

SMITH VOCATIONAL AND AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL  
NORTHAMPTON, MA

MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Tuesday December 19, 2023  
5:00 PM

PRESENT: Mr. Michael T. Cahillane, Dr. Julie Spencer-Robinson, Mr. Richard Aquadro, Dr. Portia Bonner  
NPS Superintendent, Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra (5:04pm)

ADMINISTRATION: Superintendent Dr. Andrew Linkenhoker, Principal Mr. Joseph Bianca,  
School Business Administrator Ms. Crystal Fairman, Facilities Director Tim Smith

ABSENT: Student Rep's Domeniq Sanchez and Brandon Diaz

Chair Michael T. Cahillane called the meeting to order at 5:00pm  
Vice-Chair Dr. Spencer-Robinson led the Pledge of Allegiance.  
Mr. Aquadro read the Mission Statement of the School.

Participation by the Public: none

Participation by the Trustees: Dr. Spencer-Robinson, as district representative of the Collaborative for  
Educational Services (CES), reported the highlights of the quarterly meeting. The newsroom blog is on  
the main website, SPIFFY coalition needs assessment survey results on website, two CES researchers are  
conducting a study on virtual reality in education.

Approval of Minutes: A **MOTION** was made by Dr. Spencer-Robinson and seconded by Mayor Sciarra  
to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2023 meeting.

**APPROVED 5-0**

School Spotlight: Dr. Linkenhoker stated the school spotlight this evening, Lily Hughes, was unable to report  
on her food drive and her involvement in Project 351 due to illness.

Dr. Linkenhoker spoke briefly in regard to a possible international trip. Animal Science instructor Beth  
Evangelista and Culinary Arts instructor Nelson Lacey gave a presentation on sustainable farming in Northern  
Italy (attached). There was discussion in regard to some of the details around how this trip would relate to the  
school's curriculum, cost and fundraising. This will be on the agenda in January for a vote.

Information and Proposals/Trustees Questions & Answers (Q&A):

Superintendent's Report - Dr. Linkenhoker presented his report (attached).

Brief discussion regarding the horticulture building project and questions asking about donations and what  
has been received since the promotional video and newspaper article.

Principal's Report - Mr. Bianca gave his report (attached). Mr. Bianca added that information from Lily  
Hughes who was to present under school spotlight is attached.

Dr. Spencer-Robinson stated in regard to grade 9 shop numbers suggesting a potential way to fill shops could  
be an every other year option.

Discussion on working with department heads on building their departments budget.

Committee Report – Dr. Spencer-Robinson stated the Policy Subcommittee met twice since the last Board of Trustees meeting to prioritize and begin reviewing and updating policies as necessary, priority order is as follows: conference food reimbursement, parent/guardian communication, parent opt out rights, library materials, graduation requirements, longevity, sick time and sick bank, Michelle Mokrezcki Fund, general policy manual review.

Facilities Report – Mr. Smith gave an update on current projects taking place on campus. Dr. Spencer-Robinson asked if our campus was impacted with the very recent heavy rain. Mr. Smith replied the campus was fine, the new diversion drain was flowing pretty heavy.

Financial Report – Ms. Fairman briefly reviewed the finances to date. Ms. Fairman updated on the free lunch program and how it is important for the families to complete the free and reduced lunch forms in order for the school to receive funds from the USDA.

New Business:

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Aquadro and seconded by Dr. Bonner to approve the payment of an FY23 invoice to Orchard Electric for \$428.00 from Facilities Revolving  
**APPROVED 5-0**

A **MOTION** was made by Dr. Spencer-Robinson and seconded by Mayor Sciarra for Discussion with Possible action (a vote) on electronic approval of warrants procedure

**Discussion:** Dr. Spencer-Robinson gave an update in regard to the current process for electronic payment for warrants and potential open meeting law violations, consulted the city solicitor for advice, and polled other local school committee members. Discussion around how trustees would review the warrants. Dr. Spencer-Robinson recommends a motion to designate one person to sign warrants with a second member designated as back up. Chair Mr. Cahillane designated Dr. Spencer-Robinson as the signer of the warrant and himself as the designated back up signer. The list of warrants will be sent with the agenda prior to the next scheduled Board of Trustees meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Dr. Portia Bonner and seconded by Mr. Aquadro seconded to designate Dr. Spencer-Robinson as the signer of warrants with Mr. Cahillane as the second signer as back up.

**APPROVED 5-0**

A **MOTION** was made by Dr. Spencer-Robinson and seconded by Mr. Aquadro to approve the updates to the Travel Reimbursement Policy

**Discussion:** Dr. Linkenhoker explained the recommendation of updates. Dr. Spencer-Robinson added this would be to support an educator who is taking time away from their job and families.

Mayor asked if there was a pro-rated amount should a conference not be a whole or multiple day where meals won't be provided. Agreement to allowing policy to be tired and revisited if needed.

**APPROVED 5-0**

Mr. Aquadro apologized and stated he needed to leave in order to get to an appointment and exited at 7:00pm

Future Business:

December 19, 2023 Building Committee meeting 3:00pm – Library

December 19, 2023 Regular Board of Trustees meeting 5:00pm – Library

January 23, 2024 Building Committee meeting 3:00pm – Library

January 23, 2024 Regular Board of Trustees meeting 5:00pm – Library

February 13, 2024 Regular Board of Trustees meeting 5:00pm – Library

Executive Session:

The chair moved to enter into Executive Session, under Massachusetts General Law - Open Meeting Law chapter 30A, Sec.21 (a) (2) to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; the School Business Administrator and to reconvene in open session for possible action.

