

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Michael A. Morgan, Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16
JUNE 2015

Thank You For Your Service

Seventeen members of the teaching and administrator staffs in the various SAU 16 schools retired at the end of this school year. These dedicated individuals represent a total of 408 years of service to their respective schools. Please recognize the excellent work of the following professional educators and celebrate their contributions to their students, families, and the community.

Exeter

Susan Curtis—Main Street and Lincoln Street Schools—23 years

Diane Taylor—Main Street School—26 years

Marcia Taylor—Lincoln Street School—27 years

Exeter Region Cooperative

David Atwood—Cooperative Middle School—41 years

Joel Bruning—Cooperative Middle School—22 years

Rich Descoteaux—Cooperative Middle School—32 years

Shelley Levy—Cooperative Middle School—14 years

Diane Reardon—Exeter High School—19 years

Bob Schur—Cooperative Middle School—17 years

Ann Shine—Exeter High School—13 years

East Kingston

Jim McMahon—41 years

Stratham

June August—32 years

Laurie Caporello—23 years

Anne Leonard—12 years

Janice Tierney—28 years

SAU/Title I Director

Karen Mullen—38 years

Immigrants in SAU 16

At the end of each school year, each NH school district must report a wide variety of different information to the Department of Education. One of these areas involves the number of immigrants who attend a public school within the district. For this purpose an “immigrant” is *someone who is between 3 and 21 years of age, who was not born in any of the 50 states or the District of Columbia or Puerto Rico, and who has not attended school for more than three full academic years*. Interestingly, SAU 16 now has 20 students who meet these criteria.

Did You Know?

The Exeter Adult Education Program was honored recently with the distinction of being the *2015 Education Business of the Year* by the Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce.

The Stratham Memorial School (SMS) gym is dedicated to **Anna S. Pike** who served as the Physical Education teacher there for 30 years from 1966 through 1996.

Governor Maggie Hassan was the featured guest speaker at this year's Fifth Grade Celebration in Newfields. Each of the 15 fifth graders wrote individual letters of invitation to the Governor asking her to be with them on their special day because she and her family are in the process of moving from Exeter to Newfields. She graciously accepted and the children and their families were thrilled!

At the recent **Exeter Adult Education** Graduation ceremony held at Exeter High School (EHS), 18 students received their high school diploma and 56 students received their High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) certificate.

The first **Officer Stephen Arkell Community 5K** that was held earlier this year in Brentwood had 1,802 registered runners and raised \$71,787. The funds are part of a memorial scholarship for Exeter High Schools and are coordinated through the Portsmouth Rotary Club.

During the recent Exeter High School (EHS) **Scholarship Awards** ceremony, 88 different organizations/families presented 90 recipients with \$190,000 in awards to help members of the Class of 2015 with expenses for their future educational pursuits.

The East Kingston Elementary School (EKES) multipurpose room is dedicated to East Kingston Police Officer **Melvin A. Keddy** who died in the line of duty on September 7, 1995. The dedication plaque in the school stresses that "Officer Keddy was a friend to all children."

Exeter High School (EHS) graduate **Anne Twombly** was nominated recently for the prestigious *National Collegiate Athletic Association Woman of the Year Award* because of her outstanding successes on the University of New Hampshire Women's Track and Field Team during her senior year at UNH.

The **Great Bay eLearning Charter School (GBeCS)** which was begun under the auspices of SAU 16, held its first high school graduation in June 2008. Including its graduates of the Class of 2015, GBeCS has now awarded diplomas to 238 students, some of whom come from as far away as Bedford and Derry, but still includes students from SAU 16 communities.

Over 1,000 people attended the **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** Certificate Ceremony for the graduates of the Class of 2015 from seven area high schools. During

the ceremony, 232 students were awarded their certificates and over \$80,000 in scholarships were presented by a wide variety of community organizations and families.

Exeter High School (EHS) will welcome **two foreign exchange students** in the fall. One is a young lady from Brazil and the second is a young man from Spain.

Exeter High School (EHS) graduate **Victoria Arlen** was recently hired as a sports commentator to cover the upcoming 2016 Paralympic games in Rio de Janeiro for ESPN. Ms. Arlen is the 2013 graduate who won three silver medals and one gold medal in swimming competition during the 2012 Summer Paralympic games in London.

Main Street School (MSS) Principal **Steve Adler** and Lincoln Street School (LSS) Interim Principal **Jim Hayes** both participated in the Get Fit in May 5K Road Race last month.

Lincoln Street School Principals—60 Years of History

1955-1968—Vivian Wood
1968-1977—John Hodsdon
1977-1983—Virginia Bereit
1983-1984—Thomas Meehan (Interim)
1984-April 1987—Patricia Schremmer
April 1987—June 1987—Kathy Garon (Interim)
1987-1993—Paul Ford
1993-2014—Richard Keays
2014-2015—Dr. James Hayes (Interim)
2015-Present—J. Andrew (Drew) Bairstow

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

The entire first grade (44 students) from **Swasey Central School (SCS)** spent a morning at the **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** visiting two technical classes (Animal and Plant Science and Building Construction Technologies) in mid-May. The children had been studying a plant unit at SCS and the field trip to SST brought them to the greenhouse where they were able to work with the high school students to learn about planting and leaf cuttings. Additionally, the young children spent time learning about safety and how they had to wear earplugs and safety glasses before working with hammers and drills. SST teachers Anne DeMarco and Jim Klingensmith, hosted the first graders and one of their teachers, Jamie Marcello, who has worked with this field trip for several years.

