

August 2, 2021

Dear Members of the SAU 21 School Community,

I am reaching out to introduce myself as the new superintendent of SAU 21. It is a privilege to have been appointed, and I thank the SAU 21 Joint School Board for their confidence in me. The SAU 21 districts have earned a reputation for strong academics and for offering a variety of opportunities to students inside and outside of the classroom in the mission to develop “lifelong learners who are creative and critical thinkers and who contribute to a changing global society.” I look forward to serving the school district and the community for many years to come. I also wish to express my appreciation for the work of Dr. Caroline Arakelian in her role as Interim Superintendent last year after Dr. Lupini’s departure. Leading a school district during the COVID-19 pandemic was no easy task, and I appreciate her efforts and those of the SAU 21 team to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment in very trying circumstances.

And, speaking of COVID-19, unfortunately, it is not yet fully behind us. I know that plans for the opening of school or on the minds of parents, students, and staff. I have worked with our administrative team and guidance from both NH DHHS and the CDC to draft the attached plan which will be presented to each district’s school board at its August meeting for consideration. We expect schools to be fully open for in-person learning on a full-day schedule at all levels. The recommendations in the plan are largely tied to community transmission levels. As was the case this summer for our school programs, while COVID-19 levels remain in the [minimal or moderate range according to NH DHHS](#), masks are recommended. If transmission levels move into the substantial range, masks would be required. Per federal transportation guidelines, masks will be required on school buses. The district does not intend to provide a remote learning academy this year. Instead, we would look to support learners whose families prefer a virtual option through the VLACS (Virtual Learning Academy Charter School) program which is available at no cost to all students in New Hampshire. If you have questions about the VLACS program or are considering this as an option for your child, please contact your child’s school.

To submit your feedback on the draft reopening plan, please go to [this link](#). Board meetings are scheduled for August 5<sup>th</sup> in North Hampton and South Hampton, August 10<sup>th</sup> in Hampton Falls and Seabrook, and August 18<sup>th</sup> at Winnacunnet. We invite you to attend those meetings, as well, to share your feedback on the draft reopening plan. COVID-19 remains a dynamic situation, and it is very possible that the recommendations included in the draft plan could change prior to the opening of school. We will do our best to keep you informed through updates from our individual school districts and the SAU.

It appears that this year may, at times, further try our patience, resilience, and fortitude. I hope that we will continue to strive for understanding and to build ever-stronger communities in spite of the challenges before us. I look forward to meeting more of our students, staff, families, and community members in the coming months and to learning

more about you and your schools. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out to me with comments or questions.

Best wishes for a safe and health remainder of the summer!

*Meredith*

Meredith Nadeau, Superintendent