

SAU #7

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY
2025

From the Desk of the Superintendent

The North Country is a special place, with deep-rooted traditions, small town values of respect and honesty, and a commitment towards hard work and excellence.

Here, we truly have an understanding that it takes “a village” to ensure the success of every child and are dedicated to making sure their pathways and dreams come to fruition.

The light of learning continues to guide all our students throughout SAU 7; it is illuminated by the professionals who have dedicated their lives to the next generation who will inherit our great nation.

Together we stand: Clarksville, Colebrook, Columbia, Pittsburg, and Stewartstown, bringing to life our mission each day to every student throughout SAU 7 “To prepare all students for success in whatever path they choose.”

Each day throughout SAU 7 the staff that comprise our three schools (Colebrook Academy and Elementary School, Stewartstown Community School, Pittsburg School) re-dedicate themselves to the art of teaching.

Together we help cultivate each student’s hopes and dreams rooted in exploration and self – discovery.

Upcoming Events

Colebrook Annual School District Meeting - March 4, 2025 @ 6:00 pm
Pittsburg Annual School District Meeting - March 6, 2025 @ 6:00 pm
Stewartstown Annual School District Meeting March 10, 2025 @ 6:00 pm
Clarksville Annual School District Meeting March 11, 2025 @ 6:00 pm
Columbia Annual School District Meeting
March 11, 2025 @ 7:15 pm

The role of Superintendent enables one with the possibilities of truly implementing a team approach of ensuring the success of each child. Building a relationship built off respect and trust are key elements in forging a common vision with every member of the SAU team, district administrative team and school board members. Together we share a common desire to strive for schools of excellence, creating and updating policies which reflect our mission, and formulating budgets that reflect 21st century education practices while balancing the affordability of the taxpayers. This is done in the spirit of our unofficial motto “United but Independent,” reflecting the uniqueness of each town while fostering an understanding that working together and moving in a common direction delivers the best results for each one of our students.

We are excited as you continue your child’s journey towards excellence and discover the high-quality education that takes place in Colebrook Academy and Elementary School, Stewartstown Community School, Pittsburg School. We hope that you find the 1st of our quarterly newsletters informative and that they help you gain a better understanding and insight into the work that takes place throughout SAU 7 each day.

COLEBROOK

ACADEMY & ELEMENTARY

2024-2025
Semester 1 Highlights

The 2024-2025 school year kicked off with staff creating vision boards for 2024-2025 goals!



Competency Based Education in SAU 7

2024-2025

>>> COMPETENCY BASED GRADING

Upon returning to school this year, we implemented the new grading system for our Competency Based Education System that SAU 7 has worked on the past four years. There were student presentations and a parent night for a grading system Q & A.

We had a welcome back luncheon for students, parents, and staff. Superintendent Hilliard and Principal Wheelock along with the Abbey Group served up a delicious BBQ meal.

>>> BACK TO SCHOOL BBQ



>>> CAES COLOR RUN

Another great CAES Color Run--a big shout-out to the Colebrook PTO! We had a lot of families participate in this 2nd year event!

>>> OUTDOOR CAREER EXPO



Colebrook took 134 students in grades 7-12 to the Outdoor Career Expo to learn about a variety of outside jobs. Pictured are juniors & seniors in the back of a NH SWAT truck!

>>> THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE



The high school Student Council annual food drive helps local families with a Thanksgiving meal.

>>> HONORING VETERANS

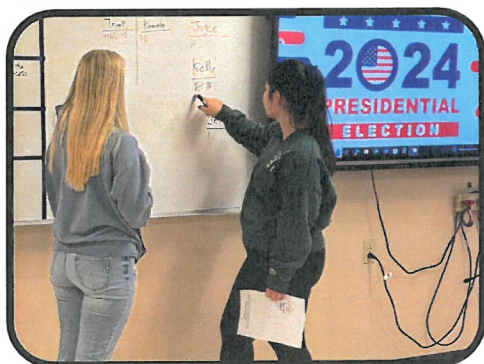


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Semester 1 Highlights

Our annual Veterans breakfast and assembly was a big success. Several hands are involved to make this happen: the Abbey Group, American Legion, Public Speaking & Debate Club students and advisors, Mrs. Boucher & Mrs. Levatino, and music teacher, Ms. Paquette & chorus students, and our VETERANS!

