

Fall Mountain Regional School District
WALPOLE ATTENDANCE AREA SCHOOLS

Walpole Primary School PO Box 549 - 18 Primary Lane Walpole, NH 03608 Phone: 603-756-4241 Fax: 603-756-4131 PreK-Grade1	North Walpole School 17 Cray Road North Walpole, NH 03609 Phone: 603-445-5450 Fax: 603-445-1955 Grades 2-4	Walpole Elementary School PO Box 549 - 8 Bemis Lane Walpole, NH 03608 603-756-4728 603-756-3343 Grades 5-8
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Hello Walpole Families and Community Members,

As we approach the deliberative session on February 5th and voting day on March 11th, I wanted to make sure everyone understands the Walpole budget requests and the two proposed warrant articles.

I encourage you to attend our Walpole Site-based meetings where we continue to have discussions about our current school year, future school plans and things that are happening around the district. These are open discussions where families, staff members and community members can join the conversation, make suggestions and ask questions to help better understand the topics being discussed. These meetings are held at the Walpole Elementary School in the community room at 6:00 PM on the first Wednesday of each month. We also have these meetings live streamed where you can watch and listen to all the meetings, but you are not allowed to participate in the conversations unless you are in person. You may contact the school and we will give you the link to the meeting.

The total Walpole Schools budget decreased by 3.91% or \$384,371.00 for the 2025 - 2026 school year. Our Special Education Director, Zandra Reagan, informed me that our special ed. numbers have continued to drop over the last three years. This is an indication of the excellent teaching and intervention strategies that our staff have put into place over the last few years. We have decided to reduce our Special Education teachers in Walpole from three to two. We will also be reducing two and a half special education paraprofessional positions. Because paraprofessionals help support all of our students and staff on a daily basis, I have chosen to change them from Special Ed. Paras to General Classroom Paras. This has no impact on the budget and simply moves these positions from one budget line to another.

Our teachers and staff do a great job when it comes to properly budgeting for the upcoming school year. We continue to make sure we are providing our students with a high quality education, while also thinking of our community members and tax payers as well. Making these decisions is difficult, but it is important to make sure that we are considering everyone when going through this process.

Warrant Articles

Each year the school has the opportunity to make improvements to the school buildings and grounds by using the funds that are in the Walpole Schools Capital Reserve Fund. Walpole currently has \$358,440.00 in that fund. The Walpole community members are encouraged to attend our Site-based meetings to help make suggestions on how we can make improvements in these areas through the use of these funds. This year, community members who attended suggested the following and it will be up to the Walpole voters to decide if we move forward with these projects or not. These projects do not have an impact on your individual town taxes because it is taken directly out of the schools Capital Reserve Fund.

Article 5 *Shall the Walpole voters vote to appropriate \$112,000.00 for capital improvements to the Walpole Primary Schools to abate asbestos in four classrooms and to replace vinyl siding with said funds to come from the Walpole Schools Capital Reserve Fund?*

Each year the district tries to remove the asbestos in at least three classrooms in each attendance area. Previously they would choose one classroom at the Walpole Primary, North Walpole and Walpole Elementary School to complete the work during the summer. Hearing from family and community members that we should be focusing on one building at a time, I requested that we complete the Walpole Primary School this year instead of dividing up the rooms at each school building. All of our classrooms at WPS would be asbestos free if we did the work on these final four classrooms.

We are also looking to replace the vinyl siding at the top of the Walpole Primary School. With the district having trouble filling the painter position over the last few years, it caused certain parts of the siding to rot. To repair this, we would like to replace the current siding with vinyl siding.

Article 6 *Shall the Walpole voters vote to appropriate \$70,000.00 to hire a qualified firm to prepare engineering and architectural drawings to facilitate expansion of the Walpole Primary School, with said funds to come from the Walpole Schools Capital Reserve Fund?*

Previous administration asked each attendance area to look at the possibility of consolidating. It was suggested last year that Walpole take a look at closing the North Walpole School and seeing if it would be possible to bring all of our students and staff to one campus.

If this is going to occur, my main focus is to make sure our students, staff, families and community members are involved in this final decision. After meeting with our school board representative and interim superintendent, we thought that it would be necessary to bring at least five suggestions forward to further discuss with the community. One of these suggestions would be to add onto our Walpole Primary School. Having discussions around the different options and providing visuals will be extremely important in helping make the final decision on what we would like to do.

The consolidation of schools is not something that would occur during the 2025-2026 school year. We are trying to plan ahead, so that we can provide the necessary information where community members feel like they can make the best decisions for our students and themselves.

I have an open door policy for my students, staff and family members, and that is the same for community members as well. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns. We all want what's best for our students and your input is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Cassarino', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Mr. Justin Cassarino, Principal