

Superintendent's Report

May, 2023

Dr. Debra Taylor



The School Year in Perspective

Last month at our Spring SAU 7 Board meeting I highlighted SAU- wide progress toward our Strategic Plan. As your superintendent, I am especially proud of the progress we have made during the past school year. I invite you to review the progress summary below as well as school highlights and see for yourself all that is going on in our schools as we pursue our mission to ensure that all SAU 7 students find success - in whatever path they choose.

Our school boards have worked together over the past year to support the implementation of our SAU 7 Strategic Plan. I am happy to report the efforts were successful.

We have implemented the career and technical education opportunities with the final approval of the North Point Career and Technical Education Center which began in the fall of 2022. North Point programs include:

1. Auto – including cars, powersports and diesel mechanics located at the Tech Building (with lease with owner of old academy building)
2. Hospitality/Culinary – in partnership with Pittsburgh School District and local resorts
3. Education – focusing on multi - level education
4. Health Science – Including LNA as well as a range of health care occupations
5. Information Technology – including a third - year cybersecurity track

PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal # 1: All students reach their maximum potential.

Teachers are implementing competency - based education including quality assessments, instructional strategies and lessons designed to engage our students and help them to grow and achieve at high levels.

Our administrative team is committed to enhancing educational opportunities for all students in SAU#7. To that end, we are implementing academic and social emotional interventions and supports and providing differentiated instruction based on student assessments. We are also grouping our elementary students based on need and monitoring their progress. We have prioritized curriculum development aligned with NH competencies, assessment mapping, quality performance assessments (QPAs) and rubrics for the past three years. Teachers meet together regularly in Professional Learning Community groups organized by level and subject to collaborate and develop units, rubrics and assessments. We are now ready to align grading and reporting of student progress to our curriculum expectations.

The initiation of ALMA, our new student information system, has begun this spring. Our implementation team is meeting weekly, and we are planning teacher training for summer and fall for district - wide implementation. Through ALMA, students will request courses that they are interested in which incorporate graduation requirements, dual enrollment, CTE coursework and electives. This system allows us to use the technology to monitor progress toward graduation, and focus on student interests, building the best possible schedule to meet student requests.

Our high schools are building partnerships with community colleges and four - year colleges through the implementation of dual enrollment, running start, e- start, advanced placement and early college. These opportunities are the bridge to college and career and offer strong foundations for post - secondary opportunities. This year our student participation in these opportunities continues to grow. In Colebrook, for example in 21 - 22 our students earned 193 college credits upon graduation, this year, in 22 - 23, our students will earn 311 college credits upon graduation. Next year all SAU 7 high school students will

be offered expanded opportunities to participate in WMCC courses virtually, taught by their instructors.

Another major focus of our goal to support all students as they reach their maximum potential has been the implementation of the North Point Career and Technical Education Center for our students in SAU # 7. CTE programs include : Computer Technology, Health Sciences, Education, Automotive, and Hospitality/ Culinary (in Pittsburg)! Last summer, we learned that Canaan students would not be participating in collaborative or CTE programs in NH. However, Stewartstown students are eligible to attend as they are NH residents. Our teachers are doing quite well, our students are thriving and our partnerships with local businesses and colleges are in place. The Regional Advisory Committee met earlier this year and plans another meeting this spring to foster the continued growth of the CTE Center and programs.

Goal # 2: Employ, Retain and Support Highly Effective Staff

Our first aim is to strengthen recruitment and retention of staff. One aspect of this effort includes establishing competitive salaries in our school system. Our School Boards have ensured that teacher salaries were regionally competitive. Each school district also addressed salary improvements for support staff in their budget for the 23 - 24 school year. We have also updated our orientation and mentoring program for new teachers. We will continue to seek feedback from teachers and principals to determine how to support our teachers in the future. We have added another web - based platform to advertise our teacher openings that is available free of charge and is specifically tailored to rural schools. More intensive mentoring is sometimes required to support new teachers or teachers who are on an alternate pathway to licensure with the Department of Education. A teacher has three years to complete the DOE requirements. In SAU 7 we currently have six teachers on alternate plans for licensure while our remaining teachers hold a beginning or experienced credential.

