

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Michael A. Morgan, Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16
DECEMBER 2015

Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility

Each year the NH Department of Education collects data relative to the number of students in each school who are eligible to receive free/reduced lunch. The most recent statistics available are for the 2014-2015 school year and are available on the Department's website at www.education.nh.gov.

The NH average for all students in grades K-12 is 28.93%

The NH average for all students in grades 1-8 is 31.10%

The NH average for all students in grades 9-12 is 24.84%

Within SAU 16 for 2015-2016:

Brentwood—7.77%

East Kingston—8.33%

Lincoln Street School, Exeter—20.16%

Main Street School, Exeter—25.88%

Kensington—10.09%

Stratham—7.84%

Cooperative Middle School—11.41%

Exeter High School—12.21%

Note: Newfields does not participate in this program.

Exceptional Sportsmanship Award

The New Hampshire Football Officials Association (NHFOA) recently selected Exeter High School for its *Exceptional Sportsmanship Award* for 2015. With great appreciation for the efforts of all administrators who professionally manage athletic events, NHFOA selects each season one school in each division to be recognized for Outstanding Football Game Administration and from each division one school displaying Exceptional Sportsmanship. Following each game the officials conduct a post-game review which includes scoring the home team for administration of the game and scoring both teams (players, coaches, spectators) in sportsmanship displayed during the game. Congratulations to Athletic Director and Football Coach Bill Ball for this outstanding recognition and achievement!

Administrator History

Exeter Area Junior High School Principals

1967-1979—Frank Kozacka

1979-1998—Thomas Meehan

Note: *Exeter Area Junior High School opened in 1967 and closed in 1998*

Cooperative Middle School (CMS) Principals

Note: *CMS opened in 1998*

1998-1999—Jeffrey Hiller

1999-2002—Jerome Frew

2002-2003—Cassandra Donovan (Interim)

2003-April 2011—Thomas O'Malley

April 2011-June 2011—Kent Rosberg (Interim)

2011-Present—William Furbush

School Board Seats Available in March 2015

Terms of office for some current school board members expire in March 2016. Now is the time for interested citizens to consider serving in these capacities. Board Members whose terms expire include Melissa Litchfield in Brentwood; Erin Pettinato in East Kingston; Patrick O'Day, Jean Tucker, and Lisa McConnell in Exeter; Stacy Surprenant and Tina Favara in Kensington; Karla Dalton in Newfields; Everett Lamm in Stratham; and Darrell Chichester (Exeter), James Webber (Kensington), Linda Garey (Brentwood), and Travis Thompson (Stratham) for the Coop. Of the thirty-three total School Board seats in SAU 16, these thirteen (13) positions will be available for (re)election.

Filing Period

Any resident over 18 years old may be a candidate for any school district office, including school board member, school district clerk, or school district moderator. Terms of office vary depending on the position. Those interested in having their names on the ballot in March 2016, must declare their candidacy in writing to the current school district clerk for their respective district **between January 20 and January 29, 2016.**

Coop Budget Advisory Committee

The nine-member Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) that serves the Exeter Region Cooperative School District will have three seats available for election in March 2016. Any resident of Exeter (current member John Bridle), Newfields (current member Simon Heslop), or Stratham (current member Lucy Cushman) will be able to be a candidate for this important position. Each term is for three-years. Budget Advisory Membership is similar to the distribution of members on the School Board with three representatives from Exeter, two from Stratham, and one from Brentwood, East Kingston, Kensington, and Newfields. The filing period for interested candidates is **between January 20 and January 29, 2016.** Anyone interested in serving the community in this capacity may contact SAU Business Administrator Amy Ransom at aransom@sau16.org or 775-8671 for additional information.

SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight: Kensington Elementary School

Given the fact that SAU 16 has an excellent reputation for its local schools, each month a different school will be highlighted here as a way of sharing more specific information

with the wider SAU and community audience. Each building principal was asked to provide information to be shared with new teachers joining the SAU this year.

Kensington Elementary School – *Becky Ruel, Principal*

122 Amesbury Road
Kensington NH 03833 - (603) 772-5705

It goes without saying that Kensington Elementary School is the **heart** of Kensington. A small town with just over 2,100 residents, Kensington is a wonderful place to live and learn! The students and staff at KES are fortunate to have such a strong and generous community supporting our school and celebrating our successes. Our 4th grade *Adopt-A-Visibility Project* this spring was a great example of our close connection with the people and Town of Kensington. With help from local tradesmen and the Farm at Eastman's Corner, our front entrance has been redesigned and beautified for all the citizens of Kensington to enjoy.

