Colchester School Board

Meeting Agenda and Packet

March 16, 2021

Colchester School District Board of Education Meeting March 16, 2021 - 7:00 P.M. Remote Meeting Citizens Participation Instructions Listed Below

Agenda

I.	Call to Order	
II.	Citizen Participation*	
III.	Hear Nominations for School Board Reorganization and Approval of Newspaper of Record	Action
IV.	First Reading of Code of Ethics for School Board Members Policy: B2	Action
V.	First Reading of School Board Policy: B1	Action
VI.	First Reading of Management of Policies: A1	Action
VII.	First Reading of Suspension of Policies: A2	Action
VIII.	Approval of Recommendation for Teacher Contract Renewals 2021-2022	Action
IX.	Approval of School Calendar for 2021-2022	Action
X.	COVID-19 Update	Informational
XI.	Approval of Personnel Consent Agenda	Action
XII.	Approval of Meeting Minutes: March 2, 2021	Action
XIII.	Approval of Special Meeting Minutes: March 9, 2021	Action
XIV.	Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports	Information
XV.	Future Agenda Items	Information

XVI. Adjournment

COVID-19 Meeting Participation

On March 30, 2020, Governor Scott signed H.681 into law, making temporary changes to Vermont's Open Meeting Law. These changes will remain in effect during the declared state of emergency due to COVID-19. On November 13, 2020, the Governor amended the executive order as a result of an acceleration in COVID-19 transmission throughout the State. The addendum strongly discourages in-person meetings. Meetings of the Colchester School Board will be held remotely with no designated meeting location. LCATV will provide coverage through live stream which can be accessed here: https://lcatv.org/live-stream-3. Citizens may participate by emailing questions or statements to meghan.baule@colchestersd.org or by calling (802) 264-5988 while the meeting is in session.

<u>POLICY</u>: CODE OF ETHICS FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

DATE ADOPTED: April 2, 2019

POLICY STATEMENT

A school board member has no legal powers or authority unless acting at a school board meeting or acting for the school board after it formally grants power to act on its behalf. A school board member should perform the duties of a school board member in a manner consistent with this code of ethics.

I. BOARD GOVERNANCE

- A. Set goals for the school system and establish policies to direct its administration.
- **B.** Maintain confidentiality of discussion conducted in executive session and of other privileged information.
- C. Abide by board decisions regardless of how individuals voted.
- **D.** Act only as a member of the board and do not assume authority as an individual in school matters when the board is not in session.
- E. Be familiar with and observe Vermont education laws.
- **F.** Listen to legal counsel and constructive criticism to protect the board and the school system from liability.
- **G.** Attend all regularly scheduled board meetings, insofar as possible, and review study materials about the issues to be considered on each agenda.

II. BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS

- **A.** Give school officials authority commensurate with their responsibility, work through the properly appointed school officials according to the school system's organization and policies, and support school officials in the performance of their duties.
- **B.** Expect the superintendent to keep the board adequately informed through regular written or oral reports and hold the superintendent accountable through an annual job performance evaluation.
- C. Refer complaints, requests, and concerns to the superintendent or other appropriate staff member.
- **D.** Use the chain of command and avoid making commitments or promises that compromise the board, administration or the school system.

Last Reviewed:March 17, 2015Date Warned:March 15, 2019First Reading:March 19, 2019Second Reading:April 2, 2019

- **E.** Listen to the recommendations of the superintendent and staff before making decisions and provide advice and counsel to the superintendent. Recognize that a board member's responsibility is to see that schools are well-run, but not to run them.
- **F.** Recognize that a board member's responsibility is to see that schools are well-run, but not to run them.

III. BOARD MEMBER RELATIONS

- **A.** Retain independent judgment and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups.
- **B.** Voice opinions responsibly, maintain good relations with other board members, respect other board members' rights and opinions, and make no disparaging remarks, in or out of the board meeting, about other board members or school staff. Instead, express opinions in a professional, fair manner.
- C. Accept the responsibility to secure facts before arriving at conclusions.
- **D.** Expect more time to be spent on educational programs and procedures than on business details at board meetings.

