

Colchester School Board Meeting Agenda & Packet

January 6, 2026



**Colchester School District
Board of Education Meeting**
January 6, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Colchester High School Library

Meeting Agenda

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| I. Call to Order | |
| II. Citizens Participation* | |
| III. Hear School Report: Colchester Middle School | Informational |
| IV. Approval of Colchester School District Announced Tuition Rates | Action |
| V. Hear FY'27 Budget Presentation | Informational |
| VI. Second and Final Reading of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Compliance Policy: D7 | Action |
| VII. Second and Final Reading of Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students Policy: F10 | Action |
| VIII. Approval of Consent Agenda | Action |
| IX. Approval of Meeting Minutes | Action |
| ○ December 16, 2025 (General) | |
| X. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports | Informational |
| XI. Future Agenda Items | Informational |
| XII. 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.csdvt.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

Administrative Offices, 59 Rathe Road, PO Box 27, Colchester, Vermont 05446

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MEMO

To: School Board Directors
From: George A. Trieb, Jr.
Subject: Announced Tuition – FY'27
Date: January 6, 2026

The announced tuition rates are based on the district's overall proposed FY 2027 budget less any transportation and special education costs. The announced tuition rates are estimates of the allowable tuition reported by districts receiving tuition students. By law we are required to set the tuition rates before January 15th each year. Two years from now when the allowable tuition rates are released by the Agency of Education, we will learn the value of our estimates.

The table below shows the past announced and allowable tuition rates for the last few years. It also shows the recommended announced tuition rates for FY 2027.

Category	FY2027	FY2026	FY2025	FY2025	FY2024	FY2024
	Announced	Announced	Allowable	Announced	Allowable	Announced
Elementary	\$18,100	\$17,200	\$15,414	\$16,100	\$15,222	\$13,800
Grades 7 - 12	\$25,500	\$23,300	\$20,678	\$21,200	\$19,641	\$19,100

Note: Special education tuition will be the announced tuition plus any additional costs incurred by the district.

Motion: I move to approve the announced tuition rates for FY'2027 at \$18,100 for elementary grades (K – 6) and \$25,500 for secondary grades (7 – 12).

Amy Minor
Superintendent
of Schools

George Trieb
Chief Financial & Operations
Officer

Carrie Lutz
Director of Student
Support Services

Jean Shea
Director of Instructional
Support Services

Gwendolyn Carmolli
Director of Curriculum
& Instruction

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**POLICY: HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT
COMPLIANCE****DATE ADOPTED:** DRAFT**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Colchester School District shall comply with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) with regard to any employee benefit or group health plan provided by the district that is subject to the requirements of the Act. The superintendent or their designee shall develop and implement procedures necessary to ensure continuing compliance with the requirements of HIPAA.

Legal Reference(s):

42 U.S.C. 1320d-2 and 1320d-4
45 C.F.R. Subpart C

Last Reviewed: November 1, 2022
Date Warned: December 12, 2025
First Reading: December 16, 2025
Second Reading: January 6, 2026

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

**POLICY: PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT, HAZING AND BULLYING
 OF STUDENTS**

DATE ADOPTED: DRAFT

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Colchester School District (hereinafter "District") is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect.

It is the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Harassment may also constitute a violation of Vermont's Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and/or Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972.

It is also the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful hazing, bullying of students and related acts of retaliation. Conduct which constitutes hazing may be subject to civil penalties.

The District shall address all complaints of harassment, hazing, bullying and retaliation according to the procedures accompanying this policy, and shall take appropriate action against any person - subject to the jurisdiction of the board - who violates this policy. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a student for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment, bullying, hazing or retaliation as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the board's disciplinary policies or the school's code of conduct.

The model procedures are expressly incorporated by reference as though fully included within this Model Policy. The Model Procedures are separated from the policy for ease of use as may be required.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

The superintendent or his/her designee shall:

1. Adopt a procedure directing staff, parents and guardians how to report violations of this policy and file complaints under this policy. (See Model Procedures on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students)
2. Annually, select two or more designated employees to receive complaints of hazing, bullying, harassment, and/or retaliation at each school campus and publicize their availability in any publication of the District that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.

