

School Administrative Unit #7 Summer Meeting Minutes							
<b>Date</b>		August 10, 2023					
<b>Time</b>		6:00 p.m.					
<b>Location</b>		Pittsburg School Bremer Pond Auditorium					
Attendance							
School Board Members							
Clarksville		Colebrook		Columbia		Pittsburg	
P	Michel Dionne	P	Nate Lebel	P	Kristin Brooks	P	Lindsey Gray
P	Linda White	E	Deb Greene	P	Stacey Campbell	P	Jamie Gray
E	Erin Blanchard	P	Rhonda Lyons	E	Eric Brungot	P	Willard Ormsbee
		P	Robert Murphy			P	Hannah Kingsbury
		P	Joey Sweatt			E	Reggie Parker
		E	Tim Stevens				
		P	Tanya Young				
Stewartstown		SAU #7					
P	Courtney Sierad	P	Debra Taylor, Superintendent				
P	Betsy Gray	P	Bridget Cross, Business Administrator				
P	Philip Pariseau	P	Jennifer Noyes, Special Services Coordinator				
		P	Jennifer Mathieu, Curriculum Coordinator				
		P	Shane Cloutier, IT Coordinator				
Guests: Canaan School Board Members: Renee Marchesseault, Roger LaFlamme, Terri Herr; NEK Choice Board Member: Sharon White; Canaan School Principal, Ron Patterson; ENSU Superintendent, Jennifer Lawcewicz Public: Richard Cole, Jr., Christine Sullivan, David Brooks, Britni Haley, Ben Young							

**Roll Call:**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Nate Lebel noting that a quorum of the Board was present.

**Joint Meeting of the SAU 7 and Canaan/ENSU School Board –**

- Regional Collaboration Discussion –  
 Superintendent Lawcewicz and Superintendent Taylor reviewed progress since the June Joint ENSU and Colebrook Board meeting. Student Kiwanis clubs are working together. Reports from the Athletic Directors concerning sports participation in Colebrook and Pittsburg/Canaan were reviewed. The districts are investigating pursuing a joint agreement for high school and CTE collaboration. We are awaiting a response from the VT Agency of Education. The Board members expressed an interest in resuming collaborative courses and CTE participation between NH and VT so that our collective student populations will have expanded educational opportunities. Members also spoke about the proposed Colebrook Building Project and how it was necessary to replace the closed Colebrook Academy, provide space for North Point CTE programs and advance education for all students in the region. Lastly, the board members reviewed the Twelve Conclusions and recommendations of the Interstate Study Committee which disbanded on January 6, 2021. Future joint meetings of the SAU and ENSU Boards will be planned in the future.

**Reading of the Minutes:**

- L.White/S.Campbell: Motion to approve the SAU #7 Meeting Minutes of April 13, 2023, as written.  
**VOTE: MOTION CARRIES**

**School Administrative Unit 7 Report:**

- Introduction to Competency Based Learning  
 Jen Mathieu, provided a detailed overview of competency-based education and grading which included real world examples of competency-based education, why competency-based education? – Mastery vs. Coverage, how competency-based education addresses grade inflation. The rollout of competency-based education was reviewed

noting that grading will occur in the 2024-25 school year and the team plans to conduct informational sessions with parents in the spring of 2024. Jen also shared the SAU 7 CBE FAQ for board information.

### **School Administrative Unit #7 Reports:**

- **Curriculum** – Jennifer Mathieu  
Jen provided a report on the following curriculum goals including:
  1. Continue Competency Based Education work including competencies, essential standards, grading, reporting, CIA team, PD for teachers, parents and school board members, and communication including website updates.
  2. Initiate classroom management growth for new and entering teachers as well as those in need of improvement by developing a comprehensive system of intervention and support incorporating coaching.
  3. Expand grant opportunities to support professional development of current teachers and work toward developing a system of first year teacher internship/course sequence for new or non-licensed teachers in partnership with an institution of higher education.
- **Technology** – Shane Cloutier  
Shane highlighted summer work to inspect and service district equipment, prepare new Chromebooks for fall rollout, Alma Student Information System transition and training, future network upgrades, improvements in speed, accessibility and network security including phishing courses.
- **Business Manager** – Bridget Cross  
Bridget highlighted activities of the business office during the prior school year including Business Manager certification training, the case for regional collaboration to benefit students, gratitude to the superintendent, SAU office staff and administrators for making her transition success. She noted new procedures that were implemented this year to focus decision making at the school level while maintaining accountability at the central office level. Highlights include, Changing the health benefit calendar so that insurance concludes on June 30 and initiates on either July 1 or September 1, depending on the individual employment contracts; Changing leave time recording to hourly, rather than daily; Changing the way that bank balances are reconciled for the treasurers; Reducing journal entries; DocuSign use for payroll, accounts payable and employment contracts. More updates to procedures will be accomplished in the 23-24 school year. Bridget also reviewed facility improvements that were accomplished at each school in the summer of 23.  
Next, Bridget proposed that the board consider the possibility of providing transportation to and from school for NEK choice students who live in nearby VT towns of Brunswick, Bloomfield, Lemington, and Norton.  
  
