

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Michael A. Morgan, Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16
MARCH 2013

Voting Day 2013 Results—Warrant Articles

Budgets

Brentwood - Proposed Budget \$5,176,504--PASSED
East Kingston - Proposed Budget \$2,875,066--PASSED
Exeter - Proposed Budget \$15,646,132--PASSED
Exeter Region Coop - Proposed Budget \$52,700,000--PASSED
Kensington - Proposed Budget \$2,680,495--PASSED
Newfields - Proposed Budget \$2,192,379--PASSED
Stratham - Proposed Budget \$9,964,011--PASSED

Trust Funds

Stratham - Special Education - Add \$100,000--PASSED
Stratham - Maintenance - Add \$75,000--PASSED

Contracts

Exeter - Paraprofessionals (3 years) 2013 – 2016—PASSED
Kensington – Teachers (3 years) 2013-2016--PASSED

Other

Exeter - Bond Payment for Its Share of Coop Bond--\$373,673--PASSED

Voting Day 2013 Results—School Board Members

Brentwood—Melissa Litchfield
East Kingston— Erin Pettinato
Exeter—Patrick O'Day and Jean Tucker
Exeter Region Cooperative—Darrell Chichester (Exeter), Linda Garey (Brentwood)
The Write-In Candidate from Kensington is yet to be determined.
Kensington— Stacy Surprenant
Newfields— Karla Dalton
Stratham—Everett Lamm and Eric von der Linden

Coop Budget Advisory Committee Results

Two current members of the Exeter Region Cooperative Budget Advisory Committee were re-elected to three-year terms on March 13, 2013. These are Simon Heslop of Newfields Lucy Cushman of Stratham. John Bridle of Exeter was elected to his first

three-year term. The Write-In Candidate from Kensington is yet to be determined. Congratulations to each of them!

Thank You for Your Service

Serving on a school board today is no easy task. The commitment of time and energy is often more significant than one imagines at first. SAU 16 has been fortunate over the years to have capable and dedicated individuals devote some of their community service efforts to help the students, families, and staff members of their respective communities. As a result of the March 2013, **Liz Faria** (Brentwood – *served 3 years on the Coop Board and 4 years on the Brentwood Board*) will not be re-joining the Exeter Region Cooperative School Board. Her seven years of service are gratefully appreciated.

Did You Know?

East Kingston Elementary School (EKES) has been selected as a Finalist in the 2013 competition for NH Elementary School of the Year by the EDies Selection Committee. In February a team of students, teachers, parents and school board members traveled to Concord to make a presentation about EKES. As a result of that work, the school was notified recently that it has progressed to the third and final stage of the process and a team of educators visited the school on March 11, 2013 to meet with students, staff, parents, community members and administrators. The winner will be announced in April.

Kensington Elementary School (KES) fifth grade teacher, Amy Steinberg, has been selected as one of ten national finalists for the Great American Teach-Off, a national competition co-sponsored by the University of Phoenix and GOOD magazine. It is a voter-based contest that carries a \$10,000 classroom prize for the winner. The winner will be announced in April.

The cornerstone on the Tuck building of the old Exeter High School on Linden Street in Exeter was laid in 1911 (MCMXI).

Exeter High School (EHS) sophomore Zach Morris captured first place for the second consecutive year in the recent Poetry Out Loud contest at the school. He moves on to compete at the Eastern Regional Semi-Finals at the University of New Hampshire.

EHS junior Alex Rose recently submitted an essay on the topic of how the US Constitution is still relevant in today's world. His essay has been chosen to be posted on the Constitutionally Speaking website, along with being submitted to several newspapers by that organization. Constitutionally Speaking is a statewide initiative on civic education that is sponsored by the NH Supreme Court Society and the NH Humanities Council.

EHS senior and Wrestling Team Captain Ross Danner recently became a Division I State Wrestling Champion in the 160-pound weight class in competition recently held at Concord High School.

The EHS Gymnastic Team, which began only four years ago, recently completed their season at Salem High School and captured First Place. Led by Seniors Brittanie Clark (Captain), Taylor Todd, and Maddy Comley (Captain), who finished in 2nd place for the all-around competition, the EHS gymnasts topped 13 other teams in the competition.

Before the first section of the current East Kingston Elementary School (EKES) was built in 1970, students went to the Pound School for grades 1-4 and Brown's Academy for grades 5-8. Both buildings may still be found on Rt. 107 in town. Brown's Academy is now the Town Office building!

At the March 2013 Annual Stratham School District Meeting, only 1.1% (63 people) of its 5,678 registered voters participated in the Meeting. The proposed 2013-2014 passed unanimously on a voice vote.

At the March 2013 Annual Brentwood School District Meeting, only 3.06% (86 people) of its 2,812 registered voters participated in the Meeting. The proposed 2013-2014 passed unanimously on a voice vote.

National Merit Finalists

Two Exeter High School (EHS) seniors Emily Avery and Nicholas Moutis have earned the outstanding distinction of being named National Finalists in the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Program. Approximately 15,000 finalists have an opportunity to compete for some 8,400 National Merit Scholarships, worth more than \$36 million, that will be offered in the spring. Final scholarship winners will be selected on the basis of their skills, academic/co-curricular accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies.

