

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Michael A. Morgan, Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16
MAY 2014

New Kensington Elementary Principal Selected

Ms. Becky Ruel, currently the Assistant Principal at Stratham Memorial School (SMS), has been selected as the new Principal for Kensington Elementary School (KES) beginning on July 1, 2014. Mrs. Ruel replaces Ms. Barbara Switzer who is retiring from education after serving KES for the past 13 years.

Ms. Ruel has been the assistant principal at Stratham Memorial School for the past seven years. Prior to that, she served in a similar capacity for five years at the William Allen School in Rochester, NH. She also has teaching experience at the grade 2 and 3 levels. Ms. Ruel holds a Bachelor's Degree in Russian and Master's Degree in Elementary Education from UNH. In addition, she has just completed the requirements to earn a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study with an Education Specialist degree in School Administration and Supervision from UNH as well. Congratulations and Best Wishes to Mrs. Ruel upon becoming the new principal at KES!

New Principal Selected for Newfields Elementary School

Ms. Kate Segal, currently the Assistant Principal at Somersworth Middle School in Somersworth, NH has been selected as the new Principal for Newfields Elementary School (NES) beginning on July 1, 2014. Ms. Segal replaces Mrs. Helen Rist who will be moving the SAU 16 Central Office to begin her work as the SAU Special Education Administrator.

Ms. Segal earned her BA in English, her M.Ed. in Education, her M.Ed. in Counseling from the University of New Hampshire, and her Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Educational Leadership from Plymouth State University. She began her public school career in 1986 as an eighth grade Language Arts teacher in Bedford, NH. Later she worked as a school counselor in Bethlehem, Goffstown, and Fremont, NH. Most recently, she has served for five years as an administrator in Somersworth, including her work at Hilltop Elementary School and Somersworth Middle School. Congratulations and Best Wishes to Ms. Segal upon becoming the new principal at NES!

Elementary School Celebrations

At the end of each academic year, each elementary school chooses to celebrate and recognize its departing students in its own creative way. These events are worth attending because they depict the uniqueness of each of our schools. Celebrations are planned for the following dates and times:

Monday, June 16th @ 7:00 pm - Kensington Elementary - Fifth Grade Recognition
Tuesday, June 17th @ 8:45 am - Main Street School - End-of-Year Assembly
Monday, June 16th @ 6:15 pm - East Kingston Elementary - Fifth Grade Recognition

Thursday, June 12th @ 6:30 pm - Newfields Elementary - Fifth Grade Recognition
Monday, June 16th @ 6:30 pm - Stratham Memorial - Fifth Grade Recognition
Monday, June 16th @ 6:30 pm - Swasey Central - Fifth Grade Recognition

Lincoln Street School had their DARE Graduation on Thursday, May 8th.

High School Celebrations

Commencement Exercises for **Great Bay eLearning Charter School** will be held on Wednesday, June 4, 2014 at 6:00 pm at the Tuck Learning Campus on Linden Street in Exeter. Festivities will be held outdoors, weather permitting.

Graduation activities for the **Exeter Adult Education Program** will be held on Wednesday, June 4, 2014 at 7:00 pm in the Arthur L. Hanson III Center for the Performing Arts at Exeter High School

The Certificate Ceremony for the **Seacoast School of Technology** seniors will be held on Thursday, June 5, 2014 at 5:30 pm in the Arthur L. Hanson III Center for the Performing Arts at Exeter High School

Commencement Exercises for the **Exeter High School** Class of 2014 will be held on Friday, June 13, 2014 at 5:30 pm at the high school. Festivities will be held outdoors, weather permitting.

Please note that all of these events are open to the public. Community members are cordially invited to attend.

Board Chairs Selected

Each year immediately after the March election, each School Board chooses a chairperson to assist in conducting its regular business. Chairpersons selected for the 2014-2015 term include:

Brentwood—Dianne Vosgien
East Kingston—Korrine Bork
Exeter—Patrick O’Day
Exeter Region Cooperative—Kate Segal
Kensington—Barbara Darby
Newfields—James McIlroy
Stratham—Heidi Hanson

NH Teacher of the Year--2015

Exeter High School (EHS) English teacher **Kristina Peterson** was nominated for the prestigious honor of Teacher of the Year for 2015. Ms. Peterson began her career at EHS in 2008 and currently teaches a variety of levels of Freshman English. Last year, she was able to secure a visit to the school from renowned author Stephen King—an event that

sparked an interest in writing for many of her students. In addition to her teaching, she has served on several EHS committees and has been actively involved in the suicide prevention initiatives in the school. In one letter of support written on behalf of Ms. Peterson, she was described as “creative, energetic, enthusiastic, sincere, dedicated, professional, responsible, reliable, courteous, friendly, and definitely student-centered.” This lengthy and detailed selection process continues for several months with the final announcement of the winner being made in early October 2014.

