

Goffstown School District



Media Release:

11 School St., Goffstown, NH 03045

Tel: (603) 497-4818

Fax: (603) 497-8425

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Brian Balke, Superintendent of Schools

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On Monday, October 30, 2017, the Goffstown School Board called a special meeting to discuss concerns around the 2017 Tax Rate as set by the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) on October 26, 2017. Specifically, the Local School Rate for the community of Goffstown was calculated to be \$15.02. The 2017 Local School Rate represents an increase of \$1.47 per thousand. This increase was higher than the anticipated Tax Rate increase presented by the School District during the School District Deliberative Session on February 4, 2017. At the Deliberative Session, the 2017 Tax Rate increase was anticipated to be \$0.64.

Administration in SAU 19 has determined that an error was made in the business office when projecting the 2017 Tax Rate during the budget process last fall as well as at the Deliberative Session on February 4, 2017. The presented Tax Rate of \$14.19 did not account for approximately \$1,500,000 in grant funds as well as food services. Both grant funds and food service are counted as revenue as no local money is raised through taxation to fund them. The mistake occurred when these grant funds and food service were counted as revenue in the Tax Rate calculation but not as expenditures as well.

Brian Balke, Superintendent of Schools shares, “We strive for accuracy and transparency in all we do in SAU 19. I accept full responsibility for this calculation error made in the anticipated Tax Rate and apologize to the School Board, the Budget Committee, the Board of Selectmen, and the community as a whole for this unfortunate error. Had we had the correct 2017 Tax Rate projection, the School District could have taken steps to reduce the increase to the tax impact for 2017”

School Board Chairperson, Dian McCarthy stated, “We are deeply concerned about the unexpected difference in the Tax Rate and are currently considering all of our options as we work towards addressing this issue. While we recognize that mistakes can occur, it is extraordinarily important to us that we receive the correct information with which to inform our decisions and also that the information we convey to the public is likewise accurate. To that end, we have put new processes in place to ensure that such an error will not occur again. The Goffstown School District is the collective effort of many talented and dedicated professionals and a supportive community, and in recent years we’ve made great strides and achievements that we can all be proud of. The Board looks forward to continuing this momentum in years to come.”

Despite this Tax Rate calculation error, the cost per pupil in the Goffstown School District as determined by the New Hampshire Department of Education is well below the State Average and among the lowest in the State. While maintaining a low per pupil cost in Goffstown, the academic achievement of our students is above the state averages in almost all areas and grade levels. It is the position of the Goffstown School District that the return on investment for public education in Goffstown is strong.