

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**  
**Michael A. Morgan, Superintendent of Schools—SAU 16**  
**SEPTEMBER 2016**

**September Enrollments**

Student enrollments generally fluctuate during the school year and official records are maintained and provide annual comparisons of information available on October 1<sup>st</sup> each year. September enrollments show some minor variations from the end of the 2015-2016 school year. Actual enrollment as of September 9, 2016:

Exeter High School—1701  
Cooperative Middle School—1317  
East Kingston Elementary School—154  
Main Street School, Exeter—523  
Lincoln Street School, Exeter—511  
Kensington Elementary School—104  
Newfields Elementary School—127  
Seacoast School of Technology—714 (343 are from Exeter)  
Swasey Central School, Brentwood—316  
Stratham Memorial School—571

More detail about student enrollment, especially with regard to an annual comparison and/or trends, will be provided in October.

**Additional New Professional Staff**

Since August, the following professional staff members have joined their respective Districts.

**East Kingston**

Heather Bell (Grade 5)  
Rebecca Fournier (Nurse)

**Exeter Region Cooperative**

Lisa Chamberlain (SST Nurse—90%)  
Kathleen Costa (EHS Special Education)

**Kensington**

Heather Antal (Nurse)

## Cost Per Pupil by District

Each year the State of New Hampshire receives information relative to the cost per pupil for the past school year. This actual cost includes all services provided to students. It encompasses staff salaries and benefits, books, supplies, facility upkeep and maintenance, and extracurricular activities. In order to maintain some level of consistency among school districts in the state, this figure does not include student transportation, food service, debt service, or out-of-district special education costs. These numbers are subject to change after review by the New Hampshire Department of Education and the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration. Preliminary figures for 2015-2016:

Brentwood--\$12,428.76

East Kingston--\$17,712.03

Exeter--\$16,795.72

Exeter Region Cooperative--\$14,553.78 (CMS: \$14,403.66; EHS: \$14,666.17)

Kensington--\$20,240.89

Newfields--\$16,049.00

Stratham--\$16,496.45

## Champions for Children

Community members and school staffs continue to recognize and celebrate the dedication of local individuals by nominating them for a 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 has chosen **Dr. Karl Singer** for this outstanding award. Dr. Singer is a long-time influential member of Kensington who had five children attend Kensington Elementary School (KES). For nearly 30 years he has been saving books, materials and lesson plans with the hope of someday being able to give back to a school that had helped his children so much. He has been regularly volunteering at KES since 2014.

Dr. Singer recalls the time when one of his children was having particular difficulties in fifth grade and the principal at the time, Gary VanderEls, took this youngster “under his wing” to provide extra help and support for him. It helped significantly and this youngster “got back on track.” Dr. Singer often pondered, “How can I every repay Gary for what he did with my son?”

Today Dr. Singer works with a small group of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and is passionate about sharing his love for math with them. He wants students to recognize that mathematics is everywhere in the world around them. He wants them to appreciate the

beauty of math in nature and expose them to concepts and patterns they have not yet encountered.

Dr. Singer's story is one that embodies the idea of *Paying It Forward*. The children of KES benefit from his kindred spirit and giving nature. He is a real Champion for Children.

The Exeter Region Cooperative School Board recently honored **The Netishen Family** of Exeter with this award. For the past seven years, this family has partnered with the Seacoast School of Technology (SST) Building Construction Technologies and Welding Technologies programs on several key projects. Various building, demolition, and renovations projects have taken place on the family's property. This has often required their significant patience and understanding as 15-20 students come and go as many as three times each day in order to accomplish the necessary work. Even though the family saved a considerable amount of money by working closely with SST, the significant inconvenience and slow pace of the work demanded extra patience and perseverance from the entire family. Their support of SST and its students deserve their recognition as a Champion for Children.

### **NHIAA Sportsmanship Award**

At the recent 2016 Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA), Exeter High School (EHS) was honored for its high degree of sportsmanship throughout the 2015-2016 school year by being presented with the Division I Runner-Up Championship Banner. This impressive distinction is often cherished more than a state championship because it highlights the significant contributions of student-athletes, coaches, parents, and fans. Since the 1998-1999 school year, EHS has received this award ten (10) times: 1999, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, and 2013. Congratulations to all involved!

### **National Merit Semi-Finalists**

Five (5) Exeter High School (EHS) seniors were recently named "National Merit Semi-Finalists" as a result of their outstanding success with the 2015 Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) that was administered to all EHS juniors last year. These students are now eligible for significant academic recognition and financial awards for college as they are strongly considered for the designation of "Finalist" by the College Board. Over 90% of Semi-Finalists generally earn that "Finalist" designation.

