

Colchester School Board Meeting Agenda & Packet

March 3, 2026



**Colchester School District
Board of Education Meeting**
March 3, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Colchester High School Library

Meeting Agenda

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| I. Call to Order | |
| II. Citizens Participation* | |
| III. Hear Colchester School District Audit Report for FY'25 | Informational |
| IV. Second Reading of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Policies | Action |
| ○ G1: Instruction | |
| ○ G1a: Homework | |
| ○ G1b: Pilot Projects | |
| ○ G6: Comprehensive Student Assessment | |
| V. Approval of Recommendation for Administrator Contract Renewals 2026-27 | Action |
| VI. Hear and Discuss Results of the FY'27 School Budget Vote | Informational |
| VII. Approval of Consent Agenda | Action |
| VIII. Approval of Meeting Minutes | Action |
| ○ February 17, 2026 (General) | |
| IX. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports | Informational |
| X. Future Agenda Items | Informational |
| XI. 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: INSTRUCTION****DATE ADOPTED: December 1, 2009****SECTION I - GENERAL:**

- A. Instruction shall be regarded as the most important function of our schools. The philosophy guiding this instruction shall be founded on a belief in the dignity and worth of each individual. Instruction shall be concerned with the development of each child; his/her scholastic achievement, his/her mental, emotional, physical and social growth. Thus, in the education of the child, individual differences as well as common tendencies shall be taken into account. No instruction shall purposely violate the personal, political, religious or cultural beliefs of a student or his/her family. Instruction should present opposing sides of controversial issues, so that with guidance young citizens may develop critical thinking.
- B. Primary objectives of instruction shall be intellectual and personal development leading towards excellence in the skills of learning, an inquiring mind, an ability to make sound judgments, an appreciation of the great cultures and responsible citizenship in our democracy. To these ends, opportunities shall be provided regularly for active participation in a broad range of educational experience by all students.
- C. All such education experience shall be organized into a purposeful curriculum, based on the ideals stated above and with due regard to individual abilities. It shall be subject to continuous study and evaluation and revised as improvement is indicated.

SECTION II - CURRICULUM:

- A. The curriculum shall be understood to embody all instructional activities. Instruction in each grade, and at each level, shall be integrated and coordinated so as to provide for the continuous development of the pupil.
- B. The evaluation and development of the curriculum as a whole shall be under the general direction of the Superintendent. He/she shall be assisted in this process from time to time by teachers, supervisors, other members of the professional staff and students selected in such a way as to give broad representation to subject areas, grade levels and special services.
- C. No major change in subjects shall be made or courses added or dropped without approval of the Board of Education.

Legal Reference:

V.S.A. Title 16 § 563

Last Adopted: April 6, 2004
Date Warned: November 13, 2009
First Reading: November 17, 2009
Second Reading: December 1, 2009

- D. All members of the professional staff shall be encouraged to study developments in curricula and to make recommendations for changes.

SECTION III - CLASS SIZES AND LOCATIONS:

- A. The recommended class size shall be determined by nature of subjects taught, grade level and the classrooms and teachers available. Though a considerable range shall be allowed to accommodate these factors, as a matter of policy, every effort shall be made to avoid having more than 30 students in an academic class.
- B. The grade structure of the Colchester School District shall be determined on the basis of classroom space available within the school buildings of the District.
- C. Grouping in homerooms shall be heterogeneous; that is, each class shall include pupils with a wide range of abilities. However, in subject fields, it may be advisable to have homogenous groupings.

SECTION IV - TEXTBOOKS, SUPPLIES, MATERIAL AIDS:

- A. Textbooks: Textbooks which are deemed necessary or desirable for instruction in the Colchester Schools shall be lent to pupils without charge. Pupils shall be held responsible for loss of textbooks or for damage beyond normal wear.
- B. Instructional Supplies: Funding consistent with the annual budget approved by the voters.
1. General Supplies: Certain supplies which are considered essential to instruction shall be furnished without charge to pupils.
 2. Physical Education Supplies: The Board of Education shall include in the budget funds for the purchase of supplies and equipment it deems necessary for the physical education program.
 3. Co-Curricular Program Supplies: It is the intention of the Colchester School District to fund its programs through the general fund budget approved by the voters whenever possible and practical. However, we do not want to limit the co-curricular program when other methods of funding exist. The School District will provide the essential non-individual specific equipment to operate each program when pre-designated in the budget. Individuals will be responsible for the purchase of individual equipment as needed. The individual or the School District shall retain ownership of equipment purchased by them. The Board may approve an activity that may require funding from outside sources.
 4. Other Materials: Supplies shall be furnished without charge to all pupils for their regular class projects. Materials used for special projects shall be paid for by the

students.