>>> WMCC OPEN HOUSE

College & Career Counselor, Brandi Covell, and Auto CTE Teacher, Ryan Ouimette, took juniors and seniors interested in learning more about WMCC to an Open House where they received information on programs and enjoyed a luncheon courtesy of the WMCC culinary students.



>>> 2024 PRESIDENTIAL MOCK VOTE

Students in civics class had a mock vote. They voted, counted ballots, and tallied up the votes!

>>> ED GERETY VISIT

Motivational speaker, Ed Gerety, spoke to all SAU middle and high school students about living with gratitude! Jackson Weir called his mother to tell her he is grateful for her.

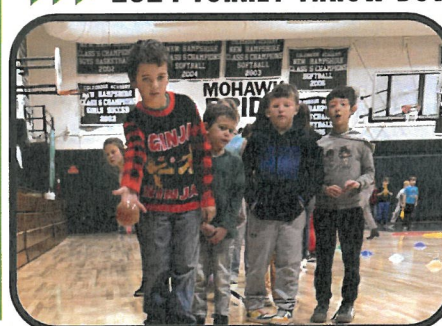


>>> KEY CLUB STUDENT SERVICE



Key Club Elves helped Santa and Mrs. Claus with crafts at Don Noyes Chevrolet.

>>> 2024 TURKEY THROW DOWN



2nd annual Turkey Throw Down sponsored by the Climate & Culture Team.

>>> TRADES EVENT

North Point CTE Director, Emilie Hall, arranged for interested freshmen and sophomores to watch the "Bringing Back the Trades" event with Mike Rowe virtual livestream from NHTI in Concord

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Semester 1 Highlights



>>> POLAR EXPRESS ELEMENTARY CONCERT



Students worked hard on learning songs for their concert.

Great job by all students & staff!



>>> COLEBROOK ACADEMY BAND

Such a talented group of students!



Thank you to our families who support music and the arts for our students.



>>> HAPPY NEW YEAR 2025

Some of Mrs. Hamelin's 3rd graders ringing in the New Year!



>>> BRETTON WOODS SKIING



Students are loving the new ski program venue of Bretton Woods!

>>> APPALACHIAN MNT. CLUB



Students enjoy visits from the AMC!

>>> 2024 HAPPY HALLOWEEN



From the Business Office:

Budget Process Timeline

1	September- SAU Administration and Principal meet to review staffing, building, curriculum, professional development and other budgetary needs
2	Early October- Quotes are requested from vendors. Budget forms are sent to staff with a deadline of 2-3 weeks to submit to the Principal.
3	Early November- Principals provide staff budget requests to the Business Office. Draft budgets are compiled.
4	Late November- Budget drafts are reviewed one last time by the Superintendent, Business Manager and Principal. Finalized drafts go to the board for approval.
5	December- The board approves drafts to present at the public hearings which are held in January or February. In March the annual meetings occur where the taxpayers vote on the budgets.

From the Business Office: Residency Question Answered

Which school can my child attend?

Colebrook Academy & Elementary
School – Colebrook, NH
(Grades PK-12)

Pittsburg School – Pittsburg, NH
(Grades PK-12)

Stewartstown Community School –
Stewartstown, NH
(Grades PK-8)

If your student resides in one of the
following towns, they can attend CAES:

If your student resides in one of the
following towns, they can attend
Pittsburg:

If your student resides in one of the
following towns, they can attend SCS:

Columbia
Colebrook

Errol (Grades 9-12 Only)
Stewartstown (Grades 9-12 Only)
NEK Choice- Brunswick, Bloomfield,
Lemington, Maidstone, Norton
Unincorporated Places- list of towns in
link below

https://www.cooscountynh.gov/governments/departments/unincorporated_places/index.php

Clarksville

Errol (Grades 9-12 Only)
Stewartstown (Grades 9-12 Only)
NEK Choice- Brunswick, Bloomfield,
Lemington, Maidstone, Norton
Unincorporated Places- list of towns in
link below

https://www.cooscountynh.gov/governments/departments/unincorporated_places/index.php

Stewartstown

NEK Choice- Brunswick,
Bloomfield, Lemington,
Maidstone, Norton
Unincorporated Places- list of
towns in link below

