

Hampton Falls School District News

2009-2010 School Year

March/April 2010

Principal Search

To prepare for Principal Deshaies' retirement from her position in June after working at Lincoln Akerman for 15 years, the School Board held several focus group sessions in January. They were designed to obtain the input of teachers, support staff, administrators, parents and community members about the attributes, experience and knowledge they believe the new principal should possess.

The focus groups explored 2 questions-

1) What are the characteristics, skills and background experiences that the new principal should possess?

2) What are the challenges and issues that should be addressed within the first six to twelve months in the position?

In the focus groups, a system of brainstorming, group consensus development and priority ranking was used to help the screening committee develop a profile to review applications and narrow the field to several candidates to be interviewed.

The people that participated in the sessions were interested in a person with:

- *previous experience as a K-8 principal
- *highly developed leadership skills
- *the ability to coach/mentor staff
- *a talent for team building
- *demonstrated concern for students
- *effective communication skills
- *experience managing change
- *familiarity in programming and curriculum development
- *accomplishments in budget development and management
- *grant writing success
- *knowledge of Special Education
- *creative problem solving abilities

- *a philosophy that values consistency and coordination of behavior management
- *excellent teaching capabilities and classroom experience
- *current knowledge of technology curriculum and its integration into K-8 academics
- *past participation in managing facilities issues
- *a capacity for engaging the community
- *a genuine passion for the job of principal

The screening committee received 45 applications to review using the developed profile. From this group the committee identified 8 candidates to interview that met the criteria. Following interviews, 3 finalists were presented to the School Board. The final candidates visited LAS during the week of February 15th to tour the school during the day and meet staff and students. Following interviews the first week in March, the School Board intends to make a final selection.

The School Board wishes to thank the screening committee, which included Mike Farinola, as selectman representative, Robin Moyer Ratigan, as School Board representative, Lincoln Akerman staff members Kathy Ward, Jaclyn Karabinas and Alan Lajoie, PTO President, Jill Thompson-Stetz, and community representatives Dennis Hanson and Jeanine Werchniak, for their conscientious and passionate input into the selection process.

SAU 21 Superintendent Search

On January 27, 2010, Mark Mason, the Joint School Board's choice to replace retiring Superintendent James Gaylord, announced he would not be accepting the position of SAU 21 Superintendent.

After much debate and examination of available options the Joint Board has decided to reopen the search. Advertisements for the position have been posted and the deadline for applications is April 1.

As with the previous search, a screening committee consisting of School Board members, community members and SAU 21 employees will review the applications, choose 6-8 candidates and conduct initial interviews. The committee will then forward recommendations to the Joint Board. Second interviews and school visits will be scheduled after which a final selection will be made by the Joint Board.

As soon as a timeline has been developed, the Hampton Falls School Board will seek a volunteer from the community to serve on the screening committee.

School Budget

The Hampton Falls School District's Deliberative Session was held on February 4, 2010. The registered voters in attendance listened, discussed and ultimately determined the Lincoln Akerman School Budget for FY10-11 that will be placed on the March 9th ballot.

Warrant articles discussed were:

- The Operating Budget for the school
- Cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Hampton Falls School Board and the Seacoast Educational Association
- Cost items associated with the Fact Finder's recommendations dated January 5, 2010 for a collective bargaining agreement between the Hampton Falls School Board and the Seacoast Educational Support Personnel Association
- \$94,000 for the first phase of a three year mandatory and recommended Life and Safety Code upgrade to the Lincoln Akerman School as required by the State Fire Marshal.

The School Board presented an overview of each functional area of the proposed Operating Budget. Throughout the meeting, the School

Board fielded questions and comments from the community. After presentation of the budget, the voters in attendance approved the Operating Budget of \$5,228,000 to be placed on the ballot. Should the proposed budget be defeated the default budget will be \$5,241,506.

All Hampton Falls residents are encouraged to vote on March 9, 2010 to decide on funding for the 2010-2011 Operating Budget for Lincoln Akerman School and Life and Safety upgrades, as well as to determine the contract status for the teachers and educational support personnel.

