

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Michael A. Morgan, Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16

DECEMBER 2016

Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility

Each year the NH Department of Education collects data relative to the number of students in each school who are eligible to receive free/reduced lunch. The most recent statistics available are for the 2015-2016 school year and are available on the Department's website at www.education.nh.gov.

The NH average for all students in grades K-12 is 28.06%

The NH average for all students in grades 1-8 is 30.26%

The NH average for all students in grades 9-12 is 23.87%

Within SAU 16 for 2016-2017:

Brentwood—7.32%

East Kingston—4.53%

Lincoln Street School, Exeter—15.85%

Main Street School, Exeter—25.41%

Kensington—10.49%

Stratham—6.94%

Cooperative Middle School—16.63%

Exeter High School—11.19%

Note: Newfields does not participate in this program.

Administrator History

Exeter High School (EHS) Assistant Principals

Edward Roundy (1955-1957)

Louise Temple (Dean of Girls—1955-1964)

John Duncklee (1957-1960)

David W. MacDonald (1960-1963)

Donald Elsemore (1963-1965)

Frank Kozacka (1965-1967)

David L. Mann (1967-1977)

Linwood Saddler (1973-1975)

Walter Borkowski (1975-1978)

Chester Willey (1977-2001)

Chester Jablonski (1979-1983)

Daniel Guilmette (1983-1984)

Michael Latvis (1980-2002)

Cassandra Donovan (1985-2001)

Eileen Sheehy (2001-2004)

James Daley (2001-2009)

Michael Monahan (2002-Present)

Walter Garland (2002-2009)

Exeter High School (EHS) Assistant Principals (con't)

Kathy Newcomb (2004-2006)

Carol Mastacouris (2006-2014)

John LeSage (2010-2012 and 2014-Present)

Marcy Dovholuk (2012-Present)

Karen Pelletier (2014-Present)

School Board Seats Available in March 2017

Terms of office for some current school board members expire in March 2017. Now is the time for interested citizens to consider serving in these capacities. Board Members whose terms expire include Liz Faria and Amy Mitchell in Brentwood; Korrine Bork in East Kingston; Dawn Bullens in Exeter; Dennis Roffman in Kensington; Kirsten Lord in Newfields; Bob O'Sullivan, Eric von der Linden, and Jillian Carter (1 year term) in Stratham; and Deborah Hobson (East Kingston), Denny Grubbs (Exeter), and Travis Thompson (Stratham) for the Coop. Of the thirty-three total School Board seats in SAU 16, these twelve (12) 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 2017, must declare their candidacy in writing to the current school district clerk for their respective district **between January 25 and February 3, 2017.**

Coop Budget Advisory Committee

The nine-member Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) that serves the Exeter Region Cooperative School District will have four seats available for election in March 2017. Any resident of Brentwood (current member Krista Steger), Exeter (current member Roy Morrisette), or Kensington (current member Cheryl McDonough) will be able to be a candidate for this important position. Each term is for three-years. In addition, a two-year term is available to any Newfields resident (current member Simon Hyslop). Budget Advisory Committee 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 25 and February 3, 2017.** 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.

SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight: Kensington 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.

Kensington Elementary School – *Becky Ruel, Principal*

122 Amesbury Road

Kensington NH 03833 - (603) 772-5705

It goes without saying that Kensington Elementary School (KES) is the **heart** of Kensington. A small town with just over 2,100 residents, Kensington is a wonderful place to live and learn! The students and staff at KES are fortunate to have such a strong and generous community supporting our school and celebrating our successes. The people of Kensington take care of each other and that spirit of taking care of one another permeates throughout the walls of our school as well. Students help each other and learn from each other every day. They work hard together, but play hard together too. It is our Kensington community that gives us our roots and a strong feeling of connectedness.

