

Colchester School Board Meeting Agenda & Packet

February 3, 2026



**Colchester School District
Board of Education Meeting**
February 3, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.
Colchester High School Library

Meeting Agenda

I. Call to Order	
II. Citizens Participation*	
III. Recording of FY'27 Budget Q & A for LCATV	Informational
IV. Approval of General Contractor List Based on Pre-approved Criteria	Action
V. Approval of Consent Agenda	Action
VI. Approval of Meeting Minutes	Action
○ January 20, 2026 (General)	
VII. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports	Informational
VIII. Future Agenda Items	Informational
IX. 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 School District

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MEMO

To: School Board Directors
From: George A. Trieb, Jr.
Subject: Contractor Bid Criteria
Date: April 11, 2025

As previously mentioned, the Board will need to weigh in from time to time as it pertains to certain aspects of the formal bidding process. The Board will also be required to review bid summaries and approve recommended bids for the project based on cost factors.

The first step in the General Contractor pre-qualification process is for the Board to adopt a list of criteria which they will use to judge applicants' qualification to be included on the list of bidders.

Below is a suggested list of criteria that can serve as a starting point for the Board. This is a list that Black River Design has used successfully in the past. Review and approval of this list will better position the Board to prepare in the situation where the Board has marginally qualified contractors applying. The Board needs to be able to point out specific criterium that applicants did not meet in order to NOT pre-qualify them. The Board should adopt these before we advertise for Qualification Statements as the first question someone will ask is "What are the criteria the Board will use to determine the qualified bidders?" We will need to be able to provide this for them.

Qualified Bidder Criteria

- Experience in successfully completing competitively bid projects of equivalent size and type.
- Proven ability to keep past projects within budget.
- Established capability to keep past projects on schedule.
- Track record of successful construction projects in the area within the last five years.
- Knowledge of and experience with location and local subcontractors.
- Establishment of commitment to this area.
- Ability to obtain performance and bid bonds.
- Quality of workmanship and ability to control/encourage quality in the subcontracted work.
- Record of fairness on change orders after the bid and during the construction phases.
- History of sound project management, coordination with subcontractors, timely submittal of required documentation, and attention to responding to the concerns of the owner during construction.
- Established ability to maintain safe working conditions.

Amy Minor
Superintendent
of Schools

George Trieb
Business & Operations
Manager

Carrie Lutz
Director of Student
Support Services

Jean Shea
Director of Instructional
Support Services

Gwendolyn Carmolli
Director of Curriculum
& Instruction

- Proven ability to safely and efficiently work around children and activities.
- Sustained ability to close out project after reaching project substantial completion.
- Ability and willingness to follow-up on completed projects.
- Willingness to return to correct warranted items.

I recommend that the Board approve the criteria for both PPS and UMS.

Motion: ***"I move that we approve the contractor bid criteria as presented for both the PPS and UMS projects."***

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Meeting Date: 2/3/2026

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

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

Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational

Colchester School District

Board of Education Meeting
Colchester High School Library

Tuesday, January 20, 2026
7:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

The Colchester Board of Education held a regular board meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, in the Colchester High School Library Media Center. Board Directors in attendance were Lindsey Cox, Laurie Kigonya, Jennifer Fath, and Student Representative Trinity McCarthy. Board Director Nic Longo joined the meeting at 7:31 p.m. Administrators and employees in attendance were Superintendent Amy Minor, Chief Financial and Operations Manager George Trieb, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli, and Director of Student Support Services Carrie Lutz. There was one audience member.

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. Citizens Participation*

None.

III. Hear Presentation on Assessments

Informational

Director of Curriculum and Instruction Gwen Carmolli presented an assessment report for 2025, detailing the Colchester School District's academic performance and growth. She provided a comprehensive overview of the Vermont Comprehensive Assessment Program (VTCAP) results, noting that Colchester students achieved a 61% proficiency rate in English Language Arts (ELA), while math proficiency stood at 52% and science at 51%, all of which outperformed the state average. The district also observed positive trends in closing equity gaps for multilingual learners and students with disabilities in ELA. Ms. Carmolli shared ELA assessment examples for different age groups, noting that it is an extremely rigorous exam that requires students to read, analyze, and interpret multiple pieces across genres. Student Board Member Trinity McCarthy echoed these statements, noting that many topics were introduced during the test that would prompt conversations with their teachers. She shared that the teachers and staff are very supportive during testing periods, offering snacks and movement breaks, which were needed given the difficulty of the exams.

