

Colchester School Board

Meeting Agenda and Packet

May 2, 2023

**Colchester School District
Board of Education Meeting Agenda
May 2, 2023 - 7:00 P.M.
Colchester High School Library**

Agenda

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| I. Call to Order | |
| II. Citizen Participation | |
| III. Black Lives Matter Flag | Action |
| IV. First Reading of Equity Policy: C1 | Action |
| V. First Reading of Nondiscrimination Policies: C6, C7, C8 | Action |
| <i>C6: Nondiscrimination</i> | |
| <i>C7: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Gender</i> | |
| <i>C8: Equal Educational Opportunities</i> | |
| VI. Second and Final Reading of Policies: A1 and A2 | Action |
| <i>A1: Management of Policies</i> | |
| <i>A2: Suspension of Policies</i> | |
| VII. Second and Final Reading of Independent Educational Evaluation Policy: F25b | Action |
| VIII. Approval of Consent Agenda | Action |
| IX. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes: April 18, 2023 | Action |
| X. Approval of Meeting Minutes: April 18, 2023 | Action |
| XI. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports | Information |
| XII. Future Agenda Items | Information |
| XIII. 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 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 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.



COLCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL

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May 2, 2023

Dear Colchester School District Board Members,

On behalf of Colchester High School students and staff, I ask that the Black Lives Matter flag continue to fly in the Colchester School District until Wednesday, June 21st. Over the course of the 2022-2023 school year I have discussed the BLM flag at length with students and staff. These discussions have led to robust conversations around Diversity Equity and Inclusion and the BLM flag holds important symbolism of our commitment to the global majority.

These discussions have also led to a staff-student co-created an end of year CHS assembly on June 2nd to celebrate our diversity. This event will feature student speakers, Student artists, and student performers who will celebrate their individuality and intersectionality with diversity equity or inclusion at CHS.

I want to thank the board for their willingness to continue to fly the BLM flag over the years. It has been a strong symbol of our district's commitment to DEI, and would not be possible without your support in accepting requests such as this.

Sincerely,

Andrew Conforti, CHS Principal

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: EQUITY

DATE ADOPTED: **DRAFT**

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This policy reflects a commitment to, accountability for, and incorporation of equity principles in all District actions; the District centers equity in policy, practice, and environment. We recognize that disparities in achievement, opportunity, and well-being impact students and families in our district based on factors including but not limited to race, ethnicity, language, ability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and socioeconomic status. We affirm through our commitments and actions that each student can and will thrive given authentic opportunities in a supportive, inclusive, and equitable educational system.

In the Colchester School District we strive to:

- respect and honor the diversity and lived experience of all community members.
- create a nurturing school environment where community members feel personally welcomed, accepted, respected, included, and supported by school staff members in the school social environment.
- value diversity, equity and inclusion and seek to represent those values in the learning opportunities we provide for our students, staff, and community.
- increase the awareness of all inequities that exist in our school community so that we can create and sustain a climate and culture that demands and supports equitable practices and increases every student's success.
- cultivate and sustain a school community that embraces a collective responsibility to address, eliminate, and prevent actions, decisions and outcomes that result from and perpetuate racism.
- address the harm caused to community members as a result of bias and inequity.
- hold ourselves and one another accountable to equity, inclusion and belonging in our schools.

Equity Principles

- A student's success should not be predicated nor predetermined by characteristics including but not limited to race, ethnicity, religion, family economics, class, geography, ability, language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or initial proficiencies.
- Factors that perpetuate systemic inequities, institutional biases and discriminatory practices must be identified, intentionally interrupted, and replaced with more equitable and just systems and practices.
- Allocation of resources and support and the design of instruction and educational opportunities shall be determined according to need so that ALL students have equitable and culturally relevant opportunities to achieve, engage, and feel belonging.

COMMITMENTS

- **District Administration**
 - Consistent with law and best practices, the District will gather and examine data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, language, ability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and socioeconomic status to inform district decision making and mitigate barriers that perpetuate gaps.

