

An Open Letter to the Colchester Community: Why Colchester Needs and Deserves a Good School System



School systems perform a vital role in modern society. They are often the glue that holds communities together. Schools host athletic, scholastic and arts events and like Colchester, host most Town recreation

programs. Our schools have helped make Colchester an attractive place for families to settle and invest in quality housing keeping property values high.

Colchester has done a better job than most in retaining young families as our student numbers are steady and our graduation rates are high. We have right-sized our faculty, but we still have five schools that have additional capacity and the buildings must be maintained.

In the last 10 years, State and Federal laws have made schools the deliverers of health, nutrition and family services to children with often intense needs. The dollar cost of these services is very high, but the cost to society of not supporting these children Pre-K through 12 is much greater in the long term.

Colchester is a large and efficiently run district serving over 2,100 Colchester and over 50 Islands tuition students. We have dedicated boosters supporting athletics, music and other programs. Over the last 10 years our district budget has gone down at the polls many times. We repeatedly have cut programs; we are now to the point that we believe if this continues the quality of our students' education will suffer.

We are reaching out to all parents and community members. Without you and your support, our budgets will continue to fail. We hope that you will support our budget on Tuesday, March 3rd, and that you pass along your support to friends, neighbors and co-workers and encourage them to vote as well. The Board thanks you and solicits your input and questions at info@cstdvt.org.

Colchester School Board Members:

Mike Rogers
Lincoln White
Christine Shepard
Lindsey Cox
Craig Kieny

**Colchester**
SCHOOLS
It All Starts **Right** Here!

We ask you to consider the following facts before you go to the polls.

Why Colchester needs and deserves a good school system:

- To support the future for our children – Colchester a great place to “live, learn & grow.”
- There are no new programs, personnel, or projects proposed (Act 166, Universal Pre-K, actually helps hold down the tax rate).
- Cost Control – 2.68% Increase – State average is 3.1%.
- Class Size is highest in state for districts/supervisory unions.
- High performance on State Tests: Math, Reading, Writing.
- CHS Graduation Rate: 96% (87% state).
- Spending Per Pupil: Lowest in Chittenden County (except Burlington, Winooski, Milton with high grant \$\$).
- Tax increase on a \$300K home is proposed at \$92/year (\$1.77/week).
- The Colchester community continues to grow with new housing which attracts more families with children. Good schools are necessary.
- CSD receives \$800,000 per year in revenue from other districts (Grand Isle) for tuition students.
- Cited as a model in the 2011 Picus Report for high performance and low spending. (VT AOE)



Vote

March 3, 2015

Important: Since many families are away and schools are closed from February 23rd through March 3rd, we encourage families to vote early by absentee ballot. Ballots are available for voting any time until March 3rd at the Town Clerk’s Office at 781 Blakely Road 7:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday. Ballots can also be mailed to your address on request by calling or emailing the Town Clerk’s Office: Call (802) 264-5520 or email TownClerk@colchestervt.gov.

Important: This year both districts, 9-1 and 9-2, will be voting at the Colchester High School gym on March 3rd, but will be using separate entrances. Please consider attending the Town and School Meetings starting at 7:00 pm on March 2nd at the CHS auditorium and the pasta dinner hosted by the School District beginning at 5:30 pm. Our Legislative Representatives are scheduled to attend as well.