

Colchester School Board

Meeting Agenda and Packet

December 7, 2021

**Colchester School District  
Board of Education Special Meeting Agenda  
Colchester High School Library  
Tuesday, December 7, 2021  
7:00 PM**

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**AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**
- II. Citizens' Participation\***
- III. First Reading of the Comprehensive Student Transportation Policy: F12a                      Action**
- IV. Out-of-District Placement Presentation    Information**
- V. FY'23 Budget: State Factors and School Requests    Information**
- VI. Approval of Consent Agenda    Action**
- VII. Approval of Meeting Minutes: November 16, 2021    Action**
- VIII. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports              Information**
- IX. Future Agenda Items    Information**
- X. Executive Session to Discussion Confidential/Identifying Student Information,      Action  
Contract Negotiations and a Potential Real Estate Opportunity**
- 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.csdvt.org/schoolboard](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.lcatv.org/live-stream-3).

## **COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **POLICY: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

**DATE ADOPTED:** February 4, 2003

### **ELIGIBILITY TO RIDE ON COLCHESTER SCHOOL BUSES**

Those resident students legally enrolled in grades K-12 or those eligible for transportation under IDEA-B (Special Education) and federal Section 504 laws in the Colchester Public Schools are eligible to ride on school busses during regular trips to and from school stopping only within the town limits of Colchester.

If the District places a student in a program outside the District, Colchester will ensure that adequate transportation to and from the program is provided.

School staff members may not ride the school bus on a regular basis. The Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, may authorize persons other than students to ride the school busses. School personnel who are assigned bus related responsibilities are authorized to ride on the bus.

On school sponsored trips, only those students, teachers, and chaperones recognized and appointed by the principal of the school from which the trip originates or by the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, are eligible to ride on the school bus. The school administration is responsible for presenting the bus driver with a list of who is eligible to ride on a field trip.

### **ESTABLISHMENT OF ROUTES**

The contractor's Transportation Supervisor shall be responsible for establishing bus routes in accordance with the provisions of this policy. She/he will work in close cooperation with the bus drivers who know the roads and are aware of any hazards or problems that may exist. She/he will work with the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, as well as the appropriate town officials to ensure that routes are planned in a safe manner over roads that will be maintained by the Town of Colchester, the State of Vermont or neighboring towns as applicable.

Normal routes (to and from school) will not include stops outside the town limits of the Town of Colchester.

While not always possible, an attempt will be made to establish and operate bus routes close enough to students homes so that students in grades 6-12 will not walk over 1 mile to a bus stop and students in grades K-5 will not walk more than .5 mile to a bus stop.

Date Warned: December 13, 2002  
 First Reading: December 17, 2002  
 Second Reading: February 4, 2003

Each kindergarten driver will receive adult acknowledgment before dropping off the student.

The School Board empowers the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, to make changes to any bus route in order to meet current needs. Such changes, however, require clear notification to the parents/guardians of affected students. Every effort will be made to notify at least three days before any change takes effect.

### **CANCELLATION/DELAY/EARLY RELEASE DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER**

The School Board has empowered the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, to close or delay the opening of school or close school early when conditions require such action.

The decision to close school will be announced to the public over the Internet, local radio and television stations.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

Bus transportation is a privilege in the Colchester School District. The necessity of providing safe transportation requires students to exhibit self-control and proper behavior while riding on a public transportation system.

Regarding student conduct matters, the school bus is an extension of the school facilities. Accordingly Board Policy DISTRICTWIDE DISCIPLINE POLICY (F1) applies. Specific bus rules are included in the procedures to this policy.

Violation of these rules may result in the student's loss of transportation privileges.

### **USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLES**

The transportation of students for school activities in privately owned vehicles is discouraged. School activities include: field trips, class outings, athletic events, club meets, community service projects, and any other school sponsored functions for which the school district routinely assumes the responsibility to provide transportation to students. In limited circumstances, however, when district owned or contracted vehicles are unavailable or impractical, the individual school principal and the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, may approve such transportation arrangements.

The Colchester School District assumes no responsibility or liability for any claim or damages arising from the transportation of students in private vehicles.

**PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BUS ROUTES**

- When establishing bus routes, the following factors will be considered: age of students; condition of roads to be traveled; school schedule; distance between home and school; safety of walking routes between home and bus stops; number and size of busses available; number of students to be served; and areas needing bus service. Every attempt will be made to run bus routes close enough to students' homes so that students in grades 6-12 will not walk over 1 mile to a bus stop and students in grades K-5 will not walk more than .5 mile to a bus stop.
- Every effort shall be made so that students are not riding to the outer points of the school district and then returning over the same route to be dropped off or picked up at home.
- Door to door stops, where possible, will be established for picking up and dropping off noontime kindergarten and pre-school students on certain school bus routes. Each kindergarten driver will receive adult acknowledgment before dropping off the student.
- Capacity Guidelines shall be in compliance with state regulations governing safe riding conditions.
- Published bus routes shall be available in the district to families on or about two (2) weeks before the start of the school year.
- Bus drivers shall have accurate, clearly written routes prior to the start of school, including direction of travel, stop locations, and approximate times.
- Although every effort will be made to ensure that students are not spending more than forty-five (45) minutes riding to school or home from school, we cannot guarantee these limits. Also, our guidelines define that every effort will be made to ensure that students arrive no earlier than twenty (20) minutes between school bus drop off and the start of the school day or school bus pick up at the end of the school day.

## **PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING STUDENT BEHAVIOR ON BUSES**

- At the beginning of each school year, bus drivers are responsible for communicating consistent rules/expectations for student behavior while riding on the bus. All transportation and school personnel will review these rules periodically. Bus drivers also assume responsibility for ensuring that these rules are posted on all busses and observed.
- Discipline procedures will be initiated by the bus driver by issuing a bus conduct report and carried out by the proper building principal according to school discipline policies and School Board Policy DISTRICTWIDE DISCIPLINE POLICY (F1).
- If the behavior continues up to three (3) occurrences, and in the opinion of the bus driver, proper disciplinary action has not taken place to ensure the safety of the other passengers, the driver will report the behavior to the Transportation Supervisor first, the Business and Operations Manager second, and subsequently the Superintendent. The decision of the Superintendent is final.
- School bus transportation is a privilege that may be lost as a consequence of inappropriate behavior. Parents of students who have lost bus privileges are required to see that students attend school, providing the student has not also been suspended from school.
- If a child has been kept after school for detention, it is the parent's responsibility to provide transportation. While the school district is NOT responsible for transporting these students, school administrators may, on a case-by-case basis, allow a student to ride a late bus.
- Every effort will be made to limit the number of students to the bus's capacity guidelines in order to decrease potential discipline and safety issues related to crowding. Bus aides, student bus patrols, intercom/radio systems, video recorders, or other techniques may be used to assist in the safe transportation of students.
- Use of busses for field trips, sporting events, or other school functions is subject to the same rules and regulations as daily bus trips. Adult chaperones involved in these activities are responsible for enforcing the bus rules. If discipline is not maintained, the bus driver has the authority to report the incident to the Transportation Supervisor, principal, or athletic director. The group will receive an initial warning. Continued occurrences may result in the loss of bus privileges for that particular group.
- Specific discipline steps will be dictated by each school's discipline policy. Generally, these steps involve:
  1. Written warning to both students and parents.
  2. Suspension of bus privileges.
  3. Total loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the semester/year if the behavior continues.
- Whenever individual or group discipline problems can be managed while the bus is in motion, bus drivers will do so. If, however, any discipline problem cannot be managed

safely while moving, the bus will be stopped. The driver will then determine whether the bus can proceed safely. The driver may return students to school, leave the bus stopped, and/or radio for assistance. Colchester schools are currently using the form printed on the back of this page as a communication tool to share student bus behavior.

