

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

Tax Rates—2015

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 2015 rates (per \$1,000 of assessed property valuation) are as follows:

Brentwood--\$23.20 (Decrease of \$1.99)—Decrease of 7.90%
East Kingston—\$24.77 (Decrease of \$0.30)—Decrease of 1.20%
Exeter--\$25.54 (Decrease of \$0.52)—Decrease of 2.00%
Kensington--\$23.03 (Decrease of \$0.83)—Decrease of 3.48%
Newfields—\$23.11 (Decrease of \$1.14)—Decrease of 4.70%
Stratham—\$19.90 (Decrease of \$0.01)—Essentially Unchanged

School Board Seats Available in March 2015

Terms of office for some current school board members expire in March 2016. Now is the time for interested citizens to consider serving in these capacities. Board Members whose terms expire include Melissa Litchfield in Brentwood; Erin Pettinato in East Kingston; Patrick O'Day, Jean Tucker, and Lisa McConnell in Exeter; Stacy Surprenant and Tina Favara in Kensington; Karla Dalton in Newfields; Everett Lamm in Stratham; and Darrell Chichester (Exeter), James Webber (Kensington), Linda Garey (Brentwood), and Travis Thompson (Stratham) for the Coop. Of the thirty-three total School Board seats in SAU 16, these thirteen (13) positions will be available for (re)election.

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 2016, must declare their candidacy in writing to the current school district clerk for their respective district **between January 20 and January 29, 2016.**

Coop Budget Advisory Committee

The nine-member Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) that serves the Exeter Region Cooperative School District will have three seats available for election in March 2016. Any resident of Exeter (current member John Bridle), Newfields (current member Simon Heslop), or Stratham (current member Lucy Cushman) will be able to be a candidate for this important position. Each term is for three-years. Budget Advisory Membership is similar to the distribution of members on the School Board with three representatives from Exeter, two from Stratham, and one from Brentwood, East Kingston, Kensington, and Newfields. The filing period for interested candidates is **between January 20 and January 29, 2016.** Anyone interested in serving the community in this capacity may

contact SAU Business Administrator Amy Ransom at aransom@sau16.org or 775-8671 for additional information.

State Champions—EHS Unified Soccer

The Exeter High School (EHS) Unified Soccer team captured its State Championship title recently with an impressive 2-0 victory over strong rival Laconia High School at a game held at Southern NH University. The Blue Hawks had an impressive season under the leadership and mentorship of dedicated Coach Sharon Orchard and worked very hard as a team to be very successful and to join other EHS champions. Congratulations to our student-athletes and to all who supported the team achieve this milestone!

Contract Negotiations Update

This school year three (3) collective bargaining groups within SAU 16 are involved in contract negotiations with their respective school boards. Recent hard work has led to tentative settlements between two (2) of the groups and their respective School Boards. These include the teachers association in Kensington, as well as the paraprofessionals in Exeter. Ongoing work is continuing between the Stratham Paraprofessional Association with the Stratham School Board. The settled contracts will be presented to the voters in March 2016 for action at the annual School District Meeting of their respective districts.

Teacher of the Year--2016

The New Hampshire Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (NHAHPERD) recently selected Cooperative Middle School (CMS) teacher (and now Local Education Agency Administrator) Ms. Cathy Claremont to receive its *Adapted Physical Education (PE) Teacher of the Year* Award. Ms. Claremont began her impressive work in teaching Physical Education at CMS in 2008 and created a program to allow all students to access PE and to help students with disabilities achieve many personal goals and successes through this program. Prior to joining the CMS staff, Ms. Claremont taught health and physical education and was a coach and athletic administrator at Lin-Wood Public School in Lincoln, NH. Over the past 19 years, Cathy has served as a very successful role model for students of all ages. Congratulations, Cathy, for your wonderful success and accomplishments within SAU 16!

Dedicated Service

It is difficult to imagine any school district in today's society where "geographic mobility" and "serial careers" do not have direct impact on the sustainability of school personnel. SAU 16 has to be one of those "rare exceptions" and "a special gem" to be able to retain such a cadre of dedicated and committed staff members. The following individuals are acknowledged here because they have faithfully served the SAU 16 community for such an extended period of time.