IV. PERSONNEL RELATIONS

- **A.** Support employment of the best qualified people as school staff and insist on regular, impartial evaluations of all staff.
- **B.** Hire no superintendent, principal or teacher already under contract with another school unless assurance is first secured from the proper authority that the person can be released from contract.

V. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- **A.** Represent the entire community and vote for what seems best for the children and youth of the school system.
- **B.** Interpret the attitudes, wishes and needs of the community to school staff and communicate the aims, methods and goals of the schools to the community.
- C. Create an environment that fosters community participation and involvement.

VI. BOARD PREPARATION AND TRAINING

- **A.** Be informed about educational issues by individual study and through participating in programs providing needed information such as those sponsored by the Vermont and National School Boards Associations.
- **B.** Take advantage of opportunities to improve your knowledge and to build your skills as locally elected members of governing school boards.

- **C.** Associate with board members from other schools to discuss school problems and cooperate in the improvement of public school conditions.
- **D.** Provide assistance to new school board members and make sure adequate orientation and training opportunities are offered them.

VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members of the board recognize the ethical duty of all public officers to avoid conflicts of interest. "Conflict of interest" means a situation when a board member's private interests, as distinguished from the board member's interest as a member of the general public, would benefit from or be harmed by their actions as a member of the board. In the case of school board members, this duty is extended by Vermont statutory law to include a requirement that boards adopt policies and procedures to avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest. In order to comply with the obligations thus imposed, the board and its members will adhere to the following standards.

A. RECOMMENDED STANDARDS

- 1. Board members will be familiar with the NSBA and VSBA Codes of Ethics, and will observe their provisions.
- 2. Board members will be familiar with, and adhere to, those provisions of Vermont education law which define school board powers and govern board member compensation and public bidding processes.
- **3.** Board members will do nothing intended to give the false impression that they have the authority to make decisions or take action on behalf of the board or the school administration.
- 4. Board members will not take any action which is intended to give the impression that they would represent special interests or partian politics for personal gain.
- 5. Board members will not use their position on the board in any manner intended to unfairly promote personal financial interests or the financial interests of family members, friends or supporters.
- 6. Board members will not accept anything of value in return for taking particular positions on matters before the board.
- 7. Board members will do nothing intended to leave the impression that their position on any issue can be influenced by anything other than a fair presentation of all sides of the question.

B. AVOIDING CONFLICTS

When a board member becomes aware of involvement in a conflict of interest as defined in state law or this policy, they will declare the nature and extent of the

conflict or appearance of conflict for inclusion in the board minutes, and will abstain from voting or participating in the discussion of the issue giving rise to the conflict.

C. COMPLAINTS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

When a conflict of interest claim against a board member is brought to the board in writing, and is signed by another board member or a member of the public, and the board member against whom the claim is made does not concur that a conflict in fact exists, the following board procedures will be followed.

- 1. Upon a majority vote of the remaining board members, or upon order of the chair, the board will hold an informal hearing on the conflict of interest claim, giving both the board member and the person bringing the claim an opportunity to be heard.
- 2. At the conclusion of the informal hearing, the remaining board members will determine by majority vote to take one of the following actions:
 - a) Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is not supported by the evidence and is therefore dismissed;
 - **b)** Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and that the member should disqualify themselves from voting or otherwise participating in the board deliberations or decision related to that issue, as required by Vermont statute; and/or
 - c) Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and, in addition to disqualifying themselves from voting or otherwise participating in the board deliberations or decision, the board member should be formally censured or subjected to such other action as may be allowed by law.

POLICY: SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

DATE ADOPTED: April 2, 2019

POLICY STATEMENT

VSA Title 16 § 423 stipulates that each town school district shall have a school board. The purpose of this policy is to define the make up and some of the operating procedures that will be used by that legislative body.

I. QUALIFICATIONS (VSA Title 16 § 558)

- **A.** A member of the school board (hereafter referred to as "the board") must be a legal voter in the Colchester Town District.
- **B.** A member of the board shall not be regularly employed by the school district.