- Administrators and district leaders will participate in continuous and ongoing training related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in education and understanding inequity and plan for continuous and ongoing learning for all staff in these areas.
 - Maintain and act upon a comprehensive equity action plan to advance the commitments within this policy which will be reviewed at least annually.
 - Engage student, family and community voices in all district and school specific equity action planning, with specific outreach to those most impacted by inequity.
 - At least annually, District administration will report to the Board and community on the District's compliance with this policy and progress on equity goals.
 - Leadership, in partnership with the School Board, will engage in an evaluative process using the equity principles listed above as a lens to evaluate and adopt equitable policy.
 - Leadership, in partnership with the School Board, will engage with the communities they serve and intentionally seek input on policy decisions from those who are often underrepresented or unheard and those most impacted.
 - Leadership will create communication systems with families that are inclusive and accessible by providing language services and multiple means of communication.
- **Systems and Operations Evaluation and Design**
 - Intentionally work to recruit, employ, support and retain diverse and culturally competent administrative, instructional and support personnel to promote diverse and inclusive staffing and strive for equitable and inclusive hiring practices and staff culture.
 - Evaluate and design school activities and services including but not limited to co-curriculars, athletics, food service, and transportation, that increase cultural responsiveness and accessibility that is inclusive of all abilities, languages, genders, socioeconomic needs and sociocultural identities.
 - Continuously evaluate and refine discipline systems that are restorative, inclusive, trauma-informed and culturally responsive to reduce exclusionary discipline and prevent perpetuation of existing disparities based on race, socioeconomic status, gender identity, and ability.
 - Continuously evaluate and refine anti-bias assessment and grading systems that align with best practices for inclusion and equity, reduce over or under identification in Special Education, and honor diversity of knowledge construction and representation.
 - Reduce incidents of bias-based harm, bullying and harassment through continuous evaluation and monitoring of Hazing, Harassment and Bullying (HHB) data, adherence to HHB policy and procedure, consistent restorative disciplinary interventions, and comprehensive preventative education.
- **Climate and Culture**
 - Every effort will be made to ensure inclusion and belonging for ALL members of the Colchester School District community.
 - Equity priorities are evident through the design of the physical spaces including accessibility of all facilities and the intentional design of the visual environment.
 - All new and existing staff will learn and be expected to identify and address bias, harassment and discrimination, and constantly interrupt identity based relational harm, microaggressions, and hate, prioritizing impact over intent.
 - Schools will honor and accommodate historic, cultural, and religious events not acknowledged on the school calendar by providing support including but not limited to timely culturally and historically relevant education, inclusive and relevant food options, space and time for religious observance at school, right to cultural and personal expression through attire, scheduling considerations and accommodations for holiday and other religious observances.

- **Curriculum and Instruction**

- The District will continually evaluate the content, instruction, and assessment of its curriculum and other resources to provide students with:
 - Culturally responsive pedagogy that critically examines and imparts a comprehensive historical and civically conscious perspective within all academic areas.
 - Equitable access to high-quality grade level education through needs based allocation of supports
 - Engaging, inclusive and flexible instructional and assessment practices aligned with current best practices and informed by district, state and federal achievement data.
 - High quality materials and learning opportunities that are regularly reviewed for bias, bigotry, and selectivity.
 - Positive and affirming representation particularly for groups historically underrepresented.
 - Robust opportunities to critically engage with themes of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - Social emotional learning and support necessary to engage meaningfully in learning and collaborate with others.

- **School Board**

- Board members will participate in continuous and ongoing training related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in education.
- The Board will support District initiatives dedicated to addressing and remediating inequity in our communities.
- The Board will hold district leadership, the Superintendent, and themselves accountable for this policy and actions that progress equitable and inclusive schools as defined in the district equity plan.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**POLICY: NONDISCRIMINATION****DATE ADOPTED:** May 17, 2005**POLICY STATEMENT**

In the performance of its duties, the Colchester School Board will safeguard the Constitutional rights and dignity of all persons who come within its jurisdiction and will implement the goals of equal educational opportunity and equal employment opportunity in all of its policy determinations and actions.

The School Board and those who administer its decisions will not discriminate against any person or groups of persons because of age, ancestry, creed, color, disability, gender, marital status, national origin, place of birth, race, religion, sexual orientation, and physical or mental condition not related to performance of a position.

School Board policies and actions of the administration will be directed toward extending equal educational opportunity for all students, and the extension of equal opportunity employment throughout the district.

Date Warned: April 29, 2005
First Reading: May 3, 2005
Second Reading: May 17, 2005

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**POLICY: NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER****DATE ADOPTED:** May 17, 2005**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Colchester School Board, pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the Colchester School District does not and will not discriminate on the basis of gender in the educational programs and activities of the District. This policy will extend not only to students with regard to educational opportunities, but also to employees with regard to employment opportunities.

It will be the continuing policy of the District to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to gender, to all students and employees.

The Superintendent of Schools shall act as the Districts Title IX compliance officer. All students and employees will be notified of the name and office address and telephone number of the designee.