Form #175

NATIONAL SCHOOL FORMS

Mt. Ebo Corporate Park, Brewster, NY 10509

<b>BUS CONDUCT REPORT</b>		STUDENT'S NAME _____		CLASS-GRADE _____
		DATE OF INCIDENT _____		<input type="checkbox"/> 1ST NOTICE <input type="checkbox"/> 2ND NOTICE <input type="checkbox"/> 3RD NOTICE
		BUS NO. _____	TRIP NO. _____	DRIVER'S NAME _____
<b>NOTICE TO PARENTS</b> 1. The purpose of this report is to inform you of a disciplinary incident involving the student on the school bus. 2. You are urged to both appreciate the action taken by the driver and to cooperate with the corrective action initiated today.				
<b>DRIVER'S REPORT:</b> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> VIOLATION OF SAFETY PROCEDURES  <input type="checkbox"/> DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY  <input type="checkbox"/> FIGHTING-PUSHING-TRIPPING  <input type="checkbox"/> _____            _____            _____         </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> EXCESSIVE MISCHIEF  <input type="checkbox"/> WRITING  <input type="checkbox"/> SMOKING            _____            _____            _____         </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> EATING-DRINKING-LITTERING  <input type="checkbox"/> RUDE-DISOURTEOUS-ANNOYING  <input type="checkbox"/> UNACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE            _____            _____            _____         </div> </div>				
<b>PRELIMINARY ACTION:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> CHECKED STUDENT'S FOLDER <input type="checkbox"/> HELD CONFERENCE WITH STUDENT <input type="checkbox"/> CONSULTED COUNSELOR <input type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONED PARENT <input type="checkbox"/> _____ _____ _____		<b>PRESENT ACTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT REGRETFUL, COOPERATIVE <input type="checkbox"/> RECURRENCES WILL BE REPORTED <input type="checkbox"/> DENIED BUS PRIVILEGE UNTIL _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ _____ _____		
(DRIVER'S SIGNATURE) _____ PARENT'S COPY - WHITE		(ADMINISTRATOR'S SIGNATURE) _____ OFFICE COPY - BLUE            TRANSPORTATION COPY - PINK		(DATE) _____ DRIVER'S COPY - YELLOW



**PROCEDURES FOR USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLES**

Whenever such approval is granted, the following conditions must be met prior to the trip:

1. The operator of the vehicle certifies that:
  - a. He/she is at least eighteen (18) years of age and has a valid driver's license.
  - b. He/she has comprehensive automobile liability insurance. Minimum insurance coverage is: \$100,000 per person, \$300,000 per occurrence, and \$50,000 for property if the vehicle has a seating capacity of nine passengers or less and \$300,000 per person \$500,000 per occurrence, and \$50,000 for property if the vehicle has a seating capacity in excess of nine passengers.
2. Written consent from the owner of the vehicle including a statement indicating the capacity of the vehicle.
3. The parent or guardian of each student who may be transported in a private vehicle has been notified of the use of private vehicles and has signed a written permission form authorizing the transportation of their son or daughter in a private vehicle. The permission form shall specifically indicate that the School District does not investigate or make any representations regarding the suitability or driving record of any operator of a private vehicle.
4. Mileage reimbursement may be paid to the owner of the vehicle. However, no other compensation or remuneration may be paid. This provision shall not apply to employees of the District who, in the scope of their employment, transport students.
5. The operator of the vehicle will comply with federal and state Safety Belt and Child Restraint laws.



**State of Vermont**  
**Department of Taxes**  
133 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-1401

*Agency of Administration*

December 1, 2021

Rep. Krowinski, Speaker of the House  
Sen. Balint, President Pro Tempore  
Vermont State House  
115 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-0004

Dear Speaker Krowinski and President Pro Tempore Balint:

The Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Taxes, after consultation with the Agency of Education, the Secretary of Administration, and the Joint Fiscal Office, is required by 32 V.S.A. § 5402b to calculate and forecast a property dollar equivalent yield, an income dollar equivalent yield, and a non-homestead tax rate by December 1. This letter is submitted in fulfillment of the statutory obligation. The Department of Taxes, Department of Finance and Management, Agency of Education, and the Joint Fiscal Office prepared consensus forecasts on various components of the Education Fund Operating Statement for Fiscal Year (FY)2023 so that the required analysis could be performed. Many thanks go to these dedicated staff for demonstrating the collaboration and meticulousness necessary to publish this forecast.

**5402b(a)(2) Mandated Forecast**

In the statutorily mandated calculation and recommendation under 32 V.S.A. 5402b, the Commissioner must assume the following:

1. The homestead base tax rate is \$1.00 per \$100.00 of equalized education property value;
2. The applicable percentage under 32 V.S.A. 6066(a)(2) is 2.0;
3. The statutory reserves under 16 V.S.A. § 4026 are maintained at five percent; and
4. The percentage change in the average education tax bill applied to homestead property, non-homestead property, and taxpayers who claim a property tax credit is the same.