- C. Selection of Educational Materials: The selection of educational materials is governed by the Board's Material and Instructional Activity Selection, and Review Policy.
- D. Other Teaching Aids:
1. Audio-Visual Aids: The selection, storage and circulation of audio-visual instructional aids shall be the responsibility of building principals which may be delegated to an audio-visual or librarian coordinator, when one is appointed to his/her school unit.
 2. Magazines, Workbooks, Newspapers, Weekly Readers: These and similar essential educational materials which are consumed, or which cannot ordinarily be used a second time, will be provided for at District expense.
 3. Field Trips: See Colchester School District policy on field trips.

SECTION V - MUSIC INSTRUMENTS:

1. Students are expected to provide their own instruments or to make rental arrangements. The school district wishes to make available to students quality band instruments that are well maintained in instances where the instrument is cost prohibitive. A reasonable rental fee to students using district owned musical instruments offers equity with students who rent from outside firms and allows the district to provide annual maintenance for instruments.
2. Students using school owned musical instruments shall pay a \$50 per year rental fee. Exception to the fee will be made when:
 - a. The student is playing the instrument at the request of the director.
 - b. The fee presents a financial hardship for the family.
 - c. The instrument is used by more than one student simultaneously in which case a mouthpiece fee of \$10 will apply.

The school shall be responsible for upkeep and general maintenance of the instrument. The student is responsible for repairing any damage that occurs outside general wear and tear. The instrument must be returned in its present condition immediately upon discontinuance of the instrumental music program, or upon the request of the director or the administration. The instrument must be returned at the end of the school year for routine maintenance.

The money generated from these fees will be placed in a fund to be used for instrument maintenance and replacement. Each school's funds will be kept separate and used for that school's instrument needs.

SECTION VI - VOLUNTEER HELP:

- A. The use of resource people and volunteer help within school buildings and on school grounds is to be encouraged as it enables our school to provide added enrichment to its programs.
- B. The use of volunteer help within school buildings and on school grounds does not place on such help the responsibility of supervising children, as the schools' personnel have a legal duty to protect the pupils in their schools from reasonably foreseeable risk or harm.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: HOMEWORK POLICY and PROCEDURES

DATE ADOPTED: June 3, 2008

PHILOSOPHY:

Colchester School District believes that the goal of homework is to increase student learning. Homework is an assignment that is intended to be completed outside of the classroom. Meaningful homework assignments are flexible and based on students' needs. Well-designed homework increases students' understanding, skills and confidence. Parents/Guardians can benefit from homework by gaining knowledge of the learning done at school. Successful homework programs link the learner, home and school.

Homework may be assigned to:

- Review and reinforce content
- Apply, extend or reflect on learning
- Introduce new content
- Provide independent practice

FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

While it is understood that the time it takes to complete homework assignments may vary with each child, the times below are the general guidelines for each grade range. Teachers will be aware of any grade specific or school-wide evening commitments for students and adjust homework accordingly. Long-term assignments should be given well in advance of the due date and should include incremental checkpoints or benchmarks to help students complete them successfully.

If a student does not have homework or finishes early, it is always a good idea to spend time reading and, in the elementary grades, reviewing math facts. The benefits of independent reading are immeasurable and help a student develop a lifelong habit of reading.

Grade Range	Average Time Per Night*
Kindergarten	0 – 10 minutes
Grades 1 – 2	10 – 20 minutes
Grades 3 – 5	30 – 50 minutes
Grades 6 – 8	60 – 80 minutes
Grades 9 – 12	90 – 120 minutes

Homework will not be assigned over vacation for grades K-8. Grades 9-12 may have homework over vacation.

No Legal References.

Date Written: May 16, 2008
 First Reading: May 20, 2008
 Second Reading: June 3, 2008

*These time ranges assume the student is focused and on-task. If a child is having difficulty on a consistent basis completing assignments within the time frames established, parents should contact their child's teacher(s) for assistance. Project work shall be included in determining total homework time.

HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER READING PROGRAMS

High school students are assigned summer reading that helps build a bridge from one year's learning to the next. With the exception of Advanced Placement (AP) classes, these assignments are differentiated to attend to students' different readiness and interests. Support is available for students who may need help during the summer to complete these assignments.

