

Colchester School Board

Meeting Agenda and Packet

May 20, 2025

**Colchester School District
Board of Education Meeting Agenda
May 20, 2025 - 7:00 P.M.
Colchester High School Library**

Agenda

- | | | | |
|--------------|---|--|--------------------|
| I. | Call to Order | | |
| II. | Citizen Participation* | | |
| III. | Hear School Report: Malletts Bay School | | Information |
| IV. | Third and Final Reading of Fiscal and Business Management Policy: E1 | | Action |
| V. | First Reading of Admission of Students Policy: F17 | | Action |
| VI. | Second Reading of Weapons Policy: F24 | | Action |
| VII. | First Reading of Firearms Policy (New) | | Action |
| VIII. | Approval of Consent Agenda | | Action |
| IX. | Approval of Meeting Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May 6, 2025• May 12, 2025 | | Action |
| X. | Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports | | Information |
| XI. | Future Agenda Items | | Information |
| XII. | Executive Session to Discuss Contract Negotiations | | Action |
| XIII. | Adjournment | | |

***Meeting Participation and Viewing Options**

Meetings are open to the public unless warned otherwise. Colchester citizens have an opportunity to speak or comment on any items listed on the agenda. For topics not listed on the agenda, public comment can be made during the Citizen's Participation agenda item. Please review the Public Comment Rules listed at www.csdyt.org/schoolboard prior to the meeting. If not attending in person, citizens may also participate in the meeting by emailing a prerecorded message to schoolboard@colchesters.org with "Citizens Participation" listed in the subject line. It must be received by noon on the day of the meeting, include your full name and phone number, and follow the Public Comment Rules. LCATV will provide live stream coverage via: www.lcatv.org/live-stream-3.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: FISCAL AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT POLICY

DATE ADOPTED: DRAFT

PURPOSE

In accordance with Title 16 V.S.A. § 563, the School Board is responsible for the School District's fiscal and business management. This policy defines the School Board's compliance with that responsibility.

POLICY STATEMENTS

I. GENERAL

The Superintendent, or their designee, shall establish, develop, and maintain a system or systems to ensure the compliance with the financial and auditing requirements of Title 16 V.S.A. § 563. This includes and is not limited to:

- A. Timely and accurate financial information for decision making.
- B. Ability to meet reporting requirements of the School Board, State and Federal Governments as well as other grantors.
- C. Annual audit requirements.
- D. Budget development, implementation, and management.
- E. Ensure that financial payments made by the School District are legal, appropriate and in accordance with the budget adopted by the School Board or in accordance with the requirements of a grant accepted by the School District.

All expenses shall be recorded in accordance with the Handbook for Financial Accounting of Vermont School Systems (Handbook II). The fiscal year shall be July 1st to June 30th.

The Superintendent, or their designee, will establish a system for managing miscellaneous accounts as may be necessary to comply with appropriate statutes, regulations, and requirements.

The Superintendent, or their designee, will establish a system for managing all federal, state, or local grant funds. Such funds will not be placed in Student Activity Accounts.

*Legal Reference(s): 1 V.S.A. § 31316 V.S.A. § 562 and § 563
24 V.S.A. § 1571, § 1681 § 1682, and § 1683*

Last Adopted: August 17, 2021
 Date Warned: March 28, 2025
 First Reading: April 1, 2025
 Second Reading: May 6, 2025
 Third Reading: May 20, 2025

II. BUDGET

A. General

1. The annual budget of the school system shall reflect the needs and goals of the school system.
2. The Superintendent's Office shall be responsible for the process used to collect all data needed for the preparation of the budget.
3. The budget shall meet the requirements of Title 16 V.S.A. and the regulations of the State Board of Education.
4. The School Board shall develop a budget at regular or special meetings.

B. Budget Preparation

Each year the Superintendent, or their designee, shall develop a budget plan based on ongoing consultations with school employees, parents, students, and other citizens. Public hearings and informational meetings will take place prior to formal adoption of the budget proposal. The objective of this plan is to provide the School Board with a proposed district budget that is in line with the School District's Vision Plan.

III. BUDGET APPROVAL

The School District's proposed budget will be presented at the annual School District meeting. The budget vote will take place on town meeting day. The budget presentation shall include explaining the School District's budget priorities, the sources and amounts of revenues and expenditures, program changes and the School District's strategies.

IV. BUDGET MANAGEMENT

The School District's voter approved budget defines its spending plan for each fiscal year. Consistent with state education laws and regulations, it is the responsibility of the Superintendent to implement and manage the School District's budget.

Changes to the budget allocations will be reported to the School Board as a part of the Quarterly Financial Report described in Section V of this policy.

V. FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Superintendent, or their designee, shall ensure that the School Board is provided with quarterly financial reports which detail budgeted/forecasted revenues and expenditures, as well as financial commitments of the School District.

- A. The Superintendent, or their designee, shall provide the School Board with a quarterly report for review of the financial status of the School District (Quarterly Financial Report).
- B. The Superintendent, or their designee, will ensure that all state, federal and other (grantor) reports are filed in accordance with the requirements of the various grantors, state, and federal governments.
- C. The Superintendent, or their designee, will coordinate with the annual independent audit to ensure the internal controls are in place and function effectively to safeguard the funds and assets of the School District.

VI. ANNUAL AUDIT

As required by Title 16 V.S.A., the School District will be audited annually by an independent certified public accounting firm.

Annually, the School Board shall meet with the auditor to review the audit report and recommendations and, in conjunction with the Superintendent, evaluate the School District's accounting practices, internal controls, and procedures based upon performance standards.