Last Reviewed: August 16, 2016
Date Warned: December 12, 2025
First Reading: December 16, 2025
Second Reading: January 6, 2026

3. Designate an Equity Coordinator to oversee all aspects of the implementation of this policy as it relates to obligations imposed by federal law regarding discrimination. This role may be also be assigned to one or both of the Designated Employees.
4. Respond to notifications of possible violations of this policy in order to promptly and effectively address all complaints of hazing, harassment, bullying, and/or retaliation.
5. Take action on substantiated complaints. In cases where hazing, harassment, bullying and/or retaliation is substantiated, the District shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment, bullying and/or retaliation; prevent its recurrence; and to remedy the impact of the offending conduct on the victim(s), where appropriate. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline.

Serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. It may also involve penalties or sanctions for both organizations and individuals who engage in hazing. Revocation or suspension of an organization's permission to operate or exist within the District's purview may also be considered if that organization knowingly permits, authorizes or condones hazing.

III. CONSTITUTIONALLY PROTECTED SPEECH

It is the intent of the District to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with student rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The purpose of this policy is to (1) prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that has the purpose or effect of substantially disrupting the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources or creates a hostile learning environment; (2) prohibit conduct intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate students in a manner as defined under this policy.

IV. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy and the accompanying procedures, the following definitions apply:

- A. **"Bullying"** means any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:
 - a. Is repeated over time;
 - b. Is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
 - (i) occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity; or
 - (ii) does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's right to access educational programs.
- B. **"Complaint"** means an oral or written report information provided by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment, bullying and/or retaliation.

- C. **“Complainant”** means a student who has provided oral or written information about conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment bullying and/or retaliation, or a student who is the target of alleged hazing, harassment, bullying and/or retaliation.
- D. **“Designated employee”** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of hazing, harassment, bullying and/or retaliation pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. 570a(a)(7). The designated employees for each school building are identified in Appendix A of this policy.
- E. **“Employee”** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the District, an agent of the school, a school board member, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, “agent of the school” includes supervisory union staff.
- F. **“Equity Coordinator”** is the person responsible for implementation of Title IX (regarding sex-based discrimination) and Title VI (regarding racebased discrimination) for the District and for coordinating the District’s compliance with Title IX and Title VI in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The Equity Coordinator is also responsible for overseeing implementation of the District’s *Preventing and Responding to Harassment of Students and Harassment of Employees* policies. This role may also be assigned to Designated Employees.
- G. **“Harassment”** means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by a student’s or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating hostile, or offensive environment.

Harassment includes conduct as defined above and may also constitute one or more of the following:

- (1) Sexual harassment, which means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, that includes sexual violence/sexual assault, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and includes situations when one or both of the following occur:
 - (i) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student’s education, academic status, or progress; or
 - (ii) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.

Sexual harassment may also include student-on-student conduct or conduct of a non-employee third party that creates a hostile environment. A hostile environment exists where the harassing conduct is severe, persistent or pervasive so as to deny or limit the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program on the basis of sex.

- (2) Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student’s or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or

visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to cultural customs.

- (3) Harassment of members of other protected categories, means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

- H. **"Hazing"** means any intentional, knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with others, against another student: In connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the educational institution; and

Which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, endangering the mental or physical health of the student.

Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extra-curricular, or military training program goals, provided that:

1. The goals are approved by the educational institution; and
2. The activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the educational institution, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

With respect to Hazing, **"Student"** means any person who:

1. is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;
2. has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurs; or
3. intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after an official academic break.

- I. **"Notice"** means a written complaint or oral information that hazing, harassment, bullying and/or retaliation may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the hazing, harassment, bullying or retaliation, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred. If the school learns of possible hazing, harassment, bullying or retaliation through other means, for example, if information is received from a third party (such as from a witness to an incident or an anonymous letter or telephone call), different factors will affect the school's response. These factors include the source and nature of the information; the seriousness of the alleged incident; the specificity of the information; the objectivity and credibility of the source of the report; whether any individuals can be identified who were subjected to the alleged conduct; and whether those individuals want to pursue the matter. In addition, for purposes of violations of federal anti-discrimination laws, notice may occur when an employee of the district, including any individual who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or responsibility, knows or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known about potential unlawful harassment, bullying and/or retaliation.

