

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Christine Rath, Interim Superintendent of Schools - SAU16
December 2017



Esther Asbell Named Associate Superintendent for SAU16

Interim Superintendent Christine Rath is pleased to announce that as of July 1, 2018, Esther Asbell will serve as Associate Superintendent for SAU16. Esther's extensive knowledge of curriculum and instruction, her leadership in fostering approaches to social and emotional learning in our schools, her experience and commitment to ensuring the district has strong safety and emergency planning in place are all invaluable assets to this school district and the SAU16 communities. It is also essential that our finalists for the superintendency know that there is a talented and committed team at the Central Office with whom he can work and Esther Asbell is an important member of that team.



Joint Board Approves Calendar for 2018-2019

The SAU Joint Board at their November 20th meeting approved the SAU16 Calendar for 2018-19. Next year's calendar closely mirrors this year's calendar with the one exception being that the in-service day in November 2018 was moved from a Friday to a Tuesday to accommodate some of our schools used as voting day locations. This calendar can be found on the SAU16 Website at http://sau16.org/content/Approved_SY_2019_SAU_Calendar.pdf

School Board Seats Available in March 2018

Now is the time for interested citizens to consider serving on our SAU16 School Boards. Terms of office for some current school board members expire in March 2018. Of the thirty-three (33) School Board seats in SAU16, thirteen (13) positions will be available for (re)election this coming March.

Board Members whose terms expire include:

- Brentwood Board, 2 seats, currently Scott Dennehy and Jessie Hollister serve
- East Kingston Board, 1 seat, currently David McBride serves
- Exeter Board, 2 seats, currently John Maxwell and Lisa McConnell serve
- Kensington Board, 1 seat, currently Tina Favara serves
- Newfields Board, 1 seat, currently James McIlroy serves
- Stratham Board, 2 seats, currently Sarah Gallagher and Eric von der Linden serve

Coop Board

- Exeter seat, currently Maggie Bishop serves
- Kensington (1 year term) seat, currently Bob Hall serves
- Newfields seat, currently Paul Bauer serves
- Stratham seat, currently Helen Joyce serves

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 2018, should declare their candidacy in writing to the current school district clerk for their respective district **between January 24, 2018 and February 2, 2018.**

Coop Budget Advisory Committee – Seats available in March 2018

The nine member Budget Advisory Committee that serves the Exeter Region Cooperative School District will have three (3) seats available for election in March 2018. Any resident of Stratham, East Kingston or Exeter can register to be a candidate for these important positions. The members whose terms expire this year include Connie Gilman - **Stratham representative**; Mark Paige - **Exeter representative** and David Pendell - the **East Kingston representative** who has also been serving as Chair of the Budget Advisory Committee. Each term is for three (3) years.

The filing period for interested candidates is between January 24, 2018 and February 2, 2018. Anyone interested in serving the community in this capacity can contact Mr. Frank Markiewicz, SAU Business Administrator, at the SAU16 office, telephone #775-8669 for more information.



SAU16 Principals Participate in Focus Group on Diversity

On January 16, 2018, the principals and district administrators will participate in a focus group around the issues of diversity in our schools with Mr. Andrew C. Smith, the New Hampshire State Disproportionate Minority Contact Coordinator. The results of this first meeting will provide the basis for a customized follow-up session with administrators this winter. In addition to his work at the state level, Mr. Smith has 25 years of experience as a consultant specializing in diversity and inclusion, leadership development, change management and cultural transformation. Mr. Smith has been working this fall with administrators and staff in the Oyster River School District.

SMS Principal Announces His Retirement

Mr. Tom Fosher, long time principal at Stratham Memorial School (SMS), has announced his retirement in June 2018. Mr. Fosher has served the Stratham community for 22 years. I have only known Mr. Fosher since August, but even in my short tenure here in SAU16, I have seen firsthand his great passion and enthusiasm for his school and for his students - "his kids." We all wish Mr. Fosher all the best as he begins a new chapter in his life.

SMS Principal Position Advertised

The SMS Principal vacancy has been posted and advertised on EdJobs, a statewide web site for individuals interested in open administrative, teaching and support positions in New Hampshire schools. The information for those interested in applying for the position of principal at Stratham Memorial School is also posted on the SAU16 web site:

<http://www.sau16.org/index.php/about-us/employment-section> The closing date for applications is January 5, 2018.

