

Colchester School Board

Meeting Agenda and Packet

December 17, 2024

**Colchester School District  
Board of Education Meeting Agenda  
December 17, 2024 - 7:00 P.M.  
Colchester High School Library**

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**Agenda**

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|--|--------------------|
| <b>I. Call to Order</b>  |                    |
| <b>II. Citizen Participation*</b>  |                    |
| <b>III. FY'26 Budget Discussion</b>  | <b>Information</b> |
| <b>IV. Second and Final Reading of Students Who Are English Learners Policy: F22</b> | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>V. First Reading of Video Surveillance Policy: E6</b>                             | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>VI. Approval of Consent Agenda</b>  | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>VII. Approval of Meeting Minutes</b><br>• December 3, 2024                        | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>VIII. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports</b>   | <b>Information</b> |
| <b>IX. Future Agenda Items</b>   | <b>Information</b> |
| <b>X. Executive Session to Discuss Contract Negotiations</b>                         | <b>Action</b>      |
| <b>XI. 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: MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS**

**DATE ADOPTED:** DRAFT

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The School Board recognizes that students with non-English language backgrounds bring diverse cultural, educational, and linguistic background experiences to our schools. The Colchester School District enrolls all students residing in Colchester without regard to their or their parents' actual or perceived citizenship status. The District has an obligation to identify the multilingual learners in our system and provide them with access to academic and extracurricular school programming as required by law.

It is the policy of the Colchester School District to ensure that all students who are multilingual learners receive the supports and services necessary to provide them an equal and meaningful opportunity to participate in the District's educational programs and services. This includes but is not limited to services from appropriately trained and experienced staff for consistent identification, appropriate assessment, and effective programming that supports progress toward English language proficiency and evaluation of and accountability for student progress toward English proficiency.

### **I. DEFINITIONS AND COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS**

For purposes of this policy, the term multilingual learner (ML) is defined as a student with a home language other than English and who has limited English language proficiency based on results from an English language proficiency assessment approved by the state of Vermont.

**Multilingual learner:** The term "multilingual learner," when used with respect to an individual, means an individual:

- A. Who is aged 3 through 21;
- B. Who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
- C. Who:
  - 1. was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
  - 2. is a Native American or Alaska native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or

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 Date Warned: November 25, 2024  
 First Reading: December 3, 2024  
 Second Reading:

- 3. is a migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
- D. Whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual —
  - 1. the ability to meet the challenging State academic standards;
  - 2. the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
  - 3. the opportunity to participate fully in society.

Historically, a variety of terms have been used to describe ML students. The term ML is inclusive of students who fall into all of these categories.

- A. English as a Second Language (ESL)
- B. English Language Learner (ELL)
- C. English Learner (EL)
- D. Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

## **II. IMPLEMENTATION**

The Superintendent or their designee will develop and maintain a Multilingual Learner English Language Program that complies with state and federal laws. This program will be periodically evaluated to make modifications when necessary. The ML Program will be adequately staffed with licensed personnel who have regular access to further professional training in order to implement ML programming. The Superintendent or their designee will oversee the ML program which is established to:

- A. Administer state required ML assessments in order to identify and assesses students whose primary language is not English, and are in need of language assistance, in a timely, valid and reliable manner.
- B. Refer ML students with suspected disabilities to special education or a 504 team for disability-related identification, evaluation, and where indicated, services, and provide language support in evaluation, programming, and service delivery.
- C. Evaluate and monitor ML students for progress toward English language proficiency and grade level content. Maintain records of progress and make records available to appropriate staff and to ML students' guardians.
- D. Objectively assess the progress of ML students in order to track and respond to the results of ML services, to ensure that language barriers are being overcome within a reasonable period of time, and to determine when transfer to fully English proficient programs is appropriate. Exit standards should be objectively based and should be designed to determine whether ML students are able to read, write, and comprehend English well enough to participate meaningfully in the District's programs.
- E. Monitor ML students after they exit ML services, to ensure that they did not exit

prematurely.