Facilities Update

At the February 4th Deliberative Session, Life and Safety Code compliance issues and the overall deterioration of the school building were frequent topics of discussion.

The School Board has made a commitment to move forward in addressing building maintenance and Life and Safety Code issues at LAS by putting forward a Warrant Article to raise and appropriate \$94,000.

Forty-four thousand dollars is to establish the front stairway as an area of refuge and to add an escape window in the Art room. This is the first stage of a three year plan which has been developed to accomplish the mandatory and recommended Life and Safety code upgrade at the school. These items are required by the State Fire Marshall.

The School Board has decided to move forward with the installation of a sprinkler system and the remaining \$50,000 is for a pump which is needed to support a sprinkler system. The Fire Marshal's office has indicated that it will soon be mandating sprinkler systems in all schools and that by installing a sprinkler system now a number of the school's existing code deficiencies would be absolved.

These Life Safety Code upgrades are the first step in addressing the issue of the deteriorating school building as any renovations and larger repairs will automatically require sprinklers.

NECAP Results

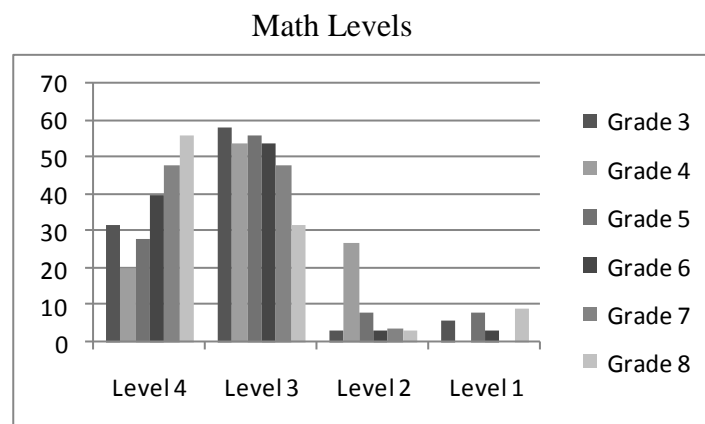
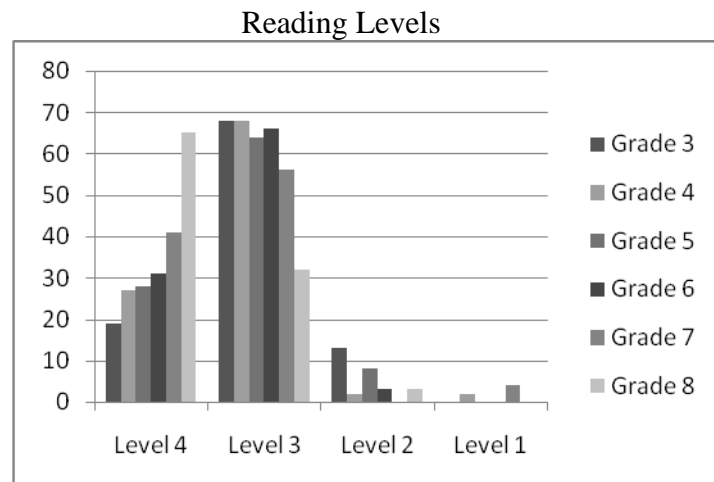
The New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) tests are administered annually to grades 3 – 8 in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island. They are designed to measure student performance against grade level expectations developed and adopted by the three states. The tests are used primarily for school improvement and school accountability. Results are used to help improve curriculum and instruction. Individual results are part of the ongoing assessment of student progress and performance.

Student performance on the tests is designated by four levels.

