



# THE SALEM NEWS

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TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2026

## Election Day in Salem and Danvers

By News Staff

Voters in Salem and Danvers will hit the polls Tuesday to decide a major financial question and several contested town races.

In Salem, voters will be asked for a yes or no decision in a special election for a Proposition 2½ debt exclusion tax override that would allow the city to raise the \$239 million necessary to build a new Salem High School by

temporarily raising the city's property taxes beyond the 2.5% annual limitation. This would be expected to cover 30 years of debt payments. The total cost of the new school is \$447 million, with the state contributing \$208 million.

City polling locations are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday as follows:

Ward 1, Precinct 1 — Bentley Academy Gymnasium, 25 Memorial Drive

Ward 1, Precinct 2 — Community Room, 135 Lafayette St.

Ward 2, Precincts 1-2 — Community Life Center, 401 Bridge St.

Ward 3, Precincts 1-2 — Salem High School auditorium, 77 Wilson St.

Ward 4, Precincts 1-2 — Witchcraft Heights Gymnasium, 1 Frederick St.

Ward 5, Precincts 1-2 — Saltonstall School

Auditorium, 211 Lafayette St.

Ward 6, Precincts 1-2 — Bates School, Theater Room, 53 Liberty Hill Ave.

Ward 7, Precincts 1-2 — Salem State Enterprise Center, 121 Loring Ave.

In Danvers, voters will choose at least one new School Committee member, three Library Trustees and their precinct's Town Meeting members in contested races at

the polls in Tuesday's annual town election.

Longtime School Committee member Eric Crane isn't seeking reelection, while incumbent Josh Kepnes is seeking a second full term and running against first-time candidates Beth Kontos and Edward Schrage. Four are vying for three seats as Library Trustees, pitting incumbents Cory Ryan and Charles Desmond against

Kathryn Carbone and Ellen Graham.

Incumbent Town Moderator Pat Fraizer is running unopposed, as is Select Board Chair Maureen Bernard.

Voting is open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday at the Danvers High School field house on Cabot Road.

For the full list of Town Meeting candidates and more election information, visit [www.danversma.gov](http://www.danversma.gov).



DEBORAH GUELF/Photo

Todd Angilly, right, sang the national anthem and kicked off the start of the race for nearly 4,000 registered runners/walkers in the 13th annual Step Up for Colleen 5K event Sunday. Go online for more photos.

ANDOVER

## Keeping her legacy alive

### Thousands of runners Step Up for Colleen on Sunday

By News Staff

ANDOVER — The 13th annual Step Up for Colleen 5K, in memory of beloved Danvers High School teacher Colleen Ritzer, drew thousands of runners and walkers to Andover's Central Park on Sunday.

Todd Angilly, who sings at each Boston Bruins home game, sang the national anthem from the park's gazebo and then kicked off the 5K walk/run at 9 a.m.

Each year, the Step Up for Colleen event draws walkers and runners of all ages to the USA Track & Field-certified course. Most wear pink, which was Colleen's favorite color, and Sunday was no exception.

"Every May, seeing our community come together in Colleen's honor is both humbling and uplifting," said the Ritzer family.

"The energy, love, and shared commitment to kindness remind us that Colleen's spirit continues to impact our community in so many powerful ways. We are

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DEBORAH GUELF/Photos

Tom and Peggie Ritzer, along with their children Laura and Daniel, gathered for a photo before the start of the 13th annual Step Up for Colleen 5K walk/road race held in memory of their daughter and sister, beloved teacher Colleen Ritzer.

BEVERLY

## Sup't drops proposal for \$1K hockey fee

### Cushing now requests 10% rise across all sports

By Caroline Enos

Staff Writer

BEVERLY — Superintendent Peter Cushing has walked back a proposal to increase hockey fees to \$1,000 a season.

Instead, Cushing is now requesting hockey families pay \$35 more a year as part of a 10% hike to fees across all sports at the Beverly middle and high school levels.

"As part of (my) amendment, I'm also committing myself, our athletic director, our high school principal and others to really engage with stakeholders to incorporate additional community feedback in future fee proposals," Cushing told School Committee members last week.

Cushing proposed the original fee increase last month to help fill a \$2 million budget gap for fiscal 2027. The change in his proposal follows pushback from parents and other community members.

