



# Superintendent Report September, 2020 SAU # 7

## **Back to School Preparations**

We have had a very busy summer preparing for the start of the return of school staff (August 27) and students (September 8).

### Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Thanks to the support of the SAU 7 Board we have been busy recruiting the shared Curriculum Coordinator with Canaan and ENSU. We plan to share the position.

In order to be prepared for the possibility of remote learning, new teacher laptops and additional chromebooks have been ordered using grant funds and are expected in 2-4 weeks. In addition, based on feedback from our staff, professional development is focused on learning and applying technology tools for both in person and remote learning.

Alternate instructional options have been limited due to the closure of the K-8 virtual school- VLACS. However, additional slots may be opening. We will provide a complete enrollment report next month.

### Health and Safety

We also prioritized health and safety. Devon Phillips, our School Health Coordinator, provided an informative presentation to faculty and staff. The information is outlined in our [SAU 7 Fall Reopening Plan](#). This plan was posted on the website and distributed to staff and families last week. In addition Health and Safety Procedures have been drafted to guide our staff and students.

## Buildings and Grounds

The ventilation system/duct work in each school have been cleaned. Final summer work completed includes replacement of tile and installation of new carpeting. There was an unfortunate water pipe break in Colebrook due to a hydrant malfunction. This resulted in some damage in two classrooms. The school was closed on August 27 until plumbing repairs were completed and water was restored. Contractors have begun repairs and insurance has been notified.

Our custodians have been working tirelessly to prepare classrooms - ensuring that student desks are socially distanced and removing excess furniture. Teachers worked for two additional days to organize their classrooms as required by the state and CDC guidelines.

PPE will be provided to all staff including masks, gloves and disinfecting wipes. As needed we are also preparing plexiglass barriers for tables. While we have asked parents to provide masks, we have a supply on hand if needed. We are also expecting disinfecting equipment which will be delivered this fall.

## Logistics

Parent surveys indicate 90% of our students will be returning to school for in person instruction. Bus Transportation has been requested for 40% of our families and 40% of our students will participate in school meals. Students will continue to participate in the Collaborative, traveling between schools to participate in high school and CTE classes. Due to the challenges of transportation with COVID restrictions, high school students with parent permission may drive to Collaborative classes. One student will sit in each assigned seat.

## Staff Inservice

On August 27, the Superintendent [welcomed](#) staff, recognized new staff members as well as returning staff for their longevity and service. Here are excerpts from my remarks:

*First let me express my best wishes for you and your families. I know this pandemic has touched us all. On behalf of our School Board Members and Administrative Team, we are grateful to all of you for your continued commitment to our students, families and school community.*

*We are in a time of change and reflection. We are living with uncertainty, feeling our way forward. As a school community, we must be clear in our hearts that everything we do is an expression of our commitment to what is true and just. We must be willing to embrace the openness of heart that leads to compassion, humility, and gratitude. We must be an institution of healing.*

*We must also be mindful of our core purpose of teaching and learning as a public school system. What we accomplished last year - when we shifted to remote learning - was a testament to the resilience of our school system. Last spring will hold a special place in our history.*

*In March, the severity of the pandemic became apparent, the school system went into action. Our teachers pivoted to remote learning. This maintained our focus on our academic mission while sustaining the vibrancy of our school community so integral to our character in SAU 7.*

*We have learned much from this experience. We have made a commitment to increasing our technology tools and capabilities. The recent change has accelerated our technology initiatives along this path. We are expanding our technology capacity and we expect new updated equipment - including additional Chromebook access in the coming school year. This will enhance our efforts to continue to provide a robust educational program should a return to remote learning be required.*

*During this challenging time, we must rely on and support one another. Our Social Emotional Learning team has worked hard this summer to provide you with guidance, resources and supports as school resumes. This work was led by Coordinator of Special Services, Jen Noyes.*

*Health and safety are primary considerations for us this year. We so appreciate the work of our health and facilities team led by Devon Phillips, SAU Health Coordinator and Cheryl Covill, Business Administrator who prioritized your health and safety by thorough preparation and changes to our operations as required by state and federal COVID 19 expectations.*

*Thanks also to our curriculum, instruction and assessment team, led by our principals, who helped to define our instructional models which we will implement this year.*

*This experience also enhanced our partnerships with the local community. The local Kiwanis Club will donate facemasks for children in our school system. Thanks to a generous benefactor, we have also received face masks for adults from the state. Many community members have reached out and offered us assistance in countless ways. In fact, this crisis has reminded us that we are at our strongest when we work together.*

*While the situation remains fluid, we will resume full in person instruction on September 8 following the health directives from the State of New Hampshire and the Centers for Disease Control. As you know, there may be changes to our plans as the school year progresses and we so appreciate your flexibility.*

*The abrupt school closure last spring, makes our return to school this fall something we are all looking forward to. We are all eager to meet new students and reconnect with those we know. We are ready to help students nurture passions, dig into deep questions, find their voice, and achieve high levels of learning. Learners in our buildings are not just the students we serve; learners are also our teachers, administrators, and staff members who are dedicated to the success of each and every child.*

*In the coming days more information will be provided to you to ensure you are well prepared for welcoming our students back to school. Thanks to your feedback, we have planned professional development opportunities which focus on three areas: Health and Safety, Social Emotional Learning and Support, and Technology Tools for Teaching and Learning. We look forward to our learning journey together in the coming days.*

*We are also committed to ensuring that each and every student will make one year's academic growth this year. This requires us to come together in support of our students and their families.*

*I have no doubt that we can and will do this. Our schools have long served students in Clarksville, Columbia, Colebrook, Pittsburg and Stewartstown. We enjoy strong community support expressed in the resources which we have*

*received each year. Voters approve our school budgets and their ongoing support to maintain our school facilities. This support is the foundation of our school system. I have faith in you, in the strength of our school community and the ennobling power of education.*

*Our history is integral to the character of our school system and, with dedication in our hearts, we will continue to succeed. With my utmost gratitude and very best wishes to you all - I welcome you back to school for the 20-21 school year.*

Respectfully,

Debra Taylor, Ph.D.  
Superintendent