Mayor Sciarra seconded

Mr. Michael T. Cahillane – yes  
Dr. Julie Spencer-Robinson – yes  
Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra – yes  
Dr. Portia Bonner – yes

At 7:40 pm the Board returned to open session.

**A MOTION** was made by Dr. Bonner and seconded by Dr. Spencer-Robinson to approve the three-year 2024-2027 contract of the School Business Administrator

Mr. Michael T. Cahillane – yes  
Dr. Julie Spencer-Robinson – yes  
Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra – yes  
Dr. Portia Bonner – yes

**APPROVED 4-0**

Adjourn:

At 7:46pm Dr. Bonner **MOTIONED** to adjourn.

**APPROVED 4-0**

Respectfully submitted,  
Deborah Carver, Board Secretary



EDUCATIONAL  
TOURS

# International Travel Program Proposal

Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School  
Ms. Evangelista & Mr. Lacey



**Sustainable Farming in Northern Italy – Spring 2025**

[eftours.com/AGN](http://eftours.com/AGN)

# Your partner in travel-based learning

EF Education First is the world leader in international education. For over 55 years, we've partnered with educators around the world to help more than 15 million students gain new perspectives and build skills for the future through experiential learning.

Our mission is to empower educators to do their best work. At EF Educational Tours, we're working to define the modern educational tour experience. Our itineraries are more than places to go and things to see. We build programs that challenge assumptions, spark connections, and inspire curiosity in young students. Students will expand their knowledge of the world around them, discover more about themselves, grow more confident and independent, and understand new people, places, and cultures.

We take care of every last detail of the tour experience—transportation and lodging, meal reservations and menus, museum tickets and local tour guides, and much more. That also includes behind-the-scenes elements, like safety checks at hotels and background checks on adult travelers. With all that taken care of, educators and students can focus on the bigger picture.

You'll find all the details and more on the next few pages.

## What's contained in this document

- Pg. 2** Safety
- Pg. 4** Liability protection
- Pg. 6** Affordability
- Pg. 7** Educational value
- Pg. 8** Itinerary specifics
- Pg. 8** Cost and payment options
- Pg. 9** Sample hotels
- Pg. 10** Sample meals
- Pg. 11** Next steps

This proposal is property of EF Education First and the educator/school for which it was intended. Distributing, copying, and/or sharing it are prohibited. The proposal, including pricing, is valid for the educator, tour, and date(s) specifically mentioned herein. For additions, subtractions, or modifications, please contact your EF Tour Consultant.

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# Safety

**Your students' safety is our number one priority. We would never send a traveler to a location we believe to be unsafe—and with our extensive global presence, our best-in-the-industry experience, and our close working relationships with U.S. and international authorities, that's a statement we can back up with real insight. Whether it's a worldwide pandemic or a sprained ankle, a missed flight or confusing medical paperwork, we make sure every situation is taken care of.**

**\*For specific information on EF's response to COVID-19, visit [eftours.com/covid](https://www.eftours.com/covid)**

## **Worldwide presence**

EF's global presence is truly unmatched. We have staff on the ground 365 days a year in over 50 countries. And we don't just work in those countries—we call them home. EF team members live in nearly every one of our tour destinations, meaning we have the local knowledge to help keep our groups safe. That presence allows us to be there to support you on the ground wherever and whenever you need us.

## **24/7 emergency support**

In the event that anything on tour goes wrong, EF staff is always available to help. Your Tour Director is your group's constant companion and first point of contact in an emergency. Additionally, our fully trained support teams are on hand 24/7 to walk teachers through any issues and provide the resources necessary to get things back on track. Our Safety and Incident Response Team—comprised of industry experts, healthcare experts, and even former FBI personnel—is ready to spring into action 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. And when they aren't directly helping EF travelers, they're actively innovating on and shaping the new worldwide standards for cleanliness and safety.

## Your team

This group is fully committed to your school's trip and the safety of every traveler.

**Operations Safety & Incident Response Team** – This team is strategically based in our Boston, Panama, Tokyo, and Zurich offices to accommodate for all time zones. Available 24 hours a day, every day of the year, they are trained to react quickly if travelers need help. The team uses a combination of extensive training, simulations, incident response planning, and previous experience to manage emergencies. As needed, they can facilitate additional support for groups on tour, solve operational issues, arrange assistance from outside specialists, and liaise with local and international authorities.

**Emergency Services & Support Team** – Our support team is available 24/7 to help resolve any issue, from a missed flight to a lost passport to more serious on-tour incidents. They also facilitate communication between travelers and families in the event of an emergency at home. The team is made up of highly trained and dedicated EF staff in our Boston and Denver offices who are equipped to solve problems and answer questions that may come up, even outside of regular business hours.

**Tour Director** – Assigned exclusively to your tour for the length of the stay at your destination, your Tour Director meets your group at the airport and travels with you until your departure. All Tour Directors undergo a background check as permissible by local law every two years and are required to participate in ongoing EF safety trainings. They're the first point of contact in an emergency and also communicate information to help travelers stay safe in a foreign destination. Tour Directors assist Group Leaders with hotel check-ins, coordinate meals, facilitate excursions with local guides, and much more. They're also culturally connected and expertly trained to support impactful learning experiences.

