

School

Administrative Unit 21

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Real-World Civics Lesson: North Hampton School Students to Cast Ballots on Town Meeting Day



Middle School students Siena Donatelli, left, and Adeline Hass speak with second-grade students from the classrooms of Laurie Berry and Megan Sharples about the importance of voting. North Hampton School students will be able to vote on a school ballot as part of Town Meeting Day. (Photo Courtesy SAU 21)

NORTH HAMPTON – Should North Hampton School have a comfort dog?

It's an important question, and among several that students in Grades K-8 will be considering on Town Meeting Day as they cast ballots alongside their parents and guardians.

Through “Local Government in New Hampshire,” students are developing a deeper understanding of civics and the importance of voting in a democratic society.

The civics project aligns with SAU 21’s Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) initiative. These optional enrichment programs allow students to lead targeted projects with the support of a mentor. The student election seeks to encourage inquiry-based learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

The Town of North Hampton and North Hampton School have developed a strong bond through community-based projects. ELO efforts include the Senior Citizens Dance and Student Road Safety Exploration. Beyond ELOs, the school’s Student Government and Town have collaborated on Earth Day clean-up efforts, while the Conservation Commission has provided its expertise and support to the school’s Forestry Stewardship Program.’

Town Manager Michael Tully suggested holding a student election day alongside the Annual Town Meeting on March 11. Assistant Principal and Curriculum Coordinator Rebecca Carlson approached Town Moderator Bobbi Burns, who supported the idea enthusiastically.

Middle School students Adeline Hass and Siena Donatelli brainstormed potential warrant articles. They shared their ideas with the Leadership Council, which consists of school administrators and seven teachers. The Council provided vital feedback. Students then spoke with other adults, such as the School Resource Officer and school counselor, before finalizing the articles.

Student-voters will consider three questions:

- Should North Hampton School investigate integrating a comfort dog into the school community?
- How would you like the School Resource Officer to spend time with your class?
- Should the tetherball equipment be reintroduced to middle school students?

Mass and Donatelli also held voter registration drives by speaking in K-5 classrooms about Town Meeting Day and the importance of having their voices heard. Students will make voter registration cards in the coming weeks.

Students will cast their ballots in a special area of the school gym, which will have voting booths and its own ballot box.

"We hope to get our students excited about exercising their vote and civic engagement but also encourage more of our families to take the time to participate in our local election," Carlson said.

Students will learn the results — and the chance they will be getting a comfort dog — on March 12.

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NHS Kids Vote!

This is a 7th
grade ELO
student
project.

Calling all students in grades K-8



**Join your adults when they go to vote on Town
Voting Day! Make your choice and
make a difference in our school!**

Vote at the Town Hall >>>

**March 11, 2025
8am to 7pm**

Questions?

Email Dr. Carlson at rcarlson@sau21.org

A message from SAU 21

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