VII. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Superintendent, or their designee, shall be responsible for establishing a risk management and insurance program covering all property and program risks related to the operations of the School District. The risk management and insurance program shall include means for identifying, eliminating, reducing, retaining, or transferring risk. When the School District cannot feasibly eliminate or retain a particular risk, it shall be transferred by the purchase of insurance.

- A. The School District will comply with state statutes and maintain an insurance program to protect it against actions, including fraud, mistakes, and errors of omission by employees.
- B. The School District shall maintain an adequate insurance program to protect the School District against loss, which may occur due to the many normal and usual hazards which a public school system faces.
- C. The School District will also carry additional insurance, when needed, to protect the School District against specific and unusual hazards which may occur, from time to time, in the various operations of the School District.
- D. The insurance program shall include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. Fire and Damage Insurance (buildings and equipment)
 - 2. Fire and Property Damage Insurance (vehicles)

3. Workers' Compensation Insurance
4. Fidelity Bond Insurance and Liability Insurance, including School Leaders Errors and Omissions

E. Bonding

1. The School District recognizes that prudent trusteeship of the resources dictates that employees responsible for the safe keeping of the School District's monies and property be bonded.
2. The School District shall be indemnified against loss of money and property by bonding of employees holding positions which have access to property and money.
3. Such bonds shall be subsumed under a blanket bond. The School District shall bear the cost of bonding each employee required to be bonded by this policy.

VIII. INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

The primary objectives of the School District's investment activities are as follows:

- A. To conform with all federal, state, and other legal requirements;
- B. To adequately safeguard principal;
- C. To provide sufficient liquidity to meet all operating requirements; and
- D. To obtain a reasonable rate of return.

All funds shall be invested at the direction of the Superintendent, or their designee. The School District's investments will be limited to low risk investments to include Certificates of Deposit, Money Market Accounts, Sweep Accounts, or other like investments.

IX. CASH AND CHECKING ACCOUNTS

A. Petty Cash

In certain situations, the cost of processing a purchase order could exceed the cost of a single purchase. To remain cost effective, small purchases are occasionally paid for in cash. To facilitate these small expenditures, and to meet emergency needs for cash, a petty cash revolving fund is annually authorized to a school and the Superintendent's Office for purchases.

This is sometimes called a "revolving fund" since it always equals the same dollar amount comprised of cash and/or detailed receipts. Petty cash should not be used to thwart or circumvent established purchasing procedures; instead, it is

convenient accommodation to facilitate immediate necessary acquisition of local low-cost goods and services in an efficient manner.

The School District authorizes but does not require the following petty cash drawn from the General Fund.

Schools:	High School	\$50
	Middle School	\$50
	Malletts Bay School	\$50
	Union Memorial School	\$50
	Porters Point School	\$50
	Special Education	\$200

1. Petty Cash Checking Account

In addition to the foregoing, a Petty Cash Checking Account is authorized as follows:

Central Office: \$4,500

B. Deposits and Checking Accounts Using the District Federal Tax Identification Number

All funds deposited in accounts using the School District's Employer Tax Identification number or in the name of the School District or its component programs are the responsibility of the School District. Organizations who wish to retain control of their funds cannot use the School District's Employer Tax Identification number and retain control over the money on deposit.

No accounts will be established without the written authorization of the Superintendent. Annually, the Superintendent shall create a listing of accounts using this identification and report this to both the School Board and the School District Treasurer. This report shall include the owners and the purpose of each account. In every case, the School District Treasurer shall be an authorized signatory on such accounts.

X. PURCHASING

The School District's procedure for soliciting and awarding business shall conform to all applicable federal and/or state laws, in particular, Title 16 V.S.A., Section 559 (Public Bids).

For each bid process, when the amount is more than \$40,000, the Superintendent, or their designee, shall present the bid results along with a description of the bid process and a recommendation to the School Board for award of the bid.

The School District reserves the right to reject any or all of the bids and to invite other bids on any proposed transaction.

No District employees shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a purchase or contract if that person has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Any employee with a real, perceived, or apparent conflict of interest shall notify the Superintendent of the conflict and not participate in the selection, award of administration or the purchase of contract at issue. A conflict of interest arises if an employee, immediate family member, partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a direct or indirect financial or other interest in, or a tangible personal benefit for a vendor considered for a purchase or contract. Employees will not solicit or accept any favor, gratuity, or anything of monetary value from such vendors which exceeds \$100 in value.

Any spending of federal funds should follow the “Federal Procurement Procedures” document and should utilize the related “Procurement Documentation Form.”

Purchase orders are the preferred method of making obligations for the School District. When purchase orders are not an option or when savings are gained through electronic/internet purchases, a district issued credit card can be used. The use of a district credit card is not intended to circumvent the district’s policy of purchasing. Use of the district credit card should not be used when a purchase order is acceptable.

Often obligations are created, and the invoice is issued in such a way as to make the purchase order process redundant. Examples include and are not limited to: mileage reimbursement, purchases made by employees away from the School District (with approval) or emergency repairs. Additionally, food services, maintenance, and custodial services often are required to make purchases where the purchase order system would create a more cumbersome and expensive process. Such “payments from invoices” can be made provided the appropriate authorization is documented and attached with the invoice for inclusion in the Board Orders. For payment to a vendor, there needs to be an invoice that includes the requested payment with administrative approval to make the payment. In the case of mileage reimbursement, there needs to be a signature of the person requesting reimbursement and an administrative signature verifying that the payment is proper and legal.