The FY23 columns in the table below would satisfy the statutorily mandated parameters of the recommendation. As required by statute, the second column labeled “Scenario A” assumes the roughly \$90 million in forecasted unreserved/unallocated funds from FY22 are applied towards lowering FY23 property tax rates, “Scenario B” assumes those funds are not applied.

<b>Homestead Yields and NHS Rate</b>	<b>FY2022 (for comparison)</b>	<b>FY2023 (Scenario A)</b>	<b>FY2023 (Scenario B)</b>
Homestead Property	\$11,317	<b>\$13,846</b>	<b>\$12,937</b>
Income	\$13,770	<b>\$16,705</b>	<b>\$15,484</b>
Non-homestead Property	\$1.612	<b>\$1.385</b>	<b>\$1,482</b>

### **Average Rates**

If the forecasted yields and rate in the table above were adopted, the average 2022-2023 (FY2023) equalized property tax rates would be as indicated in the table below.

	<b>FY2022 (for comparison)</b>	<b>FY2023 (Scenario A)</b>	<b>FY2023 (Scenario B)</b>
Homestead Property	\$1.523	<b>\$1.308</b>	<b>\$1.400</b>
Income	2.50%	<b>2.19%</b>	<b>2.35%</b>
Non-homestead Property	\$1.612	<b>\$1.385</b>	<b>\$1.482</b>

The Scenario A rates would lead to an average bill decrease of 8.9% for all payers, the Scenario B rates would lead to an average bill decrease of 2.5%.

### **Education Spending Growth**

On a per-pupil basis, the expected growth in spending is forecast to be 4.74% on average.

	<b>FY2022 (for comparison)</b>	<b>FY2023</b>	<b>Rate of Growth</b>
Total Education Spending (\$Millions) <sup>1</sup>	\$1,496.6	\$1,560.7	4.28%
Equalized Pupil Count	86,975	86,596 <sup>2</sup>	-0.4%
Average Equalized Per Pupil Spending	\$17,207	\$18,023	4.74%

<sup>1</sup> Projected total education spending for property tax rate purposes as defined by 16 V.S.A. § 4001 (6)

<sup>2</sup> FY23 equalized pupils are calculated in accordance with Act 154 (2020) limitation on average daily membership (ADM) declines

**Key Considerations from the Administration's Point of View**

This forecast is calculated as prescribed in statute and with the information that is available to date. Because of this, there are always variables or uncertainties that might result in a different outcome than what is forecasted. For instance, the December 1 letter last year predicted an average nine percent increase in education property tax bills, in large part due to a forecasted decline in non-property tax revenues in the Education Fund that did not materialize. This year, we find ourselves in a very different situation, where if the full \$90 million was applied to lowering rates, we could lower bills by an average of nearly nine percent. This illustrates the high degree of uncertainty in the Education Fund and the economy as a whole because of the pandemic.

It's important to remember the property tax rate is only one piece of the property tax bill formula. Another important factor is the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA). The CLA is a mechanism that helps ensure uniform property values across the state. When fair market property values increase in a town, it decreases the town's CLA, which causes the town's tax rate on bills to increase. Given the increased value in real estate in Vermont this year, the CLA is expected to go down in many communities which means actual tax rates in those towns could be much higher than the forecasted statewide rate. Districts should be especially mindful this year when considering the potential tax impacts that lower CLAs may have on their member towns. Other variations from the forecasted statewide rate can also be expected because locally voted per pupil spending is still the primary driver of a town's tax rate.

The \$90 million in forecasted unreserved/unallocated funds from FY22 is primarily a result of higher-than-expected performance of the non-property tax revenues, the FY22 education property tax credits costing less than anticipated, enhanced surplus from FY21, and other prior year reversions. This forecasted surplus is one time money, which means we must be careful not to use it in ways that build ongoing costs which would need to be covered by future property taxes.