We are working to align professional development opportunities to support innovation, provide incentives for participation and utilize grant funds to support professional development costs. This effort has been highly successful. We have increased our offerings during the summer and school

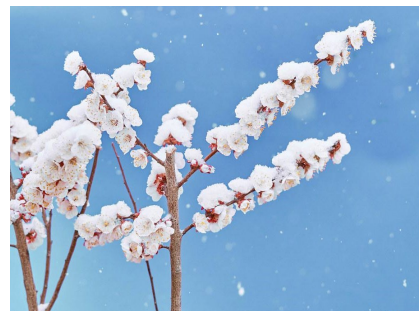
year. Initiated a curriculum website with resources teachers can use. We provide regular opportunities for teachers to work together to collaborate. We fund the great majority of our professional development opportunities with grant funds including Title II, Esser II and III and IDEA. We focus on our annual evaluation system and improving classroom practices. In addition to our mentoring program, we also provide regular instructional modeling and coaching feedback for teachers in all of our schools. Our principals provide walkthroughs including brief classroom visits with direct written feedback concerning their observations. Teachers then have the option to reply on writing or have a dialogue about the report.

Goal # 3: Establish Community Relationships and Partnerships that Support Successful Students

This year we have continued and expanded many successful in person activities in our schools such as open house, parent conferences, athletic events, and other parent engagement activities. We know there is more work to be done and family engagement is a high priority.

We have had extensive outreach with the community and business partners this year through the implementation of the North Point CTE Center and programs. This will lead to stronger school and community partnerships in the future and more opportunities for students to be successful. In Pittsburgh, parents have been invited into the school several times for special events. In Stewartstown, parents and community members have been invited to receptions and book fairs. In Colebrook, parents and community members took part in many school events and participated in the building expansion committee which focused on future planning of HS/CTE facilities in Colebrook.

Our leadership team is devoted to advancing our school system in innovative ways with student needs and preparation for college and career in the forefront. We are a strong team, working collaboratively to engage and support our students. We appreciate the support of our school boards. At the SAU meeting we will hear reports from all departments which further highlight the progress



we are making in curriculum, special services, technology and business services.

*SAU 7 Strategic Plan Extension through 2025 and
Goal Update Approved by SAU 7 School Board November 10, 2022
Excerpt of Report to the SAU 7 Board on April 13, 2023*

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We have met the goals of our SAU 7 strategic plan for this year through our focus on student growth and development. We have accomplished this by focusing on competency - based teaching and learning. Our teachers have participated in regular professional learning community meetings, district wide professional development, CBE aligned curriculum including subject and grade/course level competencies and standards for students. In addition, we are implementing new instructional materials in reading K - 8. We have a full schedule of summer professional development opportunities for teachers and paraeducators.

Our Student Services Department has been hard at work this year continuing the focus on student growth for students with disabilities. Staff have received professional development in the areas of reading intervention, social emotional learning and behavior supports. The SAU 7 Special Education team once again provided an Extended School Year program in the summer of 2022.

Our strategic plan also focused on supporting our teachers' implementation of technology in support of personalized teaching and learning. To that end, we have reinstated our school staff technology committee, embedded professional development, and are planning for the implementation of ALMA, the new student information system.

This year we welcomed Bridget Cross, as our new Business Manager. Bridget Cross has been focusing on creating effective and efficient workflows and practices and emphasizing team building in the SAU and school offices. We are committed to our focus on the customer focused approach to serving our school staff, school board and community.

Our schools are thriving and collaborating to prepare students for success. Our students are engaged with our communities on so many levels – from school to work programs to service - learning projects to internships.

Our graduates are gaining admission to competitive colleges and universities, stepping into career - track jobs that interest and excite them. This year our seniors have completed over three hundred college credits. In fact, one student will attain her associates degree upon graduation.

Through professional development and collaboration, our teachers continue to enhance their ability to provide a safe, supportive, and academically rigorous environment in which students can succeed.

