

Report of the Superintendent

This has been another year of good work of behalf of students for SAU 83 as it moves along in the second year of its Strategic Plan (<http://www.sau83.org/about-us/strategic-plan/strategic-plan>). Some improvements include the beefing up of the music program with the hiring of a new music teacher, Jamie Bolduc, and the addition of a band program. It includes the first year of Spanish with Heather Wardwell for the upper grades. It was the first year of the new state test, the Smarter Balanced Assessment, and a new benchmark for the improvement of student achievement. Two Collective Bargaining Agreements for staff were passed for the 2016-2018 and 2016-2019 school years.

THE ELLIS SCHOOL BUILDING

After a summer of contractors working to remove asbestos, in all forms, from Ellis School, the school is essentially asbestos free. Old asbestos floor tiles and insulation were removed and replaced. A new cafeteria/gym floor was laid and lined for games. Walls were painted and new cubbies and storage replaced fifty year old equipment in some rooms. Also, a science lab was installed for grades 7 and 8 and cabinetry expanded in the 5 and 6th grade science rooms. The pre-school playground was made more accessible to our littlest population with new play structures and a rubberized walkway.

Building concerns continue to include the old and inefficient bathroom facilities, antiquated and inefficient heating and electrical systems, and the lack of safety in the configuration of access to the building. It is the earnest desire of the school community to work with the Town of Fremont to outfit Ellis School with more efficient equipment to save money and the environment, and to create a safer, more controllable interior configuration.

STUDENTS AND ACHIEVEMENT

This year saw a small increase in student population due in large part to the moving of the Seacoast Charter School from Kingston to Dover. After this bump in population, the population of Ellis School, like almost every other school in New Hampshire, is expected to decline over the next few years.

On an achievement note, the Federal Government just passed the renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which will take effect August 1, 2016. You will remember different iterations of this law as “Goals 2000” and the “No Child Left Behind Act.” This time around the title is “Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA.)” Here are a few of the highlights of this new law. There is no longer an expectation that one hundred percent (100%) of students will read and do math on grade level. This was found to be unachievable. There will no longer be “Adequate Year Progress” designations.

Here some of what ESSA will do. It will:

- Allow states to set their own goals for achievement

- Identify the bottom 5% of schools for performance on the Smarter Balanced Assessment for both the total student population and subgroups within that population to receive state support to improve results
- Title I funds will continue and increase for some districts
- Grants will be made available for districts that wish to pilot performance pay and other teacher improvement methods.

MANY THANKS

The job of running a school system requires the wearing of many hats and ever changing expectations. It would not be possible to keep things running without the concerted effort of a very dedicated staff, School Board, parents, and community. I want to extend my thanks to those people who continually work hard to support the education of Fremont's youth every day.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Betsey S. Cox-Buteau