NHSAA Outstanding Service Award – 2014

Assistant Superintendent **Esther Asbell** has been selected to receive the 2014 Outstanding Service Award by the New Hampshire School Administrators Association. This impressive award is presented annually to a Central Office Administrator who is not a superintendent. Its criteria include honoring a person who works to improve district educational programs and/or services; is focused in a direction and is moving to achieve the SAU purpose and mission; contributes to a positive workplace climate and high morale; anticipates emerging problems and acts to resolve them; and demonstrates professional growth and involvement. Ms. Asbell has worked in her current SAU 16 position since July 2010. In addition to her extensive work with coordinating key aspects of curriculum, instruction, and assessment among the various districts in the SAU, she has been heavily involved in planning and implementation of Critical Incident Management protocols including suicide prevention and safety and security issues for the schools. She also works directly with the Newfields School Board and the East Kingston School Board and is respected around the state and the region for her knowledge and expertise with the New England League of Middle Schools where she currently serves as its President-Elect.

Agriculture Team of the Year--2014

The Seacoast School of Technology’s Animal and Plant Science Program instructor, **Anne DeMarco**, was recently recognized at the FFA State Convention at the Mount Washington Resort in Bretton Woods as the *Agriculture Teacher of the Year* for a record third time! Mrs. DeMarco attended the convention with many of her students who took home numerous honors, including \$3,650 in scholarship money for their performances in a variety of disciplines. Congratulations to Mrs. Demarco for this outstanding third time recognition and for all the successes of her students in the Animal and Plant Science Program.

National History Day—New Hampshire Teacher of the Year--2014

Exeter High School Social Studies teacher **Molly Stevenson** was recently honored by being chosen as the 2014 National History Day New Hampshire Teacher of the Year - High School Division. Ms. Stevenson has consistently distinguished herself with her work in various areas of the Social Studies and currently serves as the EHS Learning Area Leader (LAL) in that department. She has also initiated and coordinates the annual EHS Induction Ceremony and Luncheon which highlights the Rho Kappa National Social

Studies Honor Society that recognizes the work and success of juniors and seniors within this academic discipline.

Champions for Children

Community members and school staff continue to recognize and celebrate the dedication of local individuals by nominating them for a local Champion for Children award. This award is given to those individuals who have distinguished themselves by demonstrating significant involvement in programs and/or services that directly benefit the students and families of School Administrative Unit 16.

The Kensington School Board recently honored **Dan Chartrand** as a Champion for Children. Dan is a past Kensington Elementary School (KES) parent (of a now 19 year old son), who continues to share his passion for reading and love of books as a volunteer with the students in Mrs. Lawler's second grade classroom. Owner of Water Street Books, Dan was also an active member of the Building Committee responsible for the 2003 addition to the school. As noted by Principal Switzer and the KES faculty, Dan is a member of the KES family and is always welcome anytime to visit the school.

The Kensington School Board has also honored **Margaret Ruggeri** as their most recent Champion for Children. Mrs. Ruggeri has been the Administrative Assistant at Kensington Elementary School (KES) for the past 33 years and is retiring at the end of this school year as she and her husband plan to move to North Carolina. Margaret and her husband, Ed, who works as a custodian at the school, had four daughters who attended KES. Mrs. Ruggeri was active a parent volunteer and a member of the PTO during those early years. Over the years, she has served as the School Board Secretary and the School District Clerk. In 2011, she was honored with the prestigious "Joan and Dick Eustis Award." The entire KES community acknowledges how difficult it is going to be to fill Mrs. Ruggeri's shoes as she has impacted students, staff, and administrators with much kindness, dedication, and commitment for so long.

Two individuals were selected by the Exeter School Board as their Champions for Children in May. **Kimberly Truesdale** is a consultant for the 5-2-10 School Health/Nutrition Program and has worked with no cost to the school district at both Lincoln Street School and Main Street School for the past three years. Kimberly attends monthly Wellness Committee meetings; is instrumental in providing health/nutritional information and materials to students, staff and parents; and has established our very popular monthly "Try It Tuesdays." **Peter Waltz**, for more than twenty years, has presented a program to the fifth grade students on the "significance of trees" to the Exeter community. As a result of Mr. Waltz's outstanding program, the fifth graders learn a great deal about the importance of trees to their community and to the broader world at large. The Exeter School Board finds both Kimberly and Peter are both true "Champions for Children."

