SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Michael A. Morgan, Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16
OCTOBER 2016

Enrollment Trends
Officially the New Hampshire Department of Education requires each school district to annually report its student enrollment on October 1st. Trends are determined from this consistent data point.

For the **twelve (12) school years** beginning on October 1, 2005 through October 1, 2016, the following changes are noted:

Brentwood-391 to 318-Decrease of 18.67%
East Kingston-188 to 155-Decrease of 17.55%
Exeter-1013 to 1003-Decrease of 0.01%
Kensington-208 to 104-Decrease of 50.0%
Newfields-165 to 127-Decrease of 23.03%
Stratham-644 to 570-Decrease of 11.49%
Cooperative Middle School-1326 to 1316-Decrease of 0.01%
Exeter High School-1611 to 1694-Increase of 5.16%

The **one-year change** from October 1, 2015 to October 1, 2016 is as follows:

Brentwood-328 to 318-Decrease of 3.00%
East Kingston-145 to 155-Increase of 0.69%
Exeter-1014 to 1003-Decrease of 1.08%
Kensington-110 to 104-Decrease of 5.50%
Newfields-138 to 127-Decrease of 6.52%
Stratham-571 to 570-Decrease of 0.18%
Cooperative Middle School-1289 to 1316-Increase of 2.09%
Exeter High School-1741 to 1694-Decrease of 2.70%

Health Insurance—Guaranteed Maximum Rate Increase
After experiencing an 8.91% average annual increase in health insurance premiums for the past 19 years (1998-2017), the Guaranteed Maximum Rate (GMR) increase for SAU 16 school districts which are part of the Local Government Center network (featuring Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield products), **is 10.5% for 2017-2018**. The final rate for 2016-2017 was an average of 1% which is significantly lower than the long-term average. These figures are estimated on "usage" and may vary considerably from year to year. The final rate for 2017-2018 will be determined in late winter or early spring.

Tax Rates—2016
Local tax rates for the six towns within SAU 16 have been set and fall tax bills have been processed by local town officials. The finalized 2016 rates (per $1,000 of assessed property valuation) are as follows:

Brentwood - $24.25 (Increase of $1.05)—Increase of 4.53%
East Kingston - $24.77 (Increase of $0.02)—Essentially Unchanged
Exeter - $26.24 (Increase of $0.52)—Increase of 2.74%
Kensington - $23.51 (Increase of $0.48)—Increase of 2.08%
Newfields - no figures finalized at this time
Stratham - $20.40 (Increase of $0.50)—Increase of 2.51%

Average Teacher Salaries for 2011-2012; 2012-2013; 2013-2014; 2014-2015; 2015-2016; and 2016-2017

Each year NH School Districts are required to report average teacher salaries to the NH Department of Education. Please note that the following figures only include teachers. The professional educators who serve in such positions as administrators, guidance counselors, nurses, school psychologists, social workers, and other support positions are not included in these averages.

Brentwood--$64,187; $65,534; $67,848; $67,734; $69,970; $70,259
East Kingston--$58,669; $60,643; $58,743; $60,394; $61,996; $64,387
Exeter--$68,760; $69,864; $70,971; $72,610; $73,544; $74,542
Exeter Region Cooperative--$64,670; $66,345; $67,990; $69,689; $68,998; $72,808
Kensington--$64,934; $66,830; $65,763; $67,612; $71,208; $73,751
Newfields--$59,194; $60,514; $60,874; $61,993; $63,201; $64,357
Stratham--$73,049; $73,545; $74,326; $75,775; $76,588; $78,498

How many students from my town are part of the Exeter Region Coop?

The Exeter Region Cooperative School District was formed in 1997 and formally began operation that year as it finalized plans for the opening of the Cooperative Middle School (CMS) in Stratham. It brought together the six communities which comprise SAU 16 and became responsible for the operation of CMS, Exeter High School (EHS), the Seacoast School of Technology (SST), and Exeter Adult Education. At that time, Exeter was home to slightly more than 50% of the students who comprised the Coop. Over 20 years, the breakdown has evolved and shifted. The current distribution of the 3,009 students:

Brentwood—494 students (16.42%)
East Kingston—237 students (7.88%)
Exeter—1188 students (39.48%)
Kensington—216 students (7.18%)
Newfields—160 students (5.32%)
Stratham—714 students (23.73%)

Exeter Area Junior High School Celebrated

On October 23, 2016, almost 100 people gathered at the YMCA building on Linden Street in Exeter to celebrate the 31 years that Exeter Area Junior High School (EAJHS) faithfully served the community on that same site. From 1967 through 1998, only two principals provided leadership for the school and developed a legacy to this day. In their honor, two concrete benches, each with their names engraved, were unveiled for the celebration: Mr. Frank Kozacka (1967-1977) and Mr. Thomas Meehan (1977-1998). A

dedicated committee of volunteers, led by former teachers Mr. Jeff Hillier and Mr. Peter Smith, raised funds for the benches and coordinated the event which brought together former students, teachers, staff members, and School Board Members who contributed to the spirit that lives on today. Many thanks are extended to YMCA personnel who welcomed guests to its site and to all those who worked hard to recognize the important work that so many people did during those years.

