

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Library

Tuesday, January 18, 2022
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, January 18, 2022, in the Colchester High School Library. Board members in attendance were Board Chair Craig Kienny, Directors Lindsey Cox, Nic Longo, Laurie Kigonya, Ben Yousey-Hindes, and student representative Gloria Kigonya. District administrators in attendance included Superintendent Amy Minor, Director of Curriculum Gwendolyn Carmolli, Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz and Business and Operations Manager George Trieb. There were no audience members.

I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

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

II. Citizen Participation

None.

III. Presentation on Act 173

Information

Director of Student Support Services, Carrie Lutz, provided an overview of Act 173 which redesigns the Vermont special education funding system from a reimbursement model to a census-based model. Ms. Lutz highlighted the financial, instructional, and regulatory changes that will go into effect on July 1. To better support struggling learners, funds through Act 173 can be used more with more flexibility. Other important tenants of Act 173 include the parent input process, goal writing, functional skills, adverse effect, and updated definitions of special education. Ms. Lutz also previewed work that is happening to continue to close student achievement gaps through improved instructional systems across the district.

IV. Presentation on English Learner Supports

Information

Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Gwen Carmolli, outlined the district's English Learner Program (EL). The district currently has 97 EL students who speak 18 languages. Ms. Carmolli provided an overview of the WIDA Model which is an assessment tool that measures developing English language in students. She highlighted some of the scores from students in the district. She also shared an overview of services that our EL teachers provide to both students and their families. She touted the positive impact that has been made in the past several years thank in part to added staffing. Ms. Carmolli thanked tax payers for agreeing to increase from 2.0 FTE in 2016 to the current 3.5 FTEs, which support grades in all five schools. She also shared additional funding sources that the district has access to.

V. Approval of FY'23 Budget and Warning

Action

Superintendent Amy Minor and Business and Operations Manager George Trieb shared the educational tax components for the FY'23 budget. They presented a recommended budget that would use ESSER funds to add a social emotional learning coordinator, a 0.5 FTE elementary speech language pathologist, and a 1.0 FTE reading teacher at MBS, all at no tax increase to taxpayers. The recommended budget also adds a director of instructional supports that would be funded using a combination of voter budget and IDEA-B.

This proposed budget would result in a 4.03% budget increase and an estimated tax decrease 0.537%. Mr. Trieb then went over how much the FY'23 proposed budget would impact Colchester taxpayers. In Vermont, if a household's income is below \$138,500 a year, they qualify for a property tax credit and pay taxes based on income instead of property value. He showed two charts displaying what the estimated decreases would be, based on how the resident's taxes are calculated. Superintendent Minor went over the comparison of per-pupil spending among regional districts. Historically, CSD is one of the lowest per-pupil spenders in the county and also spends below the statewide average.

Director Cox moved to adopt a budget of \$48,563,209 for the support and operation of the Colchester School District for the year beginning July 1, 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

With the budget approved, Superintendent Minor then went over the plan to inform the community. The communication plan includes mailing the CSD Annual Report to the Community to every household in Colchester, emailing information to families, hosting budget-related zooms for employees, and producing the Your Vote Matters video series to be posted on social media. The board also considered filming a round-table discussion with LCATV which is made available online and on-air on the LCATV channel. The board will also allot time at the February 1st and 15th meetings for any questions from the community.

Normally, the residents of Colchester are welcomed to Colchester High School on the evening before voting day to share a meal and hear presentations from both the town and school district. Following the presentations, residents in attendance vote "from the floor" on several housekeeping items. Due to COVID-19, there will be no Town Meeting this year and subsequently, the school board agreed to add two articles to the ballot for voter approval. The articles will be explained in the Annual Report that's mailed out to all residents.

Director Cox made a motion that due to health and safety concerns related to meeting in person during the COVID-19 pandemic, the School Board moves to vote all 2022 Annual School District Meeting Articles by Australian ballot on March 1, 2022, under the emergency legislation. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Approval of Consent Agenda

Action

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: January 18, 2022

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
Support Staff	Rebecca	Strock	New Hire	Behavior Interventionist	35	MBS	Notice of Hire	New Position	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Sarah	Wight	New Hire	Paraeducator	32.5	MBS	Notice of Hire	Linda Kapusta / Denise Jacques	Yes	Yes

Director Longo moved to approve the Consent Agenda for January 18, 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Approval of Meeting Minutes: January 4, 2022 **Action**

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on January 4, 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes: January 11, 2022 **Action**

Director Cox moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on January 11, 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Approval Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports **Information**

- Superintendent Minor acknowledged changes in the testing and contact tracing guidance recently released by the Vermont Agency of Education. She anticipated the district will share updated the COVID operating procedures in the next few days. She also shared that the mask requirement for schools has been extended to February 28, 2022.

X. Future Agenda Items **Information**

- 95XXX Property
- 2022-2023 School Calendar
- Early Release Days
- Budget Communication
- Transportation Policy and Contract
- Citizens Participation Discussion
- Policy Revision Cycle (Human Resources)
- Preschool Presentation

XI. Executive Session to Discuss Negotiations **Action**

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to enter executive session at 8:25 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Cox moved to exit executive session at 9:00 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. Adjournment

Director Cox moved to adjourn at 9:01 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorder:


Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Board Clerk:


Nic Longo
Board Clerk