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# Foster's Daily Democrat

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## SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL



Spaulding graduating students get emotional after listening to the commencement address by art teacher Lauren Despina during commencement in Durham on June 12. DEB CRAM/FOSTER'S DAILY DEMOCRAT

# Graduates share memories and look to the future

**Karen Dandurant**  
 Foster's Daily Democrat  
 USA TODAY NETWORK

ROCHESTER — Spaulding High School Class of 2026 graduates celebrated with family and friends on Friday, June 12.

The ceremony was held at the Whittemore Center at the University of New Hampshire. Hundreds of programs served as fans in intense heat inside and outside the arena.

"I will miss school in general," said Gabrielle Averill, a graduate. "I like the routine of it. But now I am looking forward to starting a career in law enforcement."

Meredith Doucette said she will miss the sense of community the students

have at Spaulding.

"I am excited for the future, too," she said. "I will be attending UNH as a premed student."

"What a year this has been," said Spaulding High School Principal Justin Roy. "This is a truly memorable group, full of spirit, with the ability to have fun. You embraced every experience with enthusiasm. In the fall we began implementing the new no cell phone law. I expected pushback, but you adapted very well. As I reflect on the year, we had a lot to celebrate. Thank you for your leadership, and your laughter; you left your mark on Spaulding High School. I leave you with my favorite saying, one I say to every graduating class — be the change you wish to see in the world."

The welcome address came from

senior class president and valedictorian Sydney Daly, whose message was something her dad told her — everything happens for a reason.

"That guides me," Daly said. "Just because we don't initially understand why something happens in our lives, that does not mean it will not present itself later. Four years ago, we started a new journey, leading up to tonight, everything happens for a reason. I see future doctors, actors. I wish everyone the best in the future and when our paths cross again, just remember everything happens for a reason."

When it came time for her valedictorian speech, that theme continued.

"I promise this speech will be short

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## Oyster River school unions fight policies on 2nd jobs, dress code

**Karen Dandurant**  
 Foster's Daily Democrat  
 USA TODAY NETWORK

DURHAM — Oyster River School District employees and their unions are objecting to policies proposed by embattled Superintendent Robert Shaps that would restrict their ability to work second jobs without his approval, as well changes to health policy, how staff are supervised, and what they are allowed to wear to work.

Four unions came together at the June 3 School Board meeting to make a united stand.

Krista Butts (Oyster River Interventionists and Tutors), Cindy Douglass (Oyster River Teachers' Guild), Sarah Castaneda (Oyster River Bus Drivers Association) and Bailey Laskey (Oyster River School Employees and Professional Standards Agreements) challenged the policies, saying they cannot be legally implemented outside union contract negotiations.

"We are here to formally register our strong objection to several policy proposals currently before this board," Butts said. "We respectfully request that the board pause action on policies pertaining to working conditions until the parties have entered into meaningful negotiation with all affected bargaining units."

The latest conflict between the unions and superintendent comes after a March survey showing a majority of teachers have a deep distrust of Shaps. Some residents have been calling for the superintendent to resign or for the School Board to remove him. Shaps has said publicly he plans to stay on for the final year of his three-year contract and retire at the end of the 2026-27 school year. The School Board has been silent on Shaps during public meetings, and School Board Chair Matt Bacon has not responded to questions from Foster's Daily Democrat.

Union leaders say the new policies Shaps wants to implement would

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## Traip Academy graduation 2026: Seniors celebrate at Fort Foster

**Brandon Brown**  
 Portsmouth Herald  
 USA TODAY NETWORK

KITTERY, Maine — Traip Academy Class of 2026 treasurer Terrence Swiger said there are millions of seniors graduating, but none more important than the

71 about to walk across the stage at Fort Foster on June 12.

"Graduation is a special time of the year where we all come together to celebrate the achievements of a unique group of individuals," Swiger said during his speech. "Tonight, in this incredible place, we gather to recognize the

unforgettable Class of 2026, as we prepare to take our next steps toward the future."

Swiger said the "memories, friendships and experiences" the class has shared over the last four years created a bond that is truly one of a kind, "while some teachers might not miss hearing

our loud conversations in the hallways."

Traip Academy celebrated the accomplishments of the graduates, with nearly \$600,000 in scholarships awarded. Each graduate will go on an individual journey, but senior Avery Bouffard

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