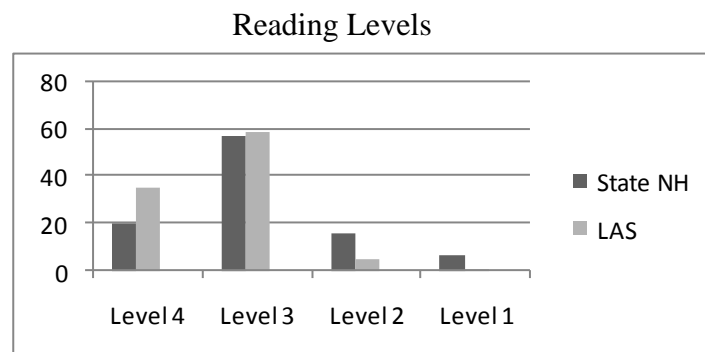
- Students performing at **Proficient with Distinction**-Level 4 demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to participate and excel at their current grade level.
- At **Proficient**-Level 3 students demonstrate minor gaps in the prerequisite knowledge needed to work successfully on the current grade level curriculum. Any gaps in skills at this level are usually addressed during classroom instruction.
- Students with gaps which may require additional instructional support score in the **Partially Proficient**-Level 2.
- Students performing at **Significantly Below Proficient**-Level 1 demonstrate extensive and significant gaps in knowledge.

During the month of October, grades 3 – 8 took tests in the areas of reading and math. Ninety-four percent of the Lincoln Akerman students performed in the Proficient to Proficient with Distinction range in the area of Reading. Eighty-seven percent of the LAS students were in the

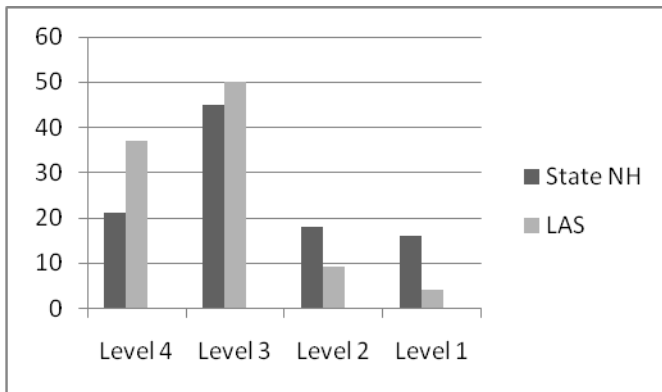
Proficient to Proficient with Distinction range in the skills area of Math.



The percentage of students in the state which scored in the Proficient to Proficient with Distinction range in the area of Reading was 77% and in the area of Math was 66%.



Math Levels



Once NECAP results are available, teachers and staff have a number of meetings within the grade level teams and between vertical grade level teams to highlight areas of strength and address any weaknesses in student performance, as well as to continue to work on the alignment of grade level expectations in the different curriculum areas.

Student Achievements

- First Place in the LAS Middle School Geography Bee went to 8th grader Ryan Mitchell with Second Place going to 7th grader Michael Strabone.
- Eighth grader Joe Karsonovich took First Place in the LAS Middle School Spelling Bee and 5th grader Ethan Werchniak placed Second.
- The Lincoln Akerman School Mathcounts Team had a great showing in the Regional Competition held at the University of New Hampshire in February. Awards included:

-First Place in the Team Competition
 -Five out of twelve of the top individual scorers (Marlene Coe, Luke Janik, Max Janik, Paul Pontbriand, Michael Strabone)

-Second overall Individual scorer (Marlene Coe)
 -First place in the Countdown competition (Marlene Coe)
 -Tie for Third Place in the Countdown competition (Max Janik and Paul Pontbriand)

Other participants included Cassie Brouillard, Mandy Brouillard, Stacie Hanson, Hanna McLean, Ryan Mitchell, Connor Patterson, Emma Ratigan, Izzy Reis and Cam Szymczycha.

Congratulations to Ryan Mitchell (Geography Bee), Joe Karsonovich (Spelling Bee) and the Mathcounts Team members as they move onto the next level of competition in their respective areas.

Current Hampton Falls School Board Members

Ellen Christo, Chairwoman echristo@sau21.org
 Thomas Baker tbaker@sau21.org
 Robin Moyer Ratigan rratigan@sau21.org
 Wayne Skoglund wskoglund@sau21.org
 James Stevens jmstevens@sau21.org

The Hampton Falls School Board usually meets on the first Thursday of each month. Hampton Falls residents are encouraged to attend meetings. Information about meeting dates and times, agendas and minutes are available on line at www.sau21.org.