**EF Travel Team** – This team is your point of contact at EF. This team is a dynamic duo, made up of a Tour Consultant and an Experience Specialist. Your Tour Consultant is an itinerary whiz & is devoted to the growth of your students. They are your school's partner, working with you on everything from finding the perfect tour and enrolling students to creating long-term travel programs for your school community. Your Experience Specialist is here to dive into all the little details that make your experience with EF special. They will work directly alongside the Group Leader (a.k.a. local teacher), right up until the moment of departure to make sure everything goes smoothly.

**Traveler Support** – Our team of support specialists are readily available to walk families through insurance inquiries, payment plans, food allergy issues, and any other topics that arise.

**Chaperones** – For every six travelers who enroll on your school's tour, your group is eligible to bring along a chaperone for free (the first spot goes to the Group Leader). This allows for a 6:1 ratio of students to chaperones, who assist Group Leaders with supervision of students to help keep them safe

# Protection for travelers, schools, and districts

We understand that unpredictable things can happen, either on tour or before departure. We offer a variety of protections, programs, and policies to make sure that, no matter what happens, travelers, schools, and districts are covered. We're doing everything we can to make planning for the future as flexible as possible.

## General liability insurance

All Group Leaders, schools, and districts who travel with EF are automatically added as additional insureds under our **\$50 million General Liability Policy**, regardless of whether or not the tour is affiliated with the school. EF's liability coverage is primary and non-contributory for covered third-party claims. The policy helps safeguard Group Leaders and their schools for covered third-party claims related to bodily injury or property damage, which includes providing a legal defense and covering legal costs for such claims. In addition, all travelers are required to sign EF's Release and Agreement, which includes a release of liability of their Group Leader, school, and school board.

## Flexibility to change tours

The world is always changing. And while our belief in the positive impact of travel is unwavering, it can feel hard to predict what life, here in the U.S. and abroad, will look like several months, a year, or even two years from now. When you decide to travel with EF, we want you to feel secure in that decision. That's why these benefits are built into every EF program.

### *Peace of Mind*

#### *Provided to all groups*

We understand that plans can change due to unforeseen circumstances. EF provides this exclusive program to account for such situations. It provides groups with flexibility to change the dates and destination of their tours in uncertain times. This program accounts for such circumstances and can be enacted up to 45 days prior to departure at the group level for any reason, including terrorism or other world events.

### *COVID Care Promise*

#### *Provided to all groups*

If your child is diagnosed with COVID-19 while on tour, we will coordinate and facilitate support services and logistics including translation services, connections with local health care providers, communication with family, and flights home at no additional cost.



## Protection for individual travelers

Travelers can help protect their investment and themselves from certain unexpected events and expenses while on tour with the Global Travel Protection Plan and Global Travel Protection Plan Plus.

### ***Global Travel Protection Plan***

*Available to all travelers*

Designed specifically with EF travelers in mind, this plan provides both pre-departure and post-departure benefits, including medical expense coverage that may apply on tour and tour cancellation for specified reasons.

### ***Global Travel Protection Plan Plus***

*Available to all travelers*

To further protect your investment from the unexpected, this plan provides all of the benefits included in the Global Travel Protection Plan as well as expanded cancellation protection.

## Background checks for adult travelers

EF requires all adults (20 years and older) to pass a criminal background check before traveling on our student tours. This provides a safer tour experience for all travelers and aligns with the process and expectations of many school districts for adults who volunteer in schools or chaperone school activities. The secure process, provided by a leading professional provider, only identifies those individuals who could present a risk to student travelers while on tour.

# Affordability

We believe every student should have the opportunity to travel. That's why we're dedicated to providing the lowest prices possible and giving travelers multiple resources for managing payments.

Tour Consultants work closely with teachers to build a tour that's exactly right for your students. Through discussions with your teacher, they take into account learning objectives, cost, timing considerations, and any other factors to craft a tour that's accessible to as many students as possible.

## Resources for managing cost and payments

***Automatic Payment Plan*** – Our recommended payment plan offers the ability to break the tour fee into smaller installments. With most tours planned well in advance, travelers can enroll for only \$95, then pay over a long period of time—often up to 18 months or two years—with final payment due 30 days before departure. Families make payments directly to EF, with no payments going through the school.

***Fundraising pages*** – Each student has access to their own unique and customizable fundraising page. The easy-to-share page makes it simple for friends and family to contribute a little something that is automatically applied to the balance of the tour, with no fees whatsoever.

***Global Citizen Scholarship Fund*** – EF Educational Tours provides \$100,000 worth of scholarships to students across the country every year. Any student is able to apply for the Global Citizen Scholarship, which is awarded on both a merit and need basis.

***Risk-free enrollment period*** - New travelers who enroll by their Early Enrollment Discount Deadline can cancel for any reason up to 14 days after enrollment for a full refund of 100% of the money paid to EF. Travelers must pay in full or enroll in our Automatic Payment Plan at the time of program enrollment and must remain either paid in full or enrolled in our Automatic Payment Plan and in good financial standing at the time of cancellation to remain eligible. To be eligible, the traveler must enroll on a tour at least 110 days prior to the scheduled departure date.

# Educational value

Our tours help prepare students for the future by teaching them more about the world, themselves, and the impact they can have on the world. Combining the power of experiential learning with the thrill of global travel, our tours help students:

- Expand their knowledge of the world around them
- Grow more confident and independent
- Understand new people, places, and cultures
- Discover more about themselves

To learn more about EF's educational philosophy, visit <https://www.eftours.com/our-story/educational-approach>

## EF is an accredited institution

We echo your commitment to education. Our travel-based learning approach is designed to blend classroom and experiential learning. This allows us to meet the same rigorous standards as schools like yours, ensuring students gain valuable experiences that transform the way they look at the world.



