE for a district diversity, inclusion and equity coordinator using Medicaid funds; adding 1 FTE for a special educator at CHS using IDEA-B funds; and adding .2 FTE for a CHS Arabic Teacher. All of the Priority A totals \$197,000.
- **Priority B** includes adding 1 FTE for a reading teacher at MBS; adding 1 FTE for an instructional coach/intervention leader at CMS; adding 2 FTE for core teachers at CMS in grades 7/8. All of the Priority B totals \$360,000.
- **Priority C** includes adding a math intervention program in grades K-8; adding .2 FTE for a CMS French teacher.

Superintendent Minor then went over the recently released FY'22 tax components from the state. Using those tax components, Superintendent Minor and Business and Operations Manager George Trieb proposed two scenarios for the board to consider. The first Scenario would maintain all staffing levels and add a diversity, inclusion and equity coordinator using Medicaid funds which would have no impact on the tax rate. This first scenario would result in a 4.38% budget increase and an estimated tax increase of 6.76%. The second scenario would take the first scenario and also add a special educator at CHS. Scenario two might result in a 4.60% budget increase and an estimated tax increase of 7.06%.

At the last meeting, Director Cox asked for more information about the request for an additional FTE at CHS for a special educator. Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz presented the rationale for that request, highlighting the growing shift from special educators acting solely as case

managers to being instructors, in an effort to close the achievement gap. “Special Educator Density” is a tool that calculates the ratio of the total school population per special educator. The goal is to be at 80 and CHS is currently at 97. In addition to the high density, there are nuances to a high school special educator that have also driven the request for an additional FTE. These differences including co-teaching in math, humanities and science; supporting students at tech centers; and transition planning linked to post-secondary education, adult services, and employment.

Board Chair Rogers voiced concern of funding positions through grant and Medicaid dollars, specifically pointing to a scenario where those funding sources could to come up short. Ms. Lutz stated that between the funds that have been allocated to the district and the amount that can be carried over, they are in good shape and there has not been any recent discussion of those funds going away. Ms. Lutz stated the district has hired positions before with grant dollars only to later transition them to the voter budget and the process has worked well in the past.

Director Cox advocated support for the diversity coordinator role. Director Longo echoed her sentiments and shared that he has personally had a positive experience with someone in a similar role and sees the value. He stated that creating the position shows the district’s commitment to its students, faculty, and the public.

Superintendent Minor asked for a direction from the board as to what percentage increase they would be comfortable with putting forth to the residents of Colchester. The board engaged in a discussion and ultimately decided to make a final decision at the next board meeting on January 19.

**VII. COVID-19 Update**

**Informational**

Superintendent Minor gave the board some updates in regards to staffing, voluntary employee testing, future vaccination opportunities for employees and students, the successful free food bundles distribution before the holiday break, and an overview of the guidance for winter sports which will start later in the week.

**VIII. Approval of Personnel Consent Agenda**

**Action**

The following Personnel Consent Agenda was reviewed by the board.

**PERSONNEL CONSENT AGENDA**  
**Board Meeting Date: January 5, 2021**  
**REVISED**

**Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)**

<b>Contract Type</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>FTE/Hours</b>	<b>Building</b>	<b>Agenda Information</b>	<b>Person Replacing</b>	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Admin Support</b>
Teacher	John	Helme	Leave of Absence	Math Teacher	1.0 FTE	CMS	Request Leave of Absence for Military Orders from 12/29/2020 to June 11, 2021(anticipated last day of school)			Yes

**Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), *Informational***

<b>Contract Type</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>FTE/Hours</b>	<b>Building</b>	<b>Agenda Information</b>	<b>Person Replacing</b>	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Admin Support</b>
Support Staff	Anneka	Welsh	End of Employment	Paraeducator - Sped	32.5	CHS	Notice of End of Employment			Yes
Support Staff	Rachel	Hamilton	End of Employment	Special Education Secretary	40	CHS	Notice of End of Employment			Yes
Support Staff	Martin	Burnod	New Hire	Paraeducator-Sped	32.5	CHS	Notice of Hire	Anneka Welsh	Yes	Yes

*Director Cox moved to approve the Personnel Consent Agenda for January 5, 2021, seconded by Director Taylor. The motion passed unanimously.*

**IX. Approval of Meeting Minutes: December 15, 2020 Action**

Director Taylor requested three edits.

*Director Cox moved to approve the amended minutes from the meeting held on December 15, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.*

**X. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports Informational**

- Director Taylor recommended a German movie called System Crasher, which highlights the difficulties schools can have when supporting children who have experienced trauma and their subsequent behavioral challenges.
- Board Chair Rogers announced he will not be seeking reelection to the board. Superintendent Minor and the rest of the board thanked him for his many years of dedicated service.

**XI. Future Agenda Items Informational**

- COVID-19 Updates
- FY'22 Budget Warning and Community Communication
- Policy Work

**XII. Executive Session to Discuss Negotiations Action**

*Director Kienny moved to enter executive session at 8:34 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Director Taylor moved to exit executive session at 9:05 p.m., seconded by Director Longo. The motion passed unanimously.*

**XIII. Adjournment**

*Director Longo moved to adjourn at 9:06 p.m., seconded by Director Taylor. The motion passed unanimously.*

Recorder:

  
Meghan Baue  
Recording Secretary

Board Clerk:

  
Lindsey Cox  
Board Clerk