- J. **“Organization”** means a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or other similar group, whose members primarily are students at an educational institution, and which is affiliated with the educational institution.
- K. **“Pledging”** means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.
- L. **“Retaliation”** is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment, hazing or bullying or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to complaints of harassment, hazing, or bullying. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, bullying, hazing, intimidation, and reprisal.
- M. **“School administrator”** means a superintendent, principal or his/her designee assistant principal/technical center director or his/her designee and/or the District’s Equity Coordinator.
- N. **“Student Conduct Form”** is a form used by students, staff, or parents, to provide, in written form, information about inappropriate student behaviors that may constitute hazing, harassment, bullying and/or retaliation.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: 1/6/2026

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	Hours/Wk	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Education	Nancy	Smith	Leave of Absence	Preschool Teacher	1.0 FTE	MBS (EEE)	Request for LOA 1/12-2/6	N/A		Yes
Education	Linda	Kapusta	New Hire	LTS- Preschool Teacher	17.5	MBS (EEE)	Notice of Hire	Nancy Smith	Yes	Yes
Administration	Peter	Farrell	New Hire	LTS - Assistant Principal	1.0 FTE	MBS	Notice of Hire	Chris Shackett	Yes	Yes

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

[illegible]

Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational									
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Colchester School District

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Library

Tuesday, December 16, 2025
7:15 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, in the Colchester High School Library Media Center. Board Directors in attendance were Lindsey Cox, Nic Longo, Ben Yousey-Hindes and Jennifer Fath. Administrators and employees in attendance were Superintendent Amy Minor, Chief Financial and Operations Manager George Trieb, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli and UMS Principal Chris Antonicci. There were no audience members.

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Lindsey Cox called the meeting to order at 7:13 p.m. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Citizens Participation*

None.

III. Hear School Report: Union Memorial School

Informational

Principal Chris Antonicci presented an informational report on Union Memorial School, providing a comprehensive overview of enrollment, attendance, assessment, and discipline data from the 2024-25 school year. He outlined current schoolwide goals that align with the building's continuous improvement plan. Reflecting on his presentation from the previous year, Principal Antonicci highlighted progress in literacy. He explained how adjustments to foundational skills instruction and the implementation of specific concepts have led to measurable improvements in student comprehension. He also shared mathematics data across various cohorts, detailing the action steps taken to improve student outcomes. A key strategy discussed was the use of "deliberate practice," which emphasizes structured, goal-oriented repetition and immediate feedback to help students navigate the effort and discomfort required for mastery. He also detailed the school's efforts to align Essential Expectations with ESSA standards, IEP goals, and report card grading systems. Principal Antonicci illustrated how educators collaborate to achieve objectives in the school's action plan, noting the use of dedicated professional learning time and weekly grade-level meetings. These meetings allow staff to analyze math and literacy data in real-time to identify and organize student intervention groups.

Beyond academics, the Principal offered accolades to the PTA for their role in generating school connections through community events and the recent artist-in-residence program. Finally, Principal Antonicci expressed his heartfelt appreciation to the Board and administration as he formally acknowledged his upcoming retirement at the end of the current school year.

IV. Hear FY'27 Budget Presentation

Informational

Chief Financial Officer George Trieb presented an informational overview of the baseline budget for FY'27. He explained that the baseline budget represents a "roll-over" of current operations into the new year, which results in a projected increase of approximately \$6.4 million, or 9.8%, over the FY'26 budget. Mr. Trieb identified the primary cost drivers as contract-negotiated salaries, statewide-negotiated healthcare, out-of-district student placements, food service, and transportation.

Additionally, the Board discussed the impact of including the first facility bond payments within the operational budget as required by state statute. Mr. Trieb suggested that the Board consider using the capital reserve fund to fund a project at CHS thereby reducing \$500K in expenses from the baseline budget.

Director Yousey-Hindes expressed concern about including bond repayments in the operational budget, noting that this could lead to confusion among taxpayers about day-to-day spending. He advocated for a specific communication strategy to remind the public why the facility repairs are crucial while providing clear talking points that separate bond costs from general operations. By "backing out" bond costs from the operational total, the Board can show that it's still adhering to operational efficiency and effectiveness in ways that align with the community's values. The presentation at the next meeting will include a specific percentage representing the bond's contribution to the overall budget increase.

Director Fath noted that while Colchester has historically maintained reasonable increases, the cumulative effect of rising costs is becoming a significant concern. She inquired how the proposed budget increase would translate into estimated tax rates and requested an update on developments at the state level. Mr. Trieb responded that the district is still waiting for several components of the state funding formula. He also mentioned a recent news report that the Governor is considering a "buy down" of the tax rate, similar to the previous year, but urged the Board to focus on the local budget—the portion they can control—since the state ultimately determines how that spending translates into a tax rate.

