

# SCHOOL TALK

This is your staff newsletter. Please send contributions to the Public Information Office, 34 West Street | cweeks@sau29.org

## Dates to Remember

- Sept. 18 – 20 - Rosh Hashanah
- Sept. 27 & 28 – Yom Kippur
- Oct. 6 – Keene City Elections
- Oct. 9 – Teacher Workshop Day – no school
- Oct. 12 – Columbus Day – school in session

## KHS

- Sept. 17 – **KHS Open House**, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
- Sept. 18 – **Senior Class photo**
- Sept. 25 – **1<sup>st</sup> Quarter progress reports marks close**
- Oct. 1 – 3 – **Homecoming** celebration starts off with a bonfire on Thursday, Oct. 1, 6:30 p.m. at Alumni Field. On Saturday, Oct. 3 the parade (theme: musical genres) starts at 11 a.m. followed by the football game v. Timberlane at 1:30 p.m. at Alumni Stadium and ends up with the Homecoming Dance from 8 – 11 p.m. in the cafeteria.
- Oct. 6 – Post secondary planning night for seniors and their parents, 6:30 p.m., auditorium
- Oct. 13 – 15 – **NECAP testing** of juniors in English and math
- SAIL – The KHS English Department launched a new student assistant program this fall called **SAIL (Student Assistance & Improvement Lab)**. From department chair Beth Hansel: "SAIL is designed to assist students in their studies of language arts and is available all year, every block, every other day." Students must be referred by a teacher to use the lab. Hansel, Jeremy VanDerKern, Mary Armstrong and Andrea Levin will be staffing the lab this year: Hansel and VanDerKern 1<sup>st</sup> semester and Armstrong and Levin, 2<sup>nd</sup>. These teachers, along with India Lawrence and Tina McLaughlin, spent time this summer designing the lab and gathering pertinent resource materials to help students work on essential skills. Using skill packets and test preparation materials developed by the SAIL staff, all 11<sup>th</sup> grade English teachers will spend the first part of this semester reviewing skills juniors are likely to encounter on the NECAP tests in October, with the goal of helping them meet or exceed test expectations as KHS strives to meet AYP (adequate yearly progress). Hansel noted, "While SAIL addresses basic skills in reading and writing, it also provides assistance for many other skills specific to English content: Using MLA (Modern Languages Association) and APA (American Psychological Association) writing styles, incorporating technology, preparing for the SAT and NECAP, understanding poetry, writing and organizing essays including the college essay, reading texts, etc.

## KMS

- Sept. 9 – **Show Choir** vocal tryouts, Non-athletic activity sign ups in cafeteria, Fall sports photographs, 2:45 p.m.
- Sept. 17 – **Grade 8 magazine** meeting
- Sept. 18 – **Grade 8 Washington, D.C.** trip registration and \$50 deposit due
- Sept. 22, 23 & 24 - Cluster B to **Harris Center**
- Sept. 24 – **Open House** from 6:30 – 8 p.m.
- Sept. 29 – **Rachel's Challenge** assemblies and evening event for parents and community members - this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year KMS has presented this program. In conjunction with the program 50 students will be involved in a peer training session.
- KMS inaugurated the first year of a three year roll out of the **DDMS (Developmental Designs for Middle School)** program designed "to meet the social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of young adolescents by providing an array of strategies designed to keep young people safe, connected, responsible, and engaged in learning," noted Eric Stinebring, Cluster B language arts teacher. He and other 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers have been trained in this program which they are instituting this year in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. 7<sup>th</sup> grade will adopt it next year and 8<sup>th</sup> grade the year after that. "DDMS at

KMS has resulted in a great start to the school year for our sixth graders," Stinebring said, adding, "Building a sense of community and shared vision has created enthusiasm and positive energy for both our staff and students. DDMS provides a common language, vision and focus as we create learning communities at KMS." He noted that this program is a continuation of the Responsive Classroom use in Keene and other SAU 29 elementary schools as part of their social curriculum.

## Daniels

- Sept. 9 - JDA Executive Board Meeting – 6 p.m.
- Sept. 10 - School Pictures
- Sept. 14 - Bus Evacuation Drill at 8:45 a.m./MAPS testing Begins/JDA meeting at 6:15 p.m.
- Sept. 15 – Strings rental day at JD, 3 – 7 p.m. in the gym
- Sept. 16 - Evening dance performance
- Sept. 22 - Band instrumental rental night at 6:30 p.m.
- Sept. 23 - Make-A-Book Workshop from 5:30-6:00 p.m./ Open House from 6 – 7 p.m.
- Oct. 1 – 8 - NECAP testing

## Franklin

- Sept. 9 - Gr. 5 Parent Night/PTC meeting
- Sept. 10 - Gr. 2 neighborhood walk
- Sept. 14 - Gr. 3 to Magic Wings
- Sept. 16 - Popcorn/Pencil sale
- Sept. 17 - Collins workshop
- Sept. 21 – Gr. 2K to KPL (Keene Public Library)
- Sept. 22 - Gr. 2 MAPS testing
- Sept. 23 - Gr. 2M to KPL/Gr. 2K MAPS testing/Open House
- Sept. 24 – Gr. 2M MAPS testing
- Sept. 25 - KA to KPL
- Oct. 6 - Flu vaccine clinic
- Oct. 13 - Collins writing
- Oct. 14 - Popcorn/Pencil sale/K to the Colonial/Gr. 2 to the Colonial

## Fuller

- Sept. 10 - School Pictures
- Sept. 14 - NWEA Testing begins
- Sept. 17 - Constitution Day
- Sept. 22-24 - Book Fair
- Sept. 22 - Band Instrument Rental at JD
- Sept. 23 - Open House
- Oct. 6 - City Primary
- Oct. 7 - FSA Meeting
- Oct. 13 - Pumpkins arrive!