## Earning credit for new experiences

EF makes it easy for students to turn their tour experience into high school credit, college credit, or to get a head start on their college essays—all while making their travel experience even more engaging.

- Students in grades 6 - 12 can earn .5 elective high school credit by successfully completing the final project as part of EF's Personalized Learning Guide. Tuition is free.
- Students in grades 9 - 12 can earn 3.0 undergraduate credits, along with the confidence that comes with taking a college course, by completing a series of assignments and a final research project with our partner, Southern New Hampshire University—all for just \$360.
- Educators traveling on student tours may earn up to 45 free hours toward relicensure OR 3 or 6 graduate level credits (\$360/\$720) through Southern New Hampshire University.

## Itinerary specifics

For more robust details, the complete itinerary is attached to this document. It includes specific locations, each day’s activities, travel plans, and more.

**Price of the proposed tour**

The tour program price covers a wide range of services that ensure students have an incredible experience. It includes all the planning and preparation that leads up to departure, travel and accommodations, plus logistical support and details once the group reaches their destination.

**Full flexible travel window:** April 17-27, 2025

**Requested travel dates:** April 18-26, 2025

<b>Price details</b>	
<i>Sustainable Farming in Northern Italy</i>	
Program Price* <sup>1</sup>	\$4,149
Includes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round-trip airfare and on tour transportation</li> <li>• Hotels with private bathrooms</li> <li>• Breakfast and dinner (see your itinerary for meal details)</li> <li>• Full-time Tour Director</li> <li>• Daily activities, tours and entrances to attractions</li> </ul>	
Global Travel Protection	\$190
EF's Peace of Mind Program *	Free
<b>Total for Students (under 20)</b>	<b>\$4,339</b>
16 monthly payments	\$266/mo
<hr/>	
Adult Supplement <sup>2</sup>	\$590
<b>Total for Adults</b>	<b>\$4,929</b>
16 monthly payments	\$303/mo

**Sample hotels**

**Every hotel we work with must meet our high standards for safety, quality, and cleanliness. Hotels are vetted by our team to make sure they meet our requirements and are subsequently inspected regularly to ensure they continue to satisfy those parameters. Please note that hotels abroad may have different amenities than travelers are accustomed to in the United States.**

Here are some examples of hotels students might stay in on tour:

### **Hotel La Pergola | Rome**

<http://www.hotellapergola.com>

The Pergola Hotel offers spacious and comfortable rooms with buffet-style breakfast in a quiet area of Rome not far from the city center. The hotel is located close to the Porta Di Roma shopping center, which has over 200 stores.

### **Ibis Firenze Nord Aeroporto | Florence**

<https://all.accor.com/hotel/3728/index.en.shtml>

With the Tuscan hills on the horizon, this hotel boasts a modern design and 220 rooms. After a day on tour, guests can get cozy in their rooms or relax in the hotel lounge and enjoy the free Wi-Fi throughout the property.

## **Sample meals**

**Meals are selected to establish a more immersive cultural experience and give students an idea of how locals eat. Below are some examples of local dishes travelers may try at the destination that your teacher has chosen, but please note that meals can vary from tour to tour.**

On tour, breakfast generally is simple and will be at the hotel; it could be plated or buffet-style. **Lunch** typically is your chance to make culinary discoveries of your own. **Dinners** will be a mix of familiar dishes and local specialties. All meals will be a mix of familiar dishes and local specialties all served from a pre-set group menu.



### **Italy: Sample Meals**

Tomato bruschetta, cannellini beans with garlic and sage, lasagna, gelato

Spaghetti with pesto, pork loin with spinach and potatoes, fruit salad

# How I can help with next steps

My name is Johna Jo Toomey and I am Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School's dedicated Tour Consultant. That means I'll be working with Ms. Evangelista & Mr. Lacey every step of the way to make sure everything is perfectly planned.

As we move forward in this process, here are some next steps to keep in mind:

- Tour Launch: I will provide promotional materials (flyers, emails, posters, etc) and the scope and sequence for advertising the tour to students and families
- Enrollment Period: Teachers (aka Group Leaders) will host an enrollment meeting with a slide deck (provided by me) explaining the educational value of our tour, how to enroll, etc
- First-time Group Leaders are eligible for a Free International Training Tour (after they enroll their first 10 travelers) to help them feel confident and prepared to lead their first international tour!
- Your travel team, which consists of Johna (Tour Consultant) and Samantha (Experience Specialist) will coordinate with you around logistics prior to departure

I hope this overview has given you the information you need to feel confident in EF as an educational travel provider. Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly. EF is excited to partner with your school to bring this life-changing experiential learning opportunity to your students.

