

Colchester School District

# SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES

The official newsletter of Superintendent Amy Minor



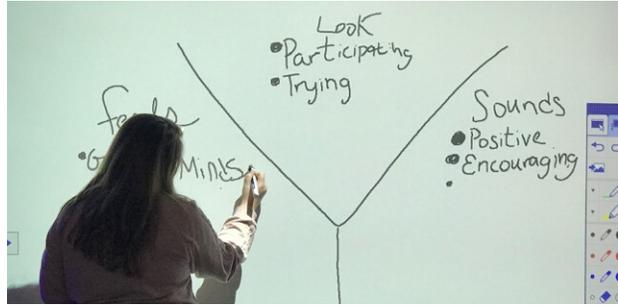
**"TODAY A READER, TOMORROW A LEADER."**

- Margaret Fuller

I have enjoyed finding small pockets of time in my schedule to visit classrooms and whenever possible, read to your students. Without a doubt, these visits have been the highlight of my school year so far. The conversations that I have with your students have been impactful and enlightening. It's wonderful to hear from these thoughtful, courteous, and brilliant young people. Our classrooms are incredible places to learn, thanks to these thoughtful, courteous, and brilliant young people. Our classrooms are incredible places to learn, thanks to these great students and our fantastic teachers. However, the schools in are what they are because we

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we have so many families that stand alongside us as partners in education. You check homework, read teacher notes, and attend conferences so you can be a part of the classroom. You organize events, attend meetings, and support fundraisers so you can be a part of your school. You're the spell-checker, coach, chef, counselor, driver, supply clerk, bank, personal assistant, and much more! Thanks to you, our schools are not just a place to go, they are a community to be a part of.



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Each school year is filled with big questions. In our classrooms, teachers asks big questions to help our students evolve as learners and leaders. Every day we challenge students to consistently evaluate their learning and search out places to grow. Our staff guides students to be creative, persistent and resourceful when they encounter academic challenges. The goal is for students to learn how to identify their own strengths and areas for improvement; ultimately becoming lifelong learners.

But students are not the only ones being asked big questions. This year, our employees are engaging in deep conversations about how we create an environment where every one of our 2,150 students has the best opportunity to learn. Our schools are engaging in conversations on cultural awareness and responsiveness to ensure that our families and students feel safe, supported and represented in our buildings.

It's no secret that PPS and UMS are amongst the oldest buildings in the district. They were designed in an era when schooling was much different. Currently the spaces in both schools are maxed out and lack functionality. Additionally, our preschool is currently housed at MBS. This location was chosen at the time the preschool formed for the sole reason of where there was available space. But ideally, our preschool students and should be amongst a similar age group in the community where they will advance to kindergarten and beyond.



# BIG QUESTIONS: RENOVATE OR BUILD

In a theme of “big questions”, the school board certainly has theirs. They have been grappling with how to address the facility concerns affecting our youngest learners in preschool through grade 2 for the past several years. We know we need to improve our facilities, the question is do we renovate and expand the existing spaces at PPS and UMS which would include creating spaces in each building for preschool, or do we build a single new building on Laker Lane to house both PPS and UMS?

As we’re currently seeing in adjoining communities, facility needs are a top priority among local school districts. Our board has been deep in the research phase for a couple years now. They’ve worked with Black River Design Architecture, Krebs & Lansing Consulting Engineers and mostly recently Lamoureux and Dickinson Engineering who administered the traffic study on Blakely Road to assess the potential impacts of a new building. At this point, no decisions have been made.



As you can imagine, this is a substantial project and what has been important for the board from the beginning is thoroughly doing the research required to fully understand the needs of our students and facilities before we put this project out to Colchester residents to vote on. Now that the traffic study and septic system analysis are complete, the school board is brainstorming ways to engage with our families on this project. You are our partners in this and your opinion on the future of the district is of great value to us. The work that lies ahead makes me excited and energized and I look forward to providing you with further updates on this very important facilities project.



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# NEW VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS

CSD administrators are putting the final touches on our strategic plan. As you may remember, last year we asked our community to provide us with feedback on our new mission and vision statements and I would like to thank those that participated. This plan will serve as a compass for all of our decisions and we will use student performance data to tweak the plan each year.

## CSD Mission Statement

Colchester Schools offer diverse educational experiences filled with rigorous and responsive teaching practices. In our collaborative learning community, students are inspired to think critically, act responsibly, communicate effectively and learn continuously to achieve their fullest potential.

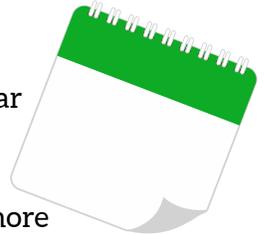
### CSD Vision Statement

We strive to prepare each student for success in life by providing an enriching, welcoming and safe environment.



## SCHOOL CALENDAR & CLOSINGS

Winter weather has certainly arrived! Please begin to think about the June calendar and the importance of your students attendance in school. For family planning, the earliest possible closing (meaning if we don't have any more snow days) will be **Monday, June 15th**. However, I think we all know that we're due for at least two more snow days given how early it is in the season, so we estimate that school will be in session until at least **June 17th**. Colchester High School graduation will remain on Saturday, June 13th, regardless of snow days. This date will not change.



Determining whether or not to call a snow day all comes down to safety. We consult a number of people and agencies to make the decision by 5:45 a.m. If you're interested in learning more about how we make the decision, check out the letter I wrote in my first year as your superintendent: [Snow Day Dilemma](#).



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The school district has a number of job openings that range from per-diem to full-time hours. We currently have full-time openings in our maintenance and IT departments. There are also open positions for paraeducators, autism and behavior interventionists, long-term subs, and coaches. Check out [www.csdvt.org/jobs](http://www.csdvt.org/jobs) for a full listing of all our open jobs. We're also actively looking to grow our substitute list. Substitutes fill spots for us in a variety of positions and schools (food service, nursing, paraeducators, teaching). Pay starts at \$90 a day. Check out [www.csdvt.org/sub](http://www.csdvt.org/sub) for more information.