XI. APPROVAL OF BOARD ORDERS

The School Board will comply with the review requirements of Title 16 V.S.A. § 563 (8). The review process is intended to ensure that all payments are lawful and in accordance with the budget adopted by the School District.

Pursuant to state statute, the School Board has authorized the Chief Financial and Operations Officer to examine claims against the district for school expenses and draw orders for such as shall be allowed, payable to the party entitled.

An accounts payable warrant report is prepared and distributed electronically to all School Board Directors, the Superintendent, and the School District Treasurer. Prior to distribution, the warrant report and all supporting documentation are thoroughly reviewed and approved by the Chief Financial and Operations Officer.

XII. DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY

The School District may dispose of surplus or obsolete equipment, materials, and supplies no longer required to accomplish the mission of the school system.

- A.** The building Principal or person in charge of the department where school property is located and is to be disposed of will inform the Superintendent, or their designee, of the availability of the property.
- B.** The Superintendent, or their designee, shall inform all administrators throughout the School District of all property available for disposal. Any department that can use such equipment or supplies may inform the Superintendent. The property will then be reassigned.
- C.** If there is no School District use for the equipment, the Superintendent, or their designee, will contact the Town Manager to see if there is a need in the Town for such equipment.

Surplus items will be classified and disposed of as follows:

- A.** Items determined to have no resale value may be disposed of by the most efficient method by the Superintendent or their designee.
- B.** Items determined to have resale value:
 - 1.** The Superintendent, or their designee, may dispose of those items having a fair market value of less than \$2,500 per item by private sale. A fair process will be followed for such a sale. This process will include posting within the School District and on the District's website that an item is for sale and provide an opportunity to bid on the purchase.
 - 2.** Items having a fair market value of \$2,500 per item or more will be advertised for sale, upon the School Board's approval, and sold to the highest qualified bidder.
 - 3.** The School District will reserve the right to reject any and all bids.

All money received from the sale of property will be deposited in the general revenue fund of the School District.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

DATE ADOPTED: March 3, 2020

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Colchester School District that any legal pupil who is a resident of Colchester shall be eligible to attend school in this district. Students will be admitted in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing tuition payment and non-discrimination.

I. RESIDENCE CRITERIA

For purposes of determining residency, the superintendent will apply the definitions contained in 16 V.S.A. §1075(a), or current state law and/or regulation.

Criteria for providing permanent residency shall include **one of the following**:

- A. A current property tax bill.
- B. Current mortgage papers/closing statements showing a Colchester address and the name of the legal parent/guardian, or custodian.
- C. Formal lease showing the name, address and telephone number of the landlord; Colchester address and name of the lessee.
- D. A notarized letter from the landlord stating the address of the residence being leased and the name(s) of the lessee(s) with the landlord's address and telephone number.

Or **two of the following**:

- A. Valid Vermont driver's license with a Colchester address.
- B. Valid Vermont non-driver ID with a Colchester address.
- C. Current utility bill showing the name of the legal parent/guardian with a Colchester address.
- D. Valid public aid card with a Colchester address.
- E. Bank statement for last or current month (financial information omitted) with a Colchester address.

The burden of proving residency or any other basis for entitlement to school enrollment shall be on the student and/or their parent/guardian.

Last Adopted: May 1, 2018
 Date Warned: February 14, 2020
 First Reading: February 18, 2020
 Second Reading: March 3, 2020

II. KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to enroll in kindergarten in the Colchester School District, children must be five (5) years of age before the first day of September.

In order to be eligible to enroll in first grade in the Colchester School District, children must be six (6) years of age before the first day of September, unless the child has attended a public school kindergarten in Vermont or another state.

III. TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students transferring from schools outside of Colchester will be placed according to the best interests of the child and at the discretion of the school principal. The student's former grade level shall be a general guide to placement, although considerations will be given to the child's age and record of achievement, as well as any other applicable factors.

IV. NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS

The Colchester School District may accept non-resident students in grades preschool to 12 when such placement is deemed to be in the best interest of the student, the district, and/or the family. The Colchester School District will assure that non-resident students are admitted to the schools of the district, when space is available, in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing tuition payment and non-discrimination.

This policy shall not apply to students who are enrolled through the public high school choice program created by ACT 129 of 2011 (Adj. Sess.).

A. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION

No non-resident will be denied admission as a tuition student if the reason for denial is that the student is disabled as defined in section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended or that the student is in need of special education services. Nor will any child be denied admission on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, marital status, or any other classification protected by federal or state law.

Parents of non-resident students seeking permission to attend the Colchester School District must address the following:

1. Make a written request to the superintendent of schools.
2. Agree to provide transportation to and from school when appropriate.
3. Agree that the student will follow all rules and regulations of the school.

4. Request permission annually to attend school in the Colchester School District.

The school district will consider the following criteria when making the decision to approve or deny a request:

1. Admission will not adversely impact class size, available facilities or existing staff.
2. The student is in good standing at the school or schools most recently attended. "Good standing" means:
 - a. The student has not been legally dismissed or suspended for more than ten (10) days during the preceding twelve months for disciplinary reasons;
 - b. The student has not been legally dismissed or expelled from any educational institution within the preceding five (5) years; and
 - c. The student is making satisfactory progress toward the completion of an approved school or home school program.

B. TUITION

Each year, the district shall establish non-resident tuition rates for the next school year and shall notify the school board of all sending school districts and the Secretary of Education of any proposed increase in tuition rates. Separate tuition rates may be established for elementary and secondary students, and for students who are eligible to participate in special education programs. Tuition rates will be established in accordance with Chapter 21 of Title 16 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, and regulations of the State Board of Education.