When school opens this year, KES will have just over 100 students coming through our doors. Given our small class size, instruction at KES will continue to be personalized and tailored to meet students' individual needs. Similar to the other elementary schools in SAU 16, we are shifting towards a Competency Learning Model to ensure our students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and utilize the critical skills and dispositions needed to be successful in this ever-changing world. While academic achievement is important, the teachers and staff at KES are committed to supporting the *whole child*. This was evidenced in our recent Competency Education visioning work, when the Kensington community identified the following qualities and characteristics as being of utmost importance for our KES students: **confident, self-driven, empathetic, kind** and **academically competent**. Our staff embraces the curious young learners in their classrooms and they utilize the tenets of the *Open Circle Program* to support and grow our students' social and emotional development. Learning is about inspiring students - the teachers at KES do that every day!

SAU 16 History

East Kingston Elementary School's Upper 5th Grade Wing – dedicated to Barbara Lobdell

Barbara spent 26 years in the field of education. She initially taught at the junior high level in both Connecticut and New Hampshire for several years, followed by becoming the Director of Chapter I Services for what used to be SAU 21 – Hampton and surrounding towns. She left SAU 21 in 1995 to become principal of East Kingston Elementary School – a position she would tell you she very much loved. The school provided a very positive environment where all the teachers supported one another and they not only knew their own students, but their students' siblings and their students' parents.

In 2000, after five year in East Kingston, Barbara had the opportunity to become the Assistant Superintendent of SAU 16 where she continued her educational career until retiring in 2005. Following retirement, she worked as a facilitator for the Best Schools Initiative and also had the opportunity to work with the New Hampshire Schools Administrators Association doing facilities studies. Barbara returned to SAU 16 one year later on a part time basis assuming her previous position as Assistant Superintendent for another two years, and even continued after that writing various entitlement grants for the SAU until the 2008 retirement of Superintendent of Schools Dr. Arthur "Skip" Hanson.

Did You Know?

On a grey winter day in early December 1958, one of the deadliest fires in American history took the lives of ninety-two elementary school children and three teachers/nuns at a Catholic school on Chicago's West Side. This event was the turning point that prompted nationwide fire safety reforms in American schools. This is part of the reason why SAU 16 is so committed to providing for the health, welfare, and safety of all of our students and staff and why "safety and security" efforts are paramount in our schools.

Ms. Tracey Christilles, Stratham Memorial School (SMS) special education teacher and case manager, recently received her official Certified Dyslexia Practitioner designation from the International Dyslexia Association.

WMUR meteorologist Kevin Skarupa recently visited Stratham Memorial School (SMS) and met with the third graders as they began their study on climate change as part of their social studies lessons.

Swasey Central School (SCS) second grader, Georgia Merrill, recently learned first-hand about those who do not have enough food to eat when she saw a man holding a sign that read: "I'm hungry." She wanted to help others and began the "Georgia Peach Project" which will raise funds that will all be given to the NH Food Bank for the holidays.

Seacoast School of Technology (SST) Animal and Plant Science teacher Anne DeMarco continues to inspire and involve her students in a wide variety of local, regional, and national FFA events that are designed to expand their knowledge and experiences in this important field. This included the Easter States Exposition ("The Big E") in Massachusetts, the Deerfield Fair, and the National FFA Convention held in Indianapolis in October. At that latter event, SST was proud to have the only two NH members - Heather Berlo and Manny Catala, both from Brentwood - who won the prestigious "American Degree" which is based on academics, community service, financial record keeping, and development of students' supervised agricultural experience. This American Degree is only given to one-half of one percent of FFA members.

Stratham Memorial School (SMS) fifth grade teacher, Jessica Wentworth, recently presented a workshop entitled "Mystery Skype: Connecting and Engaging Students" at the prestigious Christa McAuliffe Technology Conference held in Manchester. At the same conference, Seacoast School of Technology (SST) Assistant Principal, Pam Carr, presented a workshop on how to implement a student-run "maker space" at the high school level.

During the 15th Annual "Celebrating Leadership in Education Awards Ceremony" held in mid-December in Concord, Lincoln Street School (LSS) teacher Amy Steinberg was recognized for being one of the *2017 NH Teacher of the Year* semi-finalists.

