

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Michael A. Morgan, Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16

SEPTEMBER 2015

Individualized Innovative Instruction

The significant SAU educational focus and vision this year is summarized in a three-word “charge” that brings together much of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment work in which teachers and administrators have been engaged for the past several years. “Teaching and Learning” are among the highest priorities of SAU 16 and stress the need to meet each student’s academic needs and strengths. “**Individualized Innovation Instruction**” captures and unifies that mission very well and underscores much of the ongoing work undertaken in each of our schools. Look for the staff lanyards that reinforce that message every day and recognize the outstanding work of teachers, staff, and administrators as they strive to address the learning potential of each student.

September Enrollments

Student enrollments generally fluctuate during the school year and official records are maintained and provide annual comparisons of information available on October 1st each year. September enrollments show some minor variations from the end of the 2014-2015 school year. Actual enrollment as of September 8, 2015:

Exeter High School—1757
Cooperative Middle School—1297
East Kingston Elementary School—146
Main Street School, Exeter—503
Lincoln Street School, Exeter—513
Kensington Elementary School—109
Newfields Elementary School—139
Seacoast School of Technology—714 (355 are from Exeter)
Swasey Central School, Brentwood—327
Stratham Memorial School—572

More detail about student enrollment, especially with regard to an annual comparison and/or trends, will be provided in October.

Cost Per Pupil by District

Each year the State of New Hampshire receives information relative to the cost per pupil for the past school year. This actual cost includes all services provided to students. It encompasses staff salaries and benefits, books, supplies, facility upkeep and maintenance, and extracurricular activities. In order to maintain some level of consistency among school districts in the state, this figure does not include student transportation, food service, debt service, or out-of-district special education costs. These numbers are subject to change after review by the New Hampshire Department of Education and the

New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration. Preliminary figures for 2014-2015:

Brentwood--\$14,308.32

East Kingston--\$18,330.79

Exeter--\$15,671.38

Exeter Region Cooperative--\$13,815.10 (CMS: \$12,911.57; EHS: \$14,536.94)

Kensington--\$18,224.82

Newfields--\$16,194.94

Stratham--\$15,721.39

Exeter Adult Education Programs

An extensive array of programs for high school completion and for personal enrichment is available through the Exeter Adult Education Program located at the Tuck Learning Campus. These opportunities are part of the numerous programs offered to local residents. Contact 775-8457 or www.sau16.org for more information.

Spotlight: Main Street School, Exeter

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.

Main Street School – *Steve Adler, Principal* 40 Main Street, Exeter – 775-8946

Main Street School (MSS) and the Exeter Developmental Preschool (EDP) serve families of pre-kindergarten through second grade who live in the Town of Exeter. The combined student population of both schools is about 500 children.

The EDP is located in the Farrell Building at 13 School Street. The EDP is an integrated program that has enrolled children who are three or four years old and who require specialized instruction with related services, as well as “typical” preschool children. It utilizes “Creative Curriculum,” which is designed to develop students’ cognitive, physical, language, and social emotional skills. A modest tuition is charged for students who enroll as “community peers.”

MSS is located immediately east of Phillips Exeter Academy in downtown Exeter. The original part of the brick building was a parochial school (St. Michael School) built in 1931. Main Street School curriculum is designed to develop the whole child through a well-rounded program that addresses both the academic and social needs of each child. The curriculum includes theme-based instruction developed around common topics in science and social studies. The development of students’ social and emotional learning is supported through the full school implementation of the Open Circle program.

Maintaining a strong working partnership with the parents and guardians of our students and connecting to the community are important goals at the Main Street School. We are extremely proud of having been awarded the State of New Hampshire's *Blue Ribbon Achievement Award* for more than 20 years and for our many community service activities. This fall we are excited to have a new playground and parking lot constructed to better serve our school community.

NHIAA Hall of Fame

Renowned and respected Exeter High School (EHS) teacher and coach, **Jim Tufts**, will be inducted into the NHIAA Hall of Fame in November this year. He joins a most distinguished group of "outstanding individuals who have had a significant and lasting impact on the lives of New Hampshire's youth through their involvement in high school athletic programs as an administrator, athletic director, coach, booster, sports writer, broadcaster, school board member, team physician, or contributor in the community."

Coach Tufts has dedicated his professional life to the Exeter/SAU 16 community, not only through his physical education teaching at EHS (1983-present), but also through his coaching of boys' soccer, ice hockey, and freshman baseball. He has also been very instrumental in programming and coaching for NH Special Olympics.

Coach Tufts began his coaching career at Exeter High School in 1977. His faithful and dedicated career includes four NHIAA State Championships in Boys Soccer and three NHIAA State Championships in Boys Ice Hockey. He has directed EHS' Special Olympics since 1988. Some of his other honors and recognitions include the "Carl Lunholm Memorial Award" in 2000 for his "service to youth and athletics in New Hampshire;" being inducted into the NH Soccer Coaches Hall of Fame in 2002; receiving the Class L (Division I) *Soccer Coach of the Year* seven times between 1988 and 2009; and the NH Legends of Hockey Hall of Fame in 2012.