***End 68 Hours of Hunger* and 2016 5K "Turkey Trot"**
Approximately 70 children within SAU 16 are being provided with weekend backpacks of food to assist them and their families who struggle with food insecurity. Thanks to the generous donations of many local individuals and sponsors, program coordinators Kim Army of Newfields and Sue Abizaid of Stratham, are helping families in all seven elementary schools, the Cooperative Middle School, and Exeter High School. School principals, nurses, nutrition workers, and guidance counselors have been extremely helpful in identifying and working with families who are most in need. The program began in February 2013 with four backpacks provided to Exeter children. In less than four years, the program has expanded to its current level. At one point, over 100 students received the benefits of this outstanding program. Food donations may be dropped off at the Tuck Learning Campus (Door B) or contributions may be made directly to *End 68 Hours of Hunger*, 7 Finn Avenue, Newfields NH 03856. The 2016 "Turkey Trot" is scheduled for Saturday, November 5, 2016 at the Stratham Rec Center to directly benefit this most worthwhile community service initiative. The 5K starts off at 9:00 am for anyone interested in participating.

Meeting with Legislators—November 21, 2016
The sixth annual meeting of local state legislators with the SAU Joint Board will be held on Monday, November 21, 2016 at 7:30 pm at Exeter High School. The primary purpose of this meeting is a discussion about how local school districts are impacted by legislative action with regard to new laws and the continuing trend of the state "downshifting" many of its costs to local towns and school districts. Personal invitations will be sent to over 70 local NH legislators immediately after the November elections. The meeting is open to the public.

Spotlight: Lincoln 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.

Lincoln Street School - *J. Andrew Bairstow, Principal*

25 Lincoln Street, Exeter – 775-8860

Lincoln Street School (LSS) is a grade three through five school built in 1955 with additions in 1960, 1978, and 1990. Currently, there are 510 students enrolled and 100 faculty/staff members serving their educational needs. Main Street School, the kindergarten through two school located behind Lincoln Street School, is our sister

school. We coordinate our services and programming with them to assure a unified experience throughout Exeter's K-5 schools.

This year, each grade level at LSS has nine (9) sections. Third grade is slated to be a 20 student to 1 teacher ratio; fourth is 21:1; and fifth is 19:1. The teaching staff is a very even mixture of new, "seasoned", and "well-seasoned" staff allowing fantastic opportunities for staff members to learn from each other and grow professionally. The staff consists of twenty seven classroom teachers; one reading specialist; seven special education teachers; one ESL teacher; seven unified arts (specials) teachers; three Title I tutors; one guidance counselor; one school psychologist; one Occupational Therapist; one Physical Therapist; and three Speech Language Pathologists. We share some staff with Main Street School, and we are fortunate to have such a robust staff to support our students.

Students have access to numerous after-school activities at LSS. For academic support, students can access our homework club, staffed by an LSS teacher. We have an after-school enrichment program that runs for approximately six weeks, three times per year. The Drama Club, with approximately 100 participants, produces two shows each year, one fourth grade and one fifth. This fall's production is *James and the Giant Peach*. The Cross Country Club provides an opportunity for 60-70 students to exercise with their peers in a semi-competitive format each fall. Also, there are a variety of athletic clinics that occur throughout the year run by a group of our teachers.

Our arts program is very strong with every fifth grade student participating in chorus (approximately 170), and almost 60 students in fourth and fifth grade participating in band. We have a night in the spring devoted to celebrating the arts. The school climate at LSS emphasizes student engagement, curiosity, and acceptance and is enhanced by involved parents. We encourage families to become involved in our school community through participation with our excellent PTO, volunteer program, and ongoing communication and interaction with their child's teacher.

Did You Know?

Stratham Memorial School (SMS) won the Grand Prize for "Best Float" in the Stratham 300th Anniversary Parade that was held at the end of September.

Tammy Gluck, Exeter Adult Education Administrative Assistant, now serves on the Sanborn Regional School Board in SAU #17 which serves Kingston and Newton.

Six of the seven elementary schools in SAU 16 recently received recognition from *New Hampshire Partners in Education* because of their outstanding volunteer programs. Over 350 educators and parent volunteers from around the state were honored at the "2016 Celebration of Volunteers" reception breakfast in Manchester earlier this month. Guest speaker, Dr. Monte Selby, enthralled the audience with song and a strong, supportive message of the importance of having volunteers in our schools.

