

2014-2015 REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The precipitous drop in oil and gas prices at the end of 2014 and the beginning of 2015, along with the creation of more and more jobs, have helped the local, regional and national economies to rebound significantly since the devastating economic downturn which began in 2008 and 2009 with the collapse of the housing markets. It is our hope that finally many families are beginning to stabilize themselves in anticipation of a much calmer future.

Understanding the relevancy of economic periods is a marvelous study for education. The *Market Basket* drama that unfolded in our area during this past summer exemplified the facets that govern our economic histories – infighting, philosophical differences, greed, personal agendas, court battles, fickle loyalties and dedicated employees/supporters. Our collective efforts in SAU 16 are focused on preparing our students for their future. Keeping learning relevant is crucial in our fast paced technology based environment. That is part of the reason that our Vision Statement and Mission Statement help to drive the services that our six communities provide to students and families.

SAU 16 VISION STATEMENT

To provide a rigorous and comprehensive education that will prepare our students for diverse post-secondary educational opportunities, a competitive workplace, and active civic participation.

SAU 16 MISSION STATEMENT

To help students gain knowledge and skills that build intellect, character, and a lifelong thirst for learning.

HIGHLIGHTS

Curriculum, Communication, Community Service, and Transitions continue to be the focus of student-centered initiatives and work within the six communities of School Administrative Unit (SAU) 16. The successful implementation of the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan has been a cooperative effort of students, staff, administrators, and School Board Members. Monthly reports to the community are published and available at the SAU website (www.sau16.org). Efforts are now underway to develop the next SAU Strategic Plan for 2016-2021. Interested members of the public are invited to join this collaborative effort.

Highlights of the past year include:

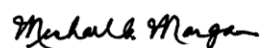
1. Continuing implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in Language Arts and Math in preparation for the new, required statewide standardized assessment, Smarter Balanced which is scheduled for the spring of 2015
2. Continuing implementation of the NextGen Science standards to advance curriculum work throughout all of the schools in the SAU

3. The College Board recognized Exeter High School in its 5th Annual AP District Honor Roll — a list of 547 districts across the U.S. and Canada being honored for increasing access to AP® course work while simultaneously maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning scores of three (3) or higher on Advanced Placement exams
4. The SAU 16 Safety and Security Committee was awarded the first-ever *New Hampshire School Emergency Preparedness Award* in 2014 because of the on-going collaboration among schools and police departments in all six SAU communities
5. Increased access to various technology resources throughout the SAU with the goal of a one-to-one device for each student and staff member
6. Offering “dual enrollment courses” so that high school students may simultaneously earn college credit such as General Biology, Introduction to Video Production, Methods of Construction I Theory, and Introduction to C++ at the Seacoast School of Technology
7. The retirements of 16 SAU professional staff members who dedicated a combined total of 352 years of service to our children and their families
8. Three local educators with SAU 16 ties received statewide recognition through the 2014 EDies awards for their impressive work in their respective fields, including Assistant Superintendent Esther Asbell (*Outstanding Service Award* from the NH Association of School Administrators); Swasey Central School teacher Amy Cantone (*The Pat Keyes Technology Educator Award* which is given annually to an individual who has developed effective and innovative instructional units using technology); and former SAU 16 administrator Tony Baldasaro (*The Susan Janosz Technology Impact Award* for his leadership role that advocates the use of educational technologies for improving instruction and who has supported technology within the context of school reform and restructuring)
9. Four Swasey Central School teachers (Lisa Brown, Jody MacBride, Robert “Archie” Schroeder, and Amy Wilson) received national recognition from the Oregon-California Trails Association for their development of an extensive five-week long unit on the westward migration called “The Oregon Trail”
10. The Exeter High School Girls Tennis team captured their first-ever state championship and the Girls Soccer Team won its seventh Division I state championship in nine years
11. The Cooperative Middle School (CMS) girls’ track and field team captured its eighth straight Seacoast Track & Field League championship in May
12. The SAU welcomed three new principals (Becky Ruel in Kensington; Kate Segal in Newfields; Jim Tremblay at Exeter High School); a new assistant principal (David Goldsmith in Stratham); and an interim principal (James Hayes at Lincoln Street School)
13. Dealing with and planning for decreasing K-5 enrollments in Brentwood, East Kingston, Kensington, and Newfields while the other districts have stabilized or slightly increased enrollments
14. Hosting the fifth annual meeting among local state legislators, school board members, and school administrators to discuss educational and financial issues of mutual concern
15. Researching and discussing the implementation of competency-based standards and grading for middle and high school students
16. Implementing more creative and resourceful personalized means for students to learn and complete the requirements of their formal education process that include extended learning opportunities beyond the traditional classroom setting

17. Expansion of the *End 68 Hours of Hunger* that provides weekend backpacks of food for students who are food insecure
18. Using a wide variety of media - including websites, newspapers, cable access television, and blogs - to communicate the schools' mission and service to the community
19. Enhancing the outreach of community service projects that assist in meeting the needs of individuals and organizations
20. Supporting and advancing the role of Advisory Committees which bring together business professionals, guidance counselors, students, farmers, chefs, and a retired principal at the Seacoast School of Technology
21. Continuing to recognize local residents as Champions for Children
22. Completing collective bargaining negotiations for four of the eleven associations within the SAU
23. Supporting the important work of the Unified Arts (music, art, physical education, health) in all SAU schools
24. Stressing the need for more active participation in the business and political affairs of the seven independent school districts within the SAU by strongly encouraging citizens to vote and serve on various Boards and Committees
25. Continuing the strong tradition of volunteerism in our schools by having all of our elementary schools and the Seacoast School of Technology (SST) recognized by NH Partners in Education
26. Reinforcing the need for student and staff awareness in the prevention of student suicides and in dealing with individuals and families who struggle with "grief and loss" issues
27. Recognizing the New Hampshire chapter of the National Education Association (NEA) which posthumously honored Cooperative Middle School (CMS) special education teacher Ed Pease with its *Champion of Human and Civil Rights Award*
28. Supporting the work of the Exeter Adult Education Program, the Exeter High School Alternative Education Program, the Great Bay eLearning Charter School (GBeCS) and the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS) as each embraces non-traditional ways of student learning
29. Expanding the variety of educational programming available on Channel 13 to all SAU 16 Comcast subscribers
30. Serving the students, families, and staff entrusted to us

This is my seventh year working with you in this important educational process. Please know that I am very grateful to the outstanding teachers, support staff members, administrators, and school board members who share our common goal of providing the best possible education for our students and their families at a reasonable cost to taxpayers. Public education faces many challenges each day because of the changing needs of students and the expectations placed upon it. Nevertheless, SAU 16 remains committed to preparing all students to be good citizens who will emerge as responsible stewards, powerful leaders, and dedicated workers in our society.

Respectfully submitted,



MICHAEL A. MORGAN
Superintendent of Schools