Stratham Public Forum on Leadership Profile for SMS Principal

On Thursday, January 4, 2018, 6:30 p.m., there will be a public forum for Stratham Memorial School parents and community members to help develop the leadership profile for the new principal at Stratham Memorial School.

Stratham parents will also have the opportunity to complete a brief survey about their hopes and expectations for the principal at Stratham Memorial School. A letter with the link to the survey will go out to parents in the coming days.

SAU16 Safety Grants Being Recommended to Governor for Funding - Rich Kane

The State recently created a Public School Infrastructure Fund that has an estimated \$19,000,000 available to public schools to improve security in schools. SAU16 Safety and Security Coordinator Rich Kane met with the district's Safety Committee and consulted school personnel to develop a priority list of security related issues and/or equipment needed. The Committee identified five (5) areas of concern that the Homeland Security Audit had also noted as areas of need. We are applying to address the following four issues with the fifth still being finalized in terms of cost:

1. Adding a secured vestibule area to Newfield's Elementary School that will allow properly vetting of all visitors to the school prior to their access to the school's interior. The estimated cost for this project is just under \$95,000.00.
2. Making improvements to East Kingston Elementary School to include creating more secured doors; having key card access systems; upgrading the emergency lock down system; and installing a panic button system. The estimate for this project is \$15,900.00.
3. Purchasing and installing security film on windows at schools across the SAU.
4. Making an upgrade to the internal radio communications systems for the schools and the maintenance department that would include the purchase of 50 new portable radios and the installation of three new antennas. This will ensure that communication can occur in an emergency and on a day-by-day basis between all our schools. The estimate for this project is \$33,824.00.
5. The fifth project is to add repeater equipment to all our schools that will improve the ability of police and fire departments when in our schools to communicate with their dispatch centers. The estimate on this project is still being determined and when the estimates are finalized, we will apply for the grant funds for this project.

The applications for these funds are first vetted by the Department of Homeland Security and then sent to the State committee for review and decision. There are no deadlines when applying for these funds, as the grants are recommended on a first come, first serve basis. If a grant is "recommended" by the committee it then goes to the Governor's office for final approval. The security grants require an 80% - 20% split; so, if approved, the school districts will be responsible for 20% of the cost.

On November 30, 2017, SAU16 was notified that our first two grants have been moved forward to the Governor's office (Newfield's and East Kingston). The remaining two grant applications have not gone to the committee for review as of the November 30th. We envision that the review will take place in the next two weeks.



Strategic Plan Updates

Instructional Rounds - Esther Asbell

In keeping with the SAU16 Strategic Plan, the SAU continues to expand the number of schools that are participating in the process of Instructional Rounds (IR). The basic premise of IR is that people best learn about the meaning of high quality instruction by observing teachers, students and the work students are asked to do, followed by meaningful conversation and analysis. The results of this analysis are shared with the staff at the school and action plans are developed to enhance the “individualized innovative instruction” for students. The work supports the teaching and learning recommendations outlined in the strategic plan related to implementation of a competency based educational system.

Staff completing the IR are trained and follow very specific protocols when gathering and analyzing the data collected in the schools. For the past five years, SAU16 has been increasing the number of trained staff enabling all SAU16 schools to participate in the IR process. To date, there are 120 administrators and teachers trained and each fall there is an Instructional Rounds training offered to continue to build capacity and sustainability of this process.

District wide Preschool - Helen Rist

One of the recommendations of the SAU16 Strategic Plan is to create a collaborative preschool model with a cooperative agreement among SAU schools for programming and cost sharing. The goal is to provide public preschool to all SAU16 students, including students with disabilities.

Currently, the Stratham, Exeter and Brentwood districts each have their own preschool programs. These programs enroll preschoolers who live in their respective communities and also provide programming for those preschool aged students with special needs. Although our other towns - Kensington, East Kingston and Newfields - do not have preschool programs in their schools, students with special needs that require highly intensive services can enroll in Exeter’s program. Some of the costs for these students from the other towns are offset with funds from the federal Special Education Grant (IDEA Grant.)