Emily, an apprentice to the company at Portland Ballet, is currently applying to several universities and plans to study chemistry next fall. She is a member of the National Honor Society and National French Honor Society at Exeter High School. Emily is the daughter of Vicky and Chris Avery of Stratham.

Nicholas, a member of the high school cross-country and track teams, is also applying to several universities and plans to study engineering next fall. He is a member of the National Honor Society and the National Spanish Honor Society at Exeter High School. Nicholas is the son of Chitra and Peter Moutis of Exeter.

State Championship—Swimming and Diving

The Exeter High School Boys Swimming and Diving team captured its first-ever Division I State Championship when the meet was recently held at the University of New Hampshire. Led by team anchor, Collin Richardson, and the team's only senior, Alex Frizzell, the Blue Hawks made an impressive mark on the competition. Congratulations to Head Coach Greig Cronauer and all of the members of the team! Together they brought another accolade to EHS!

State Championship—Alpine Skiing

For the third consecutive year, the Exeter High School (EHS) Girls Ski Team captured the Division I State Championship that was recently held at Mount Sunapee. Outstanding freshmen Keala Eichholz and Natalie Bruno led the way for the Blue Hawks under the excellent coaching of EHS teacher Joanne Pare. The undefeated season was a real tribute to the excellent success and sportsmanship displayed by the team once again!

End 68 Hours of Hunger

Many of the schools in the SAU are embracing the campaign to reduce/end weekends of hunger for some of the neediest children in our community. End 68 Hours of Hunger (the amount of time between school lunch on a Friday and a school breakfast on a Monday) is a private, not-for-profit organization aiming to meet the needs of school children who are impoverished in this way. Two local volunteers with connections to SAU 16 schools, Kim Army (Newfields) and Susan Abizaid (Stratham), are coordinating the local efforts for this initiative. School administrators, nurses, counselors, and teachers are becoming more aware of ways to help the most impacted children in a quiet and unassuming way. Exeter Hospital recently completed a three-week food drive to help raise both awareness and food staples for this program. Exeter High School students are involved in this project as well. The Exeter Newsletter featured a front page story about this effort on February 22, 2013. More information is available at www.end68hoursofhunger.org.

Extra Funds for School Lunch Programs

Because of the diligent efforts of the Foods and Nutrition staff in many of our school districts, SAU 16 was recently approved to receive an additional six cents per lunch meal claimed for free or reduced services because it complies with new federal guidelines. This include having minimum required food quantities for all meal components available to students in every serving line; all food products and ingredients used to prepare school meals indicate zero grams of fat per serving; and the minimum calories required for breakfasts served under the Food Based Menu Planning option are available to every student, as applicable. SAU 16 schools in Brentwood, East Kingston, Exeter, Kensington, and Stratham will benefit in this way for all meals claimed beginning on March 1, 2013.

Honoring the Past in SAU 16

Kensington Elementary School Principals

1953-1969-Esther (Hussey) Prescott
1969-1973-Robin (Burdick) Whittemore
1973-1974-Ronald Nickerson
1974-1976-Richard Fitzpatrick
1976-1989-Frank Scala
1989-1992-Gary VanderEls
Sept. 1992-Nov. 1992-Robert Sinibaldi (Interim)

Nov. 1992-June 1994-Robert Teel
1994-2000-Chester Lee
2000-2001-Thomas Meehan
2001-Present-Barbara Switzer

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

Lincoln Street School (LSS) joined all of the schools in the SAU to celebrate March as “Music in Our Schools” month. Five grade-level concerts are scheduled and the fifth graders joined the “World’s Largest Concert” on Thursday, March 14. LSS boasts an outstanding music program with its two exemplary music educators, Sue Noseworthy (General Music) and Beverly Perriccio (Instrumental Music). It is also fortunate to have a strong affiliation with the Seacoast Academy of Music which offers string lessons to some of the LSS students.

Four fifth grade students (Maddie Gilmartin, Ashley Arcidi, Ashlyn Rice, and Julianna Perrella) from **East Kingston Elementary School (EKES)** recently formed the EKES Soles4Souls Team so that they could do something that would make a difference in the world. Soles4Souls is a shoe charity that refurbishes gently used shoes and then donates them where needed in the United States and around the world. The team collected a wide variety of shoes during February to support their efforts to help others and to expand their community service involvement.

The Exeter Fire Department in collaboration with **Main Street School (MSS)** is sponsoring the “Stop, Drop, and Read” program during the month of March. This reading incentive program involves all of the second graders and challenges the students to read daily and to track the minutes that they read. The reading logs are submitted to teachers every Friday. Final tallies will lead to a number of prizes for the students, including a classroom pizza party; a water bottle for all participants; a special backpack full of surprises for one random student; and an extra special surprise from the Fire Department. This collaboration supports the important curriculum and literacy work at MSS and strengthens ties to the community on several levels.

