



Town of Southborough

Special Town Meeting

Monday, March 2, 2026

Overview of Warrant Articles

Overview of Articles 1-4

Articles 1-3:

- Funds feasibility studies/schematic designs for multiple potential building projects.
- Future Town Meeting (“TM”) vote on actual construction project.
- Articles 1-3 present TM with different options to study. TM can choose to study 1, 2, or 3 different options (or none). Select Board and School Committee support studying only option 1 (Article 1).

Article 4:

- Funds immediate replacement of Neary roof, ADA upgrades, and study of minimal code compliance.
 - If Article 1 passes, then Article 4 can be limited to just roof replacement.

Background

- May 2025: Special Town Meeting vote
 - Considered replacing Neary and Finn with new 4-grade school at Neary; not approved.
- Summer 2025: New PreK-8 School Building Committee formed
 - Studied twelve (12) different options; narrowed to three (3) options that aligned with educational vision of Schools.
- September 2025: Survey of Town voters

Neary Building Project Survey: Feedback

1. Cost Concerns

- Residents felt the overall cost and tax impact were too high
- Many wanted a more affordable or phased approach

2. Strong Concern About Closing Finn School

- Fear of losing community identity and local access

3. Desire for More Alternatives

- Renovation vs. rebuild
- Different grade configurations

4. Trust and Communication

- Some residents did not feel fully informed
- Process perceived as unclear or too fast
- Need for simpler, clearer communication

Article 1: Neary Renovation Study

- Transfer up to \$175,000 from Free Cash
- Fund a feasibility study and schematic design for renovation and improvement of Neary School
- Includes minimum of two options:
 - Full renovation and modernization
 - Targeted spend (\$15 MM) for minimum code compliance to extend building life (roof, ADA, asbestos, HVAC, safety, exterior)
- Supported by Select Board (5-0), School Committee (5-0), Advisory (5-0)

Article 2: Trottier and Finn Expansion Study

- Transfer up to \$500,000 from Free Cash
- Study expansion of Trottier to add Grade 5 and expansion of Finn to add Grade 2
- Would result in Neary no longer being used as a school
- Proceeds in two phases
 - Phase 1: Feasibility phase (focus on capacity and site analysis)
 - Phase 2: Schematic design phase (estimate cost of project)
- Not Supported by Select Board (4-1), School Committee (5-0), Advisory (6-1)

Article 3: Finn Expansion Study

- Transfer up to **\$324,000** from Free Cash
 - *If Article 2 passes, amount can be reduced by \$80,000, i.e. total of \$244,000*
- Study expansion of Finn to serve PreK-Grade 3
- Would result in Neary no longer being used as a school
- Includes design work, site planning, and cost estimates
- **Not Supported** by Select Board (4-1), School Committee (5-0), Advisory (4-3)

Articles 1-3: Impact on FY27 Budget

	<u>FY27 Levy Balance*</u>
	\$
If just Article 1 passes	373,318
	\$
If Articles 1 and 2 pass	(126,682)
	\$
If Articles 1, 2, and 3 all pass	(370,682)
<i>*Based upon estimates as of 2/26/26</i>	

Article 4: Neary Roof Replacement and ADA Upgrades

- Borrow and appropriate \$6,850,000 to fund replacement of Neary roof
- Addresses a critical need: roof is in failure mode
 - \$4.5 million for roof replacement (construction in summer 2026)
 - \$2.35 million for ADA accessibility upgrades and study of additional code compliance costs
 - *But if Article 1 passes, then Article 4 can be reduced to \$4.5 million (i.e. just roof replacement – study of ADA upgrades will be in progress)*
- Supported by Select Board (5-0), School Committee (5-0), Advisory Committee (vote at Town Meeting)