Tuition payments for non-resident students may be paid by one of three methods: annually, with one payment being made by October 1; bi-annually, first payment on October 1 and the second payment by February 1; or quarterly, with payments due on October 1, December 1, February 1 and April 1. Tuition for non-resident students may be waived by the superintendent for up to 30 school days to accommodate children whose parents are moving into or leaving the Colchester School District. To obtain a waiver, parents or guardians must apply in writing stating the reasons for a waiver. The superintendent will consider the special circumstances of the parents and the needs of the school district.

High School seniors whose parents move from Colchester after the end of the first half of the school year may be permitted to attend Colchester public schools on a tuition-free basis until the end of the current school year. The board may grant a tuition waiver in such circumstances provided the student is in good standing and is making normal academic progress towards graduation. All requests seeking a tuition waiver shall be submitted in writing to the board prior to student's

enrollment or continued enrollment in school. The student, or the student's parent or guardian is responsible for providing transportation to and from school.

The superintendent, or their designee, shall develop procedures and forms necessary for the effective implementation and administration of this policy.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: WEAPONS POLICY

DATE ADOPTED: September 19, 2017

PURPOSE

It is the intent of the Colchester School District to comply with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 and state laws, requiring school districts to take appropriate disciplinary action including possible expulsion or long-term suspension of students who bring to school or possess at school firearms and/or weapons. It is further the intent of the Board to expand the category of prohibited weapons pursuant to state law, and as defined by this policy. Additionally, it is the intent of the Board to maintain a student discipline system consistent with the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Vermont State Board of Education rules.

I. CONDUCT PROHIBITED

It is a violation of this policy for any student at any time to possess or bring a weapon: to school; on school grounds (including parking lots and cars in parking lots); on school buses or other vehicles used to transport students to/from school and school activities; and/or at school functions, whether held on school property or at another school sanctioned site. The School Board shall take appropriate disciplinary action against any student who violates this policy in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. “Firearm” shall mean items and devices defined as “firearms” in 18 U.S.C. §921, including, but not limited to:

1. Any weapon (including a starter pistol, BB, and pellet gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, or other propellant;
2. The frame or receiver of any weapon described in 1 above; or
3. Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer.
4. Any destructive device, including explosives, incendiaries, or poison gas, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. A bomb;
 - b. A grenade;

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 Date Warned: September 1, 2017
 First Reading: September 5, 2017
 Second Reading: September 19, 2017

- c. A rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces;
 - d. A missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce;
 - e. A mine; or
 - f. A device similar to the above-described devices; or
 - g. Any combination of parts designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described above and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.
- B.** “Weapon” shall mean any device, instrument, material or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury. This includes items such as knives, “brass knuckles”, switch blade/butterfly/and other types of knives, chains, clubs, and stars, poison or other toxic materials, etc. as well as items usually designed or used for another purpose, but that are capable of inflicting serious bodily harm, if used in an aggressive, belligerent or threatening manner, such as scissors, compasses, or a two by four.
- C.** “Weapon” shall also mean a hoax device, so designed, assembled, fabricated or manufactured as to convey the physical appearance of an explosive or incendiary bomb, or of any of the devices listed in subparagraph II-A 1-4 of this paragraph.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Confiscation of the Firearm and/or Weapon

Administrators or other delegated school officials will exercise judgment and caution, using law enforcement if necessary, to confiscate any article identified as a weapon under this policy. Any such actions should be taken so as to minimize the risk of further endangering self or others.

B. Notification of Law Enforcement

Where a student brings to school or possesses at school a firearm and/or weapon, school officials shall immediately refer the student to a law enforcement agency.

C. Disciplinary Proceedings

1. Any student who brings a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school shall be referred by the Superintendent to the School Board for appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, expulsion or long-term suspension.
2. A hearing conducted by the School Board under this policy shall afford due process as required by law, including but not limited to those outlined by State Board of Education rules, as applicable.

3. The Superintendent, with the approval of the School Board following opportunity for a hearing, shall expel from the school for not less than one calendar year any student who possesses at school or brings to school a weapon as defined in Section II-A above. However, the School Board may modify the expulsion or long-term suspension on a case-by-case basis. Such modifications must be made in writing and may be granted in circumstances such as (but not limited to):
 - a. The student is unaware that they have brought a weapon to school.
 - b. The student did not intend to use the weapon to threaten or endanger others.
 - c. The student does not present an ongoing threat to others and a lengthy long-term suspension would not serve the best interests of the pupil.
 - d. The student is disabled and the misconduct is related to the disability.
4. The Superintendent, with the approval of the School Board following opportunity for a hearing, may impose a long-term suspension from the school for the remainder of the school year or up to 90 school days, whichever is longer, any student who possesses at school or brings to school a weapon defined in Section II-B or C above.

D. Meeting the Intent of Congress

With respect to incidents involving a weapon as defined in subparagraph II-A above, modifications on a case-by-case basis may not be used so that the overall effect is non-compliance by the Board with the one-year long-term suspension for possession of a firearm pursuant to the Gun-Free Schools Act and state law.

IV. REPORTS TO THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

Annually, at a time and on a form determined by the Secretary of Education, the Superintendent shall provide the Secretary with a description of the circumstances surrounding expulsions and long-term suspensions imposed under this section, the number of students who violated this policy and the type of weapons involved.

V. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit the Board from providing alternative educational placement to a student, at the Board's sole discretion.