Because the current GED (Graduate Equivalency Diploma) program ends in December 2013, the **Exeter Adult Education** Director, Leslie Haslam, and her staff have embarked on an aggressive campaign to reach out to the hundreds of area residents who had begun the GED over the past ten years, but never completed the battery of tests required by the program. This has included increased media and social networking coverage; at least three rounds of letters to past participants; telephone contacts; and word of mouth exchanges. The Adult Education staff is asking community members to “spread the word” that any NH resident who is 18 years of age or older and who has not earned a high school diploma may still take the current GED test in 2013. Beginning in January 2014, a totally new high school equivalency test will be unveiled. Contact with the Adult Education office may be made by calling 775-8457 or by accessing information through the SAU 16 website at <http://adulthood.sau16.org>.

In keeping with SAU efforts to foster positive school climate and culture, the **Cooperative Middle School (CMS)** recently hosted a very powerful presentation by Mr. John Halligan from Vermont. A few years ago, Mr. Halligan lost his thirteen-year-old middle school son to suicide. He has appeared on several national television shows and spoken in many schools across the country to stress three important themes to students: 1) A student's words and actions are very powerful and they have a lasting impact on others; 2) The most influential group in a school is the bystander—instead students should be “up-standers” to make a positive difference; 3) Some secrets should never be promised to be kept because if a student knows someone who may be suicidal or who has suicidal thoughts, that information must be shared with a trusted adult immediately. The CMS students and staff were very moved by Mr. Halligan's impressive comments and advice.

Exeter High School (EHS) continues to enjoy the outstanding success of its Youth and Government Club that is under the direction of Social Studies teacher, Amy Vandersall. Sponsored by the YMCA chapters around the state, the Youth and Government experience exposes students to the intricacies of state government at many levels. Long-time local Youth and Government experts, Helen and Kevin Joyce of Stratham, have worked closely with the group to help prepare them for state roles. It is important to note that these students display significant promise and enthusiasm for government service!

The **Newfields Elementary School (NES)** community is preparing for its biggest annual event: the Taste of Italy Spaghetti Sauce Cook-off and Auction. This event will be held on Saturday, March 23, from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm and draws from all facets of Newfields and beyond! It is a very popular alumni event and also attracts longtime community members who do not have children at the school. The organization and preparations are the responsibility of a group of parent volunteers with the help from the entire NES staff. The day of the event, all the teachers assist with set-up, clean-up, sauce judging and details during the live auction. This year there is an added a new twist! There will be a cupcake competition! The Cupcake Smack Down will be judged by local bakery chefs and is sure to be a blast!!

The February issue of *The Beacon*, the monthly newsletter published and distributed by the **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** features a wonderful array of stories of graduates from their programs. It emphasizes that “some of our greatest assets, as a community, are the many talents and passions of our graduates.” Eleven short stories are featured and collectively display a tapestry of experience that ripples throughout the community. These range in successes from Culinary Arts to Building Construction Technologies. Even two current teachers (Ashley Taylor and Emily York) at Main Street School (MSS) are featured because they participated in the Early Childhood Education program. For more information, go to www.SeacoastTech.com.

After school enrichment programs at **Stratham Memorial School (SMS)** began on Monday, March 11, 2013. Twenty-one activities ranging from the arts, technology, fine/gross motor movement and more have been offered. This session students will be cooking, painting, dancing, bike riding, play acting, sewing, knitting, running and building. They will enhance many skills framed through the school philosophy, as well

as expanding chances to learn something new. Over 200 students are involved each week - even on Friday afternoons. Sessions last approximately one hour over the course of six weeks. Scholarships are provided to students of all ages as the need may dictate.

The **Kensington Elementary School** (KES) Wellness Action Committee sponsored “Health Spirit Week” in mid-February. It was the first year of implementing this event. The school community began recycling food scrapes, unfinished milk, and paper products. The third and fifth graders weighed the scraps after each lunch and recorded the weight on a white board in the cafeteria. This was monitored throughout the week with the goal of trying to reduce waste. Staff members continued to talk with the students about the importance of eating everything that they take because this will not only reduce waste, but will provide important nutrients and energy that the students will need for the afternoon.

The Book of the Month program at **Swasey Central School** (SCS) continues to support language arts in all of the classrooms. This month the school community is focused on *City Hawk* by Meghan McCarthy. This is a wonderful true story about a pair of hawks living on a building near Central Park in New York City. Mrs. Cantone’s class helps to prepare a different video each month to reinforce the book. This video plays at lunchtime for the students. All classrooms create exciting lessons and activities to support each month’s book.

Personal Reflection

Voting in America is on the decline since 1960 when 62.8% of voting-age Americans went to the polls in the presidential election to choose between John Kennedy and Richard Nixon. In 1996 after decades of slippage, 48.9% of voting-age Americans went to the polls to choose among Bill Clinton, Bob Dole, and Ross Perot. That was a 25% decline in 36 years. More recently, the 2000 rate was 54.2%; the 2004 rate was 60.4%; the 2008 rate was 62.3%; and the 2012 rate was 57.5%. In perspective: Less than 20% of local voters participate in town elections in SAU 16!