The Board also reviewed the status of Colchester's Common Level of Appraisal (CLA). Mr. Trieb explained that the CLA serves as a significant amplifier of the tax rate. Because the town hasn't completed a full appraisal since 2011, the CLA is expected to be exceptionally low. While officials are checking the status of the current town-wide appraisal, it is highly unlikely to be implemented in time for the FY'27 budget cycle.

Board Chair Cox characterized the 9.8% increase as very high and requested that the administration provide scenarios at the next meeting to reduce that increase by half, even if such reductions require difficult conversations and decisions. She expressed interest in potentially "swapping" items to better meet the current needs of students and employees and asked for additional Board guidance for the administration. The Board had some discussion and Superintendent Amy Minor stated that the administration would bring back broad expenditure reduction scenarios, noting the need for sensitivity regarding filled positions and the formal processes required for staff reductions. The Board agreed to schedule an additional meeting in January dedicated to further budget planning.

**V. First Reading of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
Compliance Policy: D7**

Action

This policy was reviewed as part of the annual CSD policy revision cycle. It outlines the District's commitment to federal privacy laws, including HIPAA, and the protection of confidential health information related to employee benefits and health plans. It is in full compliance with all relevant state and federal laws and regulations. No changes were recommended or requested.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the first reading of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Compliance Policy: D7. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. First Reading of Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students Policy: F10 Action

This policy was reviewed as part of the annual CSD policy revision cycle. It governs the prevention of harassment, hazing, and bullying of students. This policy is identical to the model policy provided by the State and is fully compliant with all legal requirements. No changes were recommended or requested.

Director Longo moved to approve the first reading of the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students Policy: F10. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. First Reading of Prevention of Sexual Harassment as Prohibited by Title IX Policy: F11 Action

This policy was reviewed as part of the annual CSD policy revision cycle. It ensures District compliance with federal Title IX regulations, specifically prohibiting all forms of sex-based discrimination and sexual harassment while establishing legally mandated grievance procedures. It is the model policy from the Vermont School Boards Association and is fully aligned with state and federal law. No changes were recommended or requested.

Director Fath moved to approve the first reading of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment as Prohibited by Title IX Policy: F11. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Approval of Consent Agenda Action

The board reviewed the following items on the consent agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA										
Board Meeting Date: 12/16/2025										
<i>Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)</i>										
Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	Hours/Wk	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Teacher	Aurina	Hartz	New Hire	Elementary Teacher LTS	1.0 FTE	PPS	Notice of Hire	Brittany Wildermuth	Yes	Yes
<i>Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Board Approval Required</i>										
Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	Hours/Wk	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	DonCarlos	Davis	Leave of Absence	Food Service	30	CMS	Request for LOA 1/16/26 - 1/29/26			
<i>Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational</i>										
Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	Hours/Wk	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	Jordan	Soutiere	New Hire	Paraeducator	32.5	MBS	Notice of Hire	N/A	Yes	Yes
Co-Curricular	Marissa	Fortin	New Hire	"C" Basketball Coach	Coach	CMS	Notice of Hire	N/A	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Nancy	Japhet	Resignation	Food Service Worker	31.5	CMS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Jessica	Randall	Resignation	Paraeducator	14.0	MBS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Makayla	Beauty	New Hire	Paraeducator	32.5	CMS	Notice of Hire	N/A	Yes	Yes
Co-Curricular	Nikhil	Blasius	New Hire	JV "B" Basketball Coach	Coach	CHS	Notice of Hire	N/A	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Autumn	Buerkett	New Hire	ML Paraeducator	32.5	CMS	Notice of Hire	Maeve Cohen	Yes	Yes

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

IX. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Action

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on November 18, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports

Informational

- The district administrators recently participated in a cybersecurity tabletop training and an AI in Education workshop.
- Superintendent Minor provided a construction update for the facilities work happening at PPS.

XI. Future Agenda Items

Informational

- School Reports
- School Assessment Presentation
- Policy Work
- Facility Renovation Updates
- FY27 Budget Development
- Quarterly Financial Report

XII. Adjournment

Director Longo moved to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Ben Yousey-Hindes
Board Clerk