Coach Tufts now joins three other Exeter individuals who have previously been inducted in the NHIAA Hall of Fame: Coach (and EHS Assistant Principal; Athletic Director) Cassandra Donovan in 2004; Official (and Exeter teacher) Fran Addorisio in 2007; and Athlete (and Coach) Dick Eustis in 2011.

School Board Member Changes

Personal and/or professional circumstances have led to the resignations of three (3) School Board Members around SAU 16.

Kathy McNeill resigned from the Exeter School Board during the summer of 2015 because of her family's move to East Kingston. She had been on the Board since March 2003. Kathy will remain involved with SAU 16 through her work on the SAU Strategic Planning Steering Committee and serving as the East Kingston representative to the SAU Policy Committee. Ms. **Lisa McConnell** has replaced Kathy on the Exeter Board.

James Firmin resigned from his Stratham seat on the Exeter Region Cooperative School Board because of some major changes in his professional work and commitments. He began with the Board on March 2014. The Stratham Board of Selectmen (as required by law) is in the process of selecting a candidate to fill this vacancy.

Heather Antal resigned from the Kensington Board for professional work reasons. She was elected in March 2015. The Kensington School Board is in the process of selecting a candidate for this position.

Each of these newly-appointed individuals will serve in their respective capacities until the March 2016 school district elections.

SAU 16 and its individual School Boards are grateful to these three former School Board Members for their service to their respective communities and constituents.

Did You Know?

Over 1,000 non-perishable food items were donated by SAU 16 staff members during the formal opening of school that convened at Exeter High School (EHS) at the end of August. This food drive supported the efforts of *End 68 Hours of Hunger* which is the weekend backpack food program that helps approximately 100 local children in SAU 16 each week.

Almost 5,000 non-perishable food items were collected over the 2015 Homecoming period at Exeter High School (EHS). This outstanding community service initiative will benefit the St. Vincent DePaul program in Exeter. Many thanks to all who contributed!

The Seacoast School of Technology (SST) began the 2015-2016 school year with its largest enrollment in its 35 year history. Over 725 students from eight (8) different high schools are enrolled in twelve (12) different Career and Technical Education programs.

The North School in Kensington, also referred to as the Old Brick Schoolhouse, is a quaint, one-room schoolhouse that was built in 1842. Windows were added in 1918; toilet facilities were installed in 1920; and electricity was finally added in 1938. The North School remained in operation until 1952 when the first section of the current Kensington Elementary School was built.

An Exeter High School (EHS) math teacher is teaching a high school Geometry class to middle school students at the Cooperative Middle School (CMS) this year. It is the first time in SAU 16 history that EHS is now offering this class below the ninth grade.

The new Seacoast YMCA facility has opened its doors on Linden Street in Exeter on the site of the old Exeter Area Junior High School that was razed in December 2012. The "Y" is adjacent to the Seacoast School of Technology (SST) and welcomes new members and guests to visit its wonderful new building and explore its new and exciting program offerings.

SAU 16 Forty Year Club

Five (5) current staff members within SAU 16 now comprise the distinguished “SAU 16 Forty Year Club.” This outstanding honor recognizes the minimum of 40 consecutive years that these dedicated individuals have worked within this excellent organization. Honorees for 2015-2016 include: **Dr. Kathi Atwood**, Exeter High School teacher; **Janice Bastille**, SAU Title I teacher; **Margaret Meyer**, SAU Fiscal Services Manager; **Bonnie Rosencrantz**, Main Street School teacher; and **Jan Smith**, Lincoln Street School Assistant Principal. These individuals have distinguished themselves by their dedication, commitment, and service to the students, families, staff, and communities within SAU 16. This recognition confers special honor and appreciation to these wonderful people who can now boast that they are among a very select group of SAU colleagues. Many sincere thanks to each of them!

SAU 16 Educational Channel 13

All local Comcast subscribers have unlimited access to the SAU 16 Educational Channel 13 in each of the six communities within the SAU. Programs of local interest dealing with students’ efforts in classrooms are regularly available. Additionally, a wide variety of athletic events are covered, as well as regular meetings of the Exeter and Exeter Region Cooperative School Boards.

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

Stratham Memorial School (SMS) welcomed thirty (30) new students and their families at the end of August as part of its commitment to successful and welcoming transitions to the school. The guests received an overview of the school and its programs and services and were escorted on a tour of the school. The Stratham Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) also presented them with welcoming gifts as part of its introduction to the many activities it sponsors.

The **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** continues to host “Technology Fun Nights” which are designed to motivate and capture the interest of middle school students in the areas of career and technical education. The first such event for this year was the 99th “Technology Fun Night” and was held on September 18, 2015. SST promises to make the October 16, 2015 event a very special occasion because it will celebrate the 100th hosting of this marvelous program. Governor Maggie Hassan has been invited to attend as SST will celebrate many milestones that evening: 10,000 hours of student activity; 2,000 faculty hours of chaperoning; 4,000 student participants; and 10,000 non-perishable food items that have been donated to the St. Vincent DePaul Society.