Date Warned: April 29, 2005
First Reading: May 3, 2005
Second Reading: May 17, 2005

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**POLICY: **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES******DATE ADOPTED:** June 21, 2005**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Colchester School District, in compliance with Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, assuring guarantees against discrimination on the basis of gender in any educational program and/or employment policies and practices, appropriate measures will be taken within the context of Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guidelines and regulations to insure such compliance.

The Board in compliance with Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act affirms:

1. The right of all students to equal treatment (including aid, benefits, services, and application of rules and regulations) without regard to gender.
2. The right of every student to access all courses without regard to gender.
3. That no student will be excluded on the basis of gender from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in Health and Physical Education programs.
4. That no student will be excluded on the basis of gender from participation, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in athletics/intramural or extra-curricular activities.
5. That no student will be excluded on the basis of gender from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in vocational programs and activities.
6. The right of all students to equal treatment without regard to family status and living situation.
7. The right of every student to counseling without regard to gender, non-discriminatory counseling instruments and use, and in counseling materials.
8. The rights of all applicants for positions to equal treatment without regard to gender.

Date Warned: June 3, 2005
First Reading: June 7, 2005
Second Reading: June 21, 2005

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**POLICY: NONDISCRIMINATION****DATE ADOPTED: DRAFT****POLICY STATEMENT**

In the performance of its duties, the Colchester School Board will safeguard the constitutional rights and dignity of all persons who come within its jurisdiction and will ensure fair and equal educational and employment opportunities in all of its policy determinations and actions. The board will not unlawfully discriminate in its programs and activities against any person or group on any basis prohibited by federal or state law and will provide equal access to designated youth groups.

Students, parents/legal guardians, employees, applicants for employment, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the District are hereby notified that this District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, political affiliation or marital status in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

The District shall make reasonable accommodations to the known qualifying physical or emotional disabilities of an applicant or employee, unless the district can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its program or activity. This includes but is not limited to: equal treatment (including aid, benefits, services, and application of rules and regulations); access to all courses; access to all athletic, intramural or extracurricular activities; access to all vocational programs and activities; access to counseling with nondiscriminatory instruments and materials; equal treatment for applicants to all positions.

A person has been designated by the District to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other non-discrimination laws or regulations. The designated coordinator is identified in the procedure accompanying this policy along with information on how that person may be contacted.

Any person having inquiries concerning the District's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504 or other state or federal non-discrimination laws or regulations is directed to contact the non-discrimination coordinator described above.

Last Reviewed: May 17, 2005
Date Warned: April 27, 2023
First Reading: May 2, 2023
Second Reading:

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: MANAGEMENT OF POLICIES

DATE ADOPTED: April 6, 2021

PURPOSE

VSA Title 16 § 563 specifies the powers of the school board and the duties of the board. The formulation and adoption of written policies is the basic method by which the board of school directors exercises its leadership in the operation of the school district.

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Policies** guide the school board, administrators and other district employees, students, parents/guardians, and community members by stating district goals and establishing parameters for administrative action.
- B. Policy or purpose statements** are written principles adopted by the school board to set basic philosophy concerning the operations of the school district. They should be brief, yet be specific enough to provide clear guidelines.
- C. Procedures** are developed by the superintendent or their designee to provide for the management of the district by describing how tasks will be carried out and board policies will be implemented.

II. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- A.** Policies shall normally be adopted at regular school board meetings. Revisions of any policy shall be treated in the same manner as the adoption of the policy.
- B.** There shall be at least two accepted readings (reviews) of each policy/revision. The policy may be adopted following the acceptance of the second reading, at the same meeting.
- C.** The school board shall provide public notice of its intent to adopt/revise any policy. This notice shall be made at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the adoption of the policy or revision. Usually, this notification will occur prior to the first reading of the policy.
- D.** The school board shall review the procedures and regulations associated with each policy upon adoption of the policy and upon revision by the superintendent.
- E.** Policies shall be codified in accordance with the Vermont School Boards Association's Model Policy Manual. All policies in effect upon the adoption of this policy shall be recoded and named to match that codification system.

Last Adopted: March 3, 2020
 Date Warned: March 12, 2021
 First Reading: March 16, 2021
 Second Reading: April 6, 2021

- F. It is the board's intention to review each policy every five (5) years.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The superintendent or their designee shall manage the implementation of this policy. They will ensure that each policy is formatted and codified in accordance with the district format and VSBA codification.
- B. The superintendent or their designee shall maintain the master policy manual. This manual shall contain the most recent adopted version of each policy and shall be the copy referred to if questions arise.
- C. The superintendent or their designee will maintain an up-to-date copy of the policy manual for public review. Updated policies will be posted publicly within five (5) days of adoption/approval.
- D. The district's web site will contain copies of all policies.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: **SUSPENSION OF POLICIES**

DATE ADOPTED: April 6, 2021

POLICY STATEMENT

The application of any section or sections of board policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a vote of at least four (4) board members present at a regular or special meeting called for the purpose of dealing with a problem affected by a specific section or sections of policy.

