

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Media Center

Tuesday, April 15, 2025
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, in the Colchester High School Media Center. Board members in attendance were Lindsey Cox, Nic Longo, Laurie Kigonya, and Student Representative Rylee Friend. Board Member Ben Yousey-Hindes attended virtually. District administrators in attendance included Superintendent Amy Minor, Business and Operations Manager George Trieb, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli, and Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz. Architect John Hemmelgarn from Black River Design also attended to speak on a specific agenda item. There were no audience members.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Citizen Participation

None.

III. Hear School Report: Malletts Bay School

Information

Malletts Bay School Principal Jordan Burke could not attend the meeting due to illness. The agenda item will be rescheduled.

IV. Approval of Vendor Selection for PPS Playground

Action

Construction for the new addition at Porters Point School (PPS) is scheduled to begin in August. The current playground is located where the addition will be built and must be relocated and replaced before the next school year begins. Additionally, the existing playground is the oldest in the District and includes equipment that is more appropriate for older students, with features that are too challenging for the K–2 age group. PPS Principal Carolyn Millham described the process used to gather input from both students and staff about priorities for the new playground. A key theme that emerged from this feedback was the importance of accessibility—ensuring that the new equipment would be usable and inclusive for students of all abilities. After collecting quotes from multiple vendors, a school-based committee reviewed the options. The leadership team then selected one vendor to recommend to the school board for approval. During the meeting, board members asked clarifying questions regarding specific playground features, how students would engage with certain elements, the cost of removing the current equipment, and the timeline for installation.

Director Longo moved to accept the bid from Ben Shaffer Playground Design and authorize the Business and Operations Manager to sign a contract for this project. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Approval of General Contractor Qualifications for Construction/Renovation Project

Action

The Board discussed the next step in the construction/renovation project: adopting a set of to evaluate general contractor qualifications for the PPS and UMS projects. Architect John Hemmelgarn from Black River Design reviewed the recommended contractor qualification criteria, including minimum

experience, ability to keep projects within budget and on schedule, knowledge and a commitment to the area, quality of workmanship, ability to maintain safe working conditions and to work around children, among others qualifications. He noted that having a set of general contractor pre-qualifications is required by the Agency of Education.

Board Chair Cox asked if the Board should consider including stronger language about working safely and efficiently on an occupied elementary school campus. Mr. Hemmelgarn recommended addressing this aspect during the reference-checking phase, where the contractor's past performance in similar settings can be evaluated.

Board Chair Cox also highlighted the importance of clear and consistent communication with the broader community. She noted that the District has a strong tradition of transparency and wants to ensure the selected contractor is committed to maintaining this standard and is agreeable to working closely with District for that purpose. Mr. Hemmelgarn suggested adding the following criterion: *"Track record of clear and open communication with the owner's administrative team."* The Board supported this addition.

Director Kigonya moved to approve the general contractor bid criteria for both the PPS and UMS projects, including the new communication-related item. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Second and Final Reading of Section 504 Rehabilitations Act of 1973 Americans with Disabilities Act Policy for Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability: F27 Action

The name of this policy will be changed to Section 504 and ADA Grievance Protocol for Students and Staff. This changes the policy's emphasis from outlining the District's responsibilities under Section 504 to providing a grievance procedure if discrimination occurs. This second draft also incorporates the introductory paragraph from the original policy based on feedback from the Board at the first reading.

Director Kigonya moved to approve the second and final reading of the Section 504 Rehabilitations Act of 1973 Americans with Disabilities Act Policy for Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability Policy F27, which has been retitled to Section 504 and ADA Grievance Protocol for Students and Staff. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. First Reading of Custodial, Joint Custodial and Non-custodial Parental Rights and Responsibilities Policy: F6A Action

District registrars often use this policy as family dynamics change throughout a child's educational career. The policy was reviewed by leadership and no changes were recommended by administrators. The Board asked a few clarifying questions regarding possible scenarios that would warrant a court order.

Director Fath moved to approve the first reading of the Custodia, Joint Custodial and Non-custodial Parental Rights and Responsibilities Policy: F6A

VIII. Approval of Consent Agenda Action

The Board reviewed the following consent agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: 4/15/25 UPDATED: 4.15.25

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

[illegible]

Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Board Approval Required

[illegible]

Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational

[illegible]

The Board had specific personnel questions related to the consent agenda and postponed making a motion until after the scheduled executive session at the end of the general session.

IX. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Action

- April 1, 2025 (Special Meeting)
- April 1, 2025 (General Meeting)

Director Longo moved to approve the meeting minutes for both April 1, 2025 meetings. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports

Information

- The Board will determine its summer meeting schedule soon.
- Superintendent Amy Minor gave a brief update on the happenings in Montpelier, including the status of a federal certification request on Title 6 and the statewide H.454 educational transformational bill that is currently being reviewed by the Senate.

XI. Future Agenda Items

Information

- Quarterly Financial Report
- School Reports
- Policy Work
- Facility Renovation/Construction Updates

XII. Executive Session to Discuss Contract Negotiations

Action

Director Kigonya moved to enter executive session at 8:11 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations and a personnel matter. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Kigonya moved to exit executive session at 8:41 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

XIII. Adjournment

Director Kigonya moved to approve the consent agenda as provided. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Fath moved to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorder:

Board Clerk:

Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Ben Yousey-Hindes
Board Clerk