Kensington Elementary School (KES) teachers this year will be focused on “writing” as a school-wide goal. In alignment with the New Hampshire Career and College Ready Standards (CCRS), KES students are now expected to develop competencies in three different genres of writing: Informative/Explanatory; Opinion; and Narrative. This year’s goal focuses on developing and utilizing assessment rubrics in each of these areas: “*KES teachers will collaboratively research, develop, and adopt a writing rubric to measure our students’ progress in Informational Writing, Opinion Writing, and Narrative Writing*”

by Friday, January 22, 2016. By June 23, 2016, all K-5 teachers will utilize the information Writing Rubric with every student to establish performance data.”

During the month of September at **Newfields Elementary School** (NES), teachers gathered additional data on students to develop appropriate Response to Instruction (RtI) approaches for each student this year. Several assessment tools including, but not limited to, Fountas and Pinnell and NWEA testing, will help to inform differentiated instruction for each child in language arts and math. Various “best practices” strategies will be used throughout the school year to implement these learning tools for the students.

The new playground and parking lot at **Main Street School** (MSS) have received raved reviews because it has improved safely for staff and students and enhanced the beauty of the school facility. This has allowed for a much easier loading and unloading of busses. The next phase of this project will seek voter approval to add additional classrooms to the school so that full-day kindergarten may be available to all Exeter families in the near future.

To enhance the delivery of educational services for students, **Lincoln Street School** (LSS) completed a technology upgrade project over the summer that now provides wireless Internet access throughout the entire building. This major improvement now allows each teacher to identify additional methods of incorporating the use of technology tools into instruction and increasing engagement and real world relevant learning for students.

Exeter Adult Education closely collaborates with Great Bay Community College (GBCC) by making and receiving referrals of adults and recent high school graduates who need to strengthen their academic skills to increase their likelihood of success in college and careers. Through this formal collaboration, instruction in the lowest level developmental math and reading is no longer offered by GBCC, but is now offered by Exeter Adult Education and taught by Exeter Adult High School Diploma teachers. During this past summer, Exeter Adult Diploma Teacher Julie Buckless taught Math 070 (developmental math) at GBCC; she is teaching the same course at Exeter Adult Education this fall. Additionally, Dan Provost is teaching English 097 (Developing College Reading) on the Great Bay campus this fall. Students who successfully complete these courses make gains in their Accuplacer® scores and may move into the next level course at Great Bay and/or continue with skill strengthening through additional adult education courses.

The 2015-2016 theme for **East Kingston Elementary School** (EKES) is “STEAM Ahead.” The acronym “STEAM” refers to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. The purpose of this focus is to expand and deeply strengthen the integration of math, the sciences, and the arts into the regular curriculum. One of the first projects of the school year will focus on a technology app that is able to record and document the remarkable stories of those around us. The students will build on this experience throughout the school year.

Given some of the significant budget cuts that **Swasey Central School** (SCS) had to implement this year, school personnel and students are very pleased to have five UNH

student interns involved in the school for a significant part of this school year. These “teachers in training” will be able to add their skills and talents to classroom instruction and services for students while learning from an outstanding array of skilled professional classroom educators. SCS is involved in this internship experience with East Kingston Elementary School which has been part of this program for many years.

This year **Exeter High School** (EHS) is implementing its “Advisory” program for every student. This initiative stems from a strong recommendation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) during its 2010 onsite accreditation visit. “Advisory” provides an EHS educator, aside from a student’s classroom teacher, to meet twice each week (30 minutes each time) with a group of 12 students. All faculty members, administrators, and some selected support staff members will work with students on a variety of topics that may including school-wide issues and fostering school and community communication and involvement. One of the key goals of the program is to “encourage peer relationships and positive adult connections.”

In mid-August, the **Cooperative Middle School** (CMS) in partnership with the Stratham Police Department hosted a “Table Top Exercise” to enhance its work on Safety and Security. Using an “active shooter scenario,” CMS administrators and Stratham Police and Fire Department personnel worked closely with other SAU 16 administrators and the NH Department of Safety/Office of Homeland Security to practice the school, police, and fire response to a serious, tragic event. The drill provided the opportunity to test the school’s “Reunification Plan” in the event that the entire school had to be evacuated due to such an event. As a result of this drill, additional improvements and refinements to various plans and communication strategies will be made.

Reflection

There are 234 municipalities in New Hampshire; 13 of these are cities; 221 are towns. About 18 months ago, a friend of mine, who is now a retired Superintendent, mentioned to me that he and his wife were thinking of visiting all of these communities. Being a New Hampshire native and a former high school social studies teacher, I thought that was a great idea - so much to see and many new things to learn! So, with my wife’s support, she and I took on that challenge and within 14 months (June 2014 to August 2015), we did just that. We traveled to every NH city and town and took one of our pictures at an identifying spot (e.g. Town Hall, Police Department, Fire Department, local school) in that community. My wife made a Shutterfly book of our travels. When you come to visit me, I may just show it to you. Another “bucket list” goal achieved!