The board shall, at its next regular meeting, reconsider its suspension of any policy, using adopted procedures to permanently adjust or amend its policies.

Last Adopted: October 28, 2005
Date Warned: March 12, 2021
First Reading: March 16, 2021
Second Reading: April 6, 2021

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: MANAGEMENT AND SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

DATE ADOPTED: DRAFT

PURPOSE

VSA Title 16 § 563 specifies the powers of the school board and the duties of the board. The formulation and adoption of written policies is the basic method by which the board of school directors exercises its leadership in the operation of the school district.

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Policies** guide the school board, administrators and other district employees, students, parents/guardians, and community members by stating district goals and establishing parameters for administrative action.
- B. Policy or purpose statements** are written principles adopted by the school board to set basic philosophy concerning the operations of the school district. They should be brief, yet be specific enough to provide clear guidelines.
- C. Procedures** are developed by the superintendent or their designee to provide for the management of the district by describing how tasks will be carried out and board policies will be implemented.

II. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- A.** Policies shall normally be adopted at regular school board meetings. Revision and removal of any policy shall be treated in the same manner as the adoption of the policy.
- B.** There shall be at least two accepted readings of each policy in the review process. The policy may be adopted or removed following the acceptance of the second reading, at the same meeting.
- C.** The school board shall provide public notice of its intent to adopt, revise, or remove any policy. This notice shall be made at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the adoption of the policy or revision. Usually, this notification will occur prior to the first reading of the policy.
- D.** The school board shall review the procedures and regulations associated with each policy upon adoption of the policy and upon revision by the superintendent.

Last Adopted: April 6, 2021
 Date Warned: April 27, 2023
 First Reading: May 2, 2023
 Second Reading:

- E. Policies shall be codified in accordance with the Vermont School Boards Association's Model Policy Manual. All policies in effect upon the adoption of this policy shall be recoded and named to match that codification system.
- F. It is the board's intention to review each policy every five (5) years.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The superintendent or their designee shall manage the implementation of this policy. They will ensure that each policy is formatted and codified in accordance with the district format and VSBA codification.
- B. The superintendent or their designee shall maintain the master policy manual. This manual shall contain the most recent adopted version of each policy and shall be the copy referred to if questions arise.
- C. The superintendent or their designee will maintain an up-to-date copy of the policy manual for public review. Updated policies will be posted publicly within five (5) days of adoption/approval.
- D. The district's web site will contain copies of all policies.

IV. SUSPENSION OF POLICY

- A. The application of any section or sections of board policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a vote of at least four (4) board members present at a regular or special meeting called for the purpose of dealing with a problem affected by a specific section or sections of policy.
- B. The board shall, at its next regular meeting, reconsider its suspension of any policy, using adopted procedures to permanently adjust or amend its policies.

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION POLICY

DATE ADOPTED: December 19, 2017

POLICY STATEMENT

The Colchester School District (CSD) recognizes that the Individuals with Disabilities Act (the “Act”) and its implementing regulations provide a right to parents to obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE) of their child if the parent disagrees with an evaluation obtained or performed by the child’s special education Evaluation and Planning Team.

Under the Act, the parent has a right to obtain an IEE at public expense if:

1. The other criteria in statute, regulations, and local policy/procedures are met; and
2. The CSD does not initiate a due process proceeding to show that the Evaluation and Planning Team’s evaluation is appropriate.

The Superintendent or their designee shall develop and revise procedures, including IEE criteria, as needed to implement this policy, in compliance with state and federal law.

Last Adopted: March 8, 2005
Date Warned: December 1, 2017
First Reading: December 5, 2017
Second Reading: December 19, 2017

INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Independent Educational Evaluations Paid for by the School District

The following procedures apply to all independent educational evaluations (IEEs) to be paid for by the School District, whether arranged for by the Evaluation Planning Team or as an Independent Educational Evaluation at parental request.

1. **Dissemination of IEE Policy and Procedure.** [At the time the Written Evaluation Report, or other report, of evaluation by the District is delivered to the parents, and/or] when parents inquire concerning independent evaluations, the parents shall be provided with a copy of this local procedure and policy, including attached Schedules A and B.