VI. NOTICE TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The Superintendent or their designee is directed to take reasonable steps to inform students and their parents of this policy and to post notices of this policy on school property.

VII. AIDING OTHER STUDENTS

A student who in any way encourages or helps another student to bring a weapon to school or to possess a weapon at school endangers the safety of others. The District expressly prohibits any such action. No student shall knowingly or willfully cause, encourage, or aid any other student to possess, handle, or transmit any of the weapons or facsimiles of weapons listed above. A student who has been found to have violated this policy by causing, encouraging, aiding, etc. another student to violate this policy shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of paragraph III-C above, including being subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension.

VIII. SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SECTION 504 STUDENTS

- A.** If a student with a disability who is eligible for special education or is protected by Section 504 brings a weapon to school, the full procedures required by federal and state law shall apply. These include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 1.** The School District may immediately remove the student from school for ten school days or less, use in-school discipline, or place the student in an interim alternative educational placement for up to 45 school days, pursuant to special education and 504 rules and regulations, as applicable.
 - 2.** The School District shall provide the parents a copy of the Special Education and/or Section 504 Rights.
 - 3.** If the student is eligible for special education, the Individualized Educational Program team shall convene to carry out the steps required by VDE Rule 4313, including but not limited to a determination of whether the misconduct is a manifestation of the student's disability, and a review of the student's IEP.
 - 4.** If the student is not eligible for special education but is a qualified student with a disability, as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Section 504 Team shall convene to carry out the procedures required by VDE Rule 4312 (including manifestation determination and re-evaluation).
- B.** If the misconduct is found by the IEP or 504 Team to be unrelated to the disability, the student shall be dealt with under the procedures outlined in paragraph III-C above. If a special education student is imposed a long-term suspension, the School District is required to continue to provide a free and appropriate public education to the student upon a long-term suspension as defined in State rule and federal law. If the student is a qualified student with a

disability under Section 504 and is imposed a long-term suspension, the District is not required to provide the student with educational services during the term of a long-term suspension.

- C.** If the misconduct is found to be a manifestation of the disability, the student will receive a long-term suspension. In the case of a special education student, the District may keep the student placed in the interim alternative educational placement up to forty-five days, while the IEP Team determines whether program or placement changes are required, as provided in VDE Rule 4313. The IEP Team may also prescribe corrective action/consequences which it deems appropriate to address the weapons issue under the IEP and behavior plan (if any).

If the student is a qualified student with a disability under Section 504, the Section 504 Team shall complete a Section 504 evaluation and may recommend program/placement changes, as provided in VDE Rule 4312. The Section 504 Team may also prescribe corrective action/consequences which it deems appropriate to address the weapons issue under the education program and behavior plan (if any).

- D.** If the student is a special education student, and if their parent requests a due process hearing during the 45 school day interim alternative educational placement, the interim alternative placement is the “stay put” placement during completion of all due process proceedings and subsequent appeals, if any, as provided by Rule 4313.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: WEAPONS

DATE ADOPTED: DRAFT

PURPOSE

It is the intent of the Colchester School District to comply with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 and state laws, requiring school districts to take appropriate disciplinary action including possible expulsion or long-term suspension of students who bring to school or possess at school a weapon. It is further the intent of the Board to expand the category of prohibited weapons pursuant to state law, and as defined by this policy. Additionally, it is the intent of the Board to maintain a student discipline system consistent with the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Vermont State Board of Education rules.

I. CONDUCT PROHIBITED

It is a violation of this policy for any student at any time to possess or bring a weapon: to school; on school grounds (including parking lots and cars in parking lots); on school buses or other vehicles used to transport students to/from school and school activities; and/or at school functions, whether held on school property or at another school sanctioned site. The School Board shall take appropriate disciplinary action against any student who violates this policy in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A.** For the purposes of this policy, the terms “firearm,” “weapon,” “school,” and “expelled” shall be defined consistent with the definitions required by state and federal law.
- B.** “Weapon” shall mean any device, instrument, material or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury. This includes items such as knives, “brass knuckles”, switch blade/butterfly/and other types of knives, chains, clubs, and stars, poison or other toxic materials, etc. as well as items usually designed or used for another purpose, but that are capable of inflicting serious bodily harm, if used in an aggressive, belligerent or threatening manner, such as scissors, compasses, or a two by four.
- C.** “Weapon” shall also mean a hoax device, so designed, assembled, fabricated or manufactured as to convey the physical appearance of a firearm, explosive or incendiary bomb, or of any of the devices that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury.

Last Reviewed: September 19, 2017
 Date Warned: September 1, 2017
 First Reading: December 3, 2024
 Second Reading: May 20, 2025
 Third Reading:

III. IMPLEMENTATION

A. Confiscation of the Weapon

Administrators or other delegated school officials will exercise judgment and caution, using law enforcement if necessary, to confiscate any article identified as a weapon under this policy. Any such actions should be taken so as to minimize the risk of further endangering self or others.

B. Notification of Law Enforcement

Where a student brings to school or possesses at school a weapon, school officials shall immediately refer the student to a law enforcement agency.

