

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Michael A. Morgan, Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16
September 2012

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 2011-2012 school year. Actual enrollment as of September 12, 2012:

Exeter High School—1758
Cooperative Middle School—1358
East Kingston Elementary School—179
Main Street School, Exeter—509
Lincoln Street School, Exeter—523
Kensington Elementary School—164
Newfields Elementary School—125
Swasey Central School, Brentwood—365
Stratham Memorial School—635

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 2011-2012:

Brentwood--\$11,359.80
East Kingston--\$12,585.86
Exeter----Not yet finalized
Exeter Region Cooperative----Not yet finalized
Kensington--\$14,388.83
Newfields--\$14,284.10
Stratham--\$13,953.51

NH Retirement System Rates Change Finalized

The NH Retirement System has advised school districts that their share of retirement costs for all full time employees will increase again July 2013. This EMPLOYER Contribution rate has a direct impact on each school district. For teachers and principals, the rate will move from the current 11.30% of a person's salary to 14.16%; this indicates a 25.3% increase. For all other employees, the rate will move from the current 8.80% of a person's salary to 10.77%; this indicates a 22.4% increase. Obviously, this will have a significant impact on district budgets as they are prepared for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Preliminary calculations of the respective districts and the SAU show the anticipated increases for the 2013-2014 budgets based on current employees:

Brentwood - \$59,145.60
East Kingston - \$31,338.00
Exeter - \$221,779.00
Exeter Region Cooperative - \$642,235.00
Kensington - \$35,540.97
Newfields - \$22,662.50
Stratham - \$122,208.73
SAU 16 - \$23,830.00

Total - \$1,158,739.80

Champions for Children

Community members and school staff continue to recognize and celebrate the dedication of local individuals by nominating them for a local Champion for Children award. This award is given to those individuals who have distinguished themselves by demonstrating significant involvement in programs and/or services that directly benefit the students and families of School Administrative Unit 16.

The Brentwood School Board recently presented this award to Swasey Central School's Food Service Director **Tammy Heath**. Nominated by the fourth grade teachers, Tammy was recognized for continuously going above and beyond her job of providing approximately 400 students with delicious and nutritious snacks and lunches. "Every day, she greets them with a smiling, happy face, encouraging them to eat their fruits and vegetables." Tammy also works with local growers to include their products in the school and she works closely with teachers in planning Native American meals and regional dishes from various parts of the United States. "Tammy loves her job, her staff, and the kids, and they love her."

School Board Seats Available in March 2013

Terms of office for some current school board members expire in March 2013. Now is the time for interested citizens to consider serving in these capacities. Board Members

whose terms expire include Linda Garey in Brentwood; Robert Nigrello in East Kingston; Patrick O'Day and Jean Tucker in Exeter; Alice Mower in Kensington; Michael Price in Newfields; Luke Pickett in Stratham; and Kate Miller (Exeter), Liz Faria (Brentwood), and Joni Reynolds (Kensington) for the Coop. Of the thirty-three total School Board seats in SAU 16, these ten positions will be available for (re)election. Now is the time for interested individuals to gather information about the duties and responsibilities associated with serving as a School Board Member.

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

Stratham Memorial School (SMS) has begun its annual “Canstruction” project under the leadership of art teacher, Ms. June August. This year’s theme is “Technology” with the donation of canned goods being placed in a structure to create a “Human Interface Computer” with associated items (e.g. cords, printers, cables) on the school stage. Last year, SMS collected over 2,000 canned goods that were donated to local food pantries as part of this exciting community service initiative.

Over one hundred students from **Main Street School (MSS)** and **Lincoln Street School (LSS)** in Exeter attended the Exeter Summer Reading Program. Students entering kindergarten through grade five participated in the eleven-day program that was held at the two schools. This year several goals were the focus of the design phase of the summer work. One was to increase the intensity of literacy instruction and to close the gap in reading, writing, and spelling skills. A second goal was to prepare students for the vocabulary and concepts that they would be learning during the upcoming school year. A third goal was to provide support for parents and families of students. More than two dozen parents were involved in this important academic program.

The transition to the **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** is a major change for many students. In an effort to ensure that students are placed appropriately in an SST program and to comply with federal guidelines set forth in the federal Carl Perkins Grant, SST will be changing its application process. Meetings with all regional and district special education administrators and high school special education administrators and directors are currently underway to increase collaboration on student placement in programs. This will help to increase the success rate of students with disabilities who wish to enroll in a particular program at SST.