These Semi-Finalists are: Michael Clements, Kristen McLaughlin, Sydney Morris, Christopher Sullivan, and Jeremie Dyes-Hopping. Congratulations to each of these students for this wonderful accomplishment!

The 2016 PSAT/NMSQT will be administered to all EHS juniors and any sophomores who wish to register on Wednesday, October 19, 2016.

### **Spotlight: Main Street School, Exeter**

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 is asked to provide information to be shared with new teachers joining the SAU this year.

#### **Main Street School** – *Steve Adler, Principal* 40 Main Street, Exeter – 775-8946

Main Street School (MSS) and the Exeter Developmental Preschool (EDP) serve children of pre-kindergarten age through second grade who live in the Town of Exeter.

The EDP is located in the Farrell Building at 13 School Street. The EDP is an integrated program that enrolls children who are three or four years old and who require specialized instruction. In addition, community preschool children may also attend EDP. The Program utilizes the Creative Curriculum, which is designed to develop students' cognitive, physical, language, and social emotional skills. A modest tuition is charged for students who enroll as "Community Peers."

MSS is located directly west of Phillips Exeter Academy (PEA) in downtown Exeter. The original part of the brick building was a parochial school (St. Michael's School) built in 1931. The MSS curriculum is designed to develop the whole child through a well-rounded program that addresses both the academic and social needs of each child. The curriculum includes theme-based instruction based upon common topics in science and social studies. The development of students' social and emotional learning is supported through the full school implementation of the Open Circle program.

Maintaining a strong working partnership with the parents and guardians of students and connecting to the community are important goals at Main Street School. Teachers, administrators, and parents are extremely proud of having been awarded New Hampshire's *Blue Ribbon Achievement Award* for more than 20 years and for the many community service activities completed annually. In March 2016, Exeter voters approved a \$5.4M Warrant Article that will allow the District to add an addition to Main Street School. This new space will support the implementation of a full day kindergarten program. Construction of the addition is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2017.

### **School Board Member Change**

**Mr. Travis Thompson** resigned from his seat on the Stratham Board at the end of June 2016, but continues to serve as one of the two Stratham representatives to the Exeter Region Cooperative School Board. **Ms. Jillian Carter** was selected this month to replace Travis on the Stratham Board. She will serve in this capacity until the March 2016 school district elections.

## **Did You Know?**

Over five large boxes of non-perishable food items were donated by SAU 16 staff members during the formal opening of school that convened at Exeter High School (EHS) at the end of August. This food drive supported the efforts of *End 68 Hours of Hunger* which is the weekend backpack food program that helps approximately 100 local children in SAU 16 each week.

New Hampshire has 234 municipalities; 13 are cities; 221 are towns. Any town can become a city by a vote of the local citizens. There is no connection between the population of a community and its designation as either a “city” or a “town.” New Hampshire has some large towns (e.g. Derry and Salem with approximately 30,000 residents each) and some small cities (e.g. Franklin and Berlin with less than 10,000 residents each).

In the days of “one room schoolhouses,” Stratham had three such schools: The Ridge School (78 Portsmouth Avenue); Stratham Hill School (240 Portsmouth Avenue); and Winnicutt (or Winniconic) School (6 Barker Road). These will be celebrated as part of the Town’s 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Parade on September 25, 2016.

Suicide Prevention Week for the State of New Hampshire was proclaimed by Governor Maggie Hassan for the week of September 5-10, 2016. The declaration coincided with World Suicide Prevention Day on Saturday, September 10, 2016. Exeter High School (EHS) hosted a press conference on Friday, September 9, 2016 to stress the importance of this event. NH State Representative Dr. Tom Sherman and Tara Ball from the Connor’s Climb Foundation spoke to a solid representation of EHS students, staff, and community members. The EHS community suffered three student suicides in 33 months (January 2010-September 2012) and is committed to do all that it can to help students who may be struggling in this regard.

Two recent very talented Exeter High School (EHS) graduates, who have excellent artistic skills, now have some of their work on display at *Me and Ollie’s* in downtown Exeter. Stop in to see the work created by Ashley Platt and Shelby Bernard.

Exeter School District School Psychologist Tricia Raymond is serving as the President-Elect and Membership Chairperson of the NH Association of School Psychologists this year. Next year, she will become President of this important and well-recognized professional association.

## **Michael J. Farrell Memorial School**

Due to his work in transforming the once run-down school building into the sturdy and bright home to young children’s programs that it is today, the *School Street School* in Exeter was officially renamed the *Michael J. Farrell Memorial School* at a dedication ceremony on May 7, 2000. In the early 1990’s, Great Bay Kids Company was in dire need of a facility and thanks to the hard work of Mr. Farrell and others, a new home was found near Lincoln Street School. Over the years, the School Street building has housed

both Great Bay Kids' Company and The Exeter Developmental Preschool Program which helps three and four year old children who are challenged by physical, speech, and developmental difficulties to get ready for kindergarten.

