

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Library

Tuesday, January 17, 2023
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, January 17, 2023, in the Colchester High School Library. Board members in attendance were Board Chair Lindsey Cox; Directors Nic Longo, Ben Yousey-Hindes, Felix Anderson, Laurie Kigonya, and Student Board Representative Olivia Dallamura. 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 two CSD employees in attendance to present an agenda item and one audience member.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Citizen Participation

None.

III. First Reading of Acceptable and Responsible Computer, Network, and Internet Use Policy: G10 Action

This policy was reviewed as part of the district's policy review cycle and in connection with the next agenda item that recommends the adoption of a cybersecurity policy. Often referred to as the AUP, this policy is provided to students and families annually during the registration process and must be agreed upon to use technology in the district. There were a few recommended updates and changes to the format and listed definitions.

Technology Director Pam Barclay and Network Administrator Peter Keenan were present to answer questions from the board. Board Chair Cox asked if there was any discussion during the review of this policy regarding the use of AI-generated plagiarism. Student Board Member Olivia Dallamura echoed that question, adding that she has heard about students who were considering trying it. Superintendent Minor stated there are procedures regarding plagiarism in some of the curriculum policies, procedures, and school handbooks but they could consider adding a section to the AUP.

Director Anderson noted that technology advances quickly and asked if there are any other areas in addition to AI-generated plagiarism that should be considered. Ms. Barclay stated because things evolve so fast, she would recommend reviewing this policy more frequently.

Director Anderson moved to approve the first reading of Acceptable and Responsible Computer, Network, and Internet Use Policy: G10. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. First Reading of Cybersecurity Policy

Action

Cybersecurity is a growing area of concern for school districts. This is a new policy that will soon be required by Vermont School Boards Association. Superintendent Minor stated there are two important purposes to this policy. First, to make sure the district is requiring users to complete mandatory training and secondly to have a reporting mechanism when an incident occurs.

The board engaged in a discussion with Technology Director Pam Barclay and Network Administrator Peter Keenan about the content of the policy and to who it applies. This initial draft of the policy focuses on human risk mitigation factors, and the board suggested adding a section to outline the district's obligations and current practices. They also requested outlining how students are engaged and educated in risk mitigation efforts. Mr. Keenan noted that students do not pose as much of a risk since they do not have the same access to the network as employees, however, teaching safe internet use is always important and something the schools should continue to do.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the first reading of the Cybersecurity Policy. The motion passed unanimously.

V. First Reading of Students Who Are Experiencing Homelessness Policy

Action

This is a new policy that is required by the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA). Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz outlined procedures that are already in place in the district. The spirit of the policy follows the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act which guarantees educational rights and supports for students experiencing homelessness. The Act provides stability, so students are not forced to continually switch districts as they relocate in search of adequate housing. The board asked how a student is defined as experiencing homelessness along with several other clarifying questions. Board Chair Cox asked why this should be a local policy if it is already law. Superintendent Minor stated the VSBA requires local districts to adopt policies like this to strengthen consistency and ensure districts are compliant. She added that it also makes it more accessible for families to find and understand the supports offered to them.

Director Kigonya moved to approve the first reading of the Students Experiencing Homelessness Policy. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Approval of FY'24 Budget and Warning

Action

Superintendent Amy Minor provided an overview of the information provided over the last two months including enrollment data, state-wide educational tax components, and the comparison of spending per equalized pupil between Chittenden County districts and the statewide average. She then provided the board with two scenarios that outlined recommended additions to staffing and a reduction in open positions. The rationale for the recommended positions were covered in detail at previous meetings. The first scenario would result in a budget of \$52,249,407 which is a 7.59% increase over the current budget and results in an estimated tax increase of 2.23%. The second scenario would result in a budget of \$52,401,407 which is a 7.90% increase over the current budget and results in an estimated tax increase of 2.61%. Superintendent Minor also noted there is a bill being considered in the legislature that could change what language is required to be on the ballot. She expected to know more once it was presented to the Governor next week.

Director Anderson asked if the scenarios were in the range of what other districts are proposing. Superintendent Minor said they in line, and actually slightly under, what other districts are considering. Director Yousey-Hindes pointed out that the estimated tax increase in both scenarios is well below the current rate of inflation and the recommended positions would in most cases directly impact students with the highest needs. Directors Kigonya and Anderson agreed that the recommended positions are important and would serve to increase student outcomes in needed areas. Director Longo appreciated the creative budgeting approach of adding these positions while also reducing open positions to lessen the tax burden. He stated an estimated tax increase of 2.6% is very reasonable and believes with the district's communication plan to inform voters that it would have voter support. Board Chair Cox agreed with the statements made and echoed confidence in the board and district's ability to connect and inform community members.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to adopt a budget of \$52,401,407 for the support and operation of the Colchester School District for the year beginning July 1, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Longo moved to warn the year 2023 Annual Town School District meeting by signing the warning for said meeting with the most current statutory ballot language. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Approval of Consent Agenda

Action

The board reviewed the following Consent Agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA
Board Meeting Date: January 17, 2023

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)										
Contract Typ	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Teacher	Emma	Miller	Leave of Absense	Speech Pathologist	1.0	UMS	Request leave of absense 2/1/23-2/17/23			
Teacher	Anita	Daywie	New Hire	Physical Education Long-Term Substitute	1.0	CHS	Request to Hire	Courtney Boetsma	Yes	Yes
Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Board Approval Required										
Contract Typ	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support

Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational										
Contract Typ	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	Kurt	Wagner	New Hire	Paraeducator	32.5	MBS	Notice of Hire	Catherine Anderson Nguyen	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Jaleen	Morel-Kunhardt	New Hire	Autism Interventionist	35	MBS	Notice of Hire	Open Position	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Claire	Chamberlain	Resignation	Head Cook	40	UMS	Notice of Resignation			
Support Staff	Karen	Rolston	New Hire	Paraeducator	32.5	UMS	Notice of Hire	Joy Eidshheim	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Louisa	Wakefield	New Hire	EL Paraeducator	32.5	CMS	Notice of Hire	Open Position	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Cameron	Roberts	New Hire	Custodian	15	CMS	Notice of Hire	Open Position	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Mila	Moussoua	New Hire	Custodian	20	CMS	Notice of Hire	Open Position	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Dahiro	Abdullahi	New Hire	Custodian	40	MBS	Notice of Hire	Open Position	Yes	Yes

Director Kigonya moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Approval of Meeting Minutes: January 3, 2023 **Action**

Director Yousey-Hindes corrected an error.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the amended minutes from the meeting held on January 3, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes: January 10, 2023 **Action**

Director Anderson moved to approve the special minutes from the meeting held on January 10, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

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

- Superintendent Minor gave a facilities improvement update. Black River Design is preparing to meet and brainstorm expansion ideas with the administration team at Colchester Middle School.
- The board discussed and agreed to record an informational budget session at the next meeting. It will be posted on LCATV's website and air on their channel throughout February.

XI. Future Agenda Items **Information**

- Continuation of policy review
- Quarterly Financial Report


XII. Adjournment

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to adjourn at 8:12 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorder:


Meghan Battle
Recording Secretary

Board Clerk:


Ben Yousey-Hindes
Board Clerk