- F.** Provide support to meet the educational needs of an ML student if the student opts not to participate in offered ML services.
- G.** Ensure that ML students will be provided equal opportunity for participation in curricular and co-curricular activities, including core curriculum, graduation requirements, specialized and advanced courses and programs, sports and clubs. No student shall be excluded from, or not be admitted to, any CSD program on the basis of their English language proficiency.
- H.** Ensure that ML programming is designed to avoid unnecessary separation of ML students from the general student body. The District will take appropriate affirmative steps to rectify the English language deficiency in order to open the educational programs to these students.
- I.** Ensure that there is ongoing meaningful communication with all ML parents in a language they can understand. The District provides translation services for families to support access to their child's educational program.

## COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

### **POLICY: VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

**DATE ADOPTED:** November 15, 2022

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The district recognizes its responsibility to maintain safety, and discipline on school grounds. The Colchester School District may use video surveillance systems (including audio) to monitor and record activity on district property to improve and protect the health, welfare, safety, and security of the entire school community. The policy applies to all employees, students, vendors, contractors, visitors, and property of the Colchester School District.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The school board authorizes the installation and use of video cameras in public areas on campus, such as (but not limited to) hallways, auditoriums, lobbies, the cafeteria, and school grounds including the parking lot, sidewalks, playing fields, school buses, district vans, and other school grounds. Individuals, including students who are in such areas do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy. The district shall not install video surveillance systems in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as inside restrooms, changing rooms or locker rooms.

Video surveillance systems may be used to promote the safety, security, protection of property, and to assist school administrators in investigating conduct that may violate the policies of the Colchester School District or law. Such video recording may be conducted without prior notice and without student or parent consent. Video surveillance systems may be operational at any time, regardless of whether school is in session or if facilities or buildings are in use.

The use of video recordings from surveillance equipment shall be subject to the other policies of the district, including the policies concerning directory information and confidentiality of student and personnel records.

The district shall notify its students and staff annually that video surveillance may occur on school property. The district shall incorporate the notice in the Student Handbook, on the district's website, and/or in a separate mailing to students. The district shall post a notice at the main entrance of each school district building where video surveillance is in effect.

Employees and students are prohibited from unauthorized use, tampering with, or otherwise interfering with video recordings or surveillance equipment. Violations will be subject to

Last Adopted: October 2, 2018  
Date Warned: September 2, 2022  
First Reading: September 6, 2022  
Second Reading: October 4, 2022  
Third Reading: November 15, 2022

appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action shall be consistent with district policy and regulations and may include, but not be limited to, written reprimand, suspension, demotion or dismissal for staff and suspension and/or expulsion for students, depending upon the nature and severity of the situation.

The use of video surveillance equipment on school grounds and on other district property shall be supervised and controlled by the building administrator or their designee. Video surveillance systems may be used for live, day and night viewing of buildings and grounds by the Superintendent or designee. At no time should students, employees, parents and/or community members have any expectation that anyone is monitoring events on the surveillance cameras as they occur. Nor should they assume that someone will immediately respond to an incident in progress. All incidents of concern need to be reported immediately to the administration.

The district retains the right to use video recordings in student disciplinary hearings and employee personnel hearings. Subject to Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) and federal and state law.





# COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting  
Colchester High School Media Center

Tuesday, December 3, 2024  
7:00 p.m.

## MINUTES (General Session)

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, December 3, 2024, in the Colchester High School Media Center. Board members in attendance were Board Chair Lindsey Cox, Directors Nic Longo, Ben Yousey-Hindes, Jennifer Fath, and Student Representative Rylee Friend. District administrators and employees in attendance included Superintendent Amy Minor, Business and Operations Manager George Trieb, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli, Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz, and Director of Instructional Support Services Jean Shea, CHS Principal Andrew Conforti, CHS Director of Student Support Services Amber Keep, CHS Special Education Team Leaders Dave Sharkey and Dana Visser. There were two audience members.

### 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

Doug Bishop of Oak Circle, newly elected to represent the Chittenden-20 district in the Vermont Legislature, addressed the board. During his campaign, he attended numerous town and school district meetings. He expressed appreciation for the work of the district and board, congratulated them on the bond approval, and wished them success in their efforts on the FY26 budget. Mr. Bishop emphasized his commitment to staying in contact with the administration and looked forward to future discussions.