2. **Discussion of IEE with District Before IEE.** Parents and guardians are encouraged to consult, in advance of scheduling an independent evaluation, with the Director of Special Services concerning the need for an independent evaluation and the qualifications of the evaluator and relevant local evaluation standards. The Director (or designee) may inquire of the parents the reason(s) why they object to the evaluation team's evaluation, but the parents may not be required to respond, and the District may not unreasonably delay the providing of the evaluation at no cost to the parent or the filing for due process to defend the District's evaluation, whichever the District decides to do.

3. **Criteria Applicable to IEE's Paid for By the School District.** An independent evaluation at public expense must be obtained under the same criteria that the District uses when it initiates an evaluation and uses an outside evaluator. See, Criteria for Evaluations Initiated by District or Parents at Public Expense (Schedule A).

The District may challenge and refuse to reimburse any evaluator/evaluation (or part thereof) not meeting the criteria, by requesting a due process hearing. The request for due process should be made without unnecessary delay.

4. The Director shall provide parents or guardians, upon request, with a list of evaluation agents/sites that provide evaluations in the required geographic area. (See Schedule B). Parents and guardians are not required to select an evaluator from the list. The list is provided for informational purposes only. Inclusion of an evaluator on the list does not mean that the District recommends or endorses the evaluator, nor does it mean that those listed have the licensing or other qualifications to perform a particular kind of evaluation or test. Parents should make sure that the evaluator is located within the required geographical area, and should verify with a potential evaluator that the independent evaluator meets the qualification criteria of Schedule A, with respect to the particular evaluation or test(s) to be performed.

5. Except for the criteria described in the IEE policy, this procedure, and Schedules A and B, the District may not impose conditions or timelines related to obtaining an independent educational evaluation at the District's expense. 34 C.F.R. §300.502(e)(2).

6. **Consideration of Results of IEE by EPT and/or IEP Teams.** The results of any independent evaluation which meets the School District's independent evaluation criteria, whether or not paid for at District expense, and whether or not it precedes or follows a District evaluation, shall be considered by the Evaluation and Planning Team (EPT) and/or IEP Team meeting participants in any decision made with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education to the student, and may be presented as evidence in a due process hearing regarding that child. Where a decision has been made prior to the availability of the results of the IEE, the relevant team should be convened to consider the IEE results when they become available.
7. **Only One Publicly-Funded Evaluation.** The District is not required to fund more than one parent-initiated independent evaluation for each District evaluation with which the parent disagrees. Each time the District conducts an evaluation with which the parent disagrees, however, the parent has a right to an independent evaluation. Parents are not entitled to reimbursement for independent evaluations which are not initiated as a result of disagreement with an evaluation by the District. The District always has the alternative of seeking a due process determination that its evaluation was appropriate, and/or that the parents' independent evaluation does not meet District criteria, as reflected in this procedure and Schedules A and B.
8. **Policy Requirements Apply to All IEE's.** Where a parent or guardian has obtained an independent evaluation without first consulting the Director of Instructional Support Services, reimbursement shall nonetheless be subject to all conditions and criteria set forth herein, including the IEE policy, Schedules A and B.
9. **Re-evaluation Distinguished:** **NOTE:** Where a parent or staff member feels that an evaluation is required:
- (1) Because a child's performance, behavior or condition has changed since the last evaluation conducted by the Evaluation and Planning Team; or
 - (2) Because the child's performance, behavior or condition warrants evaluation of an area not previously identified as an area to be evaluated by the Team,

the staff member or parent should request that a *re-evaluation* (i.e., additional evaluation) be performed through the Evaluation and Planning Team. The Evaluation and Planning Team shall promptly prepare and implement an evaluation plan, with parental input, pursuant to the usual procedures. If the parents disagree with the results of the reevaluation, they may then request an independent evaluation at public expense pursuant to this procedure.

Independent Evaluations Ordered by a Hearing Officer.

If a Hearing Officer requests an independent educational evaluation as part of a hearing, the cost of the evaluation shall be at public expense.

SCHEDULE A

Evaluation Criteria For Independent Educational Evaluations Initiated By District or Parents At Public Expense

The following procedures and criteria apply to all independent educational evaluations to be conducted at District expense. Failure to comply with any of the criteria and/or procedures listed, may result in the District's refusal to fund an independent evaluation.