Approximately 94 students who live within SAU 16 are registered for "Home Schooling" as required by the NH Department of Education.

Exeter High School (EHS) will host its Veterans Day Assembly on Thursday, November 10, 2016 at 10:30 am in the school gym. Approximately 30 military veterans are scheduled to attend. This wonderful, annual event is open to the public.

Exeter Adult Education will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Adult Education in our country on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Tuck Learning Campus (Door D). This is an excellent tribute to all of the students who have been so successful in this educational endeavor and celebrates the work of the dedicated teachers and staff members who have helped individuals achieve a goal which many often thought was simply an elusive dream. The public is warmly invited to attend.

Exeter High School (EHS) students who are studying US Government are working with 30 adults who are preparing for their US Citizenship Test. Federal District Justice Landya McCafferty recently visited EHS and explained this process to our students. During the winter, EHS will host the Naturalization Ceremony for these new citizens. Social Studies teacher Aaron Blais has been very instrumental in this amazing activity.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Exeter High School (EHS) World Language Department is hosting twenty-three (23) students from the Paris, France suburb of Montgeron in October. These students will be staying with local families after having visited New York and Boston. In April 2017, twelve (12) students from EHS will reciprocate and travel to Montgeron to stay with French families in the Paris area.

The Seacoast School of Technology (SST) hosted the October meeting of the Governor and Executive Council. Several students presented to the Council during its breakfast meeting. Governor Maggie Hassan presented Certificates of Commendation to SST Administrative Assistants Laurie Eldridge and Brenda Schrempf and Teaching Assistant James Walsh.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 21.4% of young people between the ages of 13-18 have experienced a several mental disorder at some point during their life.

Exeter High School (EHS) physical education teacher, Jim Tufts, is coaching EHS soccer for the 40th consecutive year. What an accomplishment!

Strategic Initiatives in Our Schools

SAU 16 *Vision For Our Graduates*….A Compass to Guide Our Work

Each graduate demonstrates engaged learning and citizenship through the ability to solve problems independently and collaboratively with perseverance and resilience, and communicates solutions with confidence and empathy.

Art classes at the **Cooperative Middle School** (CMS) this fall are consistently developing student work. Eighth grade students worked very hard as they made careful observations of a shoe, a sneaker, or a boot. After sketching a contour, they used a seven-step value scale to create shading on these shoes. Their finished projects are remarkable because they are quite detailed and realistic looking. Now hung in the CMS

hallways are some colorful paintings—with tints and shading—completed by these students.

Recently **Exeter High School** (EHS) science teachers, Dr. Angela Lennox and Ms. Liz Morse, took their advanced biology students to Great Bay Community College (GBCC) to experience what science at the collegiate level is like. They learned how dual enrollment credits transfer from EHS to GBCC and had a tour of the campus. During the tour of the nursing program, the students saw an animated dummy that talks about how it is feeling and can be adjusted to a number of scenarios (e.g. heart attack, lung infection and birth/delivery). One group worked on vital signs and the importance of hand-washing, while another group watched the delivery of a baby. Some of the students volunteered to operate the remote camera and "tools" that simulated abdominal surgery.

Twenty-nine (29) dual enrollment courses are offered at the **Seacoast School of Technology** (SST) this year. Currently 248 students are enrolled in these college classes for a total of 696 credits. Very importantly, the Careers in Education program has a *Memo of Understanding* with the University of New Hampshire (UNH) which waives the ED 500 course (i.e. a requirement for college education majors) after just one year in the Careers in Education program. Additionally, dozens of articulation agreements between SST programs and other institutions of higher education are being used to benefit students. (Incidentally, Exeter High School also offers several dual enrollment courses as well.)

At **Lincoln Street School** (LSS), the professional staff has successfully organized their personal and professional learning community goals around this year's building goals, both of which are centered on the SAU's *Vision for Our Graduates*. Many staff members are focusing their efforts on student growth, flexible grouping (changing student instructional groups based upon their progress of specific learning needs on the topic), and the use of teaching math using center-based instruction. Each certified teacher has met with Principal Drew Bairstow to discuss their goals, their application to the school goals, and their plan to achieve success. This unified approach to instruction will provide many positive benefits for the students.

In addition to holding classes at the Tuck Learning Campus, **Exeter Adult Education** also holds adult education and HiSET preparation classes for high school equivalency for inmates at the Rockingham County Department of Corrections in Brentwood. Recently, Adult Education Director Leslie Haslam administered the HiSET test at the jail as she trained a new examiner.

