

## Granite State College at Pease moving staff to Rochester facility

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PORTSMOUTH — The local Granite State College campus will soon move from its Pease International Tradeport location to a smaller facility as officials have announced they will consolidate the nine classroom facilities across the state into four regional centers.

Starting sometime in late spring, the college will begin to consolidate all of its employees at the Portsmouth campus to the Rochester office, but will still offer local classes and programs.

Peter Conklin, director of Academic Centers for Granite State College, told Foster's on Thursday that the four regional hubs will be based out of Conway, Claremont, Concord and Rochester.

The current facility located at 51 International Drive consists of nearly 10 classrooms and a dozen offices and Conklin said the intended and yet-to-be-identified site for local classes will be much smaller and accommodate three or four classrooms with some space for offices.

"We're still in the Seacoast," said Conklin.

Conklin has been busy over the past year working to consolidate all of the other facilities and said the Seacoast is next on his list.

"The transition will be as seamless as possible," he said.

With the growing demand for Internet based education and enrollment rates having "plateaued," Conklin said the college felt it was their fiscally conservative responsibility to consolidate, but still provide access to education.

"Our mission is about access," said Conklin.

The college currently provides about half of its credits offered through online courses and with growing competition from other educational institutes in the Seacoast, the move is being considered the most efficient way to keep up.

Summer classes will feel the brunt of the impact because consolidation efforts are expected to be finalized by July 1 at the latest, said Conklin.

In addition to growing economic concerns and more adults seeking alternative education, Conklin believes the change is a good thing and wants everyone to know they will strive to continually provide the best educational outlet available.

"The idea is to maintain services," he said.

Granite State College is one of four institutions of the University System of New Hampshire and its primary mission is being the system's statewide college for adults as well as being a leader in delivering online education.