School Highlights

Colebrook Academy and Elementary School

School began in late August, and our Colebrook students and staff were off to a great start. A back - to - school barbecue welcomed students and parents back to school! Students experienced their first school year since 2019 - 20 with no COVID restrictions and returned to normal activities.

As a learning community, CAES partners with families to support the “ whole child ” by providing students with safe, engaging, and high - quality school experiences while valuing each student’s social and emotional needs. Recognizing the importance of a strong home - school connection, we believe that by transparent communication and working together, we can make sure your child’s social, emotional, and academic needs are met.

Despite the challenges of COVID - 19 this school year, one goal is to continue building positive school culture and climate for our joined PreK - 12 system. The entire staff is committed to establishing an environment that makes every student feel part of a positive learning community where it’s safe to take risks and make mistakes in order to grow. We also emphasize the development of leadership qualities among our students with the objective of having them assume greater responsibility for their actions and education on a PreK - 12 continuum.

We want students to develop a sense of personal PRIDE through developmentally appropriate behavior expectations. This means that students will be expected to adhere to our school Behavior Matrix, school policies, and conduct themselves in a respectful manner with their peers and staff to foster a safe, successful school that is focused on learning and positive relationships. In order to accomplish this, we will reach out to parents for support with any academic or behavioral concerns to ensure all our students are prepared for learning. In addition, beginning last year, teachers make positive parent contacts each week for students who exhibit traits that support our Behavior Matrix.

Highlights of this year include:

- Colebrook offered several school wide assemblies this year including the BMX Freestylers who promoted character building and team work (Learn more here: <https://bmxfreestylers.com/>); and The Choose Love Tiger Production which focused on Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness and Compassion. (Learn more here: <https://chooselovemovement.org/>)
- Colebrook implemented a school achievement plan which focused on reading and math achievement growth. K- 8 elementary teachers implemented a new reading program with professional development support. Tutorial sessions were provided, and students participated in a computer based curriculum.
- This is the first year of implementation of the North Point CTE Center following approval in May 2022. Students participated at high levels of participation and engagement. Five programs were implemented: Auto, Culinary/Hospitality, Education, Health Sciences, and Information Technology. Dr. Tia Cloutier was appointed as the new CTE Director, while retaining her secondary counseling duties.
- Sophomores participated in the ASVAB as a career exploration skills assessment.
- October marked the initiation of the new Colebrook PTO. The Co-presidents were elected, and the group began to work in partnership with teachers and administrators.
- Parent/Teacher conferences were held on November 9th.
- A veteran's breakfast and assembly with local Veterans was held at school on November 10th.

- The Scholastic Book Fair was held November 14- 17th and a Harvest Lunch for parents to give thanks was held on November 17th.
- The formal dedication of the “Trask Gymnasium” occurred on November 25th at games.
- Following an analysis of last spring state assessment the Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment team is focusing on improvement of math outcomes.
- A new monthly newsletter was initiated in November and sent to parents via email and on our Facebook page.
- In December, an ALICE (School Safety) training was provided for staff by School Safety Officer Jake Pelletier and Principal Wheelock.
- Parents joined their students for a Holiday Lunch on December 15th
- Tyler Young and Sawyer Larson volunteered to serve as student school board reps in the second meeting of the month starting in January.
- Students and staff pitched in to collect and distribute meals and toys to needy families during the holidays.
- Teachers continued to implement the Timbernook Outdoor Education Curriculum for students in grades K- 8
- Expanded social emotional learning and counseling supports for students were provided.
- Several student activities and clubs are thriving this year such as Key Club, World Language Club and National Honor Society, to name a few.
- The partnerships continue with the Colebrook Recreation Department for summer programming and youth drama productions.
- Student field trips have increased, student dances occurred, the homecoming parade created a positive community connection.

Please refer to the [CAES Facebook Page](#) for highlights of school activities.

Throughout the school year the Colebrook School Board continued to plan for the building facilities expansion project. The Colebrook Academy building closed in 2019 and was sold in 2021. The Board recognized that the current school building was not sufficient to serve our Pk- 12 student population. Working with the community, the Board approved a design, and received approval for 60% building aid in December. Then in February, a generous donation of \$2.8 million was pledged, and grants were secured. However, the vote of the community in March 2023 was unsuccessful. The Board is now

considering future options to achieve the funding necessary for the needed addition.