While school district budgeting is well underway, the Administration would also encourage school boards to be strategic in how they deploy the nearly \$400 million they received directly through federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. This funding can be used for impactful initiatives like universal afterschool and summer programming, improving our education infrastructure and addressing learning loss – all critical priorities to give our kids the best possible education and opportunities from cradle to career. These short-term federal funds will not replace ongoing revenue needs, and we must be cautious, regardless of the funding source, to not create budget cliffs in one to three years when these surpluses and federal dollars are depleted.

With these factors in mind, and in consideration of this extremely rare opportunity to provide relief to Vermonters who have put so much into this system, the Governor and Administration would like to see half of the surplus, \$45 million, returned to property taxpayers. There is also an opportunity to address some of the ongoing and upcoming education and workforce pipeline issues with the remaining \$45 million, an opportunity that will likely have a positive effect on student experiences and outcomes into the future. Given our workforce shortage across all

sectors, the Governor would like to see the other \$45 million reinvested into our students and used for one time school capital construction costs that will directly enhance workforce development programs, such as enhancements to CTE centers. The Administration would welcome the opportunity to work with the Legislature and school boards to achieve these two objectives.

While the pandemic has created upheaval in so many areas of our society, the impact on our students – from an educational, social, and emotional perspective – has been among the most significant. That is why it remains so critical to help Vermont's children and families recover so they can thrive long into the future. I extend my thanks to the families, students, teachers, school boards, and support staff who have navigated this landscape with grace and a focus on the health and wellbeing of children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Bolio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Craig" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Bolio".

Craig Bolio  
Commissioner, Department of Taxes

cc: Kristin Clouser, Interim Secretary, Agency of Administration  
Daniel French, Secretary, Agency of Education  
Adam Greshin, Commissioner, Department of Finance and Management  
Rep. Janet Ancel  
Sen. Ann Cummings  
Rep. Kathryn Webb  
Sen. Brian Campion  
Catherine Benham, Joint Fiscal Office  
Jennifer Carbee, Office of Legislative Counsel

**CONSENT AGENDA****Board Meeting Date: December 7, 2021****Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)**

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support

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

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support

**Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational**

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Co-Curricular	Sam	Pollock	New Hire	Head Alpine Ski Coach		CHS	Notice of Hire	Kevin Ose	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Heather	Jenkins	New Hire	Paraeducator	32.5	PPS	Notice of Hire	Emily Ryan	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Charlton	Whitney	New Hire	Test to Stay Assistant	15	DW	Notice of Hire	New Position	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Courtney	Dennison	New Hire	Behavioral Interventionist	35	MBS	Notice of Hire	Open Position	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Haylee	Patch	New Hire	Paraeducator	22.5	UMS	Notice of Hire	Open Position	Yes	Yes
Co-Curricular	Emily	Kopacz	New Hire	Head Nordic Ski Coach		CMS	Notice of Hire	Jess Frank	Yes	Yes

# COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting  
Colchester High School Library

Tuesday, November 16, 2021  
7:00 p.m.

## MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, November 16, 2021, in the Colchester High School Library. Board members in attendance were Board Chair Craig Kieny, Directors Lindsey Cox, Nic Longo, Laurie Kigonya, and Ben Yousey-Hindes. District administrators in attendance included Superintendent Amy Minor, Business and Operations Manager George Trieb, Director of Curriculum Gwendolyn Carmolli and three Colchester Alternative Program Teachers, Phil Gulizio, Jaime Wark, and Lisa Ryan. There were no audience members.

### I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair Craig Kieny called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### II. Citizen Participation

Colchester resident, Genna Barnaby, provided a video statement asking for clarification on the COVID-19 case totals for the 2020-2021 school year; requesting additional details on the individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 in the current school year; requesting information on any CSD community members who have been injured from receiving the vaccine, or who died from COVID-19; and information how CSD is using ESSER funds and other money designated to schools in regards to COVID-19.

