



Hampton, NH 2026 SAU 21 Warrant Articles

In the Know Hampton Your Source for Unbiased Town Information

This document is intended to help Hampton voters understand the Warrant Articles that will appear on the ballot on March 10, 2026. We do not tell you how to vote – that is up to you. The objective is to help voters understand what the Articles mean, what people are saying for and against, and what the cost implications may be.

Election of Officers for SAU 21

2026 Candidates for SAU 21 Positions		
Positions	Term	Candidate Names
School Board - Hampton Falls (1)	3 Yrs	Desiree Potter
		Charles Shannon
School Board - Seabrook (1)	3 Yrs	Patricia O'Keefe
Budget Member - Hampton (1)	1 Yr	Nichole Duggan
Budget Member - Hampton Falls (1)	3 Yrs	Colleen Farias
Budget Member - Seabrook (1)	3 Yrs	Laura Carty
School Moderator (1)	3 Yrs	Chris Muns

What it means: Hampton voters get to vote on each of these open positions (even though the candidate may come from a different town.) There are six open positions, but only one contested race - two candidates for one open position for School Board member from Hampton Falls. You have the option to write-in a name.

Article 1: Operating Budget of \$32,803,073 versus Default Budget of \$32,469,395

Shall the School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$32,803,073. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$32,469,395, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Note: Hampton is responsible for 47.23% of the SAU 21 budget, calculated based on both property valuation and student enrollment.

What it means: The Proposed Operating Budget is \$32,803,073, which is an increase of 1.76% over last year's budget (+\$566,343). It is \$333,678 higher than the default budget of \$32,469,395. There were factors that contributed to lower expenses as well as factors that brought the budget higher, as outlined on the next page.



The following budget drivers resulted in reductions to the SAU 21 operating budget:

- Personnel Reduction – Proposed reduction of 3.0 FTE teacher positions (retirements).
- Special Education Tuition – Decrease in out-of-district placement costs due to changing student needs.
- Special Education Transportation – Decrease in specialized transportation due to changing student needs.
- Contracted Services – Reduction in ESOL services based on decrease in student needs.
- General reductions – Prioritized departmental requests on all discretionary accounts to reduce costs.

The following budget drivers resulted in increases to the SAU 21 operating budget:

- Salary Adjustments – Contractual obligations for SEA and SESPA union members as well as non-union staff, including cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and step increases.
- Health Insurance– Increases resulting from funding level changes, and employee plan election changes.
- Cost Escalation– Inflationary increases across multiple operational accounts.
- Vocational Program – Cost increases due to higher participation levels and tuition rate increase.
- Student Activities – Investment supplies, registration, competition entry fees for new robotics program.

Those in favor say: The Board and staff worked hard to keep expenses reasonable for taxpayers. The budget as presented, while higher than last year, follows the '25-26 budget that decreased from spending for '24-'25.

Those Against Say: No one spoke against this Article at the SAU 21 Deliberative Session.

Fiscal Impact: For a Hampton property valued at \$600,000, the added tax would be \$26.35 (Hampton's 47.23% of the cost).

Article 2: Library Furniture and Redesign - \$192,698

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$192,698 for the purchase of new furniture and the redesign of the Hawley Library at Winnacunnet High School? This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until the project is complete or June 30, 2029, whichever is earlier.

What it Means: The Board proposes raising \$192,698 in taxation to redesign of Hawley library and to purchase new furniture. The project is part of the district's five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Those in Favor Say: The current library furniture and layout are outdated, with many pieces of furniture and equipment reaching the end of their useful life and no longer meeting the functional needs of the space. A Library Redesign Committee was convened in FY2025–26 to evaluate the existing space, identify improvement opportunities, and recommend a plan to enhance functionality, flexibility, and learning support within the library.

Those Against Say: No one spoke against this Article, but a Hampton attendee asked for details about what was included in the estimated cost. it will be a complete overhaul of the entire library.

Fiscal Impact: For a Hampton property valued at \$600,000, the additional cost impact versus last year would be \$8.96 (Hampton's share of 47.23%).



Article 3: HVAC Upgrades - \$497,581

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$497,581 for HVAC and controls upgrades at Winnacunnet High School? This project is part of the facility plan adopted by the school board. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until the project is complete or June 30, 2029, whichever is earlier.

What it Means: The School Board is asking voters in the 5 served towns to fund the planned HVAC and controls upgrades project as outlined in the five-year capital improvement plan (CIP).

Those in Favor: The HVAC system is reaching end-of-life. The proposed upgrades are part of the planned replacement, maintenance and duct cleaning cycle that will help keep the system functioning properly.