Kensington Elementary School (KES) was visited recently by a team from the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) for a School Approval/Adequate Education Site Visit**.** This visit was conducted in accordance with NH State Law (RSA 193-E) which requires that all *"public elementary and secondary education shall provide all students with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare them for successful participation in the social, economic, scientific, technological, and political systems of a free government, now and in the years to come; an education that is consistent with the minimum standards for public school approval, the state-established academic standards, and school district or school curriculum."*

It was a comprehensive visit in which the team reviewed curriculum and policies, as well as meeting with several members of the KES community. Principal Becky Ruel wanted to publically thank the students, teachers, parents, and School Board Members who volunteered their time to meet with the NHDOE team to share their experiences and perspectives about KES. A full report, along with any recommendations, will be reviewed at the December School Board Meeting.

While there was a bit of preparation and some anxiety surrounding the visit, the day was very positive and the team was quite complimentary to KES. One of the students, however, said it perfectly. When asked by a DOE team member what the best part about Kensington Elementary School was, his immediate reply was, "You feel loved here." Mission accomplished!

Several exciting field trips during October sparked the interest of the children at **East Kingston Elementary School** (EKES). The third and fourth graders went to Plimoth Plantation in Massachusetts for a full day of activities. Accompanied by a large group of parents and teachers, the children were exposed to "living history" as they toured the village and interacted with costumed role players who portrayed 17th Century residents. The EKES kindergarten class went to Applecrest Farm Orchards in Hampton Falls to enjoy a hay ride and apple picking while also learning about how apple trees and apples grow; getting a lesson on honeybees and seeing a honeybee hive; and touring the farm. They also enjoyed a snack of apple cider donuts and apple cider. When the children returned to school, they planted a new apple tree to celebrate their successful outing.

One of this year's building goals at **Main Street School** (MSS) is to strengthen students' social and emotional competencies and support positive student behavior. With this in mind, Exeter Special Education Administrator, Dr. Renee Bennett, provided a presentation to all professional staff on social and emotional learning during an early release day in September. For October's early release day, Ms. Lynn Lyons, a licensed clinical social worker and psychotherapist from Concord, NH, presented information to the staff on how to support students with anxiety. She emphasized that it is more important to address the process rather than the content of anxiety. During Open House in October, a presentation on *Open Circle* was shared with MSS families. This program is used throughout MSS and teaches and supports positive behavior strategies for young children.

On Friday, October 7, 2016, **Newfields Elementary School** (NES) hosted Plymouth State University's TIGER program for an all-school enrichment opportunity. TIGER is an acronym for Theatre Integrating Guidance, Education and Responsibility. The entire school community was entertained and educated by their performance which included actors, theatre, dance, and music. Their performance is intended to "transform thoughts, feelings, and behavior to help children envision and understand their own power in resolving difficult issues…helping them seek positive solutions to make school a place where all children thrive." The performance was followed by 4th and 5th grade student workshops focused on raising awareness about bullying and empowering bystanders.

Stratham Memorial School (SMS) continues to focus on educating "the whole child" by using instructional techniques grounded in developmentally appropriate practice,

academic rigor, relevance, and relationships. The approach is student-centered and encompasses academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of the children. In Literacy this year, the SMS administration, faculty, and staff are using reading and writing strategies in a workshop approach. Teaching and learning are supported through the use of resources and professional learning opportunities that provide teachers with important tools for planning rich experiences that include deep levels of understanding. In Math, the workshop approach is also used to implement units of study using standards-aligned resources. Science work is centered on inquiry as students are provided with inquiry-based resources that have students question, investigate, seek evidence, explain, connect, and justify. Social Studies work involves students having real-world experiences related to their community and the rich history of New Hampshire and the United States. Of particular note this year is the process and importance of voting for national, state, and local representatives.

Full day kindergarten is now a reality at **Swasey Central School** (SCS). Teachers Kathy Desmarais, Julie Proctor, and Sue Mayo are excited and working hard to implement this program in the most developmentally appropriate way to strengthen the children's learning and make them eager to come to school each day. Kindergarteners spent the first couple of weeks learning each other's names and the routines of the classroom. They are learning to become more and more independent by doing such things as unpacking backpacks, handing in folders, moving about the classroom, participating in specials, and packing up their belongings. The children also worked on creating "Hopes and Dreams," which led into creating classroom rules. They also really enjoyed "Dot Day" and "Thank a Police Officer Day" in September.

R**eflection**

At the end of September, I was so impressed by the camaraderie displayed by the middle and high school staffs when they played against each other in their third annual softball game to benefit our SAU 16 *End 68 Hours of Hunger* program. The game was played "under the lights" at beautiful Sawyer Park in Kensington. Students of all ages, parents, colleagues, and community members attended. Before, during, and after the game, I could not help but notice the laughing, the teasing, the competitive spirit, and the overall good time that players and spectators had. It's that kind of community involvement that adds to SAU 16 being such a special place!