Michael Farrell was Vice President of Administration for Wheelabrator Technologies in Exeter. His company was very supportive of providing quality childcare opportunities in the community. This helped to identify the local need and Mr. Farrell worked closely with the school district to raise \$150,000 to complete the work on the School Street building.

Prior to his work in Exeter, Mr. Farrell held high level administrative positions under President Richard Nixon and President Gerald Ford. Mr. Farrell died in 1999 at 62 years old. Today the community is still grateful for his dedication and commitment to children.

### **SAU 16 Forty Year Club**

Five (5) current staff members within SAU 16 now comprise the distinguished "SAU 16 Forty Year Club." This outstanding honor recognizes the minimum of 40 consecutive years that these dedicated individuals have worked within this excellent organization. Honorees for 2016-2017 include: **Dr. Kathi Atwood**, Exeter High School teacher; **Janice Bastille**, SAU Title I teacher; **Mary Jo Gregg**, Main Street School teacher; **Bonnie Rosencrantz**, Main Street School teacher; and **Jan Smith**, Lincoln Street School Assistant Principal. These individuals have distinguished themselves by their dedication, commitment, and service to the students, families, staff, and communities within SAU 16. This recognition confers special honor and appreciation to these wonderful people who can now boast that they are among a very select group of SAU colleagues. Many sincere thanks to each of them!

### **SAU 16 Educational Channel 13**

All local Comcast subscribers have unlimited access to the SAU 16 Educational Channel 13 in each of the six communities within the SAU. Programs of local interest dealing with students' efforts in classrooms are regularly available. Additionally, a wide variety of athletic events are covered, as well as regular meetings of the Exeter and Exeter Region Cooperative School Boards.

### **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.*

A Readers' and Writers' Workshop model in literacy is a key component to outstanding instructional practice at **Stratham Memorial School (SMS)**. Teachers and administrators are also working on developing a comprehensive and focused Math

Workshop model to help each student master particular skills. The Science curriculum is very much focused around a successful Inquiry Model. The staff is building capacity as it is always looking for ways to improve. This includes such strategies as book groups, Professional Learning Communities, and Instructional Rounds, all of which are being done to make SMS better for students and families.

The beginning of the year at **Newfields Elementary School (NES)** gave the school community the opportunity to review its “Responsive Classroom” foundations. “Responsive Classroom is a research-based approach to K-8 teaching that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social-emotional learning. High-quality education for every child is built on the foundation of a safe and joyful learning community.” This results in “greater teacher effectiveness, high student achievement, and improved school climate” (responsiveclassroom.org). The NES culture, climate, and tone for the school year are established during the first few weeks of school where a sense of community is built; classroom rules and routines are created; and innovative, individual instruction is begun. Along with classroom morning meetings at NES, the entire school gathers for Community Meetings throughout the school year. Earlier this month, in recognition of 9/11, on Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, everyone at NES met outside to thank the Newfields Police, Fire Personnel, and First Responders for keeping everyone safe. Fifth Graders led the Pledge of Allegiance; the Newfields’ Girl Scouts lowered and then raised the American and New Hampshire flags; and new Guidance Counselor Kelsey Miller, sang the National Anthem.

Enrollment for the fall semester at **Exeter Adult Education** is in full swing during September because many individuals register for academic and enrichment classes. These include day and evening classes. Classes are designed to meet the various needs of non-traditional learners such as English language learners and those preparing for the HiSET high school equivalency exam. A wonderful selection of enrichment classes are also available to community members, and include such offerings as options for retirement and social security, as well as learning a new craft. As in past election years, Exeter Adult Education will host a Candidate Forum on Thursday, October 20, 2016 from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm in the Science Lecture Hall at the Tuck Learning Campus. Members of the public are cordially invited to attend.

Good communication at **Kensington Elementary School (KES)** continues to be a major focus for the new school year. Principal Becky Ruel and the KES teachers are working hard to keep families informed about upcoming events, as well as providing regular information about students’ progress. Information about important educational topics such as Competency-Based Education, homework procedures, and family involvement in the school will also be circulated. The KES webpage is updated often so that the general public and parents receive timely communications from classroom teachers. Weekly emails with flyers and other pertinent information are also sent to families.

The opening assembly at **Main Street School (MSS)** this year was filled with many positive experiences for the children. Music teacher Juliet Goyette introduced the children to some of the staff members whom they usually meet outside of the classroom.