Beyond standardized testing, the report included data from internal STAR assessments and social-emotional evaluations. She noted that a major benefit of STAR assessments is that they are taken multiple times throughout the school year, which allows educators to make adjustments in real time based on the data, ultimately allowing them to be more responsive. STAR growth data from Fall 2024 to Fall 2025 showed significant improvements across the board, with early literacy rising by 11 percentage points, reading by 6 points, and math by 4 points. Additionally, the district saw favorable trends in student engagement, with the graduation rate increasing to 96% and chronic absenteeism decreasing from 20% to 18%. The DESSA assessment further indicated strengths in social and self-awareness among students, with social awareness scores jumping from 47% to 69% over the past year.

The presentation concluded by outlining the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) goals, which aim to further improve academic and social-emotional achievement and close gaps for historically marginalized groups. To achieve these objectives, the district is focusing on strengthening instructional systems, evidence-based practices, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Ms. Carmolli emphasized that successful strategies currently in place include instructional coaching, data teams, and enhanced social-emotional learning supports, all of which contribute to a deeper engagement in student learning. Board members asked a series of questions connected to the testing environment, advanced preparation, and how individual and cohort scores are distributed and analyzed.

IV. Hear FY'27 Budget Presentation Informational

Superintendent Amy Minor opened the FY'27 budget presentation by emphasizing the district's stable enrollment, which has remained consistent for over a decade and is projected to grow according to a 2024 demographic report. She showed how enrollment translates into class sizes, noting that while some grades fluctuate slightly above or below state recommendations, the district remains appropriately "right-sized" in terms of the number of students in core classes. This operational efficiency has historically supported fiscal restraint, resulting in a modest average tax increase of 2.73% over the last ten years. For the upcoming fiscal year, the primary budget drivers include salaries and benefits, specifically a projected 7.3% increase in state-negotiated healthcare costs following last year's 11.9% increase, as well as a 15% rise in transportation costs over three years, and necessary funding for out-of-district placements and other services that are required to meet identified student needs.

In response to a previous board request for a mid-range reduction scenario, administrators presented a strategic plan to reduce the baseline budget by \$1,077,007. This proposal includes shifting \$500,000 in maintenance costs to the Capital Reserve Fund, saving \$427,007 by eliminating five vacant support staff positions and 1.0 FTE (salary and benefits), and reducing \$150,000 in professional services no longer required due to student transitions. These adjustments result in a total budget increase of 8.13%. However, officials clarified that 3.62% of that figure is allocated to the voter-approved facilities bond, leaving the actual annual operational increase at 4.51%.

During the Board discussion, Director Longo commended the administration for identifying these reductions, characterizing the 4.51% operational increase as reasonable and highlighting that the facilities bond is a vital investment for long-term taxpayer savings. Director Kingonya also voiced her support for the proposal, though she cautioned that further reductions to professional services in future years could eventually impact student outcomes. In response to clarifying questions from Director Fath regarding staff vacancies, administrators confirmed that the decision to eliminate these positions was carefully vetted and explained that staffing levels are aligned with specific service needs rather than raw enrollment numbers. Board Chair Cox concluded the session by noting a consensus among the Board, echoing the sentiment that the recommended budget and estimated tax rate are manageable within the current economic climate.

Director Kigonya moved to adopt a budget of \$70,167,602 for the support and operation of the Colchester School District for the year beginning July 1, 2026.

V. Approval of Consent Agenda Action

The board reviewed the following items on the consent agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA (Updated 1/20/2026)

Board Meeting Date: 1/20/2026

Licensed Employees (Teacher/Administrator)

Contract Type	First Name	Last Name	Category	Position	Hours/Wk	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
Handbook	Robyn	Terranova	Leave of Absence	Van Driver	35	DW	Request for Leave of Absence 1/21/26-1/30/26	N/A		Yes

Non-Licensed Employees (Support Staff), Informational

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

VI. Approval of Meeting Minutes Action

Director Longo moved to approve the minutes from the January 6 and January 13, 2026, meetings. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Board/Administration Communication, Correspondence, Committee Reports Informational

- Superintendent Minor provided a construction update for the facilities work happening at PPS.

VIII. Future Agenda Items Informational

- CHS Club and Programming Presentations
- Policy Work
- Facility Renovation Updates
- FY27 Budget Communication Plan
- 2026-27 School Calendar

IX. Adjournment

Director Longo moved to adjourn at 8:21 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Meghan Baule
Recording Secretary

Ben Yousey-Hindes
Board Clerk

DRAFT