In early June, one of the sixth grade teams at the **Cooperative Middle School (CMS)** participated in “Sight Day” coordinated by the New Hampshire Association for the Blind. It was designed as an awareness event where students put on blindfolds and tackled four different challenges without sight. Think about these challenges in which the students participated: 1) spreading cream cheese onto a cracker or scooping grapes onto a spoon; 2) using vision machines that simulate glaucoma, cataracts, and macular degeneration while trying to read printed materials; 3) using a white cane while blindfolded and trying

to find items in a room; and 4) playing “beep kickball” while blindfolded as they listened for the ball to beep and then tried to kick it without hurting someone else in the room. The students “learned by doing” and came away from the experience with a totally new appreciation for people who struggle with sight impairments every day.

In early May, the **Exeter High School (EHS)** Social Studies Department hosted Salaash Morompi, a Maasai tribesman from Kenya to speak to students about growing up in Africa. Classes met in the auditorium to hear about daily life among the wild animals of the savannah. Dressed in traditional Maasai clothing, Mr. Morompi entertained students with pictures showing homes and schools, as well as those of his family and friends in Kenya. The students were also delighted to watch scenes from the Disney documentary *African Cats* that was filmed at the Maasai Mara National Reserve where Mr. Morompi works as a guide among the local wildlife. The Social Studies Department is grateful to parent Susan Lavoie for coordinating this visit.

Several exciting art learning experiences for the children at **Swasey Central School (SCS)** unfolded during the last month of the school year. First graders built and decorated kites as they focused on the concept of symmetry in the mediums of paint and cut paper. Second graders worked on a stained glass ocean project and then explored fish painting. Third graders studied the life and artwork of Vincent Van Gogh and created sunflower paintings in his style. Fourth graders explored the artwork of Georgia O’Keeffe and created giant flowers as she did. Fifth graders explored a variety of painting techniques and building collages with the paintings and some tall ships. This wonderful variety of programs is coordinated by Art teacher Crystal Buswell who serves in this role at both SCS and Newfields Elementary School (NES).

Plans are underway to expand the **Main Street School (MSS)** facility to accommodate full day kindergarten and all pre-school services. The Exeter School Board has reviewed preliminary architectural plans which will include sufficient space for eight (8) kindergarten classrooms (versus five current kindergarten classrooms). It was noted that the plan also included the rebuilding of Walsh Field at the Lincoln Street School (LSS) play area. The total cost of the project is yet to be determined and will most likely be placed before the voters in March 2016.

During this past school year, **Newfields Elementary School (NES)** recorded some significant academic gains in its school-wide system approach to school improvement, commonly referred to as RtI (Response to Instruction). Principal Kate Segal and the NES teachers collaborated to meet and challenge each student by targeting instruction and monitoring growth to work toward continuous improvement. Using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAPs) developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), 97% of the third, fourth, and fifth graders achieved or exceeded the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) proficiency levels and/or met the estimated student growth index in reading and math. In addition, using the Fountas and Pinnell literacy benchmarks, students in grades K-2 made exceptional growth and 92% of those students met or exceeded proficiency and/or reached their individual growth targets. School officials are extremely pleased with this outstanding student results.

With the leadership of **East Kingston Elementary School (EKES)** Literacy Coach Emily Darby, approximately 1,000 gently used books were collected recently as part of the school's efforts to increase summer reading for all students. The goal was to offer a variety of different books to children so that they can take them home over the summer and participate in the collaborative reading program with the town library. During the last week of school, each child was able to select five books and was given a book log to record their reading. Any of the donated books that were not selected this year will be given to the school library, classroom libraries, or placed in the school's multi-purpose room for reading during lunch. Any remaining books will be given to the Pound School Bookstore. Melissa Foy, Kim Kady, and Sharon Norman helped tremendously with this important learning project and their efforts are greatly appreciated.

The end of the year at **Stratham Memorial School (SMS)** was very busy for the professional staff, especially with regard to collecting year-end data in both literacy and math. All teachers completed their "benchmarking" of students so that next year's teachers will know exactly where to begin targeting skills with every individual. Over the summer, this data will be put into the classroom groupings so that teachers may begin planning instruction for the beginning of the school year. Kindergarten through grade two teachers administered the year-end assessment in math. These results were collected and will be utilized to create Response to Instruction (RtI) groups for next year. Additionally, curriculum binders were created for every grade level to help transition new teachers to SMS. Each binder includes the grade level trajectory along with information about balanced literacy, Reader's and Writer's Workshop, and differentiating instructional techniques in math. Other sections of the binder include the standards in all academic areas, as well as the "NextGen Science" work that most grade levels have done.

In early June at **Kensington Elementary School (KES)**, the Sexual Assault Support Services (SASS) presented a program entitled *Personal Body Safety* to all of the students. This is part of the *Safe Kids, Strong Teens* violence prevention program. The primary goal of this work is to incorporate personal body safety into the school curriculum as an important means to keep children safe and to help prevent child abuse. SASS educators visited each classroom and used puppets to present the lesson in an entertaining and non-threatening format. Hearing that some of these special puppets were recently stolen, the KES students in grades K-3 decided to donate some of the money earned from Market Day earlier in the year so that SASS officials could purchase new puppets for other children to enjoy.

For the second consecutive year, **Lincoln Street School (LSS)** will host its exciting Summer Reading Camp for students in grades K-5 under the direction of successful and respected teacher Stephanie Varrin. This program meets simultaneously with the Extended Year Program provided for special education students.

Reflection

Summer brings a time to do something different. My personal goal each summer is to visit at least one new place. (That is the Social Studies teacher in me!) Consider going to the Coaticook Gorge just north of the Vermont border in Quebec. There you will find the largest suspension footbridge in the world. If you don't like walking across a gorge you could drive across the 2,500 foot suspension bridge in the northeast as it brings travelers to Deer Isle, ME. (Spend the day in Stonington too!) Later this summer, my wife and I

are going to Lac St. Jean—that is three hours northwest of Quebec City! Check it out online.