Plainfield/Cornish School Districts
SAU 32 & SAU 100
Newsletter From
Interim Superintendent David W. Baker

October 2026

Dear Cornish and Plainfield Parents, Staff and Communities:

I continue to split my time between Cornish and Plainfield Schools. As I explained at the last board meetings, I do not have a set schedule, but try to make sure that I spend equal time in both districts. I enjoy visiting the schools and I also weave in supervision time for both Brandon and Audra. Walking around the buildings gives me a good sense of classroom instruction and a general sense of the climate in each building. I am glad to report that the early weeks have been good in both districts. Staff work to provide common language and consistent expectations and the children seem to be engaged at all the grade levels. It is especially heartening to see the consistency with so many new staff in Cornish. That staff has worked hard to "learn the ropes" so to speak and to provide that consistency throughout. I don't have anything to compare it to, but I did hear a Cornish staff member (veteran) say that it felt like a different place than last year. That is good news and take it at face value.

As we enter budget season it is important to note that at the very least school funding is complicated. This year may be particularly complicated because of new legislation that passed during the last session. Two important bills will affect the way we go about budgeting for FY 28. First is what we are calling the Cap Bill (HB1300). This will require a vote to be placed on the Ballot in November that allows communities to cap their expenditures for the upcoming year. If the cap passes it means that Local property tax levies for school districts cannot grow beyond the prior year's amount, adjusted for inflation and new construction. Also SAU central office spending is restricted to a maximum of 6 percent of total school district appropriations. These provisions would be in effect for FY 28 and FY 29 and then would reappear again on the ballot in November of 2028. Passing the cap requires a three-fifths (60%) supermajority vote on the general election ballot in November. As we get closer, we will produce more information. To that end, the Grantham District has been approached by NH School Funding FairnessProject to partner and provide an educational funding presentation to communities in Sullivan County and the Upper Valley Region. NHSFFP is starting with a goal of providing these

presentations in at least each of the 10 counties in NH this fall. You can find the Tour closest to you and register. The link is here. If you can't attend, then you can follow updates here.

The Coop Committee continues to meet. This committee was formally established almost three years ago to develop a recommendation to the boards in Cornish and Plainfield related to a Cooperative merger between the two districts SAU 32 and SAU 100. Establishing a Cooperative District means that the two current districts no longer exist. But instead, the two form a new Cooperative SAU that will be assigned a new SAU number. Voters in both towns will be presented with warned Articles of Agreement that will govern the new entity. Ultimately the decision is in the hands of the voters. The Coop Committee did meet on September 15th and made a very important decision that they had been discussing for over a year. Essentially, should the instruction in the new entity be located in one building or two. The committee deliberated on this and finally decided on September 15th to recommend that all K-8 instruction would happen at 92 Bonner Road, the site of the existing Plainfield School. Here is the important thing to note. If the Cooperative becomes a reality, then that site would no longer be Plainfield Elementary School. It would be a new entity, owned and operated by the new district school board. So you can see that this "one-school" decision leads to many other significant questions. For example, how do we deal with the transfer of the assets in both Plainfield and Cornish? How do we establish the governance structure of the new school board? Needless to say, these are important questions for both towns. The next meeting will be before this Newsletter is posted, but I will keep you informed. Remember, the Cooperative Committee only has the charge of developing a report with recommendations to both boards. Ultimately, the boards will decide what to bring to voters. And the voters have the ultimate authority. With respect to a Coop formation a 3/5th (60% supermajority) is necessary. Stay tuned.

We continue to be in need of Substitute Teachers in both Cornish and Plainfield. This is a great opportunity to serve the community and get to know your schools even better. If you are interested in Cornish contact Brandon Hill at brandon.hill@sau100.nh.gov and if you are interested in Plainfield contact Audra Bucklin at abucklin@sau32.nh.gov.

I want to keep both communities informed. This is a year with many plates spinning. Just stay tuned. We have to have more frequent community information disseminated given the current legislative landscape. We will try to keep it easy to understand, but it is

complex. Never hesitate to reach out to me by email (dbaker@sau32.nh.gov or david.baker@sau100.nh.gov). Enjoy the beautiful fall season.

Dr. David Baker
Interim Superintendent
Plainfield/Cornish