1. **Location:** All evaluations shall be conducted within the State of Vermont or within a 25 mile radius of the Colchester School District central office, Colchester, VT (the "designated area"). Under special circumstances (for example, where either scheduling or the uniqueness of the issue to be evaluated render assessment within the designated area impracticable), evaluations may be sought outside the designated area, with the prior written approval of the Superintendent. The person seeking an evaluation outside of the designated area shall show (a) that unique circumstances require evaluation outside the designated area; (b) that the costs of the evaluation are not excessive when compared to the customary and usual charges in Vermont for a comparable evaluation. In the event of such a waiver, other criteria listed below shall still apply, and reimbursement for approved associated expenses (meals, room, travel) shall be limited to the current District rates for meals and to the current federal government rate per mile for travel. (The current rates at a given time are available by phone from the Business and Operations Manager in the Colchester School District central office.) Travel other than by car, and lodging, shall be pre-approved by the Superintendent, shall be limited to the allowable expenses for one adult and the child, and shall be arranged in advance by the District.
2. **Qualifications of Evaluators:**
 1. Evaluators must have the following minimum qualifications:
 - (1) Expertise in the particular area for which information is sought and meet applicable state licensing and/or endorsement requirements;
 - (2) Training in administering the evaluation procedure(s) being used, and in scoring and interpreting the results, as required by and in conformance with the instructions provided by the producer of the evaluation procedure.
 2. In addition, where eligibility in any of the following categories of disability is concerned, the evaluator must be licensed in the applicable field specifically indicated by the appropriate provision of the VDE Rule 2362.1 (a)-(i), as it may be amended from time to time:
 - (1) Visual Impairment: optometrist or ophthalmologist;
 - (2) Deafness or being hard of hearing: audiologist, otologist or otolaryngologist;

- (3) Speech or language impairment: speech-language pathologist;
- (4) Orthopedic impairment: physician;
- (5) Chronic or acute health impairment: person with the professional licensure required by Rule 2362.1(g)(1)-(2), to wit: a person whose professional license qualifies him/her to offer an opinion on the existence of the specific condition suspected to be an other health impairment and its effect of the student's ability to function and who has specific training and experience in diagnosing and recommending treatment for the condition;
- (6) Emotional disturbance: psychologist or psychiatrist;
- (7) Autism: physician;
- (8) Traumatic Brain Injury: physician.

3. **Itemization or Description of Services:** If an evaluation consists of the administration of more than one test, the bill for the evaluator's fee should be itemized, including a description of each service performed, the identity, licensure and/or degree or certification level of each evaluator, and the hours spent by each individual evaluator performing any portion of the evaluation.

4. **Permissible Evaluation Tools, Techniques and Subject Matter:**

- a. Independent evaluation costs are limited to reasonable and necessary expenditures for necessary and appropriate evaluation procedures. "Evaluation procedures" are defined as observation of the student and other necessary and appropriate diagnostic measures. They do not include time for evaluator research, parent consultation, program evaluation, or other tasks not directly involving administration, scoring or report in writing, of a diagnostic procedure and/or its results. Note: parent interviews/meetings with evaluation staff for purposes other than a formal interview as a part of the evaluation (to get child's medical history, for example) are **not reimbursable** as evaluation expenses. For example, fees for meetings(s) with the parents to discuss evaluation results are **NOT** reimbursable.
- b. No area shall be evaluated, nor shall any evaluation procedure be carried out, unless appropriate justification can be given for it. No area should be the subject of an independent educational evaluation at public expense unless the Evaluation and Planning Team has first had an opportunity to evaluate the student in that area.
- c. Tests and other evaluation materials must meet the special evaluation requirements set forth in VDE Rule 2362.2.1; and federal rules 34 C.F.R. §104.35(b) and 34 C.F.R. §300.532.

- d. **Familiarity with Eligibility Criteria.** The independent evaluator shall be familiar with Vermont's criteria for eligibility under VDE Rule 2362(a)(1)-(3), (b) and (c), federal requirements for evaluating for a specific learning disability, 34 C.F.R. 300.541, and categories of disability as outlined in VDE Rule 2362.1(a) through (1), including the fact that the eligibility determination is to be made by the Evaluation and Planning Team, not by an individual evaluator.

The task of the independent evaluator is to develop diagnostically relevant information about the child, and to provide an opinion of the type specifically described by the applicable Vermont rules for the suspected specific disability, for consideration by the Evaluation and Planning Team, in determining eligibility, and not for the independent evaluator to determine eligibility. The evaluator's report may include diagnostic findings to support or refute the existence of a disability in one or more disability categories; that the student is or is not functioning significantly below expected age or grade norms in one or more basic skills; and that the student is or is not in need of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of the child with disabilities, as required by VDE Rule 2362(a)-(c).