Students on Team 11 at the Cooperative Middle School (CMS) collected coins and spare change to help children in need. Amassing a total of \$1160, the students were able to purchase 109 toys (thanks to the generous discount offered by the owner of *Whirlygigs* in downtown Exeter) that were given to the Exeter Fire Department to distribute to area children.

Strategic Initiatives in Our Schools

SAU 16 *Vision For Our Graduates*...A Compass to Guide Our Work

Each graduate demonstrates engaged learning and citizenship through the ability to solve problems independently and collaboratively with perseverance and resilience, and communicates solutions with confidence and empathy.

At the **Seacoast School of Technology** (SST), two Digital Media Arts students from Exeter High School (EHS) recently earned an ACA (Adobe Certification Associate) Certification in Graphic Design and Illustration using Adobe Illustrator. Madison Gallant earned her first certification in this area. Alice Nickerson now has three certifications. Her other certifications are in Visual Communication using Adobe Photoshop and Interactive Media using Adobe Flash Professional. She is currently studying to earn the certification in Print and Digital Media Publication using Adobe InDesign. If she earns this, she will be recognized as an ACA Visual Design Specialist and will be awarded a special certificate.

A group of UNH students from the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences (CEPS) are involved in an initiative called “STEMbassadors.” In January, they will be visiting fourth and fifth graders at **Stratham Memorial School** (SMS) to present information about hands-on and minds-on activities geared toward building interest and excitement about engineering and physical science topics. Following their visit, the school will host a Saturday workshop for parents and students as a way of nurturing this interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) learning.

The **Main Street School** (MSS) professional staff has been actively assessing the progress of students in reading. First and second grade students have taken the STAR reading assessment, the Core Phonics Review, and a fluency assessment to determine individual student progress. This individual and collective data will be reviewed and used to guide classroom instruction and to support decisions about additional reading intervention strategies.

Swasey Central School (SCS) is in its first year of implementing a full-day kindergarten program. The three sections of kindergarten children are now familiar with their class routines and are immersed in the kindergarten curriculum. All of the classes have enjoyed field trips to the Mary E. Bartlett Library and Hidden Valley Farm. They also enjoyed their visits to the SCS *MakerSpace* to design and construct a personal Trick or Treat bag. Recently the children worked on a thematic unit dealing with Architecture and Construction and the teachers connected literacy to this topic by comparing several versions of *The Three Little Pigs*.

Lincoln Street School (LSS) is in the infancy of a social-emotional learning program. Third grade teachers are evaluating their students and entering this information into a program called DESSA (Devereux Student Strengths Assessment) to identify supportive activities that will help bolster their social skills without a loss of core curriculum time. Classroom teachers are using the same resource to help find whole group activities based on their class’s profile. This is an exciting development for LSS, and it is one that will help to develop students’ self-regulation skills, interpersonal communication, and executive functioning skills, all of which have been identified as highly necessary in the SAU-wide work toward determining “the vision for an Exeter High School (EHS) graduate.”

On December 2, 2016, **Exeter High School (EHS)** hosted 43 new citizens and their families, representing 23 countries, for the Naturalization Ceremony which was a Special Session of the United States District Court for the District of New Hampshire. The Honorable Landya B. McCafferty presided and Governor (and now US Senator-Elect) Maggie Hassan attended and offered words of welcome to our guests. This effort was spearheaded by EHS Social Studies teacher Aaron Blais who worked with other teachers and students to plan for this unique high school event. Almost 400 EHS students attended this impressive ceremony and some participated as leaders of song and the Pledge of Allegiance. Some of the countries represented by the new citizens include: Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Egypt, Malaysia, Nigeria, South Korea, Togo, and Vietnam.