### III. CAP and Central Office Relocation Presentation and Discussion

#### Action

Colchester Alternative Program (CAP) Teachers, Phil Gulizio, Jaime Wark, and Lisa Ryan presented an overview of the mission, purpose, and opportunities provided to high school students enrolled in CAP. The program is currently housed in a leased space on Blakely Road. The owner of the building has listed it for sale three times over the past six years. If a sale is successful, it is unknown if the new owners would allow the program to continue operating out of the space. Given that uncertainty, Superintendent Amy Minor and Business and Operations Manager George Trieb have been looking into other locations for the program. There are currently no other rental spaces within walking distance to Colchester High School and even if there were, they cited concerns with entering the program into a different lease for fear that a similar issue would occur. Their recommendation to the board was to move CAP to the current CSD Central Office building which is located on the Colchester High School campus and is owned by the district. While it would require renovations to transform the space from an office setting to a learning environment, it would provide a permanent home for the program. Other benefits include an increase in classroom size and gathering spaces, a full bathroom with a washer and dryer to meet the unique needs of students who do not have access to those things at home, and closer proximity to the high school's main building. The board was supportive of this recommendation.

With the movement of CAP to the current Central Office building, the district would need to relocate Central Office to a rental space. Three potential properties were identified but the best fit is

located at 59 Rathe Road in Colchester. It offers additional square footage which would allow the district to relocate personnel who currently have offices in schools, giving those buildings the ability to recoup some space back for students. Superintendent Minor gave a timeline that includes securing the new lease for the central office in December, construction occurring in the spring and summer, and completion by August 1.

The board engaged in discussion with the CAP teachers about how the students would feel about the change, how they will solicit design input from students, and the potential additional capacity and programming that the new space would offer.

Director Kieny asked for a cost breakdown associated with ending the current CAP lease, moving the program to Central Office, and relocating Central Office to a rental space. Business and Operations Manager George Trieb explained that it is essentially swapping one existing lease for another, however, the impact of the new Central Office lease on the future budget is about an additional \$45K per year. He shared that the cost per square foot is not much greater than the current lease, but there is more space. The other expenditure will be an estimated \$250K-\$350K in renovations to the current Central Office building to make it a learning environment for CAP. He noted that vendors are tough to secure, and the supply chain is unpredictable. The renovation schedule will be important to allow time to have the new CAP facility completed by the end of the summer. He explained how the board's capital reserve account works and how the board can utilize it for projects like this. He also noted that the timing allows some of the costs to be spread across two budget years.

***Director Cox moved to authorize the business manager to finalize the bid process for necessary renovations to convert the current central office building into the Colchester Alternative Program and to sign a 3-year lease for a rental space to house the district's central office personnel. The motion passed unanimously.***

#### **IV. Out-of-District Placement Presentations Information**

This agenda item was moved to the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

#### **V. FY'23 Budget Discussion: Assumptions Information**

Business and Operations Manager, George Trieb, presented his core budget assumptions for the FY'23 budget. The assumptions are the predicted increases in the budget from the current year to next year. While some items ranged from no change to 4%, both health insurance and the general transportation contract are predicted to increase 10% over the current budget.

***At 8:01 pm, Board Chair Kieny made a motion to take a short, five-minute recess. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting resumed at 8:05 pm.***

#### **VI. Citizens' Participation at Board Meetings Discussion Action**

Board Chair Kieny provided some history regarding individual participation at school board meetings. Before the pandemic, the public could contact the board individually or as a group at any time, however, live participation during a meeting was only allowed in person. The board would respond to questions submitted in other formats at the second meeting of each month. Throughout the pandemic, public meeting environments have shifted greatly across the country due to health



concerns. In June of 2021, the board started to allow written participation for those who choose not to attend in person. Since then, submitted statements have been read aloud by a board member or district employee. The board also created Public Comment Rules which are noted on each agenda and posted online. The board engaged in a discussion on if they should expand, remove, or alter any of its participation options.

Directory Longo cited public meeting law and the “reasonable opportunity” that the public should have to express an opinion. The pandemic increased abilities to offer digital methods for the public to engage with the board. He expressed interest in altering participation to allow more live participation, however, he requested that written statements should no longer be read aloud. He cited the potential discomfort or awkwardness for the person reading the letter and the possibility for the letter to be misconstrued with tone or cadence. He suggested a video recording or live video directly from the author instead of a written letter that must be read aloud by someone else.

