



## Principally Speaking

### NOVEMBER 2015

Upon the completion of a local corn maze with friends, watching some youngsters attempting to solve the puzzle, noting the apple cider in the hut with orange pumpkins everywhere, one could only think of fall's sudden arrival. It also brought to my realization that these sights and sounds also provided a cue for the commencement of the budget season and more specifically, the crafting of next year's fiscal version. The SMS Administration, School Board and town appointed Financial Advisory Committee will begin the task of developing the 2016-2017 School District Warrant Articles for the community's annual meeting.

It is a process that is never easy, but a challenge to develop. It has been well communicated via the television, newspaper, or internet, that people are concerned about the budget and the frugal fiscal responsibilities that arise. It is a scenario that presents itself annually at local, regional, state and national levels. My goal during this year's budgeting process is to maintain the focus on keeping the students of Stratham Memorial at the forefront of the decisions being made. As an SAU 16 resident, I know we are still in a tough, economic time in the state of New Hampshire and nationally. It is however, a challenge that presents itself with many opportunities and challenges that I look forward to accepting.

Every year, there are a number of line items that the school district does not maintain control over; these lines are a necessity for the building and its operation. As one looks into the future, our food service program may need support from the general operating fund in an effort to follow the mandated federal guidelines. Some associated costs with the

building have also risen as the school becomes the center for many of our town's recreation programs. The Stratham Summer Recreation has developed a full, five day program here at SMS for an eight week period. In addition, programs such as the Boy/Girl Scouts, Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO), Kingston YMCA, and our after school enrichment utilize the building before and after school daily and on weekends.

"We exist to inspire every learner every day." It is our mission statement that was crafted by the Stratham Active Leadership Team (S.A.L.T.) and frames our program daily. We will take into account the mission, vision and our goals as a basis for budgeting considerations. Other budgetary items have been justified based upon the SAU #16 Strategic Plan, class size, programming and technology as it relates to our student social, emotional and academic growth.

This year, we seek to retain thirty-two, fulltime regular classroom teachers; equivalent to this year's totals. I would seriously like to reconsider our BCBA position to remain at three days weekly. Our data concludes that this role would suffice given our current enrollment. Based upon the number of individuals on the Professional Employee contract for the 2015-16 school year, the number of staff on this agreement would be the same for 2016-17. Paraprofessional positions for the upcoming school year will also be consistent with this year's staff.

The implementation of our technology vision and three year plan has provided one to one computing in our fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Our goal was to provide the same ratio moving

into our grade three classrooms. Each classroom within the building has an interactive device/board (Promethean, SmartBoard, Bright Links) which is having a profound effect on our teaching and learning at all grade levels. In primary rooms, Kindergarten-Grade Two, every two classes shares a cart of Chromebooks/Netbooks/iPads providing a ubiquitous notion for student utilization.

This time around, we have reviewed two documents relative to the safety and security of the school. Our Property Condition Report has provided us with a list of suggestions to enhance the building and replace existing components of its structure. The SMS Security Assessment conducted by the State of NH Department of Safety Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management also provided us with recommendations to maintain the principles associated with their focus.

We are a community that is well-connected, steadfast, ardent and passionate about school and education. I am confident that through our combined efforts the school's reputation will continue to be enhanced by the most supportive parents, motivated students and inspiring/engaging teachers that any elementary school would hope to have. Our public meeting dates will be posted on the SMS website for your participation and input at [www.sms@sau16.org](http://www.sms@sau16.org). I hope to see you on March 4, 2016 for the annual School District Meeting held in the SMS cafeteria commencing at 7:00 PM.



Our Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) will meet on Tuesday, November 17th for their business meeting and follow-up conversation about SMS technology

with MakerSpace (STEM) teacher Steve Gagnon and technology integrator Ellen Sargent. They will share their expertise on technology relative to its integration and usage by students. The information session will begin at 7:00 in our library.



# Spaghetti @ BINGO

The SMS PTO along with the school staff are prepping for the fourth annual social event on Friday, November 13 from 6:00-8:00. Mama Walshini's secret pasta sauce recipe (all the way from Providence, RI) will be served on top, with fresh Italian bread, garden salad, drink and to top it off with dessert! Last year, the event sold out and we believe this year's tickets will also sell quickly. Come and enjoy a family fun night, complete with food, fun and prizes! We'll play BINGO like you've never played before!



**Lost and Found:** The weather at this time of year produces more clothing items in our lower stairway. The cooler mornings followed by the warmth around lunch/recess means that layers of clothing are left outside, in the café, or on

the bleachers in the gym. Please have your child visit the lost and found or stop by to see if any of the clothing items (sweatshirts, jackets, umbrellas, boots or lunchboxes) are familiar! **Morning Drop-Off**, staff return inside the building at 8:35. If you arrive after that time, please bring your child to the front of the school for entry.