C. Disciplinary Proceedings

1. Any student who brings a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school may be brought by the Superintendent to the School Board for an expulsion hearing. The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Board Chair, will consider the following criteria in making the decision: the age of the student, previous discipline infractions, intent, impact on the school and other students, awareness level regarding the possession of the weapon, how the weapon was found or reported, threatening behavior, disposition at the time of the incident, administrative teams overall assessment of the situation and the facts at the time.
2. A hearing conducted by the School Board under this policy shall afford due process as required by law, including but not limited to those outlined by State Board of Education rules, as applicable. An expulsion hearing conducted under this policy shall afford due process as required by law.
3. The Superintendent, with the approval of the School Board following opportunity for a hearing, may impose a long-term suspension from the school for the remainder of the school year or up to 90 school days, whichever is longer, any student who possesses at school or brings to school a weapon defined in Section II above. However, the School Board may modify the expulsion or long-term suspension on a case-by-case basis. Such modifications must be made in writing and may be granted in circumstances such as (but not limited to):
 - a. The student is unaware that they have brought a weapon to school.
 - b. The student did not intend to use the weapon to threaten or endanger others.
 - c. The student does not present an ongoing threat to others and a lengthy long-term suspension would not serve the best interests of the pupil.
 - d. The student is disabled and the misconduct is related to the disability.

IV. REPORTS TO THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

Annually, at a time and on a form determined by the Secretary of Education, the Superintendent shall provide the Secretary with a description of the circumstances surrounding expulsions and long-term suspensions imposed under this section, the number of students who violated this policy and the type of weapons involved.

V. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit the Board from providing alternative educational placement to a student, at the Board's sole discretion.

VI. NOTICE TO STUDENTS AND PARENT/GUARDIAN

The Superintendent or their designee is directed to take reasonable steps to inform students and their parent/guardian of this policy and to post notices of this policy on school property.

VII. AIDING OTHER STUDENTS

A student who in any way encourages or helps another student to bring a weapon to school or to possess a weapon at school endangers the safety of others. The District expressly prohibits any such action. No student shall knowingly or willfully cause, encourage, or aid any other student to possess, handle, or transmit any of the weapons or facsimiles of weapons listed above. A student who has been found to have violated this policy by causing, encouraging, aiding, etc. another student to violate this policy shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of paragraph III-C above, including being subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension.

CODE C5
(REQUIRED)

FIREARMS

ADOPTION NOTES – This text box and the disclaimer should be removed prior to adoption.

(a) General – As with all model policies, VSBA recommends that each board carefully review this model prior to adoption to assure suitability with the district's own specific circumstances, internal coding system, current policies, and organizational structures. Highlighted language or blank, underscored spaces indicate areas which Boards must change/complete to reflect local personnel titles, policy references, duty assignments etc.

(b) Legal references are listed for convenience, but do not need to be included in the policy as adopted.

(c) Any model policies listed under "cross-reference" indicate a reference to another related VSBA model policy. A district should check its own current policies to assure internal consistency.

(d) Withdrawn and earlier versions of revised policies should be maintained separately as part of the permanent records of the District.

Policy

It is the policy of the _____ School District to comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 and state law requiring school districts to provide for the possible expulsion of students who bring firearms to or possess firearms at school. It is further the intent of the board to maintain a student discipline system consistent with the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Vermont State Board of Education rules.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the terms "firearm" "school" and "expelled" shall be defined consistent with the definitions required by state and federal law.

Sanctions

Any student who brings a firearm to school, or who possesses a firearm at school shall be brought by the superintendent to the school board for an expulsion hearing.

A student found by the school board after a hearing to have brought a firearm to school shall be expelled for at least one calendar year. However, the school board may modify the expulsion on a case-by-case basis when it finds circumstances such as, but not limited to:

1. The student was unaware that they had brought a firearm to school.
2. The student did not intend to use the firearm to threaten or endanger others.
3. The student is disabled and the misconduct is related to the disability.
4. The student does not present an ongoing threat to others and a lengthy expulsion would not serve the best interests of the pupil.

At the discretion of the school board and administration, an expelled student may be afforded limited educational services at a site other than the school during the period of expulsion under this policy.

Policy Implementation

An expulsion hearing conducted under this policy shall afford due process as required by law and as developed by the superintendent or designee.

The superintendent shall refer to the appropriate law enforcement agency any student who brings a firearm to a school under the control and supervision of the school district. The superintendent may also report any incident subject to this policy to the Department for Children and Families (DCF).

The superintendent shall annually provide the Secretary of Education with descriptions of the circumstances surrounding expulsions imposed under this policy, the number of students expelled and the type of firearms involved.

VSBA Review:	Reviewed 9/22/2022
Date Warned:	
Date Adopted:	
Legal Reference(s):	16 V.S.A. § 1166 (State law pursuant to Federal law)
	13 V.S.A. §§ 4004, 4016 (Criminal offenses)
	20 U.S.C. § 7151 (Gun Free Schools Act)
	18 U.S.C. § 921 (Gun Free School Zones Act of 1990)
	20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 et seq. (IDEA)
	29 U.S.C. § 794 (Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973)
	Vt. State Board of Education Manual of Rules & Practices, §§ 4311, 4313
Cross Reference:	Search and Seizure
	Student Conduct and Discipline

DISCLAIMER: This model policy has been prepared by the Vermont School Boards Association for the sole and exclusive use of VSBA members, as a resource to assist member school boards with their policy development. School Districts should consult with legal counsel and revise model policies to address local facts and circumstances prior to adoption, unless the model policy states otherwise. VSBA continually makes revisions based on school districts' needs and local, state and federal laws, regulations and court decisions, and other relevant education activity.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: FIREARMS

DATE ADOPTED: DRAFT

PURPOSE

It is the intent of the Colchester School District to comply with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 and state laws, requiring school districts to take appropriate disciplinary action including possible expulsion or long-term suspension of students who bring to school or possess at school a firearm. It is further the intent of the Board to expand the category of prohibited weapons pursuant to state law, and as defined by this policy. Additionally, it is the intent of the Board to maintain a student discipline system consistent with the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Vermont State Board of Education rules.