Director Yousey-Hindes made a distinction between citizens having direct access to the board to express concerns and share opinions, versus the citizen’s ability to make a public statement at an open meeting. He noted that citizens, employees, and students can always reach out to board members individually and that the current discussion is purely about the role that a public meeting plays in allowing participants to reach a broader audience by issuing a public statement that would be recorded in the meeting minutes.

Directory Kigonya stated that citizens have multiple ways to access the board both privately and publicly. She questioned what additional measures needed to be added. She expressed concern about meetings becoming unmanageable due to excessive time or unruliness if online participation is allowed.

Director Cox shared that expanding participation access at board meetings has been a goal of hers since she began serving. She specifically cited citizens who may be unable to travel or attend a live meeting in person because of childcare, work commitments, or other responsibilities. She stated that having a physical time and place to come to a meeting in person should be a bare minimum and that the board should take steps to increase the accessibility of board meetings.

Superintendent Amy Minor shared that many school boards across the state are having similar discussions. She stated that the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA) is hosting a webinar on the topic and is currently working with their attorneys to draft a model policy. Superintendent Minor recommended that the board draft a specific CSD policy and accompanying procedures for citizens’ participation that are applicable in a variety of situations or settings. She also noted that if the board were to expand digital participation to the public, they would need to consider adding staff at the meeting to manage whichever platform is chosen.

The board agreed that they would like to see what the VSBA creates but in the meantime, they would like to make an immediate change to cease having board members or employees read submitted letters aloud.

***Director Yousey-Hindes moved to prohibit the open session reading of emails submitted to the school board unless read by the author or a proxy, and moved to expressly allow the playing of prerecorded messages if they are received by noon on the day of the meeting and follow the board’s Public Comment Rules as listed on the school board website. He also moved that the***

*board begin the process of preparing a policy and associated procedures to govern citizens' participation for the Colchester School board. The motion passed unanimously.*

**VII. Approval of Consent Agenda**

**Action**

The following Consent Agenda was reviewed by the board.

DRAFT

**CONSENT AGENDA****Board Meeting Date: November 16, 2021****Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)**

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Teacher	Melissa	Fontaine	Transfer	School Nurse	1.0 FTE	CHS	Request to Transfer	Lindsey Campion	Yes	Yes

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

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	Lijuan	Merkel	Leave of Absence	EL Paraeducator	32.5	MBS	Intermittent, Unpaid, Medical Leave			Yes

**Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational**

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	Caitlin	O'Neil-Bain	New Hire	Paraeducator	32.5	UMS	Notice of Hire	Logan Lemnah	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Allison	Middleton	Resignation	Paraeducator	32.5	CHS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Deborah	Brosseau	Resignation	Food Service Worker	15	CHS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Munanga	Byamungu	New Hire	Custodian	40	CHS	Notice of Hire	Open Position	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Sandra	Boyd	Transfer	Custodial Manager	40	DW	Notice for Transfer	Richard Johnson	Yes	Yes

*Director Longo moved to approve the Consent Agenda for November 16, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.*

**VIII. Approval of Meeting Minutes: November 2, 2021** **Action**

Board Chair Kieny asked to further clarify sentences in section III and IV. Director Cox asked to added current COVID case data known up to that meeting into section III.

*Director Longo moved to approve the amended minutes from the meeting held on November 2, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.*

**IX. Approval of Meeting Minutes: November 9, 2021** **Action**

*Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on November 9, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.*

**X. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports** **Informational**

- Superintendent Minor stated the Test to Stay program started this week. The district successfully tested 23 quarantined students on Monday and 67 on Tuesday. They will continue to monitor staffing requirements if the numbers increase. The hope is that the need will eventually decrease as more eligible students are vaccinated. After cases from the weekend and Monday, the total districtwide case count is over 50.

**XI. Future Agenda Items** **Informational**

- FY'23 Budget Timeline
- Out-of-District Placement Presentation
- Facilities Information
- Policy Work

**XII. Executive Session to Discuss Confidential/Identifying Student Information and Contract Negotiations** **Action**

*Director Cox moved to enter executive session at 9:06 p.m. to discuss confidential student matters and contract negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.*

**XIII. Adjournment**

*Director Cox moved to exit executive session and adjourn at 9:57 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.*

Recorder:

Board Clerk:

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Meghan Baule  
Recording Secretary

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Nic Longo  
Board Clerk