“In fact, the need for SAU-wide programs reaches beyond preschool,” notes Helen Rist, Director of Special Education for SAU16. In January, Helen Rist will be forming a study committee to begin looking into addressing these needs.



December Retirements

We want to recognize and thank two of our long-serving administrative assistants who are retiring at the end of this calendar year in December 2017.

Linda “Lyn” Schimoler, the Central Office Special Education Administrative Assistant, is retiring after 34 years of service to SAU16. Lyn has worked for several special education administrators over this period of time, always working to ensure that our district’s special

education operations are efficient, cost effective and compliant with state and federal regulations. Special Education Director Helen Rist notes, “You could always count on Lyn for a warm greeting, sincere smile and help with every task.”

Sue Gentile began her career in August 1994 working as the Adult Ed Administrative Secretary with Director Leslie Haslam and then moved in July 1999 to Lincoln Street School to work with Principal Richard Keays where she has been the Administrative Assistant for seventeen plus years. Principal Drew Bairstow shares that “Sue is known for her strong work ethic, attention to detail and her organizational skills. Her institutional knowledge is beyond compare.”

Both of these individuals will be greatly missed and we wish them all the best in their retirements!

Two SAU16 Teachers Recognized for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching

This month, the New Hampshire Department of Education announced the selection of two SAU16 teachers as 2017 recipients of the *Presidential Awards for Excellent in Mathematics and Science Teaching*.

At Exeter High School (EHS), **Dr. Angela Lennox** was recognized for her outstanding Science teaching. Dr. Angela Lennox has taught Science at EHS for 33 years. She primarily teaches Biology, but has also taught Chemistry, Life Science and Earth Science. In 1997, Angela received the State of NH's 1997 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Teaching. She has been a Science Department head, a Learning Area Leader, and EHS Key Club Advisor. She and her husband love to sail.

At the Cooperative Middle School (CMS), **Elise Catalano** was recognized for excellence in math teaching. This is Ms. Catalano's 24th year teaching although she is a first year teacher at CMS as a 6th grade math teacher. Prior to CMS, she taught in Rye for 10 years teaching 8th grade and prior to that, Ms. Catalano was in South Hampton teaching 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades.

Kensington Elementary Dot Project

After reading “The Dot” by Peter H. Reynolds and celebrating International Dot Day in September, **Kensington Elementary School (KES)** fourth graders continued the KES tradition of painting creative designs on ceiling tiles to be displayed in the school library. KES librarian, Mrs. Eastwood, explained that this project was a good way to expose the students to the 4 C's of 21st century learning – communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity. The project took the students several weeks to complete while learning how to collaborate, compromise and work together to develop a design to be painted on a ceiling tile.

Cooperative Middle School (CMS) Sticks and Stones project

In recent years, the Sticks and Stones artist-in-residence program at CMS has been an annual project. During this three week program, former teachers Skip Brunette and Jeff Irwin of Trash Can Lid Productions in Eliot, Maine, worked with all of the sixth graders with a goal to prevent bullying before it begins by using music and dance as a medium to end a myth about an age-old playground saying – “sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt you.”

The year's program concluded for each group of sixth graders with a performance for family and friends that ended with a song called "Alone." "It's an original song we wrote because I think it's one of the things that's overlooked the most," Brunette said. "This is kind of the silent bully, the exclusion piece. It's very hurtful and that could last a long time." The positive feedback from the sixth graders was indicative of how successful and encouraging this program is for the sixth grade students.

Exeter High School Students Excel at Latin Competition

On Saturday, December 2nd, eleven EHS students traveled to the annual Granite State Certamen at Dover High School, where they earned multiple accolades while competing against fellow Latin students from throughout New Hampshire. In the intermediate division, EHS claimed first and third place honors. First place was awarded to Tyler Silverwood, Noah Robinson, Andrew McElroy and Sawyer Rogers, and Barrett Su, Alayna Chichester, Julia Tennant and Sophia Rubens received third place finishes, while Loren Brooks and Weston Su placed third in the advanced division. Congratulations on a strong showing by EHS at the statewide Latin quiz competition.