### III. Hear Presentation on CHS Champ Program

### Information

Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz provided an overview of the CHS Champ Program. Initially presented to the board in the spring of 2024, the program addresses the needs of students with elevated internalizing behaviors who struggle in general education settings despite their academic capabilities and desire to attend school. The program, launched at the start of the school year, currently serves nine students and emphasizes flexible scheduling. CHS Special Education Team Leaders Dave Sharkey and Dana Visser detailed the program's schedule and curriculum, which incorporates hands-on methods to increase engagement and movement. Student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many reporting increased attendance and support. A video presentation showcased student activities, including classroom participation and community field trips. Board members discussed the program's broader impacts and potential scalability. Director Yousey-Hines praised the program as an exemplar of meeting students' diverse needs and highlighted its alignment with the district's mission. Director Fath inquired about transcript representation and future capacity. The program's credits are proficiency-based and count towards graduation. Ms. Visser explained pathways for transitioning students, with options including tech programs, internships, or reintegration into general education. Student Representative Rylee Friend asked about collaboration with general education teachers to avoid redundant content. Mr. Sharkey assured coordination with teachers to ensure complementary, not repetitive, learning experiences.

**IV. FY'26 Budget Discussion****Information**

Business and Operations Manager George Trieb reviewed the Commissioner of Taxes' annual education tax rate letter, projecting a 5.9% increase in statewide average education property tax bills. He explained the implications for Colchester, noting variables like the common level of appraisal and the dollar yield, which could significantly influence local tax rates. Mr. Trieb stressed that variables are likely to change in the upcoming months. Superintendent Minor will provide updated information on long-term weighted average daily memberships and funding mechanisms, enabling the board to establish spending targets and estimate a tax rate. Two additional meetings in January will review budget scenarios and react to any possible changes from the AOE or legislative.

**V. First Reading of Students Who Are English Learners Policy: F22****Action**

This policy was reviewed as part of the annual cycle and is required by the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA). The VSBA has updated its model policy, and administrators recommended aligning the district's policy with those changes. Beyond those changes, there were several additional recommended updates, most notably the title and terminology for referring to students learning English. The district now uses the term "multilingual learners," and the draft policy was revised accordingly. The board discussed the policy's implementation and the legal requirements for supporting multilingual students in their education and acquisition of English.

*Director Yousey-Hindes moved to approve the first reading of the Students Who Are English Learners Policy: F22. The motion passed unanimously.*

**VI. First Reading of Weapons Policy: F24****Action**

This policy was reviewed as part of the annual cycle. Superintendent Minor provided historical and practical context on the distinction between firearm violations and violations involving other types of weapons. During the review process, administrators observed that weapon policies vary across districts statewide. Superintendent Minor noted that Colchester has the strictest weapons policy in the county, requiring school board hearings for all violations regardless of the weapon type or circumstance. She highlighted that many districts separate firearm policies from those addressing other weapons, allowing for greater clarity and flexibility, especially at the elementary level. The board discussed the potential benefits of creating two distinct policies. Superintendent Minor provided examples of how a separate weapons policy could establish thresholds for violations that would necessitate a school board hearing.

*Director Longo moved to approve the first reading of the Weapons Policy: F24. The motion passed unanimously.*

**VII. Approval of Consent Agenda****Action**

The board reviewed the following consent agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: 12/3/2024

*Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)*

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

*Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Board Approval Required*

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

*Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational*

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	Hours/Wk	Building	Agenda Information	Person Replacing	Budgeted	Admin Support
Support Staff	Emma	Gervais	Resignation	Paraeducator	16.0	MBS	Notice of Resignation			

DRAFT

There were not items on the agenda that required board approval.

**VIII. Approval of Meeting Minutes** **Action**  
• **November 19, 2024**

*Director Longo moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on November 19, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.*

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

- Administrators met with Black River Design to start finalizing the initial timeline for the bond facilities work.
- Appreciation given for the community's generosity during the recent clothing and gift card drive to support students and families in need.

**X. Future Agenda Items** **Information**

- School Reports
- FY26 Budget Development
- Policy Work

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

*Director Yousey-Hindes moved to enter executive session at 8:50 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Director Yousey-Hindes moved to exit executive session at 9:39 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.*

**XII. Adjournment**

*Director Longo moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m.*

Recorder:

Board Clerk:

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Meghan Baule  
Recording Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ben Yousey-Hindes  
Board Clerk