DIFFERENTIATION

We are responsible for meeting the varied academic needs of all students in our schools. This responsibility requires us to carefully consider the modification and extension of homework assignments based on our knowledge of student learning styles, readiness, and interest. When making modifications, it is important to preserve the integrity of the assignment while making adjustments by reducing the quantity, varying the type and/or altering the level of difficulty of homework assignments.

Students needing adjustments in homework expectations may include:

- Highly motivated and independent learners.
- Students with learning needs (e.g. Educational Support Team plans, Individualized Education Plans or plans under Section 504).
- Students struggling with homework completion due to personal or family circumstances.

GRADING OF ASSIGNMENTS

Student performance should be measured and reported on the basis of clear curriculum content and student performance standards. Therefore, academic grades should be directly based on student performance in mastering targeted Grade Level Expectations and District curriculum standards. In other words, homework should not be given simply for the purpose of giving or receiving a grade or to demonstrate a student's level of responsibility. It is an instructional strategy that affords students the opportunity to practice and apply their knowledge. When applied in this way, homework is a tool for improving student success.

- Completed homework assignments should always be given some form of feedback (e.g. checkmark, grade or narrative/verbal comments).
- At the K-5 level homework will only be graded for completion.
- At the 6-12 level homework can be graded for completion and/or with a number or letter grade.
- At most, homework will count for 10% of a student's final grade in grades K-8 and 20% in grades 9-12.

The guidelines for grading homework apply only to homework itself, not the grading of projects. Projects are often worked on during class time and are therefore considered class work. Project

work shall be included in determining total homework time but will not be included in homework grading.

MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Homework should be completed because it is an important part of a student's responsibility as a learner. Therefore, incentives and rewards should be used on a limited basis. Homework should never be used as punishment. Failure to complete an assignment will result in loss of credit. Homework is of value to learning, and therefore students will be allowed to complete an assignment within one week of the original due date with a maximum loss of credit of 25%. After one week, a teacher may elect to give the student no credit for the missed assignment.

Loss of recess, staying after school or detention will not be used as a consequence. If homework completion is a chronic problem, schools may provide interventions such as Homework Club or individualized support.

COMMUNICATION

The philosophy and procedures should be communicated through:

- Handbooks
- Web pages (district and school)
- Student orientations
- Parent conferences
- Parent transition nights
- Open houses
- Faculty meetings
- Staff orientations

Each school will follow a clear system for reporting homework to students and parents (ex. student planners, weekly assignment sheets, team assignment sheets, web pages, posted in classrooms). The system will be established and reviewed.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Student

- Set up and follow a homework routine.
- Follow the school's homework reporting system (ex. daily planner, home folder).
- Bring all necessary materials to and from school.
- Understand the directions, ask clarifying questions.
- Complete homework assignments to the best of his or her ability.
- Return homework as assigned.
- When questions or concerns arise speak with the teacher.
- If there is no homework or it is finished early, it is always a good idea to spend time reading and, in the elementary grades, reviewing math facts. The benefits of independent reading are immeasurable and help a student develop a lifelong habit of reading.

Teacher

- Explain to students the importance of homework and its connection to learning.
- Teach skills and strategies necessary for successful homework completion.
- Provide clear instructions and answer clarifying questions.
- Provide homework that is clear, meaningful and purposeful.
- Provide feedback on homework in a timely manner.
- Communicate with student and parents as needed.
- Work collaboratively with other teachers to assign reasonable amounts of homework (see guidelines).

Parents/Guardians

- Set up and follow a homework routine (time, location, materials and storage of materials).
- Be encouraging and supportive.
- Monitor student's homework (daily assignments, completion).
- When issues, questions or concerns arise please speak with the teacher in a timely manner.
- Encourage the student to work on her or his own; be available to help.
- Follow the school's system for reporting homework (ex. daily planner, home folder).

Administration

- Communicate and monitor consistent implementation of the homework policy and procedures.
- Communicate homework expectations to parents.
- Establish, communicate and review the school's reporting system to parents.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: PILOT PROJECTS

DATE ADOPTED: June 20, 2017

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Colchester School Board to encourage professional staff to seek improvement of the educational program through all appropriate means, including carefully designed experimental and pilot projects.

Experimental and pilot projects may originate at the individual classroom, grade level, building, or district level. Such projects must be consistent with school district goals and mission, the district wide curriculum development/revision plan, and should support action plans.

PROCEDURES

In the case of a project involving an individual teacher or classroom, approval must be obtained from the building Principal. The Principal is required to notify the Superintendent of the project.