Sincerely,  
Johna Jo Toomey  
Tour Consultant  
[johnajo.toomey@ef.com](mailto:johnajo.toomey@ef.com)



**“I am now more confident than ever in the safety and experiences of my students after working with EF on this trip. As a leader, I am committed to ensuring a global mindset throughout my district and student/teacher travel.”**

**Angela M., Administrator, Brunswick, ME**

**“I advocate for travel because the world is vast and diverse. If we want to truly understand our neighbors in other states or countries, we must reach out and meet them where they live. Travel provides a glimpse into another world that our students may have Googled or watched on a device, but living it with the smells, food, smiles, and various challenges teaches flexibility, tolerance, understanding, and empathy.”**

**- Chuck C., Group Leader, Central, SC**

### **From a single tour to a whole program**

A single tour can open up endless possibilities for a small group of students. Our goal at EF is to bring that experience to as many students as possible, including the broadest collection of students at your school. By progressing from a single tour to a consistent travel program, you'll not only build a culture of exploration, but you'll provide the opportunity of travel to even more students. We can work directly with you and your staff to establish a framework for your travel program that's tailored specifically to your school's needs and goals.

# Superintendent Report

December 19, 2023

Submitted by  
Andrew H. Linkenhoker, Ed.D

## Instructional Leadership

*The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.*

- Freshmen Exploratory
  - Full Shops: 9 (Includes capped Ag. Mech)
  - 10-11 Students: 1
  - 8-9 Students: 1
  - 6-7 Students: 3
  - 4-5 Students: 1
    - Reminder: 150 students/year = 600 total students
    - To fill ALL programs = 720 total students
- NEASC Self-Study Updates
  - Faculty approved all foundational elements & School and Community Profile
  - Working on principles of effective practice
    - Hope to have faculty vote to approve in January
  - March 19 & 20, 2024 visit
    - Must house, feed, and reimburse travel for up to 8 people
- DESE TFM (Tiered Focused Monitoring)
  - March 4-6, 2024 dates of review
  - Review student records, policies, procedures, etc. to ensure compliance



Ms. Brisbois's class did an in-depth study of the 1st, 4th & 6th Amendments through Supreme Court cases involving students. They researched the facts of the case, how the Court ruled, & how it impacts them today.

## Management & Operations

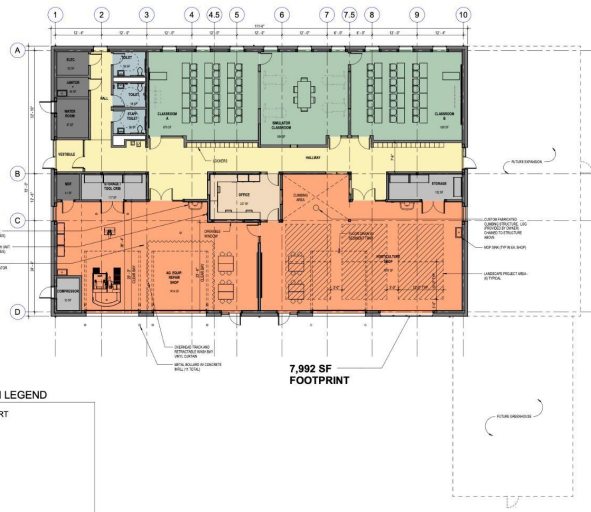
*Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.*

- Campus Updates
  - Companion Animal Building:
    - Plumbing & Electrical continuing with interior work
    - HVAC system delayed/changed due to supply chain issues
    - Estimated completion date end of 2023-2024 school year
    - Met with owner of Good Dog Spot: providing invaluable advice on this building

## Management & Operations

*Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.*

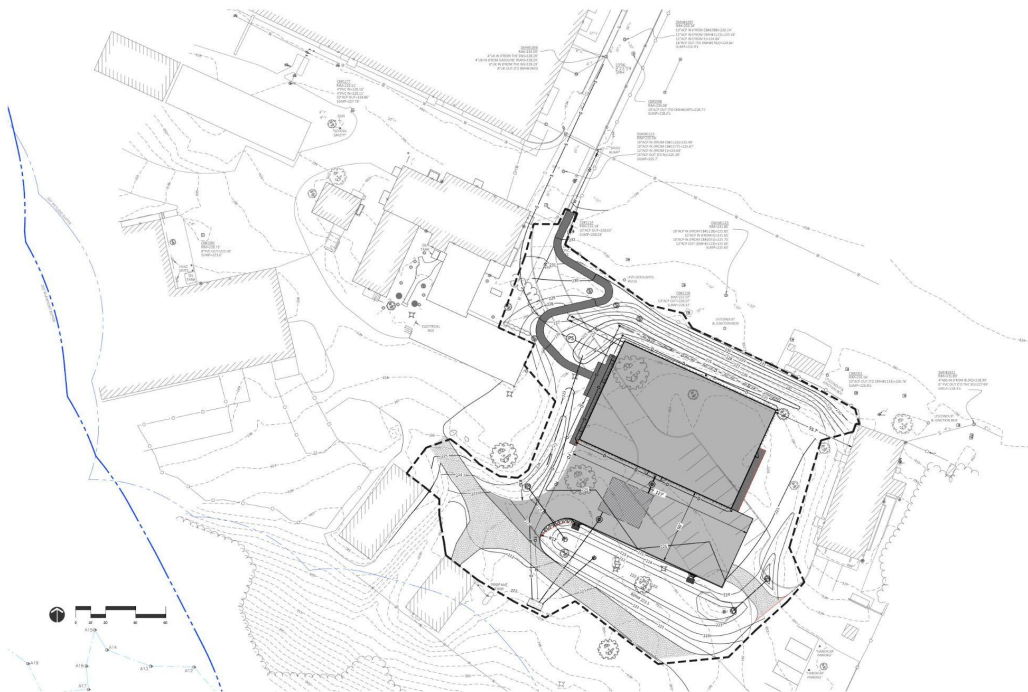
- Horticulture Building Updates
  - Focus has been on site testing
  - Conservation Meeting went well 12/14/23
  - Electrical Engineer determined electrical supply to that area of campus is not sufficient
    - Considering new building, existing Horticulture Building, & Companion Animal Building
    - Current infrastructure needs to be replaced no matter what
  - Finalizing Design Documents (DD) for 2nd estimate to occur first week of January
    - Decide on paying for independent estimate at that stage
  - January BoT Meeting will be to vote on DD
    - If approved then move onto Construction Documents (CD)
      - Another estimate will occur during this phase
    - Once CD is complete and approved then move on to bidding process

