

December 23, 2022

Dear SAU 90 Staff and Families,

Although it is very quiet in our schools today, we are comforted to know that everyone is home safe and sound gearing up for the holidays ahead. The decision to delay or cancel school is one of the most difficult decisions superintendents make. I wanted to shed some light on how those important decisions are made.

Given the unpredictable weather patterns on the seacoast, we are constantly following multiple forecasts including those on WMUR Manchester, WCVB Boston, The Weather Channel, AccuWeather, and NOAA Weather. Additionally, superintendents participate in Winter Weather Conference Calls with Homeland Security and Emergency Management the day before any major storm. We also speak with colleagues in our area, including Superintendents from SAU 21 (Winnacunnet and others) and SAU 16 (Exeter).

Yesterday morning, I spoke with Superintendent Meredith Nadeau from SAU 21 regarding today's weather. We made the decision to reach out to our local Emergency Management Director, Chief McMahon from Hampton Fire and Rescue. Given the high tide timeline, heavy winds, rain, and power outages predicted there was great concern about getting students home safely at our early dismissal time. Additionally, I spoke with other officials including Chief Reno and our school board. Given the safety concern and timing, the decision was made to close school today. We wanted to share this with families as soon as possible knowing the impact this has on everyone. Please know that we take learning time very seriously and we must balance this with the safety of our most precious assets, our students and staff.

There are two resources that are available to our Hampton families. In partnership with the New Hampshire Department of Education, Tutor.com is available for all Hampton Academy students. It allows students to access on-demand, 1 to 1 tutoring anytime, anywhere. If you need any assistance with accessing the program, please be sure to reach out to Hampton Academy. Jeanie Ryan, from Waterford Upstart Outreach contacted me this week about a fantastic opportunity for our preschool students. This is a grant-funded program using Waterford Upstart online learning which includes a FREE laptop that can be kept, a designated family coach, and internet access if needed. Families must register by January 31, 2023. For more information, please contact the NH Waterford Liaison, Jeanie Ryan at jeanryan@waterford.org or call 603-235-5266 to sign up. [Waterford Upstart Flyer](#)

The YMCA has some openings for afterschool care. [Please see attached flyer to sign up!](#)

In closing, I wanted to share the following email that I received last week. The names have been redacted out of respect for the family.

Dr. Costa,

I thought you would be delighted to hear that our daughter [REDACTED] (Hampton Academy 2019) has been accepted to Yale University for the class of 2027. She is currently attending Berwick Academy on a full 4-year scholarship where she has been recognized as the top scholar for her grade every year. She scored a perfect 1600 on the SAT on her first attempt. We would like to express our appreciation to the Hampton Schools for putting her on the path to success. Thanks [REDACTED]

The holidays give us all the opportunity to pause our busy lives and reflect on our accomplishments. It also gives us the opportunity to thank the entire school community for all the support that they provide our students, our families, and our staff. We never know the impact that we might have on a student, a staff member, or a family.

The past few years, we have seen our community come together, show compassion, kindness, and generosity that has brought love, friendship, and support to others. The strength in our community helps to unify and fortify our district and town with perseverance and determination. These gifts are far more valuable and precious than anything we could wrap in festive paper and bows. For this and more, I am grateful, and I am proud.

Warm wishes for a happy and healthy holiday ahead, and may 2023 be merry and bright!

Dr. Lois B. Costa
Superintendent of SAU 90