



February 5, 2010

Dear Elementary Parents / Teachers:

Last month, Keene School District Administrators faced some very challenging decisions as we worked together to reach the budget target established by the Finance Committee of the Keene Board of Education. In order to reduce our budget, hard decisions were made at all levels of the school district. We felt a commitment to join our colleagues in responding positively to the very difficult economic conditions facing our city and country.

After much deliberation, Keene Elementary Principals recommended the elimination of our fifth grade world language teaching position, a delay in implementation of the recommendations for world language elementary program and the reduction of one elementary principal for the 2010-11 school year. As you may recall, administrative staffing was an area identified for study by the Administrative Review Task Force Study presented in December.

We know this is not an ideal response to our budget crisis and should not be viewed as a permanent solution. We are confident that this reduction can be sustained on a short-term basis while our community reaches a consensus on the future structure of our elementary schools. We believe that given the difficult economic challenges facing our families, eliminating an administrator will have a lesser impact on teacher – student ratios, support staff and student support professionals than looking to our faculty for additional position reductions.

We have been meeting regularly to identify and plan for the transition to share one principal for Jonathan Daniels School and Benjamin Franklin School. Our recommendation is based upon a survey of student enrollment, location of campuses and supervisory responsibilities across our five elementary schools.

As we move forward in preparation for the opening of school in September, we are confident that our planning and management structure will not compromise student safety and learning. We are proud of the experienced staff and leaders throughout our school system and their collective abilities to make this temporary re-allocation of resources possible.

We look forward to the establishment of the community based task force to begin the process of bringing Keene residents together to determine the future of our schools. That future must include high quality education at a cost that is more in line with other communities across the state. We will

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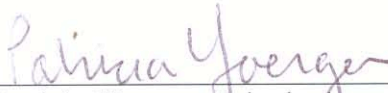
be reporting back to the Education Committee on our progress this spring and will make a complete report next October with recommendations for the following school year.

Please support us as we move forward in the days ahead with faculty and family meetings to gain public input and help in this challenging task.

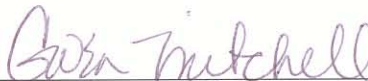
Sincerely,




William Harris, Principal
Franklin School




Patricia Yoerger, Principal
Jonathan Daniels School




Gwen Mitchell, Principal
Wheelock School



Paul Huggins, Principal
Fuller School



Richard Cate, Principal
Symonds School



William Gurney, Co-Superintendent
SAU 29