



Happenings @ SAU 70



From Our Superintendent

Happy New Year! As we welcome 2024, we also celebrate the halfway point in our school year. Here is a quick roundup of district-wide events, initiatives, and activities. ...

Emergency Operations:

Safety and security have been a focus throughout the SAU as some recent events have required us to activate processes to ensure student and staff safety. Fortunately, the “suspicious package” that caused us to implement our safety protocols at Marion Cross turned out to be harmless, and the social media post that led to a lockdown at Hanover High, while frightening, ended up to be less of a threat than an extremely disruptive and reckless case of poor judgment.

Both incidents provided unanticipated opportunities to exercise our safety protocols under “this is not a drill” conditions. Overall, our administrators, staff, and students did an exceptional job following instructions and keeping our schools safe. Debriefings of each event revealed the need to update and further standardize our protocols, enhance some of our building infrastructure, such as door locks and cameras, refresh our training, and make some slight changes to our approaches to crisis communication. That said, our law enforcement partners gave us high marks for our responses to both events.

We are working to further standardize our emergency communications practices and can really use your help. When a situation arises that requires us to initiate our emergency response procedures, our first priority is ensuring the safety of our students and staff. ***If you call us, you will tie up phone lines that we rely on for our internal communication and our coordination with law enforcement and first responders. If you come to our schools to get your children, you will crowd entrances and exits, and create traffic obstacles that could interfere with emergency vehicles.*** The ubiquity of cell phones guarantees that partial or inaccurate information will swirl during a school emergency. ***It is critical that you wait for crisis communication from the schools or from law enforcement.***

It is also important for you to know that we have state-approved Emergency Operations Plans that have provisions for in-building safety protocols, evacuation, and reunification with parents. While we can't share the details of these plans for safety reasons, we work closely with law enforcement, state agencies, and local partners to ensure we're all on the same page. We conduct drills to give our students and staff opportunities to walk through these protocols so that our basic responses become routine. We also have periodic safety assessments from NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and very recently from the Vermont School Safety Liaison. The feedback we receive from these agencies allows us to focus our improvement efforts.

Climate Action Plan:

Building on the great work of the HHS Environmental Club, efforts are underway to expand the [Hanover High School Climate Action Plan](#) SAU-wide. This effort will assist all of our districts in meeting the goals they have established in our [Strategic Plan](#), and will help our school boards honor the aspirational commitment that voters approved in 2022's Warrant Article (#8 in Hanover, #5 in Dresden) "...to support the transitioning of school facilities and operations to renewable sources of heating/cooling and transportation." Over the coming months, we will be seeking the help of each of our schools' students, staff, and families as we gather data and determine priorities as we do our part to operate as sustainably as possible. You can help our students accomplish this important work by responding to surveys that we will be disseminating through our schools to collect data about transportation and energy use. We will be using this data to help us establish realistic targets as we work to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, and to act locally to do our part globally.

Regards,

Jay Badams
Superintendent



From Our Assistant Superintendent

In an effort to continuously improve educational offerings and support for students, several departments within our school district have joined forces this month to enhance curriculum and maximize grant utilization. The collaboration involves the English department from the high school, elementary world language teachers, K-12 Library Media Specialists, and elementary physical education teachers.

Significant progress has been made in refining curriculum structures, with a particular focus on aligning learning objectives and resources across different grade levels. To facilitate transparency and accessibility, plans are underway to purchase a web design aimed at seamlessly sharing curriculum details on the district's website.

Another crucial aspect of recent endeavors is the diligent work on Title grants for all schools within the district. Many parents may not be fully aware of the comprehensive support these grants offer, including funding for various programs, professional development opportunities, and essential classroom materials.

This year, the grants have enabled a multitude of enriching initiatives across different schools. Examples include providing equipment for the woodworking program at the middle school, acquiring drums for the music program at Bernice A. Ray School, supplying Makerspace Carts for first-grade teachers at Marion Cross School, offering coaching services at both middle and high school levels, organizing after-school tutoring programs, establishing an after-school art and library program at Marion Cross School, and facilitating science professional development sessions for teachers in kindergarten through sixth grade.

Moreover, the district continues its commitment to fostering collaboration and alignment through K-12 meetings in all subject areas. Led by members of the leadership team, these monthly gatherings serve as platforms for discussing the district's Strategic Plan, refining curriculum, updating policies, and evaluating programs. The ongoing discussions allow

stakeholders from various schools to convene regularly and address pertinent issues that directly impact educational outcomes.

This collaborative effort underscores the district's dedication to providing a well-rounded and enriching educational experience for all students. By leveraging the expertise and resources across departments, the aim is to continually enhance curriculum offerings and ensure that every child receives the support needed to thrive academically and beyond. Parents can look forward to more updates and opportunities to engage with these initiatives as they unfold throughout the academic year.

Regards,
Robin Steiner
Assistant Superintendent

Important Dates:

February 19 - Presidents' Day - All SAU 70 schools and SAU Office closed

February 20 - 23 - February Break - All SAU 70 schools closed

February 29 - Annual District Meetings - Hanover High School Auditorium 5 PM

March 4 - Annual Town Meeting , Tracy Hall at 7 PM

March 5 - Voting Day Hanover High School (Parking will be in the upper rear parking lot with entrance to the school by the locker room) 7 AM - 7 PM

March 5 - Voting Day in Norwich, Tracy Hall - 7 AM - 7 PM

Please check out the [District calendar](#) for a listing of activities and meetings.

Learn more about voting on our [Voter](#) resource page on our website.

FROM AROUND THE DISTRICT

Nationwide Eclipse Ballooning Project

Two Months Later... What Happened and Where Are We Now

As part of the NASA and NSF-funded Nationwide Eclipse Ballooning Project (NEBP), Hanover High School traveled to Oregon during the October 14, 2023, annular solar eclipse.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)