National Family and Consumer Science Day was celebrated in early December by students at the **Cooperative Middle School (CMS)** under the leadership of dedicated, veteran teacher Wendy MacArthur-Keith. This day is set aside as a reminder to be more physically, mentally, and financially healthier. Ms. MacArthur-Keith encouraged students and their families to support a “Dining In” Day so that families could prepare and eat a nutritious meal together around a dining room table. One of the many benefits of family conversations during meals is to provide an opportunity for children to expand their vocabulary and acknowledge key current issues without the distraction of television, cell phones, and other electronic devices. Interestingly, a 2000 survey from Harvard Medical School found that children between the ages of 9 and 14 who, on a regular basis, had dinner with their family ate more fruits and vegetables and consumed less soda and fried foods.

Readers’ Theater in the second grade at **Kensington Elementary School (KES)** has given rise to some budding actors and actresses! Mrs. Wendy Lawler’s students recently performed “*Wishes*” for their fellow kindergarten and first grade classmates. In addition to designing their own background and making their own props, the performance was amazing despite some jitters beforehand! *Readers’ Theater* is not only fun, but there are numerous researched benefits for enriching students’ oral language and literacy skills. *Readers’ Theater* develops students’ fluency through repeated exposure to text; integrates reading, writing, speaking and listening in an authentic context; increases reading motivation by engaging students; creates confidence and improved student self-image, as well as providing a real purpose (and audience) for reading.

Last year, **Newfields Elementary School (NES)** Principal Kate Segal and teachers Matt Bennett and Jodi Bennett represented NES serving on the SAU 16 Competency Based Education (CBE) Committee, facilitated by consultant Rose Colby and Assistant Superintendent Esther Asbell. As a part of this Committee work, three goals were established for NES:

Goal 1: *Understand, plan and implement CBE (Competency Based Education) lessons through PBL (Project Based Learning activities).*

Goal 2: *Improve school-wide, collegial pathways where faculty and administration feel safe sharing knowledge, experiences, uncertainty, hopes and dreams, in delivering effective, innovative, child centered, competency based instruction.*

Goal 3: *Implement the 5 elements of CBE at NES in 3-5 years, including a reporting process.*

The five elements of Competency Based Education are:

1. Students advance upon mastery.
2. Instruction includes specific, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students.
3. Assessment is meaningful & a positive learning experience for children.
4. Students receive timely, differentiated support, based on their individual learning needs.
5. Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge along with the development of important skills and dispositions, which include communication, creativity, collaboration, and self-direction.

This important work continues at NES.

Exeter Adult Education classes for the winter and spring terms were recently announced. Many of these outstanding programs begin in early January 2017. Various classes leading to an Adult High School Diploma are available, including Biology with Lab, Algebra I, Real Life Math, Global Human Rights, and Energy and Motion. Classes meet one night a week for 15 weeks. The cost for each course is \$130 (plus \$20 for those classes with a lab component). Most classes are held at the Tuck Learning Campus at 30 Linden Street. Further information is available at adulted.sau16.org or by calling 775-8457.

The staff at **East Kingston Elementary School** (EKES) continues to focus on creating a school environment where children demonstrate ownership of their learning and are involved in the functioning of the school. A prime example of this is the involvement of fifth graders on the "Theme Committee." This year the EKES theme is "I can. You can. We can." In October, a dozen or so application letters were received from students and four (4) fifth graders were selected to join the Committee. These four representatives attend the monthly Committee meetings that start at 8:00 am.

Recent discussion at the Committee Meetings in November and December focused on how to recognize students for accomplishing goals, working to make their dreams a reality, and for accomplishing various classroom projects. The students sat with the adults as together they brainstormed ideas, and eventually just took over the conversations. At one particularly critical juncture one of the fifth graders coined the phrase "Tree of Dreams" and it stuck. Without missing a beat, the work focused on how EKES could transform its "Tree of Kindness" recognition to a monthly acknowledgement of student work toward goal attainment.

Reflection

Gift giving has become an extensive part of our December holiday period. It is so important to give a gift out of the goodness of one's heart rather than giving something with the expectation that one will receive a gift in return. After all, "it is far more important to give than to receive." May you and your family have a wonderful and happy holiday filled with peace!