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Items Requested to Replenish Food Bank

North Haven: The Department of Community Services Food Bank is currently seeking assistance in replenishing several much-needed items, including pasta sauce, flavored rice, baked beans, canned chili, canned fruit, cookies, Pop-Tarts, peanut butter crackers, and cheese cracker snacks.

An Amazon wish list has been created to allow donations to be shipped directly to Community Services.

To access the wish list, select "Registry & Gift List" on the Amazon home page, click "Find a Registry," and search for "North Haven CS Food Bank."

Donations can also be made directly through the following link: https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/22SWBOJQ9FKB4

In addition, donations may be dropped off at the Department of Community Services, located at 5 Linsley Street, during business hours Monday-Friday from 9am-4pm.

For questions regarding donations, or for residents interested in accessing the food bank, please contact Robert Snurkowski at the Dept. of Community Services, Mon.-Fri. at (203) 239-5321 ext. 8502.

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Express yourself in our Letters to the Editor

To submit a letter: Letters to the Advisor should include the writer's name, address and phone number. The writer's signature should appear at the end of the letter. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters will be accepted through Wednesday at 5pm. We will extend the deadline if circumstances allow and providing we have space available. Letters must be no longer than 400 words due to space limitations. The Advisor does not edit letters which are published as they are received. If a letter is questionable, the writer will be contacted for verification. The Advisor reserves the right to not publish letters that may be personally offensive.

Our Schools Cannot Absorb Another Cut

To The Editor: June 3, 2026

On June 9th, , there will be a second budget referendum held at the North Haven Rec Center between 6am and 8pm. I'm encouraging everyone to come out and vote yes on this budget, but I'd also like to express why I don't like this budget. It's clear from the results of the last failed referendum that the town wanted to see cuts and that's fine. That's not the part I don't like.

My problem is that the pain was not distributed equitably across the town and Board of Education sides. Whether through attrition, layoffs, or reshuffling, our schools will have 28 fewer positions than needed to function at full capacity and classrooms will suffer poorer outcomes and greater challenges because of it. Burnt out educators just got heavier loads put on their shoulders. Our town just got a little less attractive to incoming families. By contrast, none of the cuts I've seen on the town side look particularly distinguishable from what the Board of Education scales back in their proposal every year before it even goes to referendum; delayed and deferrals maintenance, and slight hiring changes. I don't want to see town services suffer either, but the calculus behind this decision isn't right.

Sadly, we are paying now for our failure to invest in education in leaner years. This is not the year to start playing catch-up, but you'd have to be crazy to think we can risk more without radically changing the way we look as a district. The last school budget workshop made it clear what's next if there are further cuts- an athletic director, middle school sports, whole programs, less teachers and less staff to support them. Many have loudly complained about waste in online echo chambers, but the data and the results of the severe cut the finance department imposed do not bear this out. Suggestions that our teachers or administrators are overpaid or overstaffed are handily dismissed by even the most surface-level analysis of what comparative districts do.

Our schools cannot absorb another cut. Any additional budget that includes further educational reductions will be a "No" vote from me. At the same time, working families need real relief, whether through municipal revenue innovation or accountability from the leaders that allow corporations to rip off consumers, utility customers, property owners, and insurance policyholders. We need to fix ECS and ensure the rich are paying their fair share.

North Haven Resident, Tim Gabriele

Firmly on the Side of Hope

To The Editor: June 4, 2026

At the town meeting on June 2, Mr. Freda addressed the crowd prior to the start of the meeting. In his remarks he said the Town folks fall into two camps. One of hope and one of hate. I thought that odd since those aren't quite opposites, but I thought about it as the meeting went on and decided that I was firmly on the side of hope!

My hope is that all the teachers, administrators, parents, students, and fellow North Haveners who are angry right now remember this feeling. Remember how disgusted you feel. How sad it is to think about those folks who had to go home and tell their loved ones they are out of a job. How the teachers and administrators who remain will have to do more with less all while not knowing if next year they'll be next. How our special needs students will not have the resources they need or how all students will be forced into larger class sizes with fewer teachers and staff to support them. How our Firefighters will have to wait another 6 months before they can have some much needed relief. How our Senior Center has to rely on volunteers for programming and how we will all still have to walk by buckets collecting rain water in the Recreation Center.

My hope is that you will all remember that Mr. Freda is a Republican. That our Republican State Legislators, Mr. Yaccarino and Mr. Cicarella, have failed for years to bring any substantial funding from Hartford into our Town. I am hopeful that after all this mess we will all remember that ENTIRE leadership in this Town is Republican and that can change when we get out and vote in November.

Scott Leamon, North Haven

Consequences of This Referendum Cycle

To The Editor: June 3, 2026

Over the past several months, I have attended meetings, watched workshops, reviewed budget documents, and tried to understand how North Haven arrived at this point.

What troubles me most is not just the budget itself, but how we got here.

This referendum cycle was heavily influenced by misinformation spread by current and former elected officials, political figures, and others with influence in our community. Incomplete, misleading, and sometimes inaccurate information spread rapidly through social media and word of mouth, encouraging many residents to vote no without fully understanding the consequences. Now we are living with those consequences.

Our schools are facing devastating cuts: Sixteen staff members and teachers have lost their jobs, eight positions disappeared through early retirements that will not be replaced, and four needed special education teachers will not be hired.

I do not support these cuts. I do not believe they are good for our children, our teachers, or our future. But I also recognize the reality before us. We cannot continue cutting education without causing serious harm.

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I write as the parent of three children who have attended North Haven Public Schools. I currently have one child graduating from high school, one in college, and a seven-year-old daughter still in our school system.

I have seen firsthand what North Haven schools can accomplish. My older children are proof of the opportunities this district provides when we invest in it. Despite often doing more with less, our schools continue to produce strong outcomes and earn recognition, including Green Acres Elementary's National Blue Ribbon School designation. Those achievements are the result of dedicated educators and staff who work tirelessly on behalf of our students.

What saddens me most is the division this process has created. In the 23 years I have lived in North Haven, I have never seen our community so fractured. Teachers have been attacked, Board of Ed and Administrators have been vilified, and even children have become part of political arguments. That is not who we should be.

This budget needs to pass. Then we need to examine this process, improve transparency, advocate for greater state funding, explore new revenue opportunities, and find ways to bring our community back together.

We can disagree about budgets without attacking educators. We can debate taxes without making children collateral damage.

Heather Tolisano, North Haven

Let's Move Forward - Vote YES June 9th

To The Editor: June 3, 2026

Despite the damage it does to our schools, I am voting yes at North Haven's next budget referendum because it's been made clear that a failed budget will mean even more cuts to education. After years of schools being asked to get by with less, students are directly impacted by this budget - fewer opportunities, larger classes, and less access to the adults and resources they need to learn - and I don't want that harm to grow.

This budget scenario is playing out in towns across the state, with calls to "cut the fat" from schools, outbursts over administrator salaries that pale in comparison to any for-profit salary with the same scope, and calls for audits of the "unrestrained spending" that schools do. Fixed income seniors have been pitted against working families, when everyone is trying to survive within the structures that protect CT's wealthiest and leave the rest of us fighting over scraps.

This is enraging on its own, but within the context of North Haven it defies all logic. Per pupil spending is near the bottom of our DRG and performance is near the top. Teachers and leaders are working at capacity to make magic happen for student learning. Schools have no capital budget or rainy day funds. PTAs work hard to raise money for things like basic office chairs for the school secretary and books for the school library, and rally parents to send in boxes of tissues for teacher appreciation week.

The Board of Finance knows this. Yet budget requests from our schools are repeatedly labeled as outrageous and schools are forced to make deep cuts that will be felt for years to come, while the town side coasts by with far less impact. This doesn't square with a town that is taking long-term sustainability seriously. It doesn't square with a town that prides itself on being a great place to raise a family or retire comfortably, because divesting from schools puts both of those at risk.

This budget demands accountability in the form of a real plan to move us forward. We need leaders to look at the whole picture, accept the reality and complexity of our finances, and take steps now so we're not back here again next year. I'm voting yes so we can start moving forward now instead of waiting while our students bear the cost. Please join me in voting YES on June 9th.

Eileen Honan Stabbe, North Haven

Letters continued on the following page