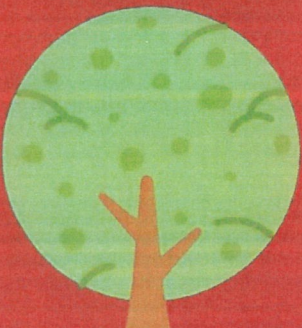
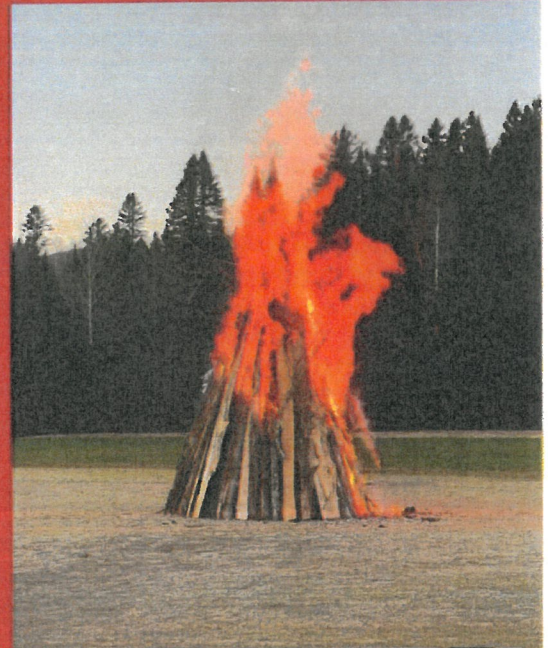
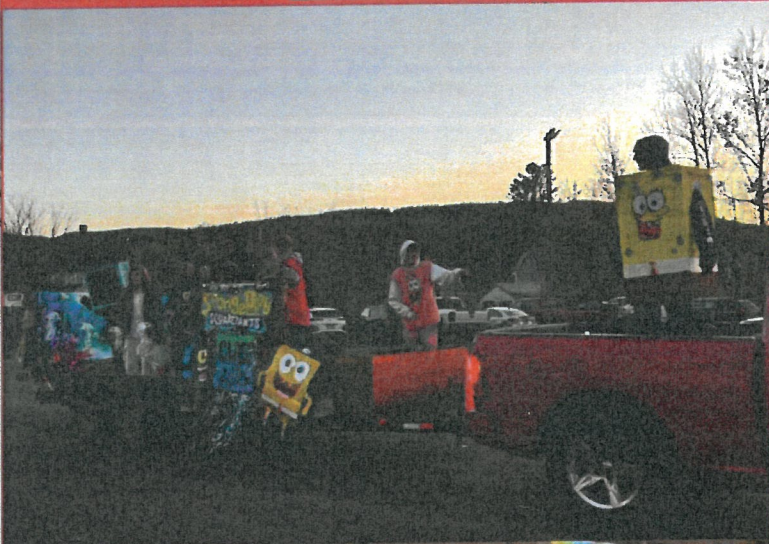
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PITTSBURG★ HAPPENINGS

We have been very busy in Pittsburg the first quarter of the year:

- Assessments were completed in the fall
- Open House was held in September - Ice cream with toppings was served The Scholastic Book Fair was held during this time as well.
- Fall Festival which included a scarecrow contest, parade, trunk or treat, movie and a bonfire.
- SISKIN visited 6 times (outdoor education)
- Kiwanis gave all elementary students free books
- Visit to the fire station for Fire Prevention Week
- Visit from the Veterans
- Zoom with Kevin Skarupa (WMUR weatherman)
- Week long Artist in Residence- all students created a mural entitled "The Beauty of Pittsburg"
- Holiday door decorating, concert and tree lighting
- ✳ visits to Echo Valley- Thanksgiving dinner, caroling and craft making
- ✳ several fundraisers completed by the classes
- Brand new gym floor completed on December 20th
- Wellness Wednesdays- ski/board at Burke, physical activities at the school







OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

PROGRAMS WITHIN THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL SERVICES

- Special Education
- 504
- Title IX
- Title VI
- English Language Learners
- Court and DCYF Liaison

DIAL SCREENING: APRIL 22ND AND 23RD

As part of federal special education law (IDEA—Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) we offer screenings to children ages 30 months through 5 years old.

The goal of this screening is early identification of special education needs. The screening includes speech, OT, social emotional, and cognitive measures. If you have concerns about your child in this age range please contact Brenda Puglisi at 603-237-4104 ext. 4111 to schedule!

