

Colchester School Board

Meeting Agenda and Packet

March 19, 2024

**Colchester School District  
Board of Education Meeting Agenda  
March 19, 2024 - 7:00 P.M.  
Colchester High School Library**

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**Agenda**

- |              |   |                    |
|--------------|---|--------------------|
| <b>I.</b>    | <b>Call to Order</b>  |                    |
| <b>II.</b>   | <b>Citizen Participation*</b>   |                    |
| <b>III.</b>  | <b>Hear Nominations for School Board Reorganization and Approval of Newspaper of Record</b> | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>IV.</b>   | <b>First Reading of School Board Policies</b>   | <b>Action</b>      |
|              | <b>1. School Board Policy: B1</b>   |                    |
|              | <b>2. Code of Ethics for School Board Members: B2</b>                                       |                    |
|              | <b>3. Management and Suspension of Policies: A1</b>   |                    |
| <b>V.</b>    | <b>Approval of Purchase for Air Conditioning Unit at CHS</b>                                | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>VI.</b>   | <b>Approval of Recommendation for Administrator Contract Renewals 2024-25</b>               | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>VII.</b>  | <b>Approval of Recommendation for Teacher Contract Renewals 2024-25</b>                     | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>VIII.</b> | <b>Approval of School Calendar for 2024-25</b>  | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>IX.</b>   | <b>Approval of Consent Agenda</b>   | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>X.</b>    | <b>Approval of Meeting Minutes</b>  | <b>Action</b>      |
|              | <b>• February 5, 2024 (general)</b>   |                    |
| <b>XI.</b>   | <b>Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports</b>                | <b>Information</b> |
| <b>XII.</b>  | <b>Future Agenda Items</b>  | <b>Information</b> |
| <b>XIII.</b> | <b>Adjournment</b>  |                    |

**\*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: SCHOOL BOARD POLICY**

**DATE ADOPTED:** March 21, 2023

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

VSA Title 16 § 423 stipulates that each town school district shall have a school board. The purpose of this policy is to define the make up and some of the operating procedures that will be used by that legislative body.

#### **I. QUALIFICATIONS (VSA Title 16 § 558)**

- A. A member of the school board (hereafter referred to as "the board") must be a legal voter in the Colchester Town District.
- B. A member of the board shall not be regularly employed by the school district.

#### **II. BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

- A. The board shall be comprised of five members.
- B. The terms of office shall be for three years and two years. One member shall be elected for a three year term and one member elected for a two year term at each annual meeting of the school district. Terms shall end on the third annual and second annual meeting days following their election.
- C. Vacancies shall be refilled in accordance with VSA Title 16 § 424.
- D. Members of the board must be sworn in by the town clerk prior to entering upon the duties of their office. (VSA Title 16 § 561)
- E. The officers of the board shall be a chair, vice-chair, and clerk.
- F. The officers must be nominated annually at the board meeting which next follows the election, and the results of this nomination must be filed at the office of the town clerk and with the Vermont Commissioner of Education. (VSA Title 16 § 561).

*Legal References:*

*V.S.A. Title 1 §§ 310 - 314*

*V.S.A. Title 16 § 423*

(1) *V.S.A. Title 16 § 424*

(2) *V.S.A. Title 16 § 554b*

*V.S.A. Title 16 § 558*

(3) *V.S.A. Title 16 § 561*

(4) *V.S.A. Title 16 § 563*

Last Adopted: April 6, 2021  
 Date Warned: March 3, 2023  
 First Reading: March 7, 2023  
 Second Reading: March 21, 2023

### **III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The powers, duties and responsibilities of the board are defined in VSA Title 16 § 563. The Colchester School Board will comply with these legal requirements.
- B. Roberts Rules of Order as modified for small boards shall govern the conduct of board meetings. (VSA Title 16 § 554b)
- C. All board meetings will be conducted in accordance with Vermont's open meeting law. (VSA Title 1 §§ 310 - 314)

### **IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS OF THE BOARD**

#### **A. Chair**

- 1. Presides over meetings of the board.
- 2. Calls special meetings.
- 3. Performs other duties as directed by the board.
- 4. In collaboration with the superintendent, establish the agenda for each meeting.

#### **B. Vice Chair**

- 1. Substitute for the chair whenever necessary.

#### **C. Clerk**

- 1. Perform all duties required by statute, VSA Title 16 § 561.