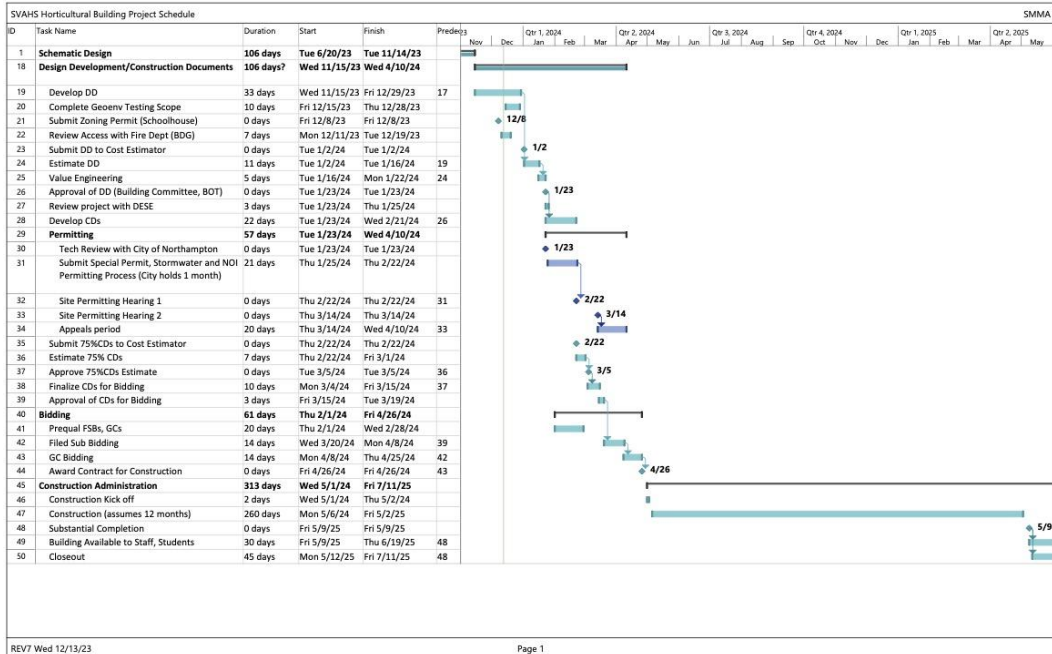


FLOOR PLANS  
1/8" = 1'-0"

SVaHS HORTICULTURAL BUILDING  
12.19.22

SMMA





REV' Wed 12/13/23

Page 1

## Family & Community Engagement

*Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.*

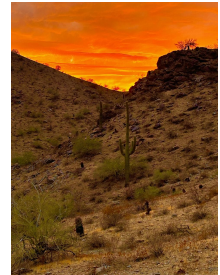
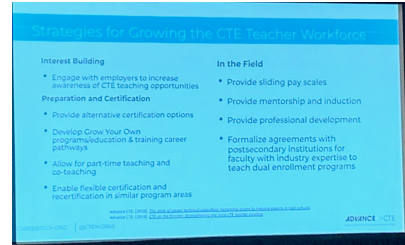
- [December Newsletter](#)
- SBHC Update
  - Hilltown Health Network has posted for 2 part time positions
    - Community Health Worker
    - Behavioral Health
  - Intention to begin services in January/February
- Website/Communication Discussions
  - Researching options for updating website
  - Potential for more efficient communication
  - Need to determine budgeting constraints

# Professional Culture

*Promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.*

- ACTE Highlights

- Morris Morrison Keynote
- Increasing Career Readiness through WBL
- AI Powered Transformation
- Kicking Compassion Fatigue
- Increasing Diversity within CTE Educator Pipeline
- AI in CTE
- ChatGPT in the Classroom
- CTE Administrators: Unique Roles & Responsibilities
- Building Student Resiliency



# Donations

- Eva Schoken donated 146 board feet of rough cut maple apex to **Cabinetmaking** to be used for student projects

# In the News...

## A LOOK BACK

By JIM BRIDGMAN

For the Gazette

50 Years Ago

• Downtown Northampton stores will be darker the traditional Christmas lighting will be absent and the neon signs of bars and package stores will be dimmed. But a bright note marks the latest local energy-savings measures — free bus fare into the city. The Downtown Merchants Association has voted to reimburse downtown shoppers for their bus fare into the city by deducting the bus fare from any purchase of \$5 or more.

• Nixes administration officials say a curtailment of Sunday driving is being considered as one way to conserve. White House energy adviser John A. Love said Monday the administration may soon require the closing of gasoline stations on Sundays.

25 Years Ago

• Parents would choose which school their children attend, within limits, under a plan to correct a racial imbalance among the city's elementary schools. The Desegregation Task Force will present details of that proposed plan, as well as two other options for desegregating city schools, at a special meeting of the School

Committee at the end of the month.