This included the custodian and staff in the health office. Ms. Goyette sang a revision of the song, “People in my Neighborhood” and Principal Steve Adler and Assistant Principal Beth Cadorette demonstrated how to ride on the school bus safely. Guidance Counselor Nancy Daniels presented a short video about “Mr. Keays’ Buddy Bench” and making everyone feel welcomed at MSS. The assembly ended happily with a video and song of “Pete the Cat.”

The fifth graders at **East Kingston Elementary School (EKES)** are demonstrating solid leadership as another school year begins. These students are seeking out ways that they can lead by example, from helping kindergarteners of and off the school bus; being reading buddies to younger students; and looking for projects that will make the school better. Three fifth graders have already set such a positive tone because they asked Principal Steve Tullar if they could be in charge of composting at EKES. They did some research; gathered important facts about the process; weighed the amount of compost from a week of lunches; and made a presentation to the entire school during the weekly All School Meeting. This is a wonderful example of students adding to the positive climate and culture in the school.

Each **Seacoast School of Technology (SST)** program is mandated to have an Advisory Committee and hold at least two meetings each year. Advisory Committee members come from the local community and have professional connections to a certain program. For example, the Executive Chef at the Colonnade Hotel in Boston serves on the Culinary Arts Advisory Committee; the President of Palmer & Sicard serves on the Building Construction Technology Advisory Committee; the Chairperson of UNH’s Computer Science Department serves on the IT Advisory Committee; and the owner of Wentworth Motors (Volvo) serves on the Automotive Technologies Advisory Committee. Hundreds of people from local business and industry serve on the 12 Advisory Committees that serve SST students. The extensive experience and strong professional commitments and support of these skilled and talented individuals contribute to the outstanding success found every day at SST.

**Swasey Central School (SCS)** has set aside a special classroom called “SCS Makerspace.” This area is dedicated to hands-on learning, problem solving, innovation, and engineering. It will be an education space to support the integration of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) through the use of diverse materials and open workspaces. Students will be able to create items and work individually and collaboratively under the direction of their classroom teacher and paraprofessionals in ways that will enhance their regular educational experiences.

This year’s building goals at **Lincoln Street School (LSS)** are based on the two vision pillars identified by SAU 16. For “Collaboration,” the focus is on: 1) fostering positive student interactions and social emotional learning; 2) providing consistent opportunities for the staff to meet and to use data to adjust instruction for individual students; and 3) to adjust that instruction using flexible groups to address student learning more precisely for both struggling students and for advanced learners. These goals will provide more



responsiveness to student needs and allow staff to further personalize education for students.

For “Student Ownership of Learning,” the focus is on project based learning. This effort really puts students in the driver’s seat. The teacher moves from being a director of learning to a facilitator of learning. This change requires a lot of work on the part of the school staff. It necessitates an abundance of planning and coordination, as they need to create an overarching challenge question or theme; anticipate the students’ choices in their projects in how they will address the question; and be prepared to direct the students to the appropriate resources that help guide their thinking and questioning. It really demands deeper thinking and develops more learning for the students. This process will take time to incorporate regularly throughout each grade level and during the school year. However, parents and students may begin to see changes in certain units of study in the coming months.

For almost three weeks in July, twenty-eight **Exeter High School** (EHS) students and two teacher chaperones participated in a student exchange program with Nara Chiben College in Nara, Japan. EHS students had the opportunity to explore Tokyo for a few days, enjoying museums and Buddhist Temples of the area, before moving south to Nara. Once there, they lived with host families and attended school where they observed and participated in daily classes and activities. They were also able to immerse themselves into Japanese culture which gave them the opportunity to use the language skills that they had learned at EHS. Students from Nara Chiben College usually come to visit EHS and stay with local families for three weeks in March. This exchange program helps to develop and nurture positive relationships among families and communities.

Some of the seventh grade Social Studies classes at the **Cooperative Middle School** (CMS) recently remembered the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. Members of the class recorded words and phrases that they heard from listening to oral testimonies from victims. Each student thoughtfully placed their collection of words within an outline of the Twin Towers and constructed a “shape poem” that told the history of that tragic day. This activity allowed students to discuss the importance of remembrance and memorials because those students were not even alive when these events occurred.

## **Reflection**

I have been reading *Our Kids* by Harvard professor Dr. Robert Putnam. He compares the life of children growing up 50 years ago with the realities of children growing up today. His major point is that today’s children and young people experience an “opportunity gap” which is based on economic conditions and lifestyles. Even as many of our families provide wonderful opportunities for their children, as a society, we face the significant challenge of how to make life better for those who are not so fortunate.