### **V. BOARD MEMBER EDUCATION**

- A. Board members will take advantage of training opportunities to learn more about their role, school programs, Vermont Agency of Education functions and legislative activities.
- B. The school district will pay the cost for these training opportunities.

### **VI. BOARD GOAL-SETTING AND EVALUATIONS**

- A. The board will participate in goal-setting and self-evaluation activities developed or recommended by the superintendent at least annually.
- B. These goals will address areas such as (not limited to):
  - 1. Policy making,
  - 2. Policy implementation,
  - 3. Community relations,
  - 4. Board interpersonal communication skills,
  - 5. Board-superintendent relations,
  - 6. Fiscal/budget management,
  - 7. The instructional program,
  - 8. Labor relations,
  - 9. Board in-service training and
  - 10. Government relations.

**COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT****POLICY: CODE OF ETHICS FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS****DATE ADOPTED:** March 21, 2023**POLICY STATEMENT**

A school board member has no legal powers or authority unless acting at a school board meeting or acting for the school board after it formally grants power to act on its behalf. A school board member should perform the duties of a school board member in a manner consistent with this code of ethics.

**I. BOARD GOVERNANCE**

- A. Set goals for the school system and establish policies to direct its administration.
- B. Maintain confidentiality of discussion conducted in executive session and of other privileged information.
- C. Abide by board decisions regardless of how individuals voted.
- D. Act only as a member of the board and do not assume authority as an individual in school matters when the board is not in session.
- E. Be familiar with and observe Vermont education laws.
- F. Listen to legal counsel and constructive criticism to protect the board and the school system from liability.
- G. Attend all regularly scheduled board meetings, insofar as possible, and review study materials about the issues to be considered on each agenda.

**II. BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS**

- A. Give school officials authority commensurate with their responsibility, work through the properly appointed school officials according to the school system's organization and policies, and support school officials in the performance of their duties.
- B. Expect the superintendent to keep the board adequately informed through regular written or oral reports and hold the superintendent accountable through an annual job performance evaluation.
- C. Refer complaints, requests, and concerns to the superintendent or other appropriate staff member.

Last Adopted: April 6, 2021  
Date Warned: March 3, 2023  
First Reading: March 7, 2023  
Second Reading: March 21, 2023

- D. Use the chain of command and avoid making commitments or promises that compromise the board, administration or the school system.
- E. Listen to the recommendations of the superintendent and staff before making decisions and provide advice and counsel to the superintendent.
- F. Recognize that a board member's responsibility is to see that schools are well-run, but not to run them.

### **III. BOARD MEMBER RELATIONS**

- A. Retain independent judgment and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups.
- B. Voice opinions responsibly, maintain good relations with other board members, respect other board members' rights and opinions, and make no disparaging remarks, in or out of the board meeting, about other board members or school staff. Instead, express opinions in a professional, fair manner.
- C. Accept the responsibility to secure facts before arriving at conclusions.
- D. Expect more time to be spent on educational programs and procedures than on business details at board meetings.

### **IV. PERSONNEL RELATIONS**

- A. Support employment of the best qualified people as school staff and insist on regular, impartial evaluations of all staff.
- B. Hire no superintendent, principal or teacher already under contract with another school unless assurance is first secured from the proper authority that the person can be released from contract.

### **V. COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

- A. Represent the entire community and vote for what seems best for the children and youth of the school system.
- B. Interpret the attitudes, wishes and needs of the community to school staff and communicate the aims, methods and goals of the schools to the community.
- C. Create an environment that fosters community participation and involvement.

### **VI. BOARD PREPARATION AND TRAINING**

- A. Be informed about educational issues by individual study and through participating in programs providing needed information such as those sponsored by the Vermont and National School Boards Associations.

- B. Take advantage of opportunities to improve your knowledge and to build your skills as locally elected members of governing school boards.
- C. Associate with board members from other schools to discuss school problems and cooperate in the improvement of public school conditions.
- D. Provide assistance to new school board members and make sure adequate orientation and training opportunities are offered them.

## VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members of the board recognize the ethical duty of all public officers to avoid conflicts of interest. "Conflict of interest" means a situation when a board member's private interests, as distinguished from the board member's interest as a member of the general public, would benefit from or be harmed by their actions as a member of the board. In the case of school board members, this duty is extended by Vermont statutory law to include a requirement that boards adopt policies and procedures to avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest. In order to comply with the obligations thus imposed, the board and its members will adhere to the following standards.