II. BOARD MEMBERSHIP

- A. The board shall be comprised of five members.
- **B.** The terms of office shall be for three years and two years. One member shall be elected for a three year term and one member elected for a two year term at each annual meeting of the school district. Terms shall end on the third annual and second annual meeting days following their election.
- C. Vacancies shall be refilled in accordance with VSA Title 16 § 424.
- **D.** Members of the board must be sworn in by the town clerk prior to entering upon the duties of their office. (VSA Title 16 § 561)
- E. The officers of the board shall be a chair, vice-chair, and clerk.
- F. The officers must be elected annually at the board meeting, which next follows the annual meeting, and the results of this election must be filed at the office of the town clerk and with the Vermont Commissioner of Education. (VSA Title 16 \S 561).

Legal References:

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V.S.A. Title 1 §§ 310	314	
V.S.A. Title 16 § 423		
	(1)	V.S.A. Title 16 § 424
	(2)	V.S.A. Title 16 § 554b
V.S.A. Title 16 § 558		
	(3)	V.S.A. Title 16 § 561
	(4)	V.S.A. Title 16 § 563

Last Adopted:	October 21, 2014
Date Warned:	March 15, 2019
First Reading:	March 19, 2019
Second Reading:	April 2, 2019

III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The powers, duties and responsibilities of the board are defined in VSA Title 16 § 563. The Colchester School Board will comply with these legal requirements.
- **B.** Roberts Rules of Order as modified for small boards shall govern the conduct of board meetings. (VSA Title 16 § 554b)
- **C.** All board meetings will be conducted in accordance with Vermont's open meeting law. (VSA Title 1 §§ 310 314)

IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

A. Chair

- 1. Presides over meetings of the board.
- 2. Calls special meetings.
- **3.** Performs other duties as directed by the board.
- **4.** In collaboration with the superintendent, establish the agenda for each meeting.

B. Vice Chair

1. Substitute for the chair whenever necessary.

C. Clerk

1. Perform all duties required by statute, VSA Title 16 § 561.

V. BOARD MEMBER EDUCATION

- **A.** Board members will take advantage of training opportunities to learn more about their role, school programs, Vermont Agency of Education functions and legislative activities.
- **B.** The school district will pay the cost for these training opportunities.

VI. BOARD GOAL-SETTING AND EVALUATIONS

- **A.** The board will participate in goal-setting and self-evaluation activities developed or recommended by the superintendent at least annually.
- **B.** These goals will address areas such as (not limited to):
 - 1. Policy making,
 - 2. Policy implementation,
 - **3.** Community relations,
 - 4. Board interpersonal communication skills,
 - 5. Board-superintendent relations,
 - **6.** Fiscal/budget management,
 - 7. The instructional program,
 - 8. Labor relations,
 - 9. Board in-service training and
 - **10.** Government relations.

<u>POLICY</u>: MANAGEMENT OF POLICIES

DATE ADOPTED: March 3, 2020

PURPOSE

VSA Title 16 § 563 specifies the powers of the school board and the duties of the board. The formulation and adoption of written policies is the basic method by which the board of school directors exercises its leadership in the operation of the school district.

I. <u>DEFINITIONS</u>

- **A. Policies** guide the school board, administrators and other district employees, students, parents/guardians, and community members by stating district goals and establishing parameters for administrative action.
- **B. Policy or purpose statements** are written principles adopted by the school board to set basic philosophy concerning the operations of the school district. They should be brief, yet be specific enough to provide clear guidelines.
- C. **Procedures** are developed by the superintendent or their designee to provide for the management of the district by describing how tasks will be carried out and board policies will be implemented.

II. <u>POLICY DEVELOPMENT</u>

- A. Policies shall normally be adopted at regular school board meetings. Revisions of any policy shall be treated in the same manner as the adoption of the policy.
- **B.** There shall be two accepted readings (reviews) of each policy/revision. The policy may be adopted following the acceptance of the second reading, at the same meeting.
- **C.** The school board shall provide public notice of its intent to adopt/revise any policy. This notice shall be made at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the adoption of the policy or revision. Usually, this notification will occur prior to the first reading of the policy.
- **D.** The school board shall review the procedures and regulations associated with each policy upon adoption of the policy and upon revision by the superintendent.
- **E.** Policies shall be codified in accordance with the Vermont School Boards Association's Model Policy Manual. All policies in effect upon the adoption of this policy shall be recoded and named to match that codification system.