- e. Tests should be selected and administered so as best to ensure that if a test is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, (unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).
- f. Assessment tools and strategies should provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child.
5. **Inclusion of Unusual Circumstances; Departure from Standard Assessment Conditions.** The independent evaluator shall note in his/her report any unusual circumstances of the testing or evaluation session which may have affected the results. If the assessment is not conducted under standard conditions, this should include (but is not limited to), a description of the extent to which it varied from standard conditions (for example, the qualifications of the person administering the test, the method of test administration, deviation from prescribed times for response, or the ages for which the test is normed, if different from the child's age).
6. **Correcting for Regression Error.** The evaluator must use a formal process for correcting regression error when determining whether a severe discrepancy exists between cognitive ability and achievement. The correction for the effects of regression may be achieved through either the use of a regression calculation chart, or through the use of statistical procedures which eliminate the effects of regression toward the mean.
7. **Bands of Confidence.** The evaluator shall use bands of confidence or standard error of measurement when reporting and interpreting test scores and other evaluation results, whenever they are available.

8. **Reporting of Scores.** The evaluator shall report all standard scores and all percentile rank scores whenever they are available.
9. **Provision of Access to Raw Data.** Evaluators must make available to the EPT and/or IEP team, upon request, test protocols and other underlying raw data on which their evaluations are based, in order for the Evaluation and Planning Team and/or IEP team to consider the weight of evaluation results.
10. **Observation.** Where observation of the student in the classroom is called for by the Evaluation Plan, the Director of Special Services shall contact the independent evaluator and the classroom teacher (or other applicable service provider) to make the arrangements necessary to observe the child. The Director of Special Services, in consultation with the evaluator, the teacher of the class to be observed, and any other appropriate District personnel, shall determine the length, location and timing of the observation, to minimize disruption to the class and student. Where a parent's independent evaluator requests an opportunity to observe, such evaluator shall be given an opportunity to observe at least comparable to any opportunities to observe accorded to the District's evaluator.

Sources: 20 U.S.C. §§1415(b)(1); 34 C.F.R. §§300.502; VDE Rule 2362.2.7.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: May 2, 2023

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Teacher	Martin	Burnod	New Hire	Humanities Teacher	1.0	CHS	Request to Hire	Rachel Cohen	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Hannah	Coon	New Hire	Third Grade Teacher	1.0	MBS	Request to Hire	Kate Ellingson	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Tim	Lynch	Resignation	Math Teacher	1.0	CHS	Request to end employment 6/30/23			

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	Cheyenne	Shoemaker	Resignation	Behavior Interventionist	35	MBS	Notice of End of Employment (4/21/23)			

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting, Special Meeting
Colchester High School, Room 114B

Tuesday, April 18, 2023
6:15 p.m.

MINUTES

The Colchester Board of Education held a Special Board Meeting on Tuesday, April 18, 2023. Those in attendance were Board Directors Ben Yousey-Hindes, Laurie Kigonya, and Felix Anderson, Superintendent Amy Minor, Colchester High School Principal Andrew Conforti, and the student and their family.

I. Call to Order

Board Director Laurie Kigonya called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m.

II. Executive Session: Student Hearing

Action

Director Kigonya moved to enter executive session at 6:17 p.m. to conduct a student hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Adjournment

Director Kigonya moved to exit executive session and adjourn at 6:48 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorder:

Board Clerk:

Gabrielle Brooks
Recording Secretary

Ben Yousey-Hindes
Board Clerk

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Library

Tuesday, April 18, 2023
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, April 18, 2023, in the Colchester High School Library. Board members in attendance were Directors Nic Longo, Ben Yousey-Hindes, Felix Anderson, Laurie Kigonya, and Student Board Representative Olivia Dallamura. District administrators in attendance included Superintendent Amy Minor, Business and Operations Manager George Trieb, Director of Curriculum Gwendolyn Carmolli, and Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz. There was one audience member. Board Chair Lindsey Cox joined the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

I. Call to Order

Board Director Nic Longo called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Citizen Participation

None.

III. Hear Quarterly Financial Report

Information

Business and Operations Manager, George Trieb, presented the Quarterly Financial Report for the district. He states that revenue and expenditures are tracking mostly as expected. He shared that should the current spending trend continue the district would expect a slight deficit of \$97,233.

IV. First Reading of Management of Policies: A1

Action

This policy review is part of a general review. There are no changes recommended to this policy.

Director Anderson moved to approve the first reading of Management of Policies: A1. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

V. First Reading of Suspension of Policies: A2

Action

This policy review is part of a general review. The board requested to merge this policy with Management of Policies: A1 and to add a section outlining the requirements for the removal of a policy.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the first reading of Suspension of Policies: A2. The motion passed 4-0, with Board Chair Cox abstaining due to being absent for part of the discussion.