### A. RECOMMENDED STANDARDS

1. Board members will be familiar with the NSBA and VSBA Codes of Ethics, and will observe their provisions.
2. Board members will be familiar with, and adhere to, those provisions of Vermont education law which define school board powers and govern board member compensation and public bidding processes.
3. Board members will do nothing intended to give the false impression that they have the authority to make decisions or take action on behalf of the board or the school administration.
4. Board members will not take any action which is intended to give the impression that they would represent special interests or partisan politics for personal gain.
5. Board members will not use their position on the board in any manner intended to unfairly promote personal financial interests or the financial interests of family members, friends or supporters.
6. Board members will not accept anything of value in return for taking particular positions on matters before the board.
7. Board members will do nothing intended to leave the impression that their position on any issue can be influenced by anything other than a fair presentation of all sides of the question.

**B. AVOIDING CONFLICTS**

When a board member becomes aware of involvement in a conflict of interest as defined in state law or this policy, they will declare the nature and extent of the conflict or appearance of conflict for inclusion in the board minutes, and will abstain from voting or participating in the discussion of the issue giving rise to the conflict.

**C. COMPLAINTS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

When a conflict of interest claim against a board member is brought to the board in writing, and is signed by another board member or a member of the public, and the board member against whom the claim is made does not concur that a conflict in fact exists, the following board procedures will be followed.

1. Upon a majority vote of the remaining board members, or upon order of the chair, the board will hold an informal hearing on the conflict of interest claim, giving both the board member and the person bringing the claim an opportunity to be heard.
2. At the conclusion of the informal hearing, the remaining board members will determine by majority vote to take one of the following actions:
  - a) Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is not supported by the evidence and is therefore dismissed;
  - b) Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and that the member should disqualify themselves from voting or otherwise participating in the board deliberations or decision related to that issue, as required by Vermont statute; and/or
  - c) Issue a public finding that the conflict of interest charge is supported by the evidence and, in addition to disqualifying themselves from voting or otherwise participating in the board deliberations or decision, the board member should be formally censured or subjected to such other action as may be allowed by law.



**COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT****POLICY: MANAGEMENT AND SUSPENSION OF POLICIES****DATE ADOPTED:** May 2, 2023**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 14, 2023  
First Reading: April 18, 2023  
Second Reading: May 2, 2023

- 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

Board of Education Meeting  
Colchester High School Media Center

Tuesday, March 5, 2024  
7:00 p.m.

## MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, in the Colchester High School Media Center. Board members in attendance were Board Chair Lindsey Cox, Directors Nic Longo, Ben Yousey-Hindes, Felix Anderson, Laurie Kigonya, and Student Representative Phoebe Richardson. District administrators and employees in attendance included Superintendent Amy Minor, Business and Operations Manager George Trieb, Director of Curriculum Gwen Carmolli, Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz, and CMS Principal Michele Cote. There were no community members in the audience.

### I. Call to Order

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

### II. Citizen Participation

None.

### III. Colchester Middle School NELMS Presentation

Information

Colchester Middle School Principal Michele Cote shared an in-depth presentation of the New England League of Middle Schools (NELMS) comprehensive report following the whole school assessment. The school participated in the evaluation to learn what the school can do to best serve the needs of middle-level learners. The report is being used to determine which areas to focus on to further align with the experts' researched best practices. She highlighted feedback that included commendations and recommendations for seven areas: curriculum and assessment, varied instruction, middle-level teachers and staff, organization for relationships for learning, democratic governance, healthy school environment, and parents and community. She shared the leadership team's steps in response to the assessment report and the school's subsequent action plan. Given the recent retirement announcement of two of the school's administrators, the board discussed the action plan and how the transition will occur. Principal Cote shared that she is deeply committed to seeing the school through a successful transition and is confident in the leadership team and collaboration efforts of the district's administration.

### IV. Second and Final Reading of Library Materials Policy: G6

Action

Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli reviewed some of the changes suggested by the board at the first reading. The board noted several additional changes that they would like made to help clarify intent in several sections. The policy will return for a third reading at a future meeting.

*Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the second reading of the Library Materials Policy: G6. The motion passed unanimously.*

**V. Second and Final Reading of Materials & Instructional Activity Selection and Review Policy: G5 Action**

Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli reviewed some of the changes suggested by the board at the first reading. The board noted several additional changes that they would like made to help clarify intent in several sections. The policy will return for a third reading at a future meeting.

*Director Anderson moved to approve the second reading of the Instructional Materials Policy: G5. The motion passed unanimously.*

**VI. Hear and Discuss Results of the FY'25 School Budget Vote Information**

Unofficial results show that the school article regarding the FY'25 school budget passed with 1,885 votes in favor and 1,505 against. The board and Superintendent Amy Minor thanked the community for their continued support and reflected on the budget process.

Laurie Kigonya was reelected to a 3-year term, and Jennifer Fath was elected to a 2-year term to fill the seat vacated by current member Felix Anderson. District administrators and fellow board members thanked Mr. Anderson for his service on the board.

**VII. Approval of Consent Agenda Action**

The board reviewed the following consent agenda.

DRAFT

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: March 5, 2024

*Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)*

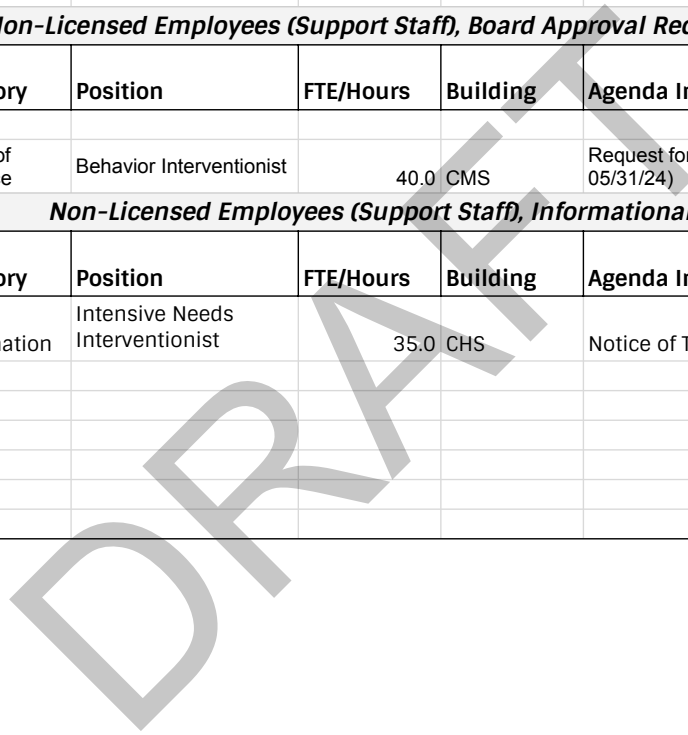
Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	FTE/Hours	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support

*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
Support Staff	Andrew	Hedden	Leave of Absence	Behavior Interventionist	40.0	CMS	Request for LOA (05/20-05/31/24)			

*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	Jamie	Chambers	Termination	Intensive Needs Interventionist	35.0	CHS	Notice of Termination			



There was a written request connected to one of the items on the consent agenda that the board wanted to discuss further. They decided to add an executive session after the general session and will make a motion following their discussion.

**VIII. Approval of Meeting Minutes Action**  
• February 20, 2024 (general)

Director Longo noted one correction.

*Director Longo moved to approve the amended minutes from the meeting held on February 20, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.*

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

- Mountain Transit lost several bus drivers and was forced to temporarily consolidate several routes until new drivers pass training and road tests.
- The district has a half day scheduled for the solar eclipse in April. Local officials will meet later in the week and may make additional recommendations to school districts.
- With it being his final meeting, Superintendent Minor and school board members thanked Felix Anderson for his service, commitment, and dedication to the school board over the past two years.

**X. Future Agenda Items Information**

- Continuation of the Policy Review Cycle
- NEASC Report from CHS
- 2024-25 School Calendar

**XI. Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Matter Action**

*Director Anderson moved to enter executive session at 8:20 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Director Yousey-Hindes moved to exit executive session at 8:57 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Director Kigonya moved to deny the consent agenda as provided. The motion passed unanimously.*

**XII. Adjournment**

*Director Anderson moved to adjourn at 9:02 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.*

Recorder:

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Meghan Baule  
Recording Secretary

Board Clerk:

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Ben Yousey-Hindes  
Board Clerk

DRAFT