Did You Know?

Swasey Central School (SCS) in Brentwood was built in the 1950s with additions made in the 1990s. It occupies approximately ten (10) acres of land and includes two playgrounds for school and community use. SCS is centrally located in the community within 300 yards of the Town Offices and Brentwood Police Department. The Brentwood Fire Station is approximately one-half mile away.

Kensington Elementary School (KES) was built in 1953 with additions made in 1967, 1987, 1989, and 2003. It occupies approximately six (6) acres of land and has one playground in the back of the school which is used by students during the school day and is available for community use when school is not in session. KES is located next to the Kensington Fire Station and also abuts the Kensington Public Library.

The Cooperative Middle School (CMS) First Lego League Team won first place in the Seacoast Qualifying Round at UNH recently.

Seacoast School of Technology (SST) Automotive Technologies teachers Fritz Arseneau and Paul Yergeau recently began an exciting after school Car Club for students who like to work on cars above and beyond the regular classroom setting and who can delve into work that is not part of the regular curriculum such as using synthetic protective rubber coating known as Plasti Dip.

SST Animal and Plant Science teacher Anne DeMarco was selected this year to serve as the Grand Marshall for the Exeter Holiday parade.

The “new” Exeter High School (EHS) opened to students on Blue Hawk Drive for the first time in the August 2006. This is the tenth year of that facility's operation.

The concept of local “school districts” in New Hampshire began in the mid-1800s with the designation that each small (usually one room schoolhouse) was its own independent “school district.” In 1865 there were 2,299 “school districts” in the state. Because of consolidation efforts, that number was reduced to 275 “school districts” by 1890. That number has remained essentially unchanged for 125 years!

The Three C's—Curriculum, Communication, Community Service

The fourth grade students at **Swasey Central School (SCS)** spent some time this fall working on an “Archaeology Roots” project. This involved some “digging in the forest” on school grounds because the school is actually located on the old Sanborn property and could lead to discovering historical artifacts. This was a specific way of students applying the skills that they were being taught in the classroom. The fifth graders also delved into archeology and its connection to history with recent field trips to Spencer Pierce Little Farm in Newbury, MA and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. This information has been linked to their study of the Maya, Inca, and Aztec civilizations.

This year marks the 65th anniversary of *Trick or Treat for UNICEF*, a United Nations fundraiser designed to support needy children in underdeveloped parts of the world. The acronym UNICEF stands for the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund and its purpose is to provide needy children around the world with basic food, water, medical, and educational assistance. It is vitally important that our children recognize just how fortunate they are and learn the value of sharing resources with others in need. This year **East Kingston Elementary School (EKES)** is proud to announce that their students raised \$532.71! Over the course of the past eleven years, EKES students have raised over \$8,500 in support of UNICEF. The school community extends a special “thank you” to Ms. Titone’s fourth grade class for coordinating this effort and recognizes the work of fourth grader, Jason DiTucci, who spearheaded the EKES initiative.

The SAU wide work toward *Individualized Innovate Instruction* is being emphasized at **Newfields Elementary School (NES)** this fall with the significant work being done with “*Every Day Math 4*” throughout the entire school. The program allows the staff to extend lessons, enrich discussions, and ensure content standard understandings. NES’s goal is to “create a classroom culture that values and supports productive struggle. Children are expected to do their own thinking and to solve problems they have not been shown how to solve by making connections between concepts and procedures. They are asked to explain their thinking and to understand the thinking of others.” Teachers are using a variety of “formative assessments” to inform daily planning and preparation. This allows them to monitor student learning and to provide individual student feedback that helps to identify strengths and weaknesses. The “summative assessments” are used to evaluate student progress at the end of an instructional unit. Using this approach, 80% of NES students reached their January 2016 benchmark by the end of November 2015!

The professional staff at **Main Street School (MSS)** has been very involved with a variety of professional development recently. This has included:

Writing Workshop- Consultant Laureen Reynolds, a nationally-known expert on writing instruction, gave a second presentation on writing at MSS. This time the audience included the kindergarten teachers, special education teachers, literacy aides, speech and language pathologists and other specialists. She identified the key components of a successful writing lesson and gave developmentally appropriate activities for three main genres in English/Language Arts.

