



Superintendent's Report

November 2020

Pittsburg School Board Update

Our first snow - October 17, 2020

Connecticut River Valley Planning Committee

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 5 at 6:00 pm. Meeting topics will include updates via subcommittees including governance, facility, and finance. While this meeting will be virtual, the hope is that the December meeting will be held in person. Meeting information may be found on the committee website. www.connecticutrivercollaborative.org

New Websites!

The new websites for all schools and SAU 7 are now completed.

Website highlights include -

- Updated information for parents and community
- School calendar
- Updated teacher webpages
- Links for students and parents for grades and google classroom
- School Board Agendas and Minutes
- School Board Policies
- Robust Search Engine

The new websites are now live and may be found at the following links:

[SAU # 7](#)

[Colebrook](#)

[Pittsburg](#)

[Stewartstown](#)

Thanks to our school principals, librarians, and administrative assistants for developing the new school websites. Special thanks to Justin Falconer, IT Director and Tori Smart, SAU Administrative Assistant for coordination and training as well as work on the SAU websites!

Curriculum Instruction and Assessment

SAU #7 (Colebrook, Pittsburg and Stewartstown School Districts) and ENSU (Canaan Schools, NEK Choice, and Unified Towns and Gores) intend to scale and deepen their implementation of personalized learning, using integrated technology tools and a competency-based learning approach. We acknowledge that the best path

forward in this effort is through a collaborative effort. Building upon the existing collaborative committee of educators representing our three regional high schools and recognizing that many of our high school students attend classes in one another's schools, we have embarked upon a collaborative curriculum, instruction, and assessment effort.

Previously, at the August SAU 7 board meeting, we received approval for the appointment of a shared curriculum director to provide leadership for our schools. Unfortunately, due to the timing of this position opening, so far, we have been unsuccessful in recruiting for the shared position.

Undaunted, we began to pursue other avenues to rekindle the professional development and curriculum work in our region. First, we have instituted the curriculum committee, which is scheduled to meet monthly after school beginning in November. Second, we developed a plan to provide ongoing opportunities for professional development and curriculum development for all teachers in our region over the course of the 20-21 school year. Staff from all schools in SAU7 and ENSU will be engaged in remote meetings on multiple days utilizing various resources highlighted in *Breaking with Tradition: The Shift to Competency-Based Learning* and other resources as necessary to support our progress. We plan to engage consultants to facilitate this work.

More information will be forthcoming at our upcoming SAU 7 School Board Meeting on November 12 along with an update on progress toward my Superintendent Entry Plan.

Substitute Teachers

We are making slow but steady progress on recruiting substitute teachers for our schools. We have employed some additional substitutes; however, we are still experiencing a severe staffing shortage in this area which may affect our ability to continue in person instruction should health conditions in our area change. Remember to refer candidates for substitute teaching to me. I would be pleased to speak with them. While a teaching degree for a substitute teacher is preferred, we are able to employ individuals with high school diplomas, provided they meet our criteria including a successful criminal background check in advance of the initiation of their employment.

Communications During These Challenging Times

One thing is for certain, one can never communicate enough! During these challenging times, we are often bombarded with information from several different sources - some accurate and some false. For example, rumors of positive COVID cases abound.

We continue to follow our safe and healthy protocols which are being observed by staff and students. Thanks to all for the hard work and dedication and dedication to keeping our students safe.

Please remember that first and foremost, we only communicate information about the effect of COVID - 19 on our schools through official channels to our School Boards, staff, parents, and students. We also must honor confidentiality requirements for schools and staff in that we cannot personally identify individuals who may have tested positive or are quarantining.

If you become aware of inaccurate information from another source that relates to school operations, please refer the information to me.

Meanwhile, we continue to communicate internally to ensure consistency and support through biweekly SAU office and leadership team meetings, weekly school visits and regular email and phone communications. We expect that our updated website will also provide ease of access to information for all.

The second Parent Forum on COVID -19 was held on Tuesday, October 27 at 5:30 pm. This virtual meeting was attended by over 50 parents and community members and was co-led by the Superintendent and School Health Coordinator and Colebrook Nurse Devon Phillips.