For the past two years, **Dr. Ute Tellini** has served as President of the Friends of the SST (Seacoast School of Technology) Culinary Arts and was recently honored by the Exeter

Region Coop School Board as a Champion for Children. In her role as president, Ute sets agendas that always include vigorous and carefully planned methods of fundraising for the program. These fundraisers pay for field trips, scholarships and small wares for the Culinary Arts kitchen. She has also been the brains behind the tremendously successful Chef's Table events held at SST with their most recent Chef's Table on May 8th at Julia's featuring Chef Matt Louis from *Moxy Restaurant* in Portsmouth.

Sadly, for the first time, the Champion for Children honoree is being awarded posthumously by the Statham School District to the former Stratham School Board Member and tireless parent volunteer, **Claire Ellis**. Very active in her community, Claire served as assistant chairwoman in her three years on the Stratham School Board; was instrumental in the negotiations of the current Stratham teacher contract; was a member of the Stratham Recreation Committee; and volunteered countless hours at Stratham Memorial School. She also served as a Scout den leader, and, with a group of other mothers, led fund-raising efforts to construct the Stevens Field Playground.

Did You Know?

The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) in their recent survey of school music programs selected the **Cooperative Middle School (CMS)** Music Program for inclusion in their 2014 report for the "*Best Communities in Music Education.*" NAMM is a very large organization that represents the music industry and educators in the USA and their survey was completed by schools across the nation. Congratulations to CMS music teacher Eric Kobb and the CMS music program for this terrific acknowledgement!

The **Exeter High School Summer Institute** is beginning its second year and will be offering fourteen (14) learning opportunities over a two-week period for students entering grades nine through twelve. Meeting dates and times are set by the instructor and specified in the course description. Students pay \$250 plus any approved lab/travel fees with course descriptions and fees found in the Summer Institute Program of Studies (www.ehs.sau16.org). Financial aid is available and classes have a minimum enrollment of ten (10) students and a maximum enrollment of eighteen (18) students per section. All courses are pass/fail and upon successful completion, students earn two Exeter High School elective credits (.5 Carnegie unit) per course.

Students from the **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** recently attended the 2014 FFA State Convention and returned with three state student officers (President - Manuel Catala; Vice President - Brian Berridge; and Sentinel - Courtney Shrempf); received FFA Alumni and Rochester Grange Scholarships (Catherine Biledeau); FFA Office of the Year (Castine Bernardy); placed in nine (9) State Winning Events that will next advance to the Nationals; won with four (4) First Place Teams; and proceeded to acquire numerous awards and placements by many of the students attending. Student teams took 1st and 2nd Place in the Animal Science Quiz Bowl; 1st and 3rd in the Equine Quiz Bowl; 1st Place in the Horticulture Quiz Bowl and 1st and 2nd Place in the FFA Quiz Bowl. Our sincerest Congratulations to all these hard working students who represented SST in such a commendable showing!

Swasey Central School (SCS) Principal Ron Kew maintains a regular blog that is available through the SCS website.

Exeter Adult Education reports full transition to the new high school equivalency test – HiSET. As with the GED, HiSET testing occurs monthly and offers both paper and computer based testing. This spring, a new “*Writing for Adults*” class combines the needs of those preparing for the HiSET writing test (grammar and essay requirements), as well as those needing to strengthen skills for career and college. This class includes instruction on grammar, vocabulary choice, and crafting writing to explain, to inform and to persuade. Although the holiday season is over, the staff at Exeter Adult Education recently completed a children’s clothing drive to meet the needs of adult students’ families who still lacked appropriate winter clothing.

The Three C’s—Curriculum, Communication, Community Service + Transitions

Exeter High School (EHS) Chemistry teacher, Mrs. Helen Friedman, took advantage of all of this year’s snowfall to use it as the starting material for her class lesson on “thermochemistry” – the study of energy. Students in Ms. Susan Argyros’s Integrated Sophomore English class utilized their study of Romeo and Juliet to write a talk show script: The Prince was the host and interviewed members of the feuding families, the Capulets and the Montagues, along with Friar Laurence about their roles in the deaths of Romeo and Juliet. Film director, Mr. Doug York, led students through all aspects of the production – character development, script writing, speaking, acting and filming.

Congratulations to **Cooperative Middle School (CMS)** student Noah Asch, an eighth grader with Team 10, who finished 5th in the state in the NH Geography Bee! CMS also has a new AV Technician, Philip Ainsworth, who has made improvements to scheduling and the Thomas G. Meehan Auditorium (TGMA) facility. Philip has also brought his enthusiasm for lighting, sound and theater to the students. Additionally, thanks to the CMS Theater Department, the TGMA now has a new 32 channel audio mixing console which will allow direct access to iPods, iPhones, MP3 capabilities, digital sound processing numerous output channels and ducking (automatically attenuates a soundtrack, giving a microphone priority – great for narration during a movie).