DIRECTORY

Director of Student Services— Jennifer Noyes, jnoyes@sau7.org, 603-237-4104 ext. 4109

Administrative Assistant— Brenda Puglisi, brenda.puglisi@sau7.org, 603-237-4104 ext. 4111

Paraprofessional to the School Psychologist— Brenda Thatcher, brenda.thatcher@sau7.org, 603-237-4104 4108

Special Education—Special education is a tailored educational approach designed to meet the unique learning needs of students with disabilities or other challenges. The goal is to provide equitable access to education by offering individualized support and accommodations to help students succeed academically and socially. Special education services may include:

1. Individualized Education Programs (IEPs):

These are personalized learning plans that outline specific educational goals, support strategies, and necessary accommodations for students with disabilities.

2. **Inclusive Education:** Special education aims to integrate students with disabilities into general education classrooms whenever possible, promoting interaction with peers and creating a diverse learning environment.

3. **Variety of Services:** This can include speech therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, or specialized teaching methods to address a wide range of needs, from learning disabilities to physical or sensory impairments.

Students qualify for special education by meeting criteria for one of 14 disabilities, the disability having an impact on education, and requiring specialized instruction.

Special education plays a vital role by fostering inclusion and creating opportunities for all individuals to participate in society. It promotes understanding, acceptance, and respect for diversity, leading to a more inclusive and equitable environment for everyone. It also helps students develop skills that will benefit them in adulthood, whether in the workforce or in daily life.

Curriculum Corner



THE OFFICIAL CURRICULUM NEWSLETTER OF SAU 7

Competency-Based Education

SAU 7 transitioned to a competency-based system of education this year. We initiated this transition with parent presentations held at each school in September. If you were unable to attend and would like more information, you can watch a recording online. Simply visit sau7.org, click on "Departments," and then navigate to the "Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment" page. The link, titled "Competency-Based Education 24-25: Parent Presentation," is located at the top of the page. Additionally, if you scroll down on that page, you will find links to various other resources.

As with any new initiative, there has been a learning curve and some challenges to overcome. Nevertheless, our teachers have done an outstanding job implementing competencies, utilizing rubrics, and adopting new mindsets to enhance student learning in meaningful ways. This transition began in 2020, when we partnered with V&S School Solutions to ensure our approach aligns with state educational standards.

In mid-January, we hosted an exciting event: several college and university admissions officers joined us via Zoom to address a question that has been on many parents' minds since our shift to competency-based education: "Will a competency-based system negatively impact my child's chances of college acceptance?" The responses from approximately a dozen admissions officers were reassuring—they indicated that a competency-based system does not negatively affect college admissions. A recording of this presentation is also available on the website, just below the Parent Presentation link. If you're interested and want to learn more, we encourage you to watch the recording.

Grants

We have had several grant-funded activities this year, including a Laura Bush Foundation Library grant in Stewartstown, an Artist in Residence grant in Pittsburg, and Wellness grants for each school. The Wellness grants have brought in motivational speaker Ed Gerety, the TIGER program (always a student favorite!), and videographer Dave Kartunen. Other federal grants have allowed us to continue our professional development efforts with consultants from V&S School Solutions and Tom Ledue as well as fund our School Resource Officers. Later in the year, these funds will support our continued learning efforts surrounding Competency Based Education.

Teacher Licensure

I am currently working with just over a dozen teachers, throughout SAU 7, on licensing procedures. Some individuals only need to complete an assessment to obtain certification, while others are in the process of finishing their courses and corresponding assessments. The NH Department of Education Bureau of Credentialing has experienced several changes over the past year, creating challenges in staying informed. However, I prioritize ensuring that our teacher candidates receive the necessary information to support their success.

Teacher Mentor Program

This year SAU 7 welcomed 11 new teachers between Colebrook, Pittsburg, and Stewartstown schools. We currently have 10 mentors working with our new teachers on a weekly basis to help ensure a smooth & welcomed transition!

Questions? Reach Out!

Jenn Mathieu
SAU 7 Curriculum Director
jmathieu@sau7.org
603-237-5571 ext. 4112

2024/2025

STEWARTSTOWN
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER



Principal Note:

As we reach the midpoint of the school year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the progress we've made and the exciting opportunities ahead. Our students have been engaged in learning, growing in their academics, and building meaningful connections with one another. From hands-on activities and guest speakers to festive celebrations and community events, the first half of the year has been filled with memorable experiences. These moments highlight the incredible dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our students, and the unwavering support from our families. Looking ahead, we're excited to continue fostering a vibrant, supportive, and engaging learning environment. Thank you for being an essential part of our school community. Together, we're creating a place where every student can thrive. Here's to a successful second half of the year!

