

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Christine Rath, Interim Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16

October 2017

Superintendent Michael Morgan honored at Bradley Kidder Educational Law Conference posthumously

On October 4, 2017, former SAU16 Superintendent Michael A. Morgan was posthumously awarded the *Bradley F. Kidder Award for Outstanding Service to Education Law*. Each fall New Hampshire's top school attorneys highlight new developments in school law at this workshop sponsored by the New Hampshire School Administrators Association (NHSAA), the New Hampshire Council of School Attorneys (NHCSA), and the New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA).

SAU16 Joint Board Vice Chairman, James McIlroy accepted the award on behalf of Mr. Morgan. In his remarks, Mr. McIlroy noted the influence Superintendent Morgan had on so many in the district, including being a steward for the vision for the SAU and spearheading the Strategic Plan for the district and its communities for many years. Mr. McIlroy also noted how much Mike cherished his work at Plymouth State and the pride he took in the connections he had with superintendents, administrators and teachers around the state. In closing, Mr. McIlroy noted, "Mr. Morgan has left a legacy in SAU16 and throughout New Hampshire by his example - a legacy of leadership, teaching and mentoring; a legacy of engagement, caring and commitment, a legacy of faith and love."

Superintendent Search Process Underway

The Superintendent Search process is underway. The Search Committee will consist of the following School Board members: Brentwood - Jessie Hollister; East Kingston - David McBride; Exeter-John Maxwell; Kensington - Tina Favara; Newfields - Thomas Hayward; Stratham - Sarah Gallaher; and Coop -Travis Thompson. In the coming weeks, letters from interested individuals who would like to serve on the Search Committee will be reviewed by the committee and the full Search Committee will be organized.

Exeter High School Principal Search Process

The Exeter Region Cooperative School Board has begun the process to select a principal for Exeter High School for the 2018-2019 school year. As a first step in the process, the Board has taken input from SAU and Exeter High School faculty, staff, and a student group and identified priorities for the principal at Exeter High School.

Following is a brief overview of the survey results.

- I. Areas where 75% or more of the 518 respondents rate this quality or behavior as "most important to me":
 - Acts ethically, with honesty, transparency, trust and collaboration (94%)
 - Ensures equitable access to effective teachers, opportunities and supports (83%)
 - Ensures a safe school where students are known, trusted, and respected (83%)
 - Ensures all students are treated fairly, with respect, with knowledge of their culture and context (79%)

- II. Areas where 60 - 74% of respondents rated the quality or behavior as “most important to me:”
- Works collaboratively to achieve a shared vision (73%)
 - Ensures teaching practices are challenging, differentiated, personalized (73%)
 - Is approachable, accessible, welcoming to families (65%)
 - Develops the professional capacity of staff (62%)
 - Communicates a clear vision and mission for the school (61%)
- III. Areas of where 39 - 45% of respondents rated the quality or behavior as “most important to me:”
- Is visible, accessible in school and community (45%)
 - Manages operations and administrative systems (44%)
 - Promotes effective use of technology (43%)
 - Uses valid assessment data to monitor student progress and improve instruction (39%)

In addition, those responding expressed their hopes that the principal would be a strong leader; committed to the Exeter community and Exeter High School; and someone who sets high expectations and holds all accountable to those expectations. They hope the principal is someone who will celebrate all the students in the school. Those responding wanted a leader who was not afraid of doing things differently, including expanding opportunities for students and staff at the school. Some of the additional qualities noted by those responding were: someone willing to learn and an individual who is calm, fair, optimistic, predictable, and with a sense of humor.

The Cooperative Board meets again on Monday, November 6th, to continue its discussion of the search process.

SAU 16 Promotes Diversity and Positive Behavior throughout Our Schools

Recent events in our area and a nationwide spike in acts of racism, anti-Semitism, and hate speech give considerable pause to educators, including all of us in SAU16, who are charged with the task of developing active citizens of our students. Yet it is these very times when we must increase our efforts to ensure that all of our school environments – in the classroom, on the playground, on our buses – are safe and respectful places for every one of our students.

We are committed to being proactive in teaching students what it means to be active citizens in their school communities, to foster respect for diversity, and to reinforce the positive and respectful behaviors. Following are some of the programs and approaches we are taking in our schools to achieve these goals.