Last Adopted:	September 2, 2014
Date Warned:	February 14, 2020
First Reading:	February 18, 2020
Second Reading:	March 3, 2020

F. It is the board's intention to review each policy every five (5) years.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- **A.** The superintendent or their designee shall manage the implementation of this policy. They will ensure that each policy is formatted and codified in accordance with the district format and VSBA codification.
- **B.** The superintendent or their designee shall maintain the master policy manual. This manual shall contain the most recent adopted version of each policy and shall be the copy referred to if questions arise.
- **C.** The superintendent or their designee will maintain and up-to-date copy of the policy manual for public review. Updated policies will be posted publicly within five (5) days of adoption/approval.
- **D.** The district's web site will contain copies of all policies.

<u>POLICY</u>: SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

DATE ADOPTED: May 21, 2019

POLICY STATEMENT

The application of any section or sections of board policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a vote of at least four (4) board members present at a regular or special meeting called for the purpose of dealing with a problem affected by a specific section or sections of policy.

The board shall, at its next regular meeting, reconsider its suspension of any policy, using adopted procedures to permanently adjust or amend its policies.

Last Adopted:October 28 ,2005Date Warned:May 3, 2019First Reading:May 7, 2019Second Reading:May 21, 2019

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					CONSENT AGE Date: March 16					
				Licensed Employ	ees (Teacher/Admi	nistrator)				
Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Teacher	Deborah	Deschamps	End of Employment	Nurse Supervisor	1.0 FTE	CHS/DW	Request to end Employment effective June 30, 2021			Yes
Teacher	Darlene	Mulcahy	End of Employment		1.0 FTE	UMS	Request to end Employment effective June 30, 2021			Yes
Teacher	Amanda	Vella	New Hire	Art Teacher	1.0 FTE	CHS	Request to Hire	Anne Cummings	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Meghan	Tiernan Fisher	End of Employment	Spanish Teacher	1.0 FTE	CMS	Request to end Employment effective June 30, 2021			Yes
				Non-Licensed Employe	es (Support Staff),	Information	nal			
Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	Joseph	Badger	End of Employment	Lead Custodian	40	UMS	Notice of End of Employment			Yes
							Request Leave of Absence for the remainder of 2020/2021			
Support Staff	Megan	Cobaugh	Leave of Absence	Paraeducator - SPED	32.5	CMS	SY			Yes
Support Staff	Sandra	Boyd	New Hire	Lead Custodian	40	UMS	Notice of Hire	Joseph Badger	Yes	Yes

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

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.

Informational

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	Contract Type First Name Last Name Category Position FTE/Hours Building Agenda Information Person Replacing Budgeted Suppo										
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	

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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

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

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

X. Executive Session to Discuss Negotiations

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:

Board Clerk:

Meghan Baule Recording Secretary Lindsey Cox Board Clerk 1 •

Informational

Action

Action

Board of Education Meeting, Special Meeting Remote Meeting Tuesday, March 9, 2021 4:30 p.m.

MINUTES

(Executive Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a Special Board Meeting on Tuesday, March 9, 2021. Governor Scott signed H.681 into law in March of 2020, 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. Those in attendance of the remote meeting were: Board Directors: Craig Kieny, Nic Longo, Laurie Kigonya and Ben Yousey-Hindes; Superintendent Amy Minor; Colchester Education Association Representative Rick Martin; and Piertro Lynn from Lynn, Lynn, Blackman & Manitsky, P.C.

I. Call Meeting to Order

Board Vice Chair Craig Kieny called the meeting to order at 4:43 p.m.

II. Executive Session to Discuss Labor Relations Agreement with Teachers and Support Staff

Action

Director Longo moved to enter executive session to discuss a labor relations agreement with teachers and support staff. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

III. Adjournment

Director Longo moved to exit executive session and adjourn at 5:26 p.m. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Recorder:

Board Clerk:

Meghan Baule Recording Secretary Lindsey Cox Board Clerk