Picturing Writing Training- Consultant Beth Olshansky trained relatively new staff members in the Picturing Writing program. She emphasized the stages of both the art and writing processes involved in the picturing writing process.

Professional Book Group- A book group facilitated by Curriculum Coordinator Karla Putney is reading the book, *The Writing Thief* by Ruth Culham. It focuses on the importance of using quality text and reading to support student writing.

The **Exeter High School (EHS)** community once again worked hard together once again to help students and families in need by filling 190 holiday baskets for the EHS Martha LaPerle Outreach Program. The baskets which included food and gift cards were designed to help families with a sick child or parent, a family who may have lost a parent, a family who may be struggling financially, or a family that is simply having a very difficult journey at this point in life. This wonderful program, which is dedicated to long-time Cooperative Middle School (CMS) nurse Martha LaPerle who retired recently, is coordinated by the EHS Nurses Office. Special appreciation is given to Brenda Flammini, Meg Laverty, and Rose Love.

Ten Latin students, comprising three teams from the **Cooperative Middle School (CMS)**, recently participated in the Tri-State Latin competition at Dover High School. A total of fifteen (15) schools from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Vermont competed in a Jeopardy-style competition with questions from Roman history, Greco-Roman mythology, and the Latin language. Special congratulations to the team of Sophia Rubens, Barrett Su, and Julia Tennant who captured second place in the overall competition!

The **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** recently held its Annual Counselor Information Day. Regional high school guidance counselors and special education case managers from seven area high schools were able to hear presentations from local business partners including Palmer & Sicard and the Exeter Inn regarding the numerous career opportunities available and the skills required. They also heard presentations about the after school Car Club and saw how Digital Media Arts students are using the 3D printer.

Classroom teachers at **Stratham Memorial School (SMS)** are continuing their efforts through various technology platforms in providing parents with information and pictures regarding ongoing initiatives at the school. Classroom blogs have been updated to provide the most current information and on-going curriculum initiatives conducted within the different classes. Among the pieces of information parents are viewing are student artifacts regarding fiction/nonfiction pieces, in-depth inquiry science experiments, art activities, Readers' Workshop selections, and students utilizing manipulatives for grasping math concepts. The introduction of the electronic portfolio through the Seesaw application has been utilized in the Makerspace and in classrooms. Students are developing their personal portfolios, selecting artifacts that truly reflect their learning (writing, project-based learning, science inquiry, art products) that occurs on a daily basis.

As reported recently in the Exeter News-Letter, the fourth graders at **Kensington Elementary School (KES)** worked on a special project this fall that is on display in a very unique location. Inspired by Peter H. Reynold's work, "The Dot," students worked together both creatively and colorfully to make their mark on the ceiling of the school library!

In celebration of International Dot Day in September, the entire school was involved in making creative designs. Grade 4 was given a special task. Groups of three or four randomly chosen students designed a plan, worked out differences, and painted together to make their design become a colorful masterpiece that the whole KES community can enjoy for many years. The project ended with a time of reflection in which the students wrote about the experience and what they will remember. Special thanks go to Principal Becky Ruel, art teacher Annie Beauchemin, school secretary Michelle Aiken, fourth-grade teacher Maggie Kilcoyne, and custodian Matt Andrews for their support in making this project happen. “I wanted this project to be an opportunity for students to make a creative mark on their school in a positive way that they will always remember. They were encouraged to try something big and new and creative, and they did an amazing job,” said librarian Cheri Eastwood.

This year, **Lincoln Street School (LSS)** teamed with the Exeter Lions Club to complete a vision screening for each and every student. In just a few seconds with each child, this service provided by the Lions Club produces a report of a student’s vision and notifies a parent if there are any abnormalities that need to be addressed. Approximately 520 screenings were completed in the two school days prior to Thanksgiving break. The Lions Club has provided students with a more thorough eye screening and has allowed Nurse’s office the opportunity to concentrate efforts on other important daily responsibilities. Additionally, because the screening time for each class is so swift, students are afforded more learning time.

Reflection

As various cultures, communities, and families gather at this time of the year to celebrate their respective traditions, let us not forget to celebrate our common humanity and our mutual desire for peace. Recent events in our world have demonstrated once again that peace and tranquility may be shattered in an instant. Nevertheless, my hope and prayer are that each of us may find a way to bring some sense of harmony and comfort to those with whom we live and work each day. That may well be the very best gift that we can share during these wonderful holidays!