R. Murphy/T.Young: Motion to investigate interstate bussing for the NEK choice districts for tuition students and report on cost estimates at the November meeting.  
Bridget distributed copies of the SAU 7 Annual Financial Audit Report to the board members.
- **Special Services** – Jennifer Noyes  
Jen reported that we had a successful extended school year program for students in all schools including speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and special education academics. She reported on the status of current special education position openings and welcomed new staff. She also discussed two special educators have become trained in the “Wilson Reading System.” We continue to explore evidence-based interventions and receive training on the programs that will benefit our students. Next, she described training opportunities provided to special education teachers and support staff. In addition to these trainings, she noted that she and Kim Wheelock trained a total of 41 staff members in Crisis Prevention and Intervention during the month of July.  
The goals of the special education team will be developed at our first fall meeting. We will utilize student outcomes, the feedback received from the Panorama survey on parent engagement, and team feedback to develop our team goals. Within our SAU Office of Special Services office, we will be focusing on Medicaid billing, rebuilding a school psychologist program with the new virtual school psychologist, providing support to special educators throughout the year to ensure that they have what they need to do their best, and supporting efforts to build a co-teaching program within each school.

**Superintendent** – Debra Taylor

The SAU 7 School Board voted to extend our current strategic plan at their November 2022 meeting. The Board felt strongly that our goals were on target and more time was needed to progress and achieve our goals.

This year our SAU 7 Leadership Team Retreat is scheduled on August 21. At this meeting we will analyze our schools' progress toward the SAU strategic plan. A presentation summarizing our work will be shared at the November board meeting.

**Mission:** To prepare every SAU7 student for success in whatever path they choose

**Vision:** We believe in a future where our entire school community - in commitment to the success of every student - will leverage the power of collaborative relationships to advance our education system and will serve as vital and supportive advocates for educational equity and opportunity.

**Strategic Initiatives (Values)**

- **LEARNING:** We are passionate about learning and seek to constantly improve and innovate.
- **COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP:** Together we are stronger, and we lead through collaborative relationships.
- **HIGHLY EFFECTIVE STAFF:** We are growing our learning organization and are committed to excellence in all aspects of our human resource processes.
- **STEWARDSHIP:** We are careful and responsible stewards in our leadership and management of the school districts.

**Goals:**

1. All students reach maximum potential
2. Employ, retain, support highly effective staff
3. Establish community relationships and partnerships

**School Board Policy**

Our Policy Committee will reconvene in early fall to address the NHSBA required policies in response to the laws passed in the 2023 NH State Legislative session. The committee will recommend policies for approval at the November SAU Board Meeting. The policy update is a combination of required updates and a review of additional policies that are recommended for adoption by our policy committee.

**Opening of School**

On August 24, all teachers and staff return to school. We will recognize years of service and provide a warm SAU 7 welcome to everyone. All new teachers will join for an orientation session then return to their schools to meet with principals. Highlights of the day include curriculum updates, cybersecurity reminders, mandatory training, and ALMA student information system training. Board members are welcome to join us for the opening day breakfast at Colebrook School at 7:30 am this year. Please RSVP. On August 29, we welcome our students back to school. We look forward to school starting again!

**Summer Celebrations**

Many thanks to our excellent custodial staff who have worked tirelessly this summer to prepare the building for our students and staff who return later this month.

**Summer Learning and Planning**

Many teachers have been engaged in curriculum, special education, crisis prevention and intervention, and social emotional learning training this summer. Administrators have updated the family student handbooks, incorporating required policies and updated procedures.

### **Opening of School**

We have a total of five fall teaching positions open across our schools as of this writing. We continue to recruit individuals to fill these positions.

### **School Improvement**

School improvement efforts are underway across all schools in our SAU.

During the two years when student's schooling was interrupted due to COVID 19 statewide school closures, local illness resulting in temporary remote learning, extending absences due to illness and shortage of substitute teachers, there have been school district, statewide and national effects on student progress in reading and mathematics. Our curriculum work has focused on ensuring that all students master required competencies through quality instruction, assessment and intervention. Colebrook has added a math interventionist for the Middle school, a group that has been especially affected by the interruption of instruction. In addition, we have been emphasizing improved teacher communication with families.

In the 22-23 school year, collaboration with Canaan ceased. However, new, and more frequent collaboration between and among SAU 7 schools grew. This year, for the first time, our Stewartstown 8th Graders attended one semester in Colebrook to participate in Spanish and Physical Education Classes and continued to attend Pittsburg Schools for one semester to attend Family Consumer Science and Woodworking. We now share two teachers among our three schools. Our high school students have participated in CTE and HS Courses in growing numbers. We have completed our regional curriculum for SAU 7 schools and are now moving forward with competency-based education grading and reporting for implementation in the fall of 2024. Our new student information system - ALMA - will be implemented in the fall of 2023 after a busy summer of preparation, data transfer, programming, and staff training. Following interest expressed by Colebrook, Pittsburg, and Canaan, we have begun to revisit regional collaboration with the Canaan School District.