Those Against: No one spoke against this Article at the SAU 21 Deliberative Session.

Fiscal Impact: For a Hampton property valued at \$600,000, the additional cost impact versus last year would be \$23.14 (Hampton's share of 47.23%).

Article 4: Auditorium Seating - \$226,000

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$226,000 to replace seating in the Auditorium at Winnacunnet High School? This project is part of the facility plan adopted by the school board. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until the project is complete or June 30, 2029, whichever is earlier.

What it Means: The School Board is asking voters to fund an auditorium seating replacement project that is part of the established auditorium improvement plan and the five-year capital improvement plan (CIP).

Those in Favor: The seats will reach the end of the useful life cycle, with matching replacement seats and seat parts are no longer available for repairs. The School Board joined a national procurement bid that will allow the Cooperative to replace all the seats at a lower cost than the original plan to replace half and use the extras in good condition as spare replacements.

Those Against: No one spoke against this Article at the SAU 21 Deliberative Session.

Fiscal Impact: For a Hampton property valued at \$600,000, the additional cost impact versus last year would be \$10.51 (Hampton's share of 47.23%).

Article 5: Special Education Expendable Trust Fund - \$50,000 - (UFB)

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate \$50,000 to be added to the existing Special Education Expendable Trust Fund, with up to \$50,000 to be funded from the June 30, 2026 Unassigned Fund Balance available for transfer on July 1, 2026. No additional amount to be raised from taxation.

What it Means: The School Board proposes funding the Special Education expendable trust with \$50,000, utilizing unreserved fund balance, for the March 2026 ballot.



Those in Favor: The Special Education Expendable Trust was established for the purpose of funding unanticipated special education costs. As such, it is beneficial to replenish the Special Education Expendable Trust to safeguard and mitigate future unexpected costs.

Those Against: No one spoke against this Article at the SAU 21 Deliberative Session.

Fiscal Impact: Funding for the Special Education Expendable Trust is proposed to be taken from any potential available year-end fund balance – not to be raised via additional taxation.

Article 6: School Health Insurance Fund Expendable Trust Fund - \$25,000 (UFB)

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate \$25,000 to be added to the existing School Health Insurance Fund Expendable Trust Fund, with up to \$25,000 to be funded from the June 30, 2026 Unassigned Fund Balance available for transfer on July 1, 2026. No additional amount to be raised from taxation.

What it Means: The Health Care Expendable Trust was established for the purpose of safeguarding the School District against increasing health insurance premium costs. The Health Care Expendable Trust allows for mitigation of potential budget increases due to rising health insurance rates.

Those in Favor: The Health Care Expendable Trust was established for the purpose of safeguarding the school district against increasing health insurance premium costs. The Health Care Expendable Trust allows for mitigation of potential budget increases due to rising health insurance rates.

Discussion: No one spoke either for or against this Article at the SAU 21 Deliberative Session, other than to explain it.

Fiscal Impact: Funding for the Special Education Expendable Trust is proposed to be taken from any potential available year-end fund balance – not to be raised via additional taxation.

Voting Day is Tuesday March 10th at Winnacunnet High School.

**Use the handy chart on the next page to record your choices.
Then bring the page with you to the voting booth to save time.**

Thanks!

In The Know Hampton is grateful to the **Beach Club Casino** and to **Granite State Gaming & Hospitality** for providing funds that allowed us to prepare and distribute this information to you.

For more information on the ballot questions, please visit:

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A Place to Write your SAU 21 Voting Notes

2026 Hampton Town Meeting Tuesday March 10th					
				WINNACUNNET COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT	
				Election of Officers (On Town Ballot)	
2026 Candidates for SAU 21 Positions					
	Positions	Term	Candidate Names		
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	Budget Member - Hampton (1)	1 Yr	Nichole Duggan		
	Budget Member - Hampton Falls (1)	3 Yrs	Colleen Farias		
	Budget Member - Seabrook (1)	3 Yrs	Laura Carty		
	School Moderator (1)	3 Yrs	Chris Muns		
Article #	Topic			Yes	No
1	Operating Budget of \$32,803,073 versus Default Budget of \$32,469,395				
2	Library Furniture and Redesign - \$192,698				
3	HVAC Upgrades - \$497,581				
4	Auditorium Seating - \$226,000				
5	Special Education Expendable Trust Fund - \$50,000 - (UFB)				
6	School Health Insurance Fund Expendable Trust Fund - \$25,000 (UFB)				