• The new four-way stop signs at the intersection of Florence and Bratt Pk roads will soon loom even larger to halt motorists accustomed to passing right on through. The city plans to increase the size of the octagonal signs that went up last Friday on Florence Road, eventually placing 48-inch signs there, each of them more than a foot larger than the signs that went up Friday.

10 Years Ago

• Three out of five adults in Massachusetts say they support having casinos in the commonwealth, but most also don't want them in their own city or town, according to a new survey by the Western New England University Polling Institute.

• Northampton Mayor David J. Napolitano has backed off an earlier call to consider merging South Vocational and Agricultural High School with the city schools in favor of asking the state to help fund a new structure that would preserve the 105-year-old vocational school's independence.

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Tuesday, 11/21/2023 Page: A02

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## \$750K sought to rebuild after fire

Smith Vocational hopes donations can cover funding gap to advance horticulture building

NORTHAMPTON

By ALEXANDER MACDOUGALL

Staff Writer

**NORTHAMPTON** — With nearly \$6 million already in hand to rebuild a horticulture building ravaged by fire 18 months ago, Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School recently launched a campaign to raise the remaining \$750,000 needed to move the project forward.

According to a letter distributed by Superintendent Andrew Linkohoker, most of the necessary \$6.7 million to build a new structure has been secured through insurance settlements, Capital Skills Grants from the state, and an amendment to the Massachusetts Economic Bond Bill by state Sen. Jo Comerford. But the school is still short of meeting the necessary goal for the project.

Linkohoker noted that as a vocational school, Smith Vocational does not have the same financial support as regional school districts and that students come from a variety of communities across western Massachusetts. The school is responsible for its own budget and policy procedures, with a board of trustees elected by residents of Northampton.

"As we work through rebuilding our Horticulture Building, our unique governance model and financial constraints have set many hurdles in our way toward construction," Linkohoker wrote. "We have been forced to downsize the new design and continue to use the portion of the building that was not damaged during the fire, that to make this new approach sustainable for

SEE DONATIONS 44

## A taste of life

Francoise creates open Le Beau Salon — 'She beautiful' in French — at Maplewood Shops

NORTHAMPTON

By JAMES FENTLAND

Staff Writer

**NORTHAMPTON** — After 17 years waiting a chair at three different Florence salons, hair stylist Anita Francoise has moved downtown and opened her own business.

Le Beau Salon opened last month in the Maplewood Shops, 17 Elm St., and already Francoise feels like she's settling in.

"It's nice being a little closer to downtown, and all the neighbors have been really friendly," he said. Francoise, a 2017 graduate of the corresponding program at South Vocational and Agricultural High School, is a Florence native who got her start at Long Well & Co.

"It was a good experience," he said. "She set me up for success. She prompted me to start early on," rather than becoming an employee.

The opening gives stylists more control over their own schedule and is one he is looking to do his own salon, setting chairs.

his hairdresser and an esthetician who are both self-employed.

As a stylist, Francoise said, he leans toward color, while

SEE SALON 88



Owner and senior stylist Anita Francoise, right, works on fellow stylist Ashley LaBouche's hair on Tuesday at Le Beau Salon in Northampton.

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER LITTLE



The team at Le Beau Salon, senior stylist Ashley LaBouche, left, owner and senior stylist Anita Francoise, and Estee Randa, right, on Tuesday at the salon.

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER LITTLE

# Looking Ahead

- 2x Weekly BAT Meetings
- Weekly Leadership Meetings
- Monthly MAVA Meetings
- Monthly Staff & DH Meetings
- 12/20/23: MDAR Commissioner Randle Visit
- 12/22/23-1/1/24: NO SCHOOL (December Vacation)
- 1/3/24: NEASC Steering Committee
- 1/5/24: CVSR Luncheon: Attorney Long
- 1/12/24: Policy Subcommittee Meeting
- 1/15/24: NO SCHOOL (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
- 1/17/24: Student Early Dismissal
- 1/17/24: MAVA Officers Meeting with Leadership I Candidates
- 1/17/24: MAVA Officers Meeting with Commissioner Riley
- 1/18/24: DESE Liaison Dave Edmunds Meeting
- 1/23/24: MassHire Manufacturing Round Table Meeting
- 1/23/24: Building Committee Meeting
- 1/23/24: BoT Meeting?

## Contact Information

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*Superintendent*

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**Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School**

80 Locust Street  
Northampton, MA 01060-2094  
Phone (413) 587-1414

Mr. Joseph C. Bianca  
Principal



[www.smithtec.org](http://www.smithtec.org)

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**Principal's Report  
December 2023 Board Meeting**

**Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School Board of Trustees:**

**Student Representative to the Board:**

Brandon Diaz  
Domeniq Sanchez

**Enrollment:**

573 – Total Students

**Admissions Update:**

Student applications year over year:

December BOT Meeting 2023 – 198 applications with (20.2%) of them from Northampton  
December BOT Meeting 2022 – 179 applications with 42 (23.5%) of them from Northampton  
December BOT Meeting 2021 – 140 applications with 28 (20%) of them from Northampton  
December BOT Meeting 2020 – 99 applications  
December BOT Meeting 2019 – 130 applications

**Freshmen Placements**

**9 Programs filled**

**Advanced Manufacturing – 12**  
**Ag Mechanics – 8**  
**Animal Science – 14**  
**Automotive – 12**  
**Cabinet Making -12**  
**Automotive Collision Repair – 12**  
**Criminal Justice - 12**  
**Electrical - 12**  
**Plumbing - 12**  
**Carpentry – 7**  
**Cosmetology – 4**  
**Culinary – 9**  
**Graphics – 6**  
**Health Assisting – 6**  
**Horticulture – 11**

**School Council:**

Met on December 19, 2023 and discussed the update on the progress of our SIP goals. We will begin the Student Handbook review process in the January/February time frame.