In early April, the **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** held the Small Business Showcase in the Talbot Gym. It was a great way for the public to meet the 78 local businesses who participated to do some business to business networking. This huge event, hosted by the Marketing Technologies program, was also a wonderful way for business owners and community members to learn about the SST, the programs offered and the students who attend. Although the event was a “Business after Hours” for the Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce, SSTs membership in the Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce brought many people from the Winnacunnet towns as well to the event.

The **Main Street School (MSS)** community actively prepared for the “Get Fit in May Road Race” that was held recently. There was even one offering in the MSS Enrichment Program that encouraged children to run after school so that they could get ready for this

major community event. Other enrichment activities included playing with Legos, conducting science experiments, and making fleece blankets.

Students in grades 3-5 at **Lincoln Street School** (LSS) recently participated in some Smarter Balanced “practice” tests in preparation for the initial administration of this new school-wide assessment in the spring of 2015. Students are taking practice tests in both reading and math, but will not receive any individual or school-wide scores. The test will allow the students to experience participating in a computerized assessment and will assist the LSS administration in determining whether the school has sufficient technology equipment to administer this testing to some 540 students.

Just before spring break, the **East Kingston Elementary School** (EKES) PTO sponsored the annual EKES Senior Luncheon. With well over 100 local seniors and grandparents in attendance, the luncheon was by far the most successful in recent memory. Visitors were lead on tours of the school by the fifth graders; enjoyed a complimentary lunch served by the fifth graders; were entertained by multiple classes sharing songs and poetry; and were given a potted plant as a parting gift. Principal Jim Eaves received numerous compliments about the students, the food, and the caring atmosphere of the school. Many thanks are extended to Melissa Wall for coordinating the event; a host of parent volunteers for set-up and service; Mary Russell for preparing the delicious meal; the fifth grade for leading school tours and serving the seniors; and the many student performers who shared their talents. It truly was a great day!

Stratham Memorial School’s (SMS) six 5th grade teachers are ready to begin utilizing their PLC (Professional Learning Communities) to craft four sections of students to be transitioned over to the Cooperative Middle School. The teachers will be reviewing gender, academic performance, special education, section 504, social relationships, guidance, RTI (Response To Intervention), behavior and any other important data for each student to determine the four sections.

Another successful *Escape to Italy Auction* was held at **Newfields Elementary School** (NES) on April 5th. The funds raised are used exclusively for in-school enrichment programs such as Artist-in-Residence, school assemblies and student field trips. The *Spaghetti Sauce Challenge* and the *Cupcake Smack Down* saw stiff competition this year! The sauce winner was Mrs. Stacy Smith and the cupcake winner was the Keenan family. Over \$10,000 was raised through the efforts of many parents and the entire staff at NES.

The first graders at **Swasey Central School** (SCS) have recently participated in research and writing projects as they explore “how to” books and use them to write a sequence of instructions. They also read and wrote poetry in April to celebrate “Poetry Month.” The third graders at SCS studied Native Americans in depth. Through research and projects, students explored how the Native Americans used the natural resources available to them to find food and build their homes. The fifth graders had a fabulous week at Sargent Camp that including a challenging ropes course where classmates had to help and encourage each other through teamwork. They also visited and worked in a replica of a

pioneer village that including cooking johnnycakes, blacksmithing, and making wooden nails.

Kensington Elementary School (KES) staff participated in the SAU 16 In-Service Day on Friday, March 14th. Teachers went to Swasey Central School (SCS) in the morning to work in K-5 grade level teams to develop performance tasks for the mathematics CCSS. The KES teaching assistants worked with Amy Danusis and Jeanne Calais on the Literacy CCSS at KES. Other KES staff worked with colleagues at various schools throughout the SAU to develop curriculum. All KES staff met with Police Chief Michael Sielicki in the afternoon at KES to review lockdown procedures. KES continues to practice its lockdown process with assistance from the Kensington Police.

Personal Reflection

Sadness has been very much in the air recently due to the tragic and untimely death of Brentwood Police Officer Steve Arkell. Once again, this puts life in perspective. Let us use our time to make positive contributions to our community, to see the good in others, and to cherish family time. Far too often, negativity can creep into our lives as we look to criticize. Let Steve Arkell's life of family love and community service inspire each of us to help build up rather than to tear down!