## Symonds

- Sept. 14 -Day One Assembly/School Picture Day
- Sept. 16 -PTA Meeting 7 p.m.
- Sept. 22 -Day One Assembly/Band Instrument Rental Night, 6:30 p.m.
- Sept. 30 -Day One Assembly/PARENT OPEN HOUSE, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 1 - 22- NECAP Testing

## Wheelock

- Sept. 10 – Bus evacuation drill
- Sept. 14 - 25 - MAPs Testing Grades 1-5
- Sept. 15 – Strings rental day at JD, 3 – 7 p.m.
- Sept. 22 - Band instrument rental night at JD from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
- Sept. 23 - Flu Clinic in the Health Office from 2:45 - 3:45 p.m.
- Oct. 1 -22 - NECAP Testing
- Oct. 6 - City Primary Election - Ward 1 Polling Place, 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- Oct. 7 – PTA meets in library from 6:15 – 7:30 p.m.

# BOARD NOTES

Informational Bulletin From the Superintendent's Office | [cweeks@sau29.org](mailto:cweeks@sau29.org)

*This is a summary of the proceedings of the Keene Board of Education regular monthly meeting held on Tuesday, September 8, 2009 in the LGIA at KHS. The meeting was televised live on Cheshire TV, Channel 8.*

## **KSD Enrollment Down Slightly**

Co-Supt. Bill Gurney reported that the Sept. 1 enrollment figures show a slight decline from last year – 3,737 this year down 74 students from last year's 3,811 count. He noted that these are preliminary numbers and that the official enrollment figures won't be set until October 1.

KHS	1718
TNT	46
CCC	70
KMS	655
Jonathan Daniels	183
Franklin	206
Fuller	283
Symonds	329
Wheelock (K-5)171	
Wheelock Preschool	76

## **H1N1 (Swine flu)**

Co-Supt. Bill Gurney reported that the SAU is preparing on many different fronts for the probable onset of the H1N1 (swine flu). He said the SAU is working with the Cheshire Medical Center – Dartmouth Hitchcock Clinic Keene, the NH Dept. of Health and Human Services, and school nurses to plan for each school's response. He added that the acquisition of surgical masks and hand sanitizing dispensers is in the works, that the computer technical staff is looking into ways of providing information to parents (homework and lessons) via Power School and possible broadcast of assignments on Cheshire TV, Channel 8.

## **KMS – Current and Future**

**Current School:** Dir. of Buildings and Grounds, Tom Remillard, reported that all the work required by the city fire department was done over the summer in time for the opening of school. He noted that the biggest project was the installation of a school wide fire alarm system.

**New School:** Mr. Donegan reported that the KMS building committee has met and that all is going according to schedule – final architectural and technical plans will be completed by January. The project will go out to bid in February, the awarding of the contract in March or April, with expected completion of the new school in time for the 2011 - 2012 school year.

**KMS Marketing Committee:** Mr. Donegan reported that the committee has met several times and that it has decided to market the sale of the current building in three phases

- Directly to the community for 90 days. If that doesn't produce anyone interested in buying the property, the marketing effort will be expanded to
- Local brokers for 3 to 4 months. If that doesn't produce any buyers, the property will be marketed
- Nationally

## **NECAP and NWEA Testing**

Co-Supt. Bill Gurney noted that NWEA testing will get underway this month and that the information from testing, which is available immediately, will guide staff in meeting the needs of students right away. He said this testing tool has been very helpful to the district. He said that the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandated NECAP tests will be administered in October. Those results will not be available until the spring and are received too late to be of much use to staff during the current year. Co-Supt. Wayne Woolridge introduced Meredith Cargill who has been hired as the SAU 29 Director of Curriculum and Assessment. She told the board that she will be making an extensive report to the Education Committee on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> about the NECAP results and the plan to address the School in Need of Improvement (SINI). Three of our schools did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under NCLB – KHS, KMS and Symonds. Each of these schools submitted plans in early August to the state as to how they will go about meeting the needs of students who failed to meet minimum requirements. The Keene District in Need of Improvement (DINI) plan is due mid-September.

## **Curriculum Report**

Ms. Cargill reported on staff curriculum work over the summer

- 50 teachers worked on professional development for science curriculum paid for through a Science in Partnership grant
- Art teachers met this summer and will meet again next summer to revise the art curriculum
- The group working on the revised social studies curriculum met to tie up a few loose ends
- World language teachers completed work on higher-level offerings in French and Spanish and increasing the offerings at the elementary level. The world language curriculum is now fully aligned.
- Ms. Cargill also reported that work is underway to develop professional learning communities.

## **LIFE and TNT Buildings**

Mr. Gurney and Mr. Remillard reported that the LIFE program should be in its new building next week and that the TNT program should move by the beginning of October. He said both buildings are going to make excellent new homes for these programs.

## **In other action:**

- Mr. Gurney reported that the middle school is working to offer more differentiated learning to students to meet the needs of all students. He also noted that the school is in the process of applying to establish a National Junior Honor Society at KMS.

*The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Keene Board of Education will be Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. in the LGIA at KHS.*