

November 18, 2022

Dear SAU 90 Staff and Families,

Earlier this week, middle school and high school families attended a discussion on Mental Health along with Former Chief Justice John Broderick, Consultant Jeff Levin, and a panel of students and staff with SAU 21 held at Winnacunnet High School. Some of the biggest take-aways from the evening centered on the importance of community, partnerships, and the prevalence of stress in our society. Together, we will work to ensure our students feel safe, supported, seen, and heard. More information can be found at the links attached below.

After six sessions and many hours, our school board finished their review of the 2023-2024 budget. Prior to the board's extensive review, our leadership team works to review 175-line items in our budget. Knowing the economic times and challenges with staffing, we focused on holding down costs while maintaining current systems. The proposed budget has increased by 1.05% over the 2022-2023 default budget. Increases are due to rising costs of special education along with increases to salaries and wage benefits in our efforts to attract and retain high quality staff including substitutes given critical shortages. Although the default budget has increased, this is in large part due to the voter approved professional staff contract and the voter approved support staff contract last spring. We look forward to presenting this to the town's budget committee on December 6 at 6:00 PM in the Town Hall. For your planning purposes, elections will be held on Tuesday, March 14. We look forward to discussing this further and answering any questions that you and our stakeholders may have.

Today, we held our first meeting with our newly formed task force to study universal preschool. Special thanks to our parents, community members, school board members, and staff who have offered to serve on this committee. During the meeting, we had the opportunity to discuss the importance of this endeavor, set timelines, and goals for the coming year. We look forward to sharing more information as we continue this study and important work.

For your planning purposes, Los Cantaros on 43 Lafayette Road in North Hampton will be hosting two Dining for a Cause events in support of the 8th grade trip to Washington DC. Please be sure to check out the flyer attached.

There will be no school on Wednesday, November 23 through November 27 due to the Thanksgiving holiday. School resumes on Monday, November 28. As we embark on the Thanksgiving Day holiday ahead, it seems appropriate and fitting to take stock of all that we have to be grateful for – our schools, our families, our students, our staff, and the good fortune of our community that continually comes together in support of one another. For this and more, we are grateful and appreciative. We wish you all a very happy and safe Thanksgiving Day holiday weekend ahead with your families and friends.

Thankfully,
Dr. Lois B. Costa
Superintendent of SAU 90

Resources on Mental Health: <https://www.jefflevincoaching.com/>
<https://rockefeller.dartmouth.edu/news/2022/03/broderick-calls-attention-need-greater-mental-health-awareness-and-infrastructure>
Dining for a Cause: [Los Cantaros Event](#)
Shark News: [Shark News 11.18.22](#)