VI. First Reading of Fund Raising, Solicitation, Advertising, and Surveying in Schools: H4 Action

This policy review is part of the policy revision cycle. Superintendent Amy Minor gave an overview of proposed changes to remove redundancy and to make it more consistent with the Student Activity and District Wellness Policies. It was also recommended to update multiple definitions within the policy, remove references to activities the district no longer participates in, and update terms to be gender neutral.

The board asked clarifying questions about the fundraising process and what fundraising money is used for. Superintendent Minor informed the board that the district's activities and athletics rely on the booster groups and fundraising as they are not fully funded by voter dollars.

Director Longo moved to approve the first reading of Fund Raising, Solicitation, Advertising, and Surveying in Schools: H4. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Second and Final Reading of Participation of Home Study Students in School Programs and Activities Policy: F26 Action

This policy review is part of the policy revision cycle. There were no changes requested.

Director Kigonya moved to approve the second and final reading of the Participation of Home Study Students in School Programs and Activities Policy: F26. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. First Reading of Independent Educational Evaluation Policy: F25b Action

This policy review is part of the policy revision cycle. It dictates a parent's right to obtain an independent educational evaluation if they disagree with an evaluation obtained or performed by the district. In March of 2022, the board adopted the Special Education Policy: G2 that outlines how the district will follow and comply with the Vermont Special Education Procedures and Practices Manual. The AOE's manual contains the most up-to-date regulations for an independent educational evaluation. In order to streamline and reduce redundancy, it was recommended to remove this policy and procedures from the district's manual.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the first reading of the Independent Educational Evaluation Policy: F25b. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Approval of Consent Agenda Action

The following Consent Agenda was reviewed by the board.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: April 18, 2023

REVISED

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Teacher	Candace	Condry-Bowles	New Hire	Alternataive Education Teacher	0.2	CHS	Request to Hire	New Position	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Samantha	Merrill	New Hire	School Counselor	1.0	MBS	Request to Hire	New Position	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Rachel	Cohen	Resignation	HumanitiesTeacher	1.0	CHS	Request to end employment 6/30/23			
Teacher	Kira	Hislop	New Hire	Elementary Teacher	1.0	PPS	Request to Hire	Mary Geibel	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Emily	Schulze	New Hire	Special Education Teacher	1.0	CHS	Request to Hire	New Position	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Nicole	DeOrsey	New Hire	Special Education Teacher	1.0	CHS	Request to Hire	New Position	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Ben	Beaudoin	New Hire	Instructional Coach/PDC Coordinator	0.2	CHS	Notice of Hire	New Position	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Jenny	Rousseau	New Hire	Reading Interventionist	1.0	CMS	Notice of Hire	Maureen Grassley	Yes	Yes
Teacher	Robert	Janelli	Leave of Absence	Special Education Teacher	1.0	MBS	Request LOA for 23/24 School Year			
Teacher	Robert	Janelli	New Hire	Math Interventionist (One-Year Only)	1.0	PPS/UMS	Notice of Hire	New Position	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
Individual	Lily	Baker	Resignation	Behavior Specialist	1.0	MBS	Request to end employment 6/30/23			

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	Edward	Thibault	New Hire	Maintenance Worker	40	DW	Notice of Hire		Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Cynthia	Kuenzi	Resignation	Autism Interventionist	35	PPS	Request to end employment 06/16/23			

Director Anderson moved to approve the consent agenda as provided. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Approval of Meeting Minutes: April 4, 2023 **Action**

Director Kigonya moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on April 4, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

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

- Superintendent Minor is finalizing the date for the Board Facilities Retreat.
- Superintendent Minor updated the board of the Support Staff Safety Committee and their development of written protocols for each building and recommended trainings.
- The board was invited to the CHS Capstone Project presentations happening in the CHS Library on Wednesday, April 19th and Thursday, April 20th.

XII. Future Agenda Items **Information**

- Policy Review Cycle
- Presentations from CHS France, Andros, and New York City Trips
- Social Emotional Learning Presentation
- End of the Year Purchases
- Tax Anticipation Note

XIII. Executive Session to Discuss the Superintendent Evaluation Process **Action**

Director Anderson moved to enter executive session at 8:04 p.m. to discuss the superintendent evaluation process. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to exit executive session at 8:42 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

XIV. Adjournment

Director Yousey-Hindes moved to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorder:

Board Clerk:

Gabrielle Brooks
Recording Secretary

Ben Yousey-Hindes
Board Clerk