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# Foster's Daily Democrat

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## Portsmouth honors sailors eternally 'on patrol'



The Portsmouth Middle School band marches into Portsmouth's Prescott Park for the Burial at Sea memorial ceremony May 22. DEB CRAM/SEACOASTONLINE

Special to Seacoastonline | USA TODAY NETWORK

PORTSMOUTH — On the Friday before Memorial Day, the city annually conducts a ceremony to honor sailors lost at sea, within sight of Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, the oldest continually operating shipyard in the nation.

On May 22, the public gathered in Prescott Park at the historical anchor that symbolizes the city's deep connections to the sea. The memorial ceremony is focused around the tossing of a wreath into the waters

of the Piscataqua River, in memory of those lost at sea and eternally "on patrol."

The Portsmouth Middle School band played the national anthem. Beacon Hospice Chaplain Bradley Hyden, who served as a Marines Corps corporal from 1986 to 1992, and as a medic in the Army National Guard from 1992 to 1994, offered the invocation. Then the band played the hymn "Abide With Me."

Mayor Deaglan McEachern and USS New Mexico

See **HONOR**, Page 2A

## Gov. Ayotte expands Gold Star license plate program

Margie Cullen

USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW ENGLAND

Less than a week before Memorial Day, New Hampshire Gov. Kelly Ayotte on May 19 signed a new law expanding the state's Gold Star License Plate Program.

Previously, only Gold Star Mothers — the mothers or stepmothers of a person killed while on duty in the U.S. military — were eligible for a Gold Star License plate. The new law expands the program to any immediate family member.

"Ahead of Memorial Day, I'm proud to sign HB 1078 to honor the families of America's fallen heroes and expand the Gold Star license plate program to include all immediate family members," Ayotte said in a statement. "This is a commitment to our Gold Star Families that New Hampshire will never forget their loved ones' service and sacrifice."

### What is a Gold Star License Plate?

A Gold Star Mother License Plate is a special red, white and blue plate with a star on the left side surrounded by the words "Gold Star Mother."

The new license plates will have the same design but be distinguished by the wording, specifying "Gold Star Mother," "Gold Star Father," or "Gold Star Family."

### Who is eligible for the Gold Star License Plate?

Under the new law, a mother, stepmother, father, stepfather, or any other immediate family member of a person killed while on duty in the U.S. military is eligible for a Gold Star License Plate.

Family members can prove eligibility through certain documentation, including proof of casualty, proof of relationship or a Veterans Affairs certification letter.

### How to get a Gold Star License Plate

The expanded access to the plates will begin on Jan. 1, 2027, and can be requested through the Office of the Commissioner at the New Hampshire Department of Safety.

## Rochester schools warn of painful cuts unless Council increases funding

Karen Dandurant

Foster's Daily Democrat | USA TODAY NETWORK

ROCHESTER — School leaders, educators and parents urged the City Council May 19 to approve spending above the tax cap to help preserve a quality education for Rochester's school children.

"So basically, we are asking for level funding from last year, to restore \$2 million," said School Board Chairman Matthew Pappas. "The current tax cap com-

pliant proposal is \$2 million less than last year. We closed schools, consolidated positions, but still reached the tipping point. Beyond staffing and budget cuts this current budget would significantly reduce or eliminate academic and elective courses."

The School Board and City Council agreed to meet Tuesday, May 26 to try to find a way through the budget crisis.

See **FUNDING**, Page 2A



Rochester School Board Chair Matt Pappas addresses the City Council May 19.

IMAGE FROM CITY OF ROCHESTER VIDEO



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