In the case of a project at a grade level, in a program, at a building, or district level, prior approval must be obtained from the Superintendent and/or designee, who will inform the School Board of the approval. Plans for any new project must be submitted to the Superintendent by May 1 preceding the school year in which it is to be implemented.

Projects that may have a significant impact on school operations or future budgets must have School Board approval. Those to be supported by local funds must obtain approval during the budget development process.

For projects approved by the School Board, the Superintendent and/or designee will present an evaluation report to the board detailing the effectiveness of the project. This report will be completed in writing on a standard format and will include an evaluation of the outcomes, including specific information from professional staff responsible for implementation.

If—upon completion and evaluation of the pilot—the recommendation is made to proceed with the program, a revised summary of financial implications will be presented to the Superintendent and to the School Board.

Last Adopted: May 16, 2001
Date Warned: June 2, 2017
First Reading: June 6, 2017
Second Reading: June 20, 2017

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ASSESSMENT POLICY

DATE ADOPTED: February 3, 2004

POLICY STATEMENT

Believing that assessment is central, not peripheral, to effective instruction, Colchester's Comprehensive Student Assessment Policy not only defines our specific purposes for instructional assessment, but also lists a variety of methods/measures used to gather student and program data. In compliance with federal/state mandates and consistent with Colchester School District's mission/strategic plan, these purposes include:

1. Providing feedback and sharing results regarding individual student performance.
2. Guiding teachers in adapting instructional strategies to individual learner needs.
3. Comparing both student scores and program results over time.
4. Informing all constituent groups about the success and impact of instructional programs.
5. Making decisions regarding the costs and benefits of specific programs and/or measures.

Effective teaching implies clarity about what students are expected to know, understand, and apply as a result of instruction. Defining this clarity through the integration of curriculum and assessment within specific fields of knowledge is the instructional core of our district's strategic plan.

Date Warned: November 14, 2003
First Reading: November 18, 2003
Second Reading: February 3, 2004

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT - **DRAFT**

POLICY: CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the Colchester School District (District) to provide rigorous, responsive, and equitable curriculum, instruction and assessment to encourage lifelong learning and success for all students.

SECTION I: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT & COORDINATION

The District shall be responsible for developing and maintaining curriculum based on:

- State standards and district proficiencies.
- Coordinated districtwide to vertically align learning across grades and schools.
- Periodically reviewed to determine compatibility with state standards and district proficiencies.

The superintendent or designee shall be responsible for assisting the district and member schools in the development, implementation, coordination, and evaluation of the curriculum.

All major changes in subjects, courses or proficiencies shall be reviewed and approved by the district curriculum office and the superintendent.

SECTION II: INSTRUCTION

The District shall provide instruction based on state standards and district proficiencies, promoting understanding, critical thinking, communication, learning and citizenship. Instruction shall address students' academic and social-emotional learning needs and interests.

SECTION III: CLASS SIZE

Class size and school configuration will, where feasible, comply with all applicable state statutes and regulations.

Class size determinations shall consider enrollment patterns, the nature of subjects taught, instructional models, student needs, staffing availability, and available facilities. The District shall strive to maintain class sizes that support high-quality instruction, equitable access to learning, and the effective use of district resources. The Board establishes a districtwide maximum class size of no more than 30 students per academic class.

The District is committed to building classes reflective of a wide range of student abilities, backgrounds, and learning needs. Occasionally, students may be grouped by skill level for specific learning needs.

The Superintendent shall report annually to the Board regarding class size determinations, compliance with state requirements, and any waivers or adjustments impacting program offerings.

SECTION IV: ASSESSMENT

The District believes assessment is central to effective instruction and is integrated with curriculum and teaching.

The District shall:

- Comply with federal/state mandates.
- Reflect the district mission/vision.
- Use a variety of methods/measures used to assess student learning.
- Provide feedback and results regarding individual student performance.
- Inform instructional planning to meet individual learner needs.
- Demonstrate achievement and program results over time.
- Inform about the success and impact of instructional programs.
- Guide decisions regarding student needs and program offerings.

SECTION V: HOMEWORK

The District believes that the goal of homework is to support student learning. Homework is an assignment that is intended to be completed outside of the classroom, designed to increase students' understanding, skills and confidence. Meaningful homework assignments are flexible, needs-based and developmentally appropriate. Homework can link the learner, home and school. Schools shall provide guidelines for homework based on district mission/vision.

SECTION VI: PILOT PROJECTS

The District encourages professional staff to pursue improvement of the educational program through thoughtfully designed experimental and pilot projects aligned with district goals, curriculum plans, and action priorities.