Warm regards,
Stephanie Humphrey
Principal

Stewartstown Community School has a wonderful staff whose dedication and commitment to our students are evident every day.

Year of the Book Clif Grant and Laura Bush Literacy Foundation Grants

In the fall of 2024, Stewartstown was awarded two grants that focused on reading: the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries Grant and the Year of the Book CLiF Literacy Grant. The Laura Bush Foundation grant awarded SCS \$5,000 for library books, and the Year of the Book CLiF grant gave us opportunities such as book giveaways, author visits, and workshops; these programs are fostering a love of reading across our school.

Throughout the year, the whole school participated in many reading events. Some of the events were DEAR Reading, Buddy Reading, and a whole school Read A Thon. The Read A Thon included 6 different themed rooms for students to choose to read in.



Wellness Walk

The Wellness Walk in October 2024 was a great success, raising \$1,424 for the student activity fund. Calendar sales added another \$925 to support field trips and events. This was the second year for the walk. All students and staff participated and had lots of fun.



Lego League Robotics Club

Our Lego League Robotics Club, coached by Amy and Michael Falconer, had a fantastic first year. While the team placed 11th at their December competition and didn't advance further, the experience was both educational and rewarding.



Wellness Walk



GEAR UP Grant

- 7 & 8 Grade at the North Country Outdoor Industry Career Expo in Lancaster.
- NH Bringing Back the Trades' and the Tradeapalooza Career Fair
- Visit from Jason Huter
- Focus on the trades and college programs
- Gear UP week
- College Apparel day
- Gear Up Navigator Mrs. Heidi Richard



Some of the wonderful events at SCS so far:

- **SISKIN** : Students participated in hands-on science and nature activities, fostering curiosity and a love for exploration.
- **North Country Chamber Players**: Live music inspired students, enriching their appreciation for the arts.
- **Fire Safety Day**: Partnered with the Beecher Falls Fire Department to teach essential fire prevention and safety skills.
- **Holiday Cheer Week**: Daily themes, games, and festive activities brought joy and unity to students and staff.
- **Burke Mountain Ski Program**- 25 students participated in the ski program this year.

Chris Paquette - IT Director

There has been a lot to adjust to this year with my job in particular. I started working within the SAU 7 years ago as an assistant to Clint Brooks as an employee of Pittsburg School. After a year there, my position was moved to be SAU wide. Within those 7 years, I have gone through quite a few changes in the SAU. Multiple superintendents, tech directors, and a business administrator. With these changes came the biggest so far. The opportunity to work as an Interim IT Director.



It has certainly been a learning experience even if I have had to act as a pseudo IT Director at times due to there being gaps in that position as the new directors had not been hired yet. It has certainly humbled me in a few areas, but I feel proud to have been given the chance to prove myself and to the SAU that I am ready to help educate our students through the use of tech we have at our disposal. For this report, I will list a few of the highlights Matt Jordan and Myself have been working on to keep things running smoothly with tech at the SAU.

We spent quite a bit of time working on cleaning up incredibly old backup files that are no longer necessary on our system as well as creating a new schedule for that system that should fill with bloat as much as it did before.

We also performed several updates on all of our servers we run here to be sure we stay in compliance with security updates.

The inventory on our ticketing software has also been updated significantly and is reconfigured to sync with our Google platform again. This will make managing the devices a little bit easier while handling tickets.

Matt and I have been working with a few vendors for a potential new website provider to give our site a more modern look, as well as help our content creators have an easier time updating the sites so we don't have stale content sitting around.

We have done a massive amount of work in Alma with our switch to competency based learning which brought a set of challenges that we didn't anticipate. I did have a little experience in Alma, but not nearly as much as my predecessor, Shane. After his departure in late June / early July, a majority of my Summer was spent so I could try to keep things running as smoothly as possible as I still learn the intricacies of the software.

Matt and I set up 62 chromebooks in Colebrook and 24 Chromebooks in Pittsburg during the Winter break. Things went over well with this transition of moving the students from their old devices to the new ones.

New Access points are being configured now by a third party company that Shane had worked with last year that will give us more reliable connection to the internet, as well as bringing us to the current wifi standard. Our current access points are around 7 years old, so this is a very nice change to have coming shortly.

This doesn't nearly cover everything we have done, but this is already a long read so I will spare you the trouble. Thank you all for reading this and I hope you have a great rest of the year!