East Kingston Elementary School: A school-wide implementation of the *Responsive Classroom* program teaches students what it means to be members of a community in which acceptance of all is a key principle. East Kingston’s *Stand Up and Speak Out* campaign provides fifth graders with practice being school leaders and modeling citizenships for the rest of the students. In addition, East Kingston teachers use literature to share stories, talk about social problems, and highlight leaders and those involved in civic rights and social justice

Stratham Memorial School also implements *Responsive Classroom* school-wide. In addition, its teachers and administrators continually stress a growth mindset philosophy for all learners, based on the belief that all of us are on a journey toward ever more equitable, inclusive, and caring words and actions.

The counselor at **Lincoln Street School (LSS)** provides lessons about inclusion, acceptance, and community building in every classroom. Each year the school also holds six whole school assemblies to focus on topics around acceptance and community building. This year's theme for assemblies is "What's Your Story," promoting diversity and celebrating differences. In addition, LSS has also used the *One School, One Book* campaign in which each year a book is featured that focuses on diversity and inclusion topics.

Every year, all **LSS** employees complete bullying recognition and intervention training and positive behavior is reinforced with "Caught Ya Cards" which students can earn when they are observed making sound social choices. The cards enter students into a monthly school-wide raffle for prizes. Additionally, the Plymouth State University TIGER performers come to perform for the school's fourth graders every year, covering topics such as building friendships and treating people with respect.

At **Main Street School (MSS)**, the staff uses *Open Circle* to support the development of students' social and emotional learning. The program works by incorporating lessons and activities that strengthen the classroom community. Through interactive work, students work with their peers to recognize similar interests and support differences in areas like culture and religion.

Main Street School has a number of other curriculum components that are designed to help children celebrate differences nationally and globally. In first grade, all students partake in "Cruising the Continents" to learn about different countries around the world, and in second grade teachers spend a unit on cultural celebrations around the world. Monthly school assemblies are also used as a vehicle to delve further into diversity through interactive presentations. The goal at MSS is to support students making connections across the different learning experiences we provide and celebrate the differences in all people.

The **Swasey School** also uses the *Open Circle* program to promote respect and understanding for all. During monthly *Swasey Shindigs*, the entire school comes together for a 20-30 minute assembly to build upon school unity. Every assembly is hosted by a different grade or faction of the school and includes music, presentations and positive messaging. Youth Motivational Speaker Chris Poulos visited in the middle of September for a BMX bike assembly focused on respect, teamwork, acceptance and more.

The **Kensington Elementary School (KES)** continues its 15 year tradition of celebrating diversity by selecting and honoring the heritage of current students at Kensington Elementary School. Families share their stories, photos, artifacts and traditions with students to help broaden their worldly perspectives and expose them to life outside of Kensington. Over the years, Kensington students have traveled to Kenya, Russia, South Korea, Ireland, Jamaica, China, India, Italy, France, Spain, Guatemala, Ethiopia, Finland and the Philippines! This year in January, the students at KES will be traveling to the beautiful countries of Croatia and Serbia.

At **Newfields Elementary School (NES)**, the students participate in *Sticks and Stones*, a week long residency that uses performance art, music and language arts to outfit young people with tools and strategies to productively interact with individuals who demonstrate bullying behaviors while offering bullies compelling reasons to change their own behavior. *Sticks and Stones* stresses that kindness

and acceptance are immensely more powerful and rewarding than the stature one may gain from intentionally harming, intimidating or isolating others.

This year, the **Cooperative Middle School (CMS)** implemented the Hawk Pride Pledge. During regular Hawk Pride assemblies that are organized around themes of Purpose, Respect, Integrity, Determination and Excellence, students are reminded of what it means to be a Hawk.

At both **CMS** and at **EHS**, specific clubs and organizations foster equity, diversity, inclusion, respect and compassion. For example, at CMS, the Blue Hawk Bunch is a community alliance that meets to promote the understanding and acceptance of differences and building friendships and is also a feeder club for the Best Buddies program at EHS. CMS students participating in the Diversity Project raise awareness in the school about diversity so that CMS will be a school that accepts all people and where it is safe to be who you are without fear of being judged. Students introduce each other to new foods, cultures, customs, and above all new friends.

The **Cooperative Middle School** is also implementing *Building Community and Combating Hate: Lesson for the Middle School Classroom*. This program, sponsored by Partners Against Hate, represents a joint effort by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF), and the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence (CPHV) to design and implement a program of outreach, public education, and training to address youth initiated hate violence. Funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Partners Against Hate features an innovative collection of both on and offline resources and support to a variety of audiences, including parents, educators, law enforcement officials, and the community at large.

