

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Library

Tuesday, August 17, 2021
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, August 17, 2021, in the Colchester High School Library. Board members in attendance were Board Chair Craig Kieny, Directors Laurie Kigonya and Nic Longo; Directors Lindsey Cox and Ben Yousey-Hindes attended via phone; and Student Board Member Gloria Kigonya. District administrators in attendance included Superintendent Amy Minor, Business and Operations Manager George Trieb, Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz, and Director of Curriculum Gwendolyn Carmolli. Principals in attendance included Heather Baron, Michele Cote, Jordan Burke, Carolyn Millham, and Chris Antonicci. There was two CSD employees and one citizen in the audience.

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. Board Chair Kieny and CHS Principal introduced Gloria Kigonya, the student school board member for the 2021-2022 school year.

II. Citizen Participation

Colchester resident, Genna Barnaby, read a statement she prepared in which she criticized the district for opening schools with COVID-19 mitigation measures in place, including mask-wearing and offering school-based vaccine clinics. She made several statements opposed to requiring masks in school and questioning the safety of the vaccine. She ended by asking the board to have a further discussion about the Black Lives Matter flag, citing that it is fueling dissent.

Vicki Brown, a special educator in the early education program at Malletts Bay School, expressed gratitude to the board, the district, and the HR department for their support during the last year of COVID-19 and in terms of healthcare offerings. She explained that the state-level healthcare negotiations between the Vermont School Board Association (VSBA) and the Vermont-NEA are tenuous and currently in a fact-finding stage after declaring an impasse. She shared concern about the proposal that was put forth by the VSBA and requested CSD board members contact their local representatives to submit a proposal that is fair and equitable.

III. Opening of School for 2021-2022 School Year

Information

Superintendent Amy Minor gave an overview of how schools will open for the 2021-2022 school year. Faculty and instructional support staff return on August 19 and the first day of school is August 25. All Colchester schools are opening with five days of in-person instruction. Superintendent Minor shared information regarding enrollment and the layered COVID-19 mitigation measures that will be in place including mask-wearing when inside, limiting visitors, cohorting students in elementary grades, utilizing outdoor classrooms, regular cleaning and disinfecting, hand hygiene, and plexiglass in some areas. At the recommendation of the Agency of Education (AOE) and Vermont Department of Health (VDH), the universal mask requirement can be dropped once an individual school reaches 80% vaccination rate of eligible students.

Board Chair Kienny asked how the 80% vaccination rate would be calculated. District Nursing Supervisor Moriah McCullagh stated that school nurses can currently verify required immunizations but there are ongoing discussions at the state level if nurses should use the database as a tool to verify COVID vaccination, which is not required. Superintendent Minor stated they are still waiting for guidance from the AOE about how that rate should be determined. Board Chair Kienny followed up by asking how the public is kept separate from students at the CMS vaccine clinics that are run by the Vermont National Guard. Superintendent Minor stated the clinic takes place in the gym using exterior doors which keeps the clinic contained.

Board Chair Kienny highlighted the difference between elementary students eating in their classroom and secondary students eating in the cafeteria and asked for the rationale. Superintendent Minor stated that the decision is consistent with the recommendations from the AOE and VDH. Nursing Supervisor Moriah McCullagh added that students at the secondary level are eligible for the vaccine which was an important factor that contributed to the decision.

Director Longo asked how many students are anticipated to utilize district transportation. Superintendent Minor shared that bus routes and ridership rates are currently being determined in collaboration with the district's busing company, Mountain Transit.

IV. Building Report from Principals

Information

School principals shared their welcome back plans for families and students including modifications to allow for layered COVID-19 safety measures including moving events outside and hosting open houses with assigned time slots to reduce the number of families on campus at a time. They also shared staffing levels at each school. The elementary schools are mostly fully staffed but the middle and high schools are still actively searching for paraeducators. The principals shared their academic focuses for the school year including high priority concepts. They thanked custodial and maintenance for all of their work over the summer to prepare their buildings to welcome students back next week.

V. Second and Final Reading of Policy E1: Fiscal and Business Management

Action

No additional edits were requested.

Director Longo moved to approve the second and final reading of policy E1: Fiscal and Business Management. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Second and Final Reading of Policy E5: Travel and Expenses

Action

No additional edits were requested.

Director L. Kigonya moved to approve the second and final reading of policy E5: Travel and Expenses. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Second Reading of Policy E10: Donations

Action

The board decided to continue discussions around adding language to address potential conflict of interest issues with the acceptance or declination of donations. They agreed to bring this policy back for an additional reading.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the second reading of policy E10: Donations while acknowledging the policy will return for another reading. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Approval of Personnel Consent Agenda

Action

The following Personnel Consent Agenda was reviewed by the board. This district has several positions that are still open and Superintendent Minor encouraged community members looking for employment to visit www.csdvt.org/jobs.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: August 17, 2021

REVISED

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Teacher	Benjamin	Beaudoin	Leave of Absence	Teacher		CHS	Request Leave of Absence Sept. 7 through approx. Oct. 20			
Teacher	Jacob	Whitaker	New Hire	Social Studies Long Term Sub	1.0 FTE	CMS	Request to Hire	John Upchurch	Yes	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	Jeremy	LaRoche	New Hire	Para	32.5	CHS	Notice of Hire	Faye Graham	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Meagan	Holland	New Hire	Para	32.5	CHS	Notice of Hire	Roy Bishop	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Eleanor	Stephenson	New Hire	ELL Para	32.5	CHS	Notice of Hire	New Position	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Kaitlyn	Hodge	Transfer	Communication Facilitator	35	CHS	Notice of Transfer	David Hodge	Yes	Yes

Director Longo moved to approve the Consent Agenda for August 17, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Approval of Meeting Minutes: August 3, 2021

Action

Board Chair Kieny requested to include the fact that the dollar amount for purchases has not changed since 1968 section III.

Director L. Kigonya moved to approve the amended minutes from the meeting held on August 3, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports

Informational

- Board retreat will take place Tuesday, August 31 at Central Office.

XI. Future Agenda Items

Informational

- Summer school outcomes
- Food service presentation
- Policy work

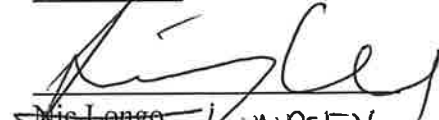
XII. Adjournment

Director Longo moved to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorder:


Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Board Clerk:


~~Nic Longo~~
Board Clerk
LINDSEY
COX