Kensington Elementary School (KES) is beginning this new school year with its first full-day kindergarten program with an option for an extended day. Fifteen of the seventeen kindergarten students are now attending kindergarten for the full day. As part of the process as well, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) sponsored a “Boo Hoo Breakfast” for parents for the third consecutive year. It is a time when KES parents can talk with each other and with the principal, have their questions answered, and enjoy food prepared by the parents of first graders.

To enhance curriculum initiatives at **Newfields Elementary School** (NES), Principal Helen Rist is bringing awareness and knowledge of words to a new level with the *Word of the Week Challenge*. Each Wednesday the new word will be revealed to the students who may then investigate the word and create any sort of product about the word itself. For example, students may draw a picture that depicts the word; or they could find the definition of the word in the dictionary or online; or find its synonyms or antonyms; or write the word in a sentence or story or poem. In general, the goal of this initiative is to help students develop their overall vocabulary.

Community Service is a vital part of the work at **East Kingston Elementary School** (EKES). The administration and staff believe that it is critical that each student realizes the value of “giving back” to the broader community. Each year, EKES organizes school-wide projects such as Trick or Treat for UNICEF, food drives, clothes drives, Holiday baskets, Treats for the Troops, and Pease Greeters. Students often organize other giving efforts such as shoe and clothing drives to send overseas; toy drives for needy children; book drives for homeless shelters; or raising money for the SPCA. Some of these efforts are already underway and underscore the fact that applied learning is often the best kind of learning for students.

Some exciting curriculum initiatives at **Exeter High School** (EHS) this year include the Honors Chemistry class under the direction of Mrs. Helen Friedman who is directing the class’ team project about antimatter. This will build on work done in Physical Science and will expand knowledge to gain a greater understanding of antimatter that will lead to a dynamic and stage-show presentation upon the completion of the group’s work. In addition, Art students, under the direction of Ms. Jennifer Vigneau, are developing their junior/senior portfolios by creating portraits of and for orphaned and abandoned children from Vietnam. This is connected with the Memory Project organization and will involve shipping some of the pictures to Vietnam.

The **Cooperative Middle School** (CMS) is continuing its efforts of Challenging Advanced Students. Two teams are committed to piloting flexible grouping based on pre-assessments. They are developing pacing guides, common units, and post assessments to enable greater flexible grouping based on a student’s ability.

Exeter Adult Education has a full roster of courses running this fall, including academic (GED, basic skills, adult high school and English for speakers of other languages) and enrichment programming. Staff is already responding to two big changes. First, 50% of adult diploma students have identified special needs, so a special educator has joined the staff to provide support to both students and staff. This is a new position and the teacher is already very busy in and out of the classroom. Secondly, all GED staff is focused on instruction and motivation to ensure students on the GED track complete the whole process before the test changes at the end of 2013. Beginning in January 2014, anyone who has started the GED and not passed all five sections, will have to start all over again with a more difficult and more expensive exam.

Adult Education started a new environmental effort by distributing aluminum water bottles so students reuse bottles at water fountains rather than single use plastic bottles. Community service happens in-house at Exeter Adult Education. Many adult education students have babies and young children and may be single parents or under employed. The staff brings in gently used clothes, books and toys that are then distributed to student families in need. Recently a teacher brought in a large bag of diapers that were unused at home. Help is simple and direct.

Did You Know?

Governor John Lynch will attend the Exeter High School (EHS) Homecoming Pep Rally on Friday, September 21st, and declare that day “Victoria Arlen Day” in New Hampshire. Ms. Arlen is a senior at EHS who recently set a world record on her way to winning a gold medal at the 2012 Paralympics Games in London. She also captured three silver medals at this competition.

New EHS Social Studies teacher, Aaron Blais is launching an Exeter Quiz Bowl team. This student group will bring together students who excel in their academic studies across disciplines. Mr. Blais hopes to have the EHS team compete in the statewide Quiz Bowl League.

The “Tuck section” of the Tuck Learning campus opened to high school students in 1912 - 100 years ago!

Reflection

Early childhood education is critically important for the development of a child. Children who learn important skills at home before coming to a formal, organized program in a school or a daycare facility will be far more successful in an academic and social setting in both the short term and the long run. Continuously exposing children to words and books and to colors and sounds from birth provides a valuable foundation for each child. Every child needs that nurturing.