*Founded in 1844 by Oliver Smith*

*SVAHS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, disability, religion or sexual orientation.*

# Project 351 Fall Service 2023

Lily Hughes - Food Insecurity Awareness



**Hi! My name is Lily Hughes. I'm a freshman at SVAHS, and I'm an ambassador with Project 351 representing Chesterfield.**

# What is Project 351?

Project 351 is a non-profit organization that's main focus is teaching young people how to make a difference through community service in their hometowns. Every year, Project 351 selects one 8th grade student from all 351 towns in Massachusetts to be a representative and ambassador for their town. Throughout the next year, Project 351 trains and guides ambassadors through leading community service projects in their community.



# Meet my team!

Ambassadors of Project 351 get to make a lot of memories during their Ambassador year, and not just by leading our own service. Ambassadors are put into groups in the beginning of the year, with kids from all over the state. Together, ambassadors bond over service, and get to make some really amazing friends. My team has helped me with this project through sharing ideas from their drives, and being there for me whenever I need it.



Me, Maeve, Misha, Lukas, & Kate

# The Impact

Since being founded in 2011 by Carolyn Casey, Project 351 has impacted the lives of 1,277,467 people as of June 2023. This year alone, my class, the Project 351 class of 2023 has impacted the lives of 77,555 people, as of that same date.



# To put that in perspective...

This year alone, people impacted by ambassadors could fill a stadium.

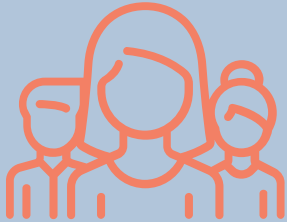


**But there's more people to be helped...**

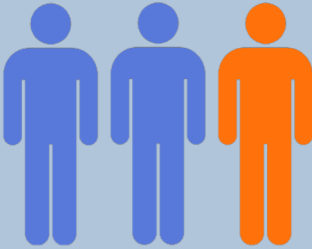
# What is food insecurity?

the condition of not having access to sufficient food, or food of an adequate quality, to meet one's basic needs.

## Food Insecurity Effects...



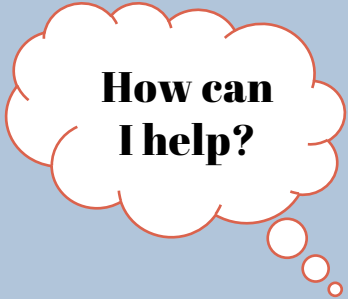
20.7% OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN IN MASS



ONE IN THREE HOUSEHOLDS OF PEOPLE OF COLOR IN MASS



18.4% OF MASSACHUSETTS HOUSEHOLDS



All information is provided by Project Bread

# Food Drive for Northampton Survival Center

From November 27-December 11  
hosted a food drive for  
Northampton Survival Center's  
Hilltown Location in Goshen.

## The Impact of the drive

Here is where I  
will put how many  
donations I  
collected, and  
how many Project  
351 as a whole  
collected and the  
impact of those  
numbers

**Youth Advisory to the Principal:**

First meeting took place on Wednesday, November 15, 2023. We discussed planning around the idea for a Positive Choices Month at SVAHS. We are looking at the Month of March to include presentations, outreach, social media posts, and announcements centered on educating students about positive choices when it comes to relationships, substance abuse and school culture. Our next meeting is Wednesday, December 20, 2023.

**Spirit Week:**

The Student Government will be sponsoring Spirit Week from January 2, 2024 – January 5, 2024. There will be daily themes for comradery and it will culminate with the shop dodgeball tournament on that Friday.

**Budget:**

Building level budget proposals are due by Thursday, December 21, 2023. We will review the individual department requests, meet with department heads, and combine into one proposal for Dr. Linkenhoker to incorporate into his budget request to the Board of Trustees. These meetings will take place during the second and third weeks in January.

**School Council:**

We reviewed the SIP goals and laid out the process of updating the Student Handbook.

**Monte's March and Smith Collision Repair**

Thanks again to Mike Brooks and Chris Richards in Collision. Every year, Mike works to support Monte's March by prepping the carts (originally fabricated here at Smith), repairing, and refurbishing as needed, to get them ready for the march from Springfield to Greenfield. It is a great opportunity for our students to support charitable endeavors through their labor and time. This year Monte raised over \$450,000.

**Toy Drive**

I want to thank Emily Dumais and the National Honors Society, who again sponsored the Toy Drive at Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School this year. In collaboration with this effort, the staff again participated in the toy drive by having a Secret Gift Exchange on December 4<sup>th</sup>. Staff members volunteered to participate and we purchased toys for each other, that we felt reflected the person we were buying for. After all the toys were unwrapped, they were donated. I want to thank the National Honors Society and all staff who participated. In all over 50 toys were collected and brought to the Northampton Fire Department.

**Personnel:**

Health Assisting Instructor – reposted  
English Teacher Long Term Substitute – resignation (move out of state)

Respectfully submitted,  
Joseph Bianca  
Principal