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Roadshows...an update! WPS 2-1-24

The past two months have been full of meetings and conversations about the different scenarios regarding the FY25 Budget. Thank you to everyone who has participated in and or gone back to watch any of those events. Outside of the typical process of those School Committee meetings and Finance Committee Hearings, a team of us with representatives from both WPS and the Town have been embarking on a Roadshow of sorts trying to make ourselves available to various organizations in order to provide context and answer questions about the development and potential impacts of the FY25 Budget and beyond. So far, we've met with the League of Women Voters, The Cameron Senior Center, WEPTO, and the Friends of the Library. In the next few weeks we will be meeting with our Westford SEPAC, Westford Rotary, WA Students, as well as holding an Open Forum scheduled for the general public on March 4 at 7:00PM. Conversations about our two different budget scenarios will continue all the way up to Annual Town Meeting which is on March 23, 2024 at Westford Academy followed by the Town Election Day on May 7, 2024.

For anyone interested in reviewing more information, all of our budget documents are available online in one location (<https://www.westfordk12.us/district/news/fy25-budget-documents>). We have made sure to include links to the Town budget website, as well, where some Frequently Asked Questions have been posted with helpful information.

Next year's 2024-2025 WPS School Calendar was approved by the School Committee this past Monday night. From feedback we received previously, we looked at some examples from other districts and updated the format to make it more user friendly with all of the information that we were trying to include. In addition to the new format, we are also grateful for the work that the Town of Westford DEI committee has done in creating a Multicultural Calendar that we are able to link to our official calendar.

To promote inclusivity and enhance mutual understanding among the many different ethnic, cultural, faith, and religious groups in our increasingly pluralistic town the Westford Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee has created a Multicultural Calendar as a tool to increase awareness of and respect for religious obligations and ethnic and cultural festivities that may affect students, colleagues, and neighbors in our town. This calendar contains a non-exhaustive list of state & federal holidays, cultural celebrations & significant religious observances of the major faiths represented in our community and may be useful when planning school exam schedules and activities, workplace festivities, and community events.

One of the upcoming events is Lunar New Year. WA's Asian Culture Club and the volunteers from the Westford Asian community warmly invite everyone to the Westford 2024 Lunar New Year celebration on Feb 10th at 4:30pm at WA. Enjoy an authentic Chinese dinner, cultural showcases, and Year of the Dragon performances.

Tickets are available using the following link:

<https://www.ticketsource.us/westford-academy-asian-culture-club>

Finally, for a number of years, Westford Public Schools has been a member of the Massachusetts Partnerships for Youth (MPY). They provide valuable professional development seminars for our staff to access covering a wide variety of topics around student's well-being. Recently, they have shared with us additional free resources for our families to access called the MPY Parenting Solutions Library. MPY is offering the MPY Parenting Solutions Library in partnership with Peace At Home Parenting Solutions, a non-profit located in Mansfield, Connecticut. Through this new partnership, MPY is pleased to offer proven resources to help students' families thrive.

Peace At Home Parenting Solutions specializes in empowering parents with evidence-based strategies to foster nurturing connections that safeguard their children's mental well-being. The Parenting Solutions Library may easily be accessed on the Parents/Caregivers' page of our district website: <https://www.westfordk12.us/district/parents-caregivers>

Cheers,

Chris

Christopher Chew, Ed. D

Superintendent

Westford Public Schools

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