I. CONDUCT PROHIBITED

It is a violation of this policy for any student at any time to possess or bring a firearm: to school; on school grounds (including parking lots and cars in parking lots); on school buses or other vehicles used to transport students to/from school and school activities; and/or at school functions, whether held on school property or at another school sanctioned site. The School Board shall take appropriate disciplinary action against any student who violates this policy in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A.** For the purposes of this policy, the terms “firearm” “school” and “expelled” shall be defined consistent with the definitions required by state and federal law.
- B.** “Firearm” shall mean items and devices defined as “firearms” in 18 U.S.C. §921, including, but not limited to:
 - 1.** Any weapon (including a starter pistol, BB, and pellet gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, or other propellant;
 - 2.** The frame or receiver of any weapon described in 1 above; or
 - 3.** Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer.
 - 4.** Any destructive device, including explosives, incendiaries, or poison gas, including but not limited to the following:
 - a.** A bomb;
 - b.** A grenade;
 - c.** A rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces;

Date Warned: May 16, 2025
First Reading: May 20, 2025
Second Reading:

- d. A missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce;
- e. A mine; or
- f. A device similar to the above-described devices; or
- g. Any combination of parts designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described above and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

III. IMPLEMENTATION

A. Confiscation of the Firearm

Administrators or other delegated school officials will exercise judgment and caution, using law enforcement if necessary, to confiscate any article identified as a firearm under this policy. Any such actions should be taken so as to minimize the risk of further endangering self or others.

B. Notification of Law Enforcement

Where a student brings to school or possesses at school a firearm, school officials shall immediately refer the student to a law enforcement agency.

C. Disciplinary Proceedings

1. Any student who brings a firearm to or possesses a firearm at school shall be referred by the Superintendent to the School Board for appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, expulsion or long-term suspension.
2. A hearing conducted by the School Board under this policy shall afford due process as required by law, including but not limited to those outlined by State Board of Education rules, as applicable. An expulsion hearing conducted under this policy shall afford due process as required by law.
3. The Superintendent, with the approval of the School Board following opportunity for a hearing, shall expel from the school for not less than one calendar year any student who possesses at school or brings to school a firearm as defined in Section II above. However, the School Board may modify the expulsion or long-term suspension on a case-by-case basis. Such modifications must be made in writing and may be granted in circumstances such as (but not limited to):
 - a. The student is unaware that they have brought a firearm to school.
 - b. The student did not intend to use the firearm to threaten or endanger others.
 - c. The student does not present an ongoing threat to others and a expulsion would not serve the best interests of the pupil.
 - d. The student is disabled and the misconduct is related to the disability.

IV. REPORTS TO THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

Annually, at a time and on a form determined by the Secretary of Education, the Superintendent shall provide the Secretary with a description of the circumstances surrounding expulsions and long-term suspensions imposed under this section, the number of students who violated this policy and the type of firearm involved.

V. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit the Board from providing alternative educational placement to a student, at the Board's sole discretion.

VI. NOTICE TO STUDENTS AND PARENT/GUARDIAN

The Superintendent or their designee is directed to take reasonable steps to inform students and their parent/guardian of this policy and to post notices of this policy on school property.

VII. AIDING OTHER STUDENTS

A student who in any way encourages or helps another student to bring a firearm to school or to possess a firearm at school endangers the safety of others. The District expressly prohibits any such action. No student shall knowingly or willfully cause, encourage, or aid any other student to possess, handle, or transmit any of the weapons or facsimiles of weapons listed above. A student who has been found to have violated this policy by causing, encouraging, aiding, etc. another student to violate this policy shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of paragraph III-C above, including being subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: 5/20/2025

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

[illegible]

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

[illegible]

Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational

[illegible]

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Media Center

Tuesday, May 6, 2025
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, in the Colchester High School Media Center. Board members in attendance were Lindsey Cox, Nic Longo, Ben Yousey-Hindes, Laurie Kigonya, Jennifer Fath and Student Representative Rylee Friend. District administrators in attendance included Superintendent Amy Minor, Chief Financial and Operations Officer George Trieb, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli, Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz and CHS Principal Andrew Conforti. 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: Colchester High School

Information

Colchester High School Principal Andrew Conforti gave an overview of the core beliefs, achievements, goals, and areas for growth in the school community. He noted an increase in students participating and excelling in the local technical programs, taking and succeeding in advanced placement courses, and working with community partners like the National Guard, UVM, and Steps to End Domestic Violence to offer opportunities and experiences to students that grow their transferable skills. He noted an expanding list of resources and initiatives that the school has rolled out to support mental health and school engagement. He gave an overview of the final accreditation report from NEASC, which was very supportive and gave good recommendations. The Board asked several questions related to the school's goals and how the leadership team is continuing to plan for the future.

IV. Hear Quarterly Financial Report

Information

Chief Financial and Operations Officer George Trieb gave an overview of the third quarter financial report. He shared that revenue and expenditures are mainly tracking as expected and noted that if the current spending trend continues, the district could expect a surplus of \$557,379. The Board asked a few clarifying questions about specific items.

V. Second and Final Reading of Custodial, Joint Custodial and Non-custodial Parental Rights and Responsibilities Policy: F6A

Action

No edits were requested.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the second and final reading of the Custodial, Joint Custodial and Non-custodial Parental Rights and Responsibilities Policy: F6A. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Second and Final reading of Fiscal and Business Management Policy: E1 **Action**

Director Yousey-Hindes requested another review to ensure consistency in section seven regarding school board and school district responsibility.