At **EHS**, the Equality Club supports LGBTQ students and issues; Hawkins focuses on women issues; and Students Against Bullying have been leaders in educating students about anti-bullying strategies at EHS. In addition, this year the school has rolled out a school-wide behavior matrix that clearly communicates the expectation that students demonstrate respect toward one another around the school.

Students at the **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** participate in an anti-bullying orientation and are expected to demonstrate a high level of understanding of issues related to anti-bullying practices by the conclusion of the orientation. Additionally, as part of program competencies and part of the Career Ready Practices, teaching students to “work productively in teams, using cultural and global competence” is an expectation at SST.

Finally, in this current climate, all SAU16 administrators, faculty, and staff are committed to being increasingly vigilant about the manner in which all members of our school communities treat each other and to hold one another highly accountable for positive and respectful behaviors in all of our school communities.

These are challenging times, but these are also times when we know we can have a strong and positive impact on our students and school communities. We take that responsibility seriously and are committed to doing all we can to ensure our schools are environments that promote respect and individual worth.

SAU16 Fall Enrollments

This fall the SAU16 schools opened with a total enrollment of 5,191 students.

October 2017

GRADE	Brentwood	E. Kingston	Exeter	Kensington	Newfields	Stratham	Other*	TOTAL
Pre-School*	5	0	33	1	0	14	0	53
Kindergarten	40	22	128	20	22	84	0	316
1	56	29	159	21	17	84	0	366
2	46	21	156	18	20	78	0	339
3	59	19	167	20	22	92	0	379
4	44	28	180	14	16	90	0	372
5	62	27	166	16	28	102	0	401
Sub-Total	312	146	989	110	125	544	0	2226
6	61	29	153	24	13	110	1	391
7	73	38	180	25	28	107	0	451
8	62	31	179	25	16	105	1	419
Sub-Total	196	98	512	74	57	322	2	1261
9	76	37	149	27	25	108	0	422
10	73	30	161	46	12	97	0	419
11	79	41	187	31	23	86	0	447
12	73	37	163	29	22	92	0	416
Sub-Total	301	145	660	133	82	383	0	1704
TOTALS	809	389	2161	317	264	1249	2	5191
*includes students who pay tuition to attend in Brentwood, Exeter, Stratham and Coop schools								
SST	AM	213						
	MID	212						
	PM	238						
	TOTAL	663						

This fall's enrollment represents a decrease in total student enrollment of about 6.4% compared to October 1, 2005. The most significant decrease over the thirteen years has occurred at the elementary level. There has been an increase in student enrollment at the high school level.

Elementary Schools	October 1, 2005	October 1, 2017	Change	Percent Chg
Brentwood	391	312	-79	-20.20%
East Kingston	188	146	-42	-22.34%
Exeter	1013	989	-24	-2.37%
Kensington	208	110	-98	-47.12%
Newfields	165	125	-40	-24.24%
Stratham	644	544	-100	-15.53%
Elementary Total	2609	2226	-383	-14.68%

	October 1, 2005	October 1, 2017	Change	Percent Chg
Cooperative Middle School				
Grade 6		391		
Grade 7		451		
Grade 8		419		
Middle School Total	1326	1261	-65	-4.90%
Exeter High School				
Grade 9		422		
Grade 10		419		
Grade 11		447		
Grade 12		416		
High School Total	1611	1704	93	5.77%
Totals	5546	5191	-355	-6.4%

A three year history reflects the decreasing enrollment shows the decreasing enrollment at the elementary and middle school levels.

	October 1, 2015	October 1, 2016	October 1, 2017	2 year change	1 year change
Brentwood	328	318	312	-16	-6
East Kingston	145	155	146	1	-9
Exeter	1014	1003	989	-25	-14
Kensington	110	104	110	0	6
Newfields	138	127	125	-13	-2
Stratham	571	572	544	-27	-28
Total	2306	2279	2226	-80	-53
Middle School					
Grade 6	416	453	391	-25	-62
Grade 7	449	423	451	2	28
Grade 8	424	443	419	-5	-24
Total	1289	1319	1261	-28	-58

High School	October 1, 2015	October 1, 2016	October 1, 2017	2 year change	1 year change
Grade 9	457	417	422	-35	5
Grade 10	430	455	419	-11	-36
Grade 11	405	428	447	42	19
Grade 12	448	392	416	-32	24
Total	1740	1692	1704	-36	12