### **Regional Collaboration**

#### **HS Courses VT and NH Students**

The question of collaborative HS courses with Canaan HS has yet to be resolved. The state of Vermont will not approve student participation without a formal interstate agreement. Therefore, Canaan students will not be able to participate in NH HS classes this fall. Similarly, no NH students can attend Canaan HS classes in the coming year. However, the Canaan Board is interested in working with SAU 7 districts to develop an interstate MOU agreement.

On July 5, Superintendent Lawcewicz met with the Interim Secretary of Education, Heather Bouchey in Vt. She was cautiously optimistic that an interstate MOU or agreement could work if there was no exchange of funds. This is subject to attorney review and development of the interstate MOU agreement. We are hopeful that regional HS collaboration will resume in the future.

### *CTE Participation by Canaan students in NH programs*

Concerning the CTE courses in Colebrook and Pittsburg, Superintendent Lawcewicz indicated that state law does not permit VT students to attend CTE courses in NH that are funded through VT district public school funds. This does not preclude NH students from attending VT CTE programs. To remedy this, the Canaan School District would need to seek private funds for CTE tuition or work with the VT legislature to change the state law that precludes this.

### *Co-curriculars*

#### Collaboration - to implement

1. Due to low participation in Canaan and Pittsburg all Student Kiwanis Clubs should combine (all SAU 7 Schools and Canaan) This could occur as early as this fall and be accomplished via zoom or other means.

#### Collaboration - to explore

2. Music, Art and Drama Co-curriculars should be considered for regional collaboration. We should begin the discussion with teachers and determine possibilities. This could occur this fall with possible spring collaborative activities.

3. Sports - Gather input and explore future regional sports including Canaan, Pittsburg, and Colebrook Schools. Data indicates declining student population and sports participation, already results in middle school students playing high school sports, eliminating JV school teams, requiring the research for regional athletic teams. Student input from each school's student council along with AD's and Principals will be sought.

NHIAA approval and a new regional sports agreement would be required. This would allow our sports, with consistently low enrolment, to thrive and for new sports to be initiated in our region. Research, planning and NHIAA approval is a lengthy process so this may take up to 2 years.

#### Collaboration - to research

Regionalization - The question of exploring regionalization in some form has arisen.

The Canaan Board requested a follow-up meeting to include Colebrook and Pittsburg School Boards. Therefore, at the SAU Board Meeting on August 10 in Pittsburg we will further explore collaboration. This meeting will include the Canaan School Board and all SAU 7 districts. Canaan School Board members and Superintendent Lawcewicz will attend the upcoming SAU 7 Board meeting to continue our conversation regarding future regional collaborative efforts.

### **New Business:**

- Naloxone Emergency Kits with Narcan are recommended to be installed in schools by NH Public Health Officials. This will be accomplished free of charge due to a grant received by UCVH. This is a critical step forward in our community's response to the substance abuse crisis. These emergency kits contain the overdose reversal drug naloxone. The Department of Health and Human Services said as many as 75% of people who have died of opioid overdoses could have been saved by a bystander. We want to make sure as many people as possible have access to this life saving tool. Training and information will be provided this fall.

**Recommendation:** Approve the installation of Naloxone Emergency Kits in SAU 7 Office and Schools.

R.Murphy/L.White: Motion to approve the installation of Naloxone Emergency Kits in SAU 7 Office and Schools.

**VOTE: Motion Carries**

**Unfinished Business:**

None

**Hearing of the Public:**

Chairman Nate Lebel opened the hearing of the public at 8:05 pm.

R.Murphy/J.Sweatt: Motion to close the hearing of the public at 8:20 pm

**VOTE: Motion Carries**

**Non-Public Session:**

- RSA 91-A: 3, II(a) -

**Other Business: -**

- Colebrook Building Project Update

**Meeting Dates:**

- SAU #7 Board Meeting: Proposed Dates for November and December:  
November 9, 2023 @ 6:00 pm – Clarksville Town Hall  
December 14, 2023 @ 6:00 pm Colebrook School District

R.Murphy/S.Campbell: Motion to approve the dates of November 9, 2023, and December 14, 2023 as the next SAU #7 Board meeting dates which will be held in Clarksville and Colebrook respectively.

**VOTE: Motion Carries**

**Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3 II (a)**

R.Murphy/J.Sweatt: Motion to enter non-public session at 8:25 pm

J.Sweatt/B.Gray: Motion to return to public session at 8:35 pm

**VOTE: Motion Carries**

S.Campbell/P.Pariseau: Motion to accept Dr. Taylor's resignation effective June 30, 2024, with regret.

**VOTE: Motion Carries**

R.Murphy/S.Campbell: Motion to engage a search firm to conduct the Superintendent Search through the NH School Boards Association.

**VOTE: Motion Carries**

**Adjournment:**

R.Murphy/S.Campbell: Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm.

**VOTE: Motion Carries**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debra Taylor, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Board Adopted: November 9, 2023