40 Year Club

Dr. Kathi Atwood—Exeter High School Special Education (40 years)
Janice Bastille—SAU 16 Title I Teacher (41 years)

Margaret (Peggy) Meyer—SAU 16 Fiscal Services Manager (41 years)
Bonnie Rosencrantz—Main Street School Teacher (41 years)
Jan Smith—Lincoln Street School Assistant Principal (41 years)

30 Year Club (Listed by School District in alphabetical order)

Robert (Archie) Schroeder—Brentwood Teacher (37 years)

Carmen Antal—Main Street School Lunch Room Assistant (33 years)
Mary Jo Gregg—Main Street School Teacher (39 years)
Rita Jacobs—Main Street School Teacher (30 years)
Debra Watson Kimball—Main Street School Special Education Teacher (31 years)
Elaine Thurston—Main Street School Food Service (34 years)

Sandra Blumenthal—Lincoln Street School Teacher (32 years)
Sue Noseworthy—Lincoln Street School Music Teacher (33 years)
Cinda Patire—Lincoln Street School Teacher (31 years)
Pam Rossetti—Lincoln Street School Teacher (34 years)
Stephanie Varrin—Lincoln Street School Teacher (30 years)

Dr. Andy Inzenga—Cooperative Middle School Music Teacher (37 years)
Teresa Kukesh—Cooperative Middle School Physical Education Teacher (30 years)
Andy Littlefield—Cooperative Middle School Technology Administrator (36 years)
Wendy MacArthur-Keith—Cooperative Middle School Teacher (36 years)
Jeanne Mantarian—Cooperative Middle School Speech Therapist (33 years)

Bill Ball—Exeter High School Athletic Director (38 years)
Pam Belanger—Exeter High School English Teacher (36 years)
Harry Hobbs—Exeter High School Math Teacher (32 years)
Dr. Angela Lennox—Exeter High School Science Teacher (32 years)
John LeSage—Exeter High School Assistant Principal (34 years)
Pam McDonough—Exeter High School Guidance Counselor (32 years)
Richard Pratt—Exeter High School Technology Administrator (32 years)
Sharon McDonald Sheedy—Exeter High School Social Studies Teacher (39 years)
Karen Pelletier—Exeter High School Assistant Principal (36 years)
Dave Shannon—Exeter High School Physical Education Teacher (33 years)
Jim Tufts—Exeter High School Physical Education Teacher (33 years)

Leslie Haslam—Exeter Adult Education Director (32 years)

Eileen Anderson—Exeter Region Cooperative—Food Service Accounting (32 years)
Dick Wendell—Exeter Region Cooperative—Director of Operations— (34 years)

Sarah Oppenhimer—East Kingston Teacher (32 years)

Margaret Kilcoyne—Kensington Teacher (32 years)
Wendy Lawler—Kensington Teacher (34 years)

Barbara Dupont—Newfields Teacher (35 years)
Dee Kettlewood—Newfields Teacher (30 years)

Melody Chartier—Stratham Music Teacher (33 years)
Judy Eitler—Stratham Guidance Counselor (37 years)
Christine Gaudet—Stratham Teacher (31 years)
Donna Maher—Stratham Teacher (36 years)

Karen Mullen—SAU Title I Teacher—(38 years)
Lyn Schimoler—SAU Special Education Administrative Assistant (32 years)

Spotlight: East Kingston Elementary School

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.

East Kingston Elementary School — *Jim Eaves, Principal*

Mission Statement: Learning Empowers All People

5 Andrews Lane, East Kingston – 642-3511

East Kingston Elementary School (EKES) is a kindergarten through grade five public school that presently enrolls approximately 140 students. EKES was built on its present site in 1971 and originally had just four classrooms. Over the years, two major additions were completed. To date, the facility consists of twelve classrooms, a multipurpose room, library, computer lab, and extensive grounds and ball fields. The faculty is comprised of thirteen full-time and four part-time professional staff members. There are paraprofessionals serving a variety of roles including special education aide, reading tutor, reading recovery tutor, math tutor, and library aide.

EKES has a reputation as an effective and caring community of learners in the town and across the region. The students are genuinely friendly, eager to learn, and very supportive of one another. The staff is highly professional and determined to provide the best for each student. Parent volunteers can be found throughout the building on any given day and are tireless in their efforts to support students and learning.

In 2013, EKES was named the New Hampshire Elementary School of Excellence “Ed”ies award winner for its commitment to provide students with a high quality personalized education in a safe and caring environment. As a school community, we are proud of our students’ accomplishments and the type of community minded individuals they become.

Did You Know?

Brothers Dacha Thurber and Sava Thurber who are in the 8th grade and 6th grade respectively at the Cooperative Middle School (CMS) perform regularly with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (BYSO). Dacha and Sava are the sons of Dr. Chris Thurber and Dr. Simo Thurber of Exeter. They recently performed a Combined Solo Violin Recital at Phillips Exeter Academy which was attended by several SAU 16 teachers who have known the boys for many years and have followed their musical progress.

