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Dear Darien Community,

Happy New Year!

On Wednesday evening, Dr. Fedigan and I had the opportunity to visit a long-standing tradition at DHS - *Cocoa and Cram*. While we do not encourage students to cram for any exams, this event pairs upperclass Blue Wave Anchor and National Honor Society students with ninth graders to provide support in advance of midterms. Students provide subject specific help across all content areas, including World Language, and organizational tips and tactics. The upperclass students also brought their favorite study snacks to go with the cocoa! It is a wonderful example of our young people supporting each other.

BOE Budget Presentation

Last evening I presented the FY27 Proposed Budget to the Board of Education. The FY27 Proposed Budget can be found [here](#). If you are interested in viewing the FY27 Proposed Budget presentation, please follow this [link](#). The presentation begins at 4:02. Many thanks to the representatives from the RTM and the Board of Finance who attended the meeting - it was a fruitful discussion and a great start to a very important process! The FY27 Budget process will continue with the following schedule:

- Curriculum & Instruction and Schools budget presentations and discussions at next week's Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, January 13th
- Special Education and Athletics budgets presentations and discussions on Tuesday, January 20th
- Operations budget presentation and discussion on Tuesday, January 27th

The FY27 Budget public hearing will be on Tuesday, February 3rd and the Board of Education FY27 Budget vote will take place on Thursday, February 5th.

Byrne's Book Club

Next week, I will be launching a book club series culminating with a community discussion. The books will vary in subject, but all will be relevant to our students and community and serve as foundations for important topics and issues we can navigate together. Our first read will be *Never Enough: When Achievement Culture Becomes Toxic-and What We Can Do About It* by Jennifer Breheny Wallace. The discussion will be Wednesday, January 14 at 7:00 pm at Darien Public Library.

Darien Public Schools

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Parent University

Our second [Parent University](#) is scheduled for Thursday, January 22 at 6:30 pm in the Middlesex Middle School media center. This event is designed to help parents navigate the rapidly evolving world of Artificial Intelligence. Please [pre-register](#).

DHS Sports

Our Blue Wave athletes have a packed weekend ahead with a full slate of exciting competitions beginning today. The action kicks off at 1:00 pm with the girls varsity indoor track & field team competing at the Yale Invite in New Haven, followed by the boys at 3:00 pm. Also at 3:00 pm, both boys and girls varsity squash will host GFA at MSquash, while boys varsity swimming takes on Greenwich High School at the Darien YMCA. Basketball fans can enjoy a triple-header against Wilton High School: the girls jv and varsity teams play at home at 4:00 pm and 5:30 pm respectively, while the boys freshman, jv, and varsity squads travel to Wilton for games starting at 4:00 pm and concluding with the varsity tip-off at 7:00 pm. This evening wraps up with girls varsity hockey at Brewster High School at 6:00 pm and boys jv hockey hosting New Canaan at Stamford Twin Rinks at 8:30 pm.

The momentum continues tomorrow, with indoor track & field returning to New Haven for the 8:00 am session of the Yale Invite, while other members of the team head to Staples High School at 10:00 am. Boys varsity wrestling travels to the Warde Invite at 9:30 am, and boys varsity swimming faces Fairfield Prep and Weston at Fairfield University at 1:00 pm. At home, girls varsity gymnastics hosts Wilton at the Darien YMCA at 2:30 pm, and the Darien Ice House will be buzzing with varsity hockey matchups as the boys take on Bishop Hendricken at 4:20 pm and the girls face Greenwich Academy at 6:30 pm. Finally, the weekend concludes on Sunday, with boys varsity hockey hosting La Salle Academy at 3:00 pm at the Darien Ice House. Go Blue Wave!

Sincerely,



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