Classroom-level projects require Principal approval (with Superintendent notification), while grade-level, building, or district-wide projects require Superintendent approval and notification to the School Board. Proposals must be submitted by May 1 preceding implementation. Projects with significant operational or budget impact, based on the judgement of the Superintendent, may be brought to the School Board for approval. Approved projects must be formally evaluated, and if continuation is recommended, a summary of financial implications must be presented to the Superintendent and School Board.

Colchester School District

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Library

Tuesday, February 17, 2026
7:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, in the Colchester High School Library Media Center. Board Directors in attendance were Lindsey Cox, Nic Longo, Ben Yousey-Hindes, Laurie Kigonya, Jennifer Fath, and Student Representative Trinity McCarthy. Administrators and employees in attendance were Chief Financial and Operations Manager George Trieb, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli, and Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz. There were no audience members.

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Lindsey Cox called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Citizens Participation*

None.

III. First Readings of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Policies

Action

- Current G1: Instruction
- Current G1a: Homework
- Current G1b: Pilot Projects
- Current G6: Comprehensive Student Assessment

These policies were reviewed as part of the policy review cycle. The Vermont School Board Association (VSBA) recommends a curriculum policy, but its new guidance shifts instruction and assessment from policy to district procedure. After a comprehensive review of policies within the scope of curriculum, instruction and assessment, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli proposed to consolidate several related policies into a single policy to give an overview of the district's educational framework. The board reviewed the combined draft policy section by section and provided feedback.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the first reading of policies G1: Instruction, G1a Homework, G1b Pilot Projects, and G6: Comprehensive Student Assessment. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Hear Quarterly Financial Report

Information

Chief Financial and Operations Officer George Trieb provided an overview of the second fiscal quarter. Revenue and expenditures are tracking mostly as expected. He noted that the district should expect a \$153,269 surplus if the current spending trend continues.

V. Approval for Replacement of CHS Gym Floor and Bleachers

Action

Chief Financial and Operations Officer George Trieb outlined a request to move forward with a long-overdue project to replace the aging bleachers and main gymnasium floor at Colchester High School. The current gymnasium floor is original to the 1974 building. After 50 years of use, it has

reached the end of its functional life and requires a full replacement to ensure a high-quality, safe surface for the district's students and athletes. Similarly, the bleachers are approximately 26 years old and exhibit significant mechanical wear. They no longer meet modern standards for ease of operation or spectator comfort, making their replacement a priority for the facility. The district secured competitive bids and Mr. Trieb answered the board's questions regarding the bids, funding strategy, and concerns for the projected timeline for the work, which would take place over 6-8 weeks while school is in session.

Director Kigonya moved to accept the combined bid from Danaher Flooring and Robert Lord and authorized the Chief Financial and Operations Officer to sign a contract for this project. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Approval of 2026-2027 School Calendar

Action

Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz outlined the draft calendar for next school year. The calendar is based on the employee contract agreement, which specifies 176 student days, 8 in-service days, 1 teacher prep day, and 2 family conference days, for a total of 187 days. This is the third year that school districts in the Champlain Valley have committed to a regional calendar that includes 175 common school days. This means that all districts in Chittenden, Franklin, and Addison counties follow the same schedule for most holidays and professional development days. The regional alignment has proven to have many benefits, including consistency with students attending technical centers, the potential for more regionalized professional development opportunities, and fewer conflicts for staff who work in districts outside of where they live. One local addition specific to Colchester is the four early-release days, which have provided excellent professional development opportunities for faculty. Colchester Parks and Recreation will continue to offer childcare on those days.

Director Longo moved to approve the inclusion of four early release days in the 2026-2027 school calendar.

VII. Approval of Consent Agenda

Action

The board reviewed the following items on the consent agenda.

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

VIII. Approval of Meeting Minutes Action

Director Longo moved to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2026, meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

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

- A construction update was shared for the facilities work happening at PPS. The basement floor is being completed, and they will get started on the first floor and framing the walls soon.
- CMS restarted the MathCounts team and took 3rd place at a recent competition
- CHS School Counselors won the Excellence in School Programming Award for Vermont.

X. Future Agenda Items Informational

- Policy Work
- Auditor Report
- Facility Renovation Updates

XI. Proposed Executive Session to Discuss Contract Negotiations Action

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to enter executive session to discuss contract negotiations at 8:12 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. Adjournment

Director Kigonya moved to exit executive session and adjourn at 8:28 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Ben Yousey-Hindes
Board Clerk