The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946.

The School Breakfast Program (SBP) was established in 1966 as a two-year pilot project designed to provide categorical grants to assist schools serving breakfasts to "nutritionally needy" children. In 1975 the program received permanent authorization. As part of the legislation making the SBP permanent, Congress declared its intent that the program "be made available in all schools where it is needed to provide adequate nutrition for children in attendance." Today schools provide two-thirds of a child's daily meals during the school year to those who choose to take part in the program. Generally, these programs are self-funding and do not impact local tax rates.

As part of "Movember Men's Health Awareness," the eight male teachers at Stratham Memorial School are taking part by growing moustaches for the entire month of November.

The Seacoast School of Technology (SST) currently has 171 students earning 462 college credits through "Dual Enrollment" opportunities with various institutions of higher learning including Great Bay Community College, Manchester Community College, Central Maine Community College, and Southern New Hampshire University. This means that 24% of SST students are benefitting from this wonderful experience.

The Exeter High School (EHS) football team has earned 15 state championships in 22 appearances since their first title in 1955.

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

In cooperation with Dan Chartrand, the owner of Water Street Books, **Lincoln Street School** (LSS) Library Media Specialist Helen Burnham, organized a school visit from children's author Liz Kessler as part of a promotional tour for her new book in the Emily Windsnap series. Also, this month this outstanding partnership brought author and illustrator, P J Lynch to the school as part of the promotional tour for his new book, *The Boy Who Fell Off the Mayflower* or *John Howland's Good Fortune*. This book is the first that he has written in addition to illustrating. Mr. Lynch is more well-known for his illustrative work from the books, *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey* and the immigration focused book, *When Jessie Came Across the Sea*.

In second grade life science studies at **East Kingston Elementary School**, students recently learned to compare and contrast living things and recognize specific features that help them survive in various environments. The students came to identify the specific ecosystems that support different species of plant and animal life. They learned that animals, including humans, interact with their surroundings and change in appearance with the four seasons. Students also came to understand the hardships many domestic animals face who do not have a home. Always wanting to make a difference, these second graders held a bake sale this month with all proceeds going to the local SPCA

shelter. Activities like this help students understand that each one of us working together can make a positive difference in our communities.

As part of its continuing emphasis on helping students learn more about and contribute to community service efforts, the **Cooperative Middle School (CMS)** has started and is supplying a CMS Clothes Closet. The closet is yet to be named formally as a contest is currently underway to come up with an appropriate designation for this important space in the school. Teachers identified a need to assist students who may have challenges finding and securing appropriate winter clothing. The closet is well stocked thanks to numerous donations coordinated by staff members Margot Walker, Becky Saunders, and parent Alyssa Caggiano. The closet has clothes of all sizes and includes hats, mittens, jackets, and footwear. Students assist in laundering and folding clothing that is donated to make sure that the closet remains neatly organized. The Welding Technologies students from the **Seacoast School of Technology** built a custom rack upon which closets could be hung in the closet. This is a marvelous community effort and will serve the needs of many students this winter.

In two days in early November, the Play Production class at **Exeter High School (EHS)** put on a wonderful performance for almost 1,300 area elementary school students. This year's Children's Theater play, *The Reluctant Dragon*, taught audience members about the idea of "compromise" and the age-old concept of "Don't judge a book by its cover." Once the audience learns more about the "fierce" dragon, one easily sees that he is very gentle on the inside. The young audience roared with laughter, gasped with surprise, and even cheered when the reluctant dragon proved his doubters wrong. Under the direction of EHS teacher Amybeth Engler, student director Maddie Roth worked extremely hard with classmates as did Kelsey Quinn with set design and stage management. Seniors Dominic DiPalermo and Jacob Poirier were instrumental in coordinating the complexities of sound and lighting for the performances.

Exeter Adult Education continues to serve a multiple array of audiences with its outstanding academic and enrichment programs as it regularly hosts students of diverse age groups including teenagers and senior citizens. In similar fashion because of its many outreach efforts, along with the warm, welcoming spirit of its staff, Exeter Adult Ed has enrolled students from over forty (40) countries in a variety of programs since 2013. This includes people who have come to the Exeter area from Afghanistan, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Congo, Czech Republic, Laos, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Ukraine, and Vietnam. The influences of this program continuously extend far and wide.