Pittsburg School

Pittsburg school continues to innovate in response to the requirements of the Comprehensive School Improvement project. Continuing this year, the school worked closely with the Department of Education and education consultants. Upon growth of student achievement as measured by the NH SAS, the school status will be reviewed for improvement in reading and math next fall.

Other accomplishments this year include:

- Continued student participation in Siskin Activities which focus on outdoor experiences.
- Increased teacher collaboration through professional learning communities
- Social emotional supports and bullying prevention education
- More project-based learning activities engage students schoolwide
- Team success in basketball advancing to the semis and finals.
- Building a culture of community continues to be a major focus this year with several school-wide activities, competitions, and field trips. HS students attended an extended field trip to Boston; elementary students experienced a maple sugar farm.
- Joli Carlson was selected to serve as Student Board member and joined the board in January.
- Parent conferences and a curriculum night was held as well.
- A moving veteran's day activity engaged community members in a memorable ceremony.
- Students organized floats for homecoming and were cheered on by parents, family and friends.
- Teachers led and students performed a lovely dramatic production of Alice in Wonderland.

More information about school happenings may be found on the [Pittsburg Facebook page](#).

Stewartstown Community School

The new year in Stewartstown Community School brought some changes that impacted the whole school community. First, the school adjusted their start time to allow staff to attend meetings to collaborate with other teachers and staff in both Pittsburg and Colebrook.

Through grant funding, Stewartstown created a Makerspace in our library. This is a space that teaches problem-solving through hands-on activities as well as engineering. Science, technology, engineering, and math are critical to a well-rounded education. For example, Mr. Kennedy and Mrs. Falconer have been working with WMSI, White Mountain Science Institute, on a robotics program. A well-rounded robotics program can help younger students develop cognitive skills and mathematical thinking that can transfer to other areas well.

With a focus on student safety, one area of focus is meeting student and staff social and emotional needs using the RULER approach. This is an evidence-based approach to social and emotional learning. RULER supports the entire school community in understanding the value of emotions, building emotional intelligence skills, and creating and maintaining a positive school climate.

Stewartstown Community School promotes a learning environment that focuses on the whole child. This whole child approach looks at each student individually on academics, strengths, and social-emotional. The collaboration of staff is the driving force in the success of each other and all of our students.

This year, 8th graders have spent the first semester with daily instruction in Woodworking and Family and Consumer Science in Pittsburg School. During their second semester, they spent time in Colebrook learning Spanish and Art.

Other accomplishments in Stewartstown this year include:

- Our students continued to participate in a weekly skiing and snowboarding program at Burke Mountain

- Our makerspace and 3D printer supported the enhanced technology instruction for K- 8 students
- Teachers engaged in book studies concerning social emotional supports for students and staff and to improve student discipline
- School wide events were held including music performances and art exhibitions.
- Stewartstown students continued to participate in WMSI science activities and were featured in a statewide video due to their excellent student engagement.
- We continued to invite parents and community members to the school to participate in educational activities including open house, performances and school wide celebration of learning.

For more information on current happenings in Stewartstown Community School please visit the [SCS Facebook page](#).

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the many parents, volunteers, board members, business owners, and community members who have volunteered their time and expertise on behalf of our students and schools this past year. Parent and community involvement is vital to quality schools and school improvement, and to that end, I know our schools are on the right path.

Important Reminders - Mark your calendars!

June School Year Schedule:

Last day of school for students: June 14th (half day)

Professional Development Day for Teachers and Support Staff: June 15th

Student Graduation:

Colebrook HS Graduation: Thursday, June 8th at 6:00 pm.

Pittsburg HS Graduation: Friday June 9 th at 6:00 pm.

Stewartstown Eighth Grade Graduation: Tuesday, June 13th at 5:00 pm.

Remember - Together we are better in SAU 7!

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Taylor, PhD.

Superintendent of Schools