Director Kigonya moved to approve the second reading of the Fiscal and Business Management Policy: E1. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Second and Final Reading of Policies **Action**
Grant Funding: E2
Travel and Expenses: E5
Capitalization of Assets: E7
Fraud: E9

No edits were requested.

Director Longo moved to approve the second and final readings of board policies E2, E5, E7, and E9. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Second and Final Reading of Policies **Action**
Student Activity Account: E4
Donations: E10

No edits were requested.

Director Fath moved to approve the second and final readings of board policies E4 and E10. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Approval of Consent Agenda **Action**

The Board reviewed the following consent agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: 5/6/25 **UPDATED 5/6/25**

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	Hours/Wk	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Teacher	Melissa	Nutting	New Hire	Title 1 Reading Teacher	0.8	UMS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	Lynn Mazza	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Casey	Lee	New Hire	Elementary Teacher	1.0	UMS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	Kelly Barnett	Yes	Yes
Nurse	Roberta	Day	New Hire	School Nurse	0.2	MBS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	Emily Dousevicz	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Elizabeth	Marks	New Hire	7th and 8th Grade Social Studies Teacher	1.0	CMS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	Damien Dulude	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Shayna	McMahon	New Hire	Elementary Teacher	1.0	MBS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	Dawn Buswell	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Ashley	Klein	New Hire	6th Grade Humanities Teacher	1.0	CMS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	Treg Vroegop	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Jeffrey	Martin	Transfer	LTS: Arches Math Teacher	1.0	CMS	Request for Temporary Transfer 5.7.25 - End of 24/25 School Year	Carol McNair	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Morgan	Beck	Resignation	Elementary Teacher	1.0	MBS	Request to end employment - end of 24/25 school year			
Administration	Chris	Antonicci	Retirement	Principal	1.0	UMS	Request to End Employment - End of 25/26 School Year			
Teacher	Pat	Phillips	New Hire	Driver's Ed.	0.1	CHS	Request to Hire 1 year only 25/26		Yes	Yes
Teacher	Courtney	Boetsma	New Hire	Driver's Ed.	0.1	CHS	Request to Hire 1 year only 25/26		Yes	Yes
Teacher	Kera	Breen	New Hire	Special Educator	1.0	CHS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	Emily Schulze	Yes	Yes

Teacher	Shannon	Jankowski	New Hire	Special Educator	1.0	CMS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	William Crowley	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Brooke	Tucker	New Hire	Classroom Teacher	1.0	MBS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	Hannah Coon	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Courtney	Imran	New Hire	1- Year-Only English Language Learner Teacher	0.6	MBS	Request to Hire for 25/26 School Year	Erika Merrell	Yes	Yes
Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Board Approval Required										
Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	Hours/Wk	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Handbook				Clerk of the Works	1.0	DW	Job Description Approval			
Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational										
Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	Hours/Wk	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	Melissa	Nutting	Resignation	Paraeducator (Title 1 Reading Tutor)	32.5	UMS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Ashley	Klein	Resignation	Paraeducator	32.5	CMS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Sidney	Martinez	Termination	Behavior Interventionist	35.0	CHS	Notice of Termination			
Support Staff	Kairie	Murray	New Hire	Paraeducator	32.5	CMS	Notice of Hire		Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Lisa	St. Germain	Resignation	Custodian	40.0	CMS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Tina	Al-Amoody	Resignation	ML Paraeducator	32.5	PPS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Lucas	Calcagni	Resignation	Maintenance	40	DW	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Courthney	Imran	Resignation	ML Paraeducator	32.5	MBS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Kera	Breen	Resignation	Behavior Interventionist	35	CHS	Notice of Resignation			

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Action

- April 15, 2025

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the minutes for the meeting held on April 15, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

XI. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports

Information

- In honor of School Employee Appreciation Week, Superintendent Minor and the Board thanked the district faculty and staff for all their contributions. She highlighted the different ways that families, PTOs, and administrators are expressing their gratitude to the staff.
- The Board reviewed the meeting calendar for next school year.
- Superintendent Amy Minor gave an update on the planned construction beginning at PPS in August. She shared slides with renderings of common spaces like the main entrance, hallways, the gymnasium, and the cafeteria.

XII. Future Agenda Items

Information

- School Reports
- Policy Work
- Facility Renovation/Construction Updates

XIII. Executive Session to Discuss Contract Negotiations

Action

Director Longo moved to enter executive session at 8:33 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations and a personnel matter. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to exit executive session at 10:01 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

XIV. Adjournment

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to adjourn at 10:02 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorder:

Board Clerk:

Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Ben Yousey-Hindes
Board Clerk

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting, Special Meeting
Central Office and Virtually

Monday, May 12, 2025
12:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The Colchester Board of Education held a Special Board Meeting on Monday, May 12, 2025. Board members in attendance included Directors Nic Longo, Ben Yousey-Hindes, Laurie Kigonya, and Jennifer Fath. District administrators included Superintendent Amy Minor and Chief Financial and Operations Officer George Trieb, and Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz.

I. Call to Order

Director Ben Yousey-Hindes called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

II. Executive Session: Contract Negotiations

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to enter executive session at 12:00 p.m. for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Adjournment

Director Kigonya moved to exit executive session and adjourn at 12:58 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorder:

Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Board Clerk:

Ben Yousey-Hindes
Board Clerk