Seacoast School of Technology (SST) Animal and Plant Science teacher Anne DeMarco was one of only 42 teachers nationwide recognized at the National FFA Conference for having earned her Honorary American FFA Degree. Ms. DeMarco completed an extensive application, including recommendations for this prestigious award, recognizing her almost 25 years of dedication as the SST FFA Chapter advisor. The FFA National Conference is the largest student event in the world and was attended this year by more than 56,000 FFA students in Louisville, KY. Congratulations Ms. DeMarco!

The **Stratham Memorial School (SMS)** community service project this month involved the finalization of the 'Canstruction' project to benefit the *End 68 Hours of Hunger*

program and the St. Vincent dePaul Society food bank. The donated cans were used to create a sculpture of the school mascot that was built on the Sue Megan Stage. Under the supervision of art teacher Katelynn Dow, students in grades K-5 wrapped each can and then placed the items to showcase the background and the SMS wolf. Students were able to donate 1,000 cans to these important community-based programs.

During the November In-Service Day at **Kensington Elementary School (KES)**, teachers and paraprofessionals worked toward its school-wide goals and spent several hours dedicated to the development of common Writing Rubrics. They carefully reviewed their English/Language Arts (ELA) Writing Standards at each grade level and met in vertical teams to understand how standards increase in complexity and develop across grade levels. Meeting individual students' needs requires understanding the skills expected each year so that staff members can help students progress by demonstrating increased sophistication in all aspects of their writing: language use, vocabulary, syntax and the organization of their ideas. The KES Open Circle Sustainability Team facilitated several activities which further promoted the school-wide implementation of the Open Circle Curriculum. This Curriculum has been implemented at KES for the past seven years to promote students' social and emotional development as young friends, learners, and citizens at school. The KES staff is committed to each child's emotional development and believes that this is as equally important as the student's academic success and that many students need explicitly taught social skills in order to develop the confidence needed to navigate the world around them. The Sustainability Team identified six Open Circle Concepts that will be displayed in all common areas of the school: *School Listening Look, Calm Breathing, Cooperate, Compliment, Dangerous and Destructive Behavior, and Positive Leader*. This provides the staff with common language and concepts to use with students throughout the building to guide them with conflict resolution or to praise them for making kind and expected choices at school.

During the early November Professional Development Day at **Main Street School (MSS)**, New England College professor Dr. Bill Preble presented the second portion of a workshop on *School Culture and Climate*. He engaged staff in activities and shared information that supported the development and nurturing of a positive school culture, climate, and school-based leadership. He helped the staff collect more information about adult culture and leadership within MSS and had the staff develop action plans. A representative school leadership team will be following up on the workshop to continue this work. Also on that day, Exeter School District Special Education Administrator Dr. Renee Bennett presented a workshop to paraprofessionals dealing with strength-based approaches to working with students with disabilities while supporting them in the classroom. Those attending also had the chance to discuss the changing roles of paraprofessionals in schools.

Newfields Elementary School (NES) is very grateful to the US Department of Education for once again providing federal grant funds through the national Small Rural School Achievement Program (REAP). Over the past two years, NES has used these funds to further enhance education through technology. Now classrooms have chrome books for each student in grades three through five. SAU 16 is continuing to move forward, using

Google as the learning platform for students and staff. The next NES building technology goal is to secure an iPad for each student in kindergarten through grade two.

When each new group of kindergarten children begins school, they always bring their own joys, childhood dreams, lived realities, and expectations to their new classroom. At **Swasey Central School (SCS)** this is a very important part of the “Getting to Know You Conferences” with kindergarten parents that teacher Mrs. Kathy Desmarais coordinates. These short conferences provide important information and help to establish a positive parent-teacher relationship. This fall the SCS kindergarten focus includes: recognizing and describing two-dimensional shapes; recognizing patterns; associating letters and sounds; drawing and writing about familiar topics; and working as scientists to observe maple tree changes in front of the school.

Reflection

Each of us has so much for which to be thankful.

This year let us think about all of those people who have helped to get us to this time and place in our lives. Let us be thankful for parents and siblings, for grandparents and godparents, for relatives and friends over the years.

Let us be thankful for our teachers and administrators, our religious leaders, and our political leaders. Let us be thankful for doctors and nurses who keep us well.

Let us be thankful for our veterans and those who serve our country. Let us be thankful for those who grow our food and deliver it to our stores. Let us be thankful for police, fire, and medical personnel who protect us and care for us when we need them.

Let us be thankful for what we have! **HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**