Southern Aroostook Community School
Parent Letter

October 6, 2008

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As we quickly move closer to the end of our first grading period I would like to make you aware of a new school/parent initiative that we will be implementing on October 29th for students in grades 7-12. For the last two months we have been working with students in advisory groups and on the development of student created portfolios. Our goal through this process has been to break down the natural barriers that exist in our schools, but also to personalize the learning process for all students. This has also been an opportunity for students to create a broader plan for their future, by taking a realistic look at themselves, and planning ahead. In the past, many times students waited until their senior year in high school and many times opportunities had passed them that could not be retrieved.

On October 29th, meetings will be set up between advisors who will serve as facilitators, students, and their parent(s) in what will be student-led conferences. There is no school that day for students in grades 7-12. These 20-minute conferences will allow the student to talk about their learning, educational plans for the future, and career goals as much as possible at this time. Your students' advisor will be in contact with you to schedule a conference. A follow-up letter will be sent to you as a reminder of the conference and time prior to October 29th.

Education is changing rapidly with many mandates coming from the federal and state levels weekly. Student-led conferences are mandatory for all high school and middle school students, and their completion helps us to meet the career expectation in the Maine Learning Results as we continue to move towards a standard based education. This process will also become part of the Local Assessment System, that we are mandated by state law to implement as part of our graduation requirements.

Interim report cards were sent home this week. Student performance will be a major topic of discussion during the student-led conferences.

I would also like to take this opportunity to advise you that the District Budget Meeting will be held on Monday, October 27th in the school's multi-purpose room. The town referendum vote will be held on Tuesday, November 4th at each local town office. Please come and exercise your right to vote on October 27th and November 4th. Every vote counts!

Should you have any questions about the advisor program, student-led conferences, scheduling issues, etc. please do not hesitate to contact me at the high school.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Porter
Principal
Southern Aroostook Community School