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Mr. Marc Balanda, Ass't. Principal
 Mrs. Liz Curtis, Ass't. Principal
 Dr. Christopher Longo, Ass't. Principal



Schaghticoke Middle School
 860-354-2204
 Mrs. Dana Ford, Principal

Mrs. Jennifer Chmielewski, Ass't. Principal
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Mrs. Anne Bilko, Ass't. Principal
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 Mrs. Jennifer Meyers, Ass't. Principal
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Spotlight on New Milford Schools

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Spotlight on Technology Education and the Hour of Code

Students at Schaghticoke Middle School receive instruction in Technology Education in both the seventh and eighth grade. In 7th grade, students have technology class once a week for one semester. Classes discuss what the responsibilities of digital citizenship are and how to stay safe as they expand their social presence on-line. Students work on both individual and group projects. In the 8th grade, students have technology class once a week for the entire school year. Students apply technology to word processing, spreadsheets and presentations.

This year, all classes participated in a special program called the Hour of Code. According to SMS Technology teacher Jennifer Morrison, the Hour of Code program took place as part of National Computer Science Week. It was designed to get as many people as possible to try a bit of coding. Students who were not currently taking Technology classes could participate by following the tutorial at home or after school. Students chose from a variety of tutorials appropriate to their interest and skill levels. Tutorials were designed to be fun and ranged from beginner to intermediate. Examples of projects included the creation of an interactive card, game, app or more. From all accounts the program was a huge success with over 15 million students participating in the event nationwide!



Mrs. Morrison says, "Hour of Code let me dedicate a week to this very important topic. I did not tell students which tutorial to use; I let them choose, although most chose the ones I would have predicted. I knew that some of my students had coding or programming experience while others had little exposure to computers outside of school. I allowed students to sit beside a classmate working on the same tutorial so they could assist each other. The most popular tutorials were Code.org's Angry Birds, Scratch, Tynker, LightBot and CodeCombat. My classes have never been this focused or quiet!"

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“My motivations for offering the program were two-fold. First, coding is a shortage area; it is not a field many students are pursuing, in part I believe, because they have no exposure to it. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, coding teaches computational thinking. This includes the ability to break a problem down into its basic parts (decomposition); pattern recognition; pattern generalization and abstraction; and algorithm design. Computational thinking has applications in all areas of education, particularly in math and science.”

“Many students asked to continue the activities and I hope to have an opportunity at the end of the year for students who are interested to dig a little deeper into the field. I knew the program was good when I saw a girl who is frequently distracted and chatting choose a higher level tutorial and, as she began to work, her friends on either side moved closer, and started discussing the problems and actions!”

SMS students were not the only ones lucky enough to participate in this important program. NMHS Business teacher Shana Bergonzelli-Graham says that many of the business classes at New Milford High School participated. “Students were given the opportunity to choose among a number of tutorials that exposed them to various coding problems (an Angry Birds maze, programming an Android app in Java, etc.). A wide variety of students with varying abilities participated and the students enjoyed engaging with the material and sharpening their problem-solving skills. We also discussed the merits of a career in technology and the importance of learning coding skills. Many students continue to visit and work on the tutorials so I’m hoping we get to expose more students to coding as the year goes on. I’d like to make it a school-wide event next year and further increase student exposure.”



SNIS Grade 4 teacher Justin Mack says his students participated in the Hour of Code to highlight the practical application of the problem solving strategies students employ during Math instruction. According to Mr. Mack, “For all of our specific content this year, students have used the Common Core’s Standards for Mathematical Practice to guide their process. Coding gave students an opportunity to see how all of those standards work together in the real world. Students had to work to understand the goal of each level, visualize the steps necessary to complete it and model a solution using symbols within the framework of the programming language. Attending to precision, working within the available structure and finding repeated patterns were also necessary to find success within the Hour of Code. This was an eye opening experience for many students. The realization that this simple coding exercise was the doorway to writing the apps that they use all the time was very motivating for students. I was pleasantly surprised to hear that many of my students went home and worked through the exercises again that night! I’m looking forward to finding other ways to work coding in to our learning.”

Want to try your hand at a bit of coding and see what our students are up to?

Visit <http://csedweek.org/learn>

NMHS Builds its Project Lead the Way Program

In the 2012-2013 school year, New Milford High School became a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) school when it launched the first in a sequence of courses in PLTW's Pathway to Engineering program. The goal was to expose New Milford students to the many possibilities for careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related fields. The