The original request would have resulted in the hockey fee rising from \$315 to \$1,000.

A current youth hockey coach himself, Cushing said the cost to run the high school hockey program is much higher than other sports. Mainly, because ice time rental rates.

"I want to be clear that I stand by the \$1,000 increase," he said at the April 29 School Committee meeting. "I understand how people feel about that, but the costs of some of our sports really need to be looked at versus how we are considering interscholastic athletics as part of our district program."

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SIXTH DISTRICT DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

## Biden backs Koh's congressional bid

By Christian M. Wade

Statehouse Reporter

BOSTON — Former President Joe Biden on Monday backed Dan Koh's campaign for Congress, making one of his first endorsements since leaving office last year and giving his ex-advisor a big boost in a crowded Democratic primary race.

"Dan Koh is a fighter who delivers for working people," Biden said in his endorsement of Koh, who served as a senior adviser in his administration. "He is going to make one heck of a Congressman and I am proud to endorse him."

Biden added in the video that Koh, who worked as a Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Cabinet Secretary at the White House, made sure that people who reached out to the administration "got what they needed — because he cares deeply about making government work for ordinary people."

Koh said he is "humbled" by Biden's support, which comes over heels, other high profile endorsements for congressional bid, including former Vice President Kamala Harris and former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg.

"President Biden's endorsement is an incredible honor," Koh said in a statement. "He is a steadfast leader who delivers for our most vulnerable everyday — showing up, delivering, and never forgetting who the government is supposed to serve. That kind

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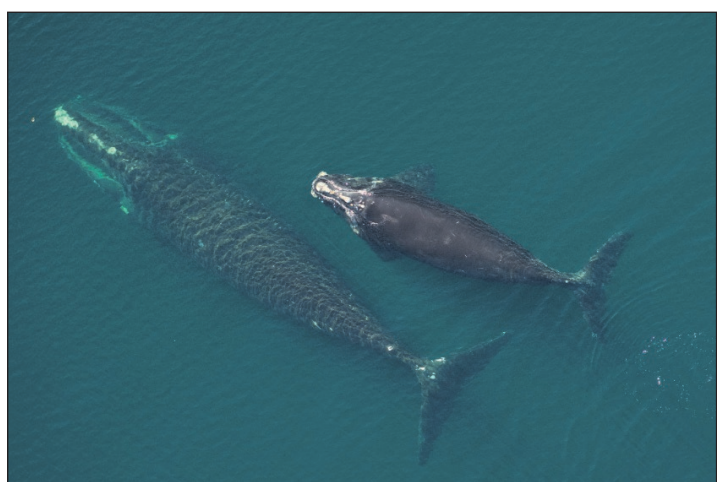
## Right whales gathered off coast; lobstermen asked to pull gear

By News Staff

Just as North Atlantic right whale calving season has come to a close, a pod of about 30 of the endangered mammals are staying off the coast of Gloucester, prompting the state Division of Marine Fisheries to call on lobstermen to remove the gear from area waters.

The whales are among the 52, including six mother/calf pairs, observed this week in Massachusetts Bay. The cetaceans off Gloucester are mostly located between the Cape Ann coast, Tillies Bank about 24 miles due east, and Scantum Basin, directly northeast of Gloucester near Jeffrey's Ledge. (See the latest right whale sighting at [whalemap.org](http://whalemap.org).)

The Division of Marine Fisheries said a substantial amount



NEW ENGLAND AQUARIUM/Contributed photo

North Atlantic right whale Millipede with her calf in Cape Cod Bay on April 9.

of lobster gear exist in the Massachusetts Restricted Area waters off Gloucester, outside trap/pot closure, due to open the boundaries of the seasonal

"This poses an acute entanglement risk to the whales feeding and socializing in this area. DMF strongly urges any lobster fishers with gear in the area off Gloucester to move their gear as soon as possible and keep away from the area until surveys indicate that the whales have moved on," the agency said in a bulletin.

As these whales are at a substantial risk of vessel strikes, NOAA Fisheries has initiated a series of voluntary slow zones off the coast through May 6, and requests all mariners reduce their speed to at least 10 knots.

The warnings come had the the North Atlantic right whale has come to a close to having the highest number of calves recorded since 2009, according

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