

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Remote Meeting

Tuesday, March 2, 2021
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, March 2, 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 Directors: Craig Kieny, Lindsey Cox, Curt Taylor and Nic Longo; 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 and Carolyn Millham.

I. Call to Order

Board Vice Chair Craig Kieny called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Citizen Participation

Christine Burdick, a parent in the district, emailed the board expressing exhaustion and frustration with the hybrid learning model for her two middle school students. Director Cox summarized her letter and thanked her for sharing her experience. She assured families that the board and the district are doing everything they can to follow the guidance, keep staff and students healthy, and offer as much in-person learning as possible. Director Cox expressed appreciation to those who have reached out to the board and administrators to share their experiences, feelings, concerns, and feedback. She emphasized that they are listening and will take what they hear into consideration as decisions are made.

Director Taylor said that the Governor seems hopeful that with the rollout of vaccines to more Vermonters, schools will be able to offer more in-person learning. He acknowledged the importance of in-person learning and the safety of students and staff.

Director Kieny asked Superintendent Amy Minor if there has been any discussion from the Agency of Education (AOE) about relaxing the distancing requirements which are currently holding the district back from offering more in-person learning in grades 6-12. Superintendent Minor stated the distancing requirements, which are set at three feet at the elementary level and six feet at the middle and high school level, were put in place to limit the spread of COVID-19. At the recent press conference, Governor Scott said the CDC may release updated guidance for distancing in schools. Superintendent Minor stated they are communicating regularly with the AOE and the Department of Health.

III. COVID-19 Update

Informational

Superintendent Minor shared that the second School Break Meal Bundle offered to families for February Break was a success. Approximately 520 students took advantage of the free food, totaling

over 7,000 meals. Superintendent Minor thanked the food service team for their dedication to distributing meals to students in need.

Superintendent Minor then shared that the governor has announced that the State will be offering vaccines to K-12 school staff. The district is awaiting further guidance on how and when the vaccine clinics will operate. The State is continuing to offer surveillance testing. In February, the district had 262 employees sign up for the test, which is about 58% of staff, resulting in one positive case. So far this year the district has had 24 COVID-19 cases. From those cases, 12 resulted in individual close contacts being quarantined and the other 12 cases resulted in individual close contacts being quarantined as well as a classroom or program being moved to full remote learning until the end of the quarantine period.

Superintendent Minor then went over the recovery plan. The AOE has defined the recovery work as a partnership between districts and the state. There will be a common planning framework used across the state that will allow districts to establish local and regional priorities based on the framework and expectations set by the AOE. The three student focus areas include social-emotional functioning, mental health, and well-being; student engagement; and academic achievement and success. Each district will be assigned to a state support team organized by the AOE. The role of the support team will be to assist districts in how they respond to state planning requirements and the implementation of district-level recovery plans. Superintendent Minor went over the timeline for the organization, assessment of needs, planning, and implementation of the plan. She also gave an update on the district's current plan to expand the existing summer school program. More information about summer school will be provided at the next board meeting.

Having just had a parent/teacher conference for one of his children, Director Longo reflected on his appreciation for the work of teachers and staff this year. He asked if there has been any concerning data or indication of lost learning. Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Gwen Carmolli, shared that the district looks at assessments three times a year for grades k-5, quarterly for grades 6-8, and the high school is reviewed by unit and course. She stated that students are responding to the content they are given, with over 70% meeting or exceeding the standard. However, she highlighted that they are noticing slips in smaller skills and gave the example of spelling. Their next step is to disaggregate the data to identify any trends in student groups. Superintendent Minor added that as they are building the recovery plan they will look further into the district's academic and SEL data to compile comprehensive needs assessment. Within that, they will determine how to close learning gaps. One example of how they will do that is with their current plan to expand summer school offerings.

IV. Approval of Recommendation for Administrator Contract Renewals 2021-22 **Action**

Superintendent Amy Minor provided the board with a memo outlining the contracts that she recommends renewing for the FY'22 school year.

Director Taylor moved to approve the recommended Administrator Contracts for the 2021-2022 school year. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

V. Hear and Discuss FY'22 Budget Results **Informational**

The school article regarding the FY'22 school budget passed with 1,867 votes in favor and 1,009 votes against. The board and Superintendent Amy Minor thanked the community for their support.

The two additional articles added to the ballot this year in place of the traditional town meeting also passed. Those in attendance congratulated the two new school board members who will be joining the school board. Ben Yousey-Hindes was elected to serve for two-years and Laurie Kigonya was elected for a three-year term.

VI. Approval of Personnel Consent Agenda

Action

The following Personnel Consent Agenda was reviewed by the board.

PERSONNEL CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: March 2, 2021

REVISED

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Teacher	Caroline	Chagnon	New Hire	Elementary Teacher, Long-Term Substitute	1.0 FTE	UMS	Request to Hire	Melinda Bassett	Yes	Yes

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

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	Genie	Denton	New Hire	Special Education Secretary	35	CHS	Notice of Hire	Rachel Hamilton	Yes	Yes

Director Cox moved to approve the Personnel Consent Agenda for March 2, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Approval of Meeting Minutes: February 16, 2021 Action

Director Cox moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on February 16, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports Informational

- Those in attendance congratulated Student School Board Member Julia Correll for being named a finalist in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

IX. Future Agenda Items Informational

- Enhanced Summer School Program
- COVID-19 Updates
- Policy Work
- Updated Demographic Study

X. Executive Session to Discuss Negotiations Action

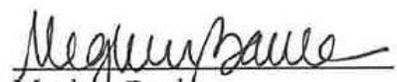
Director Longo moved to enter executive session to discuss negotiations at 7:43 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Cox moved to exit executive session at 8:02 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

XI. Adjournment

Director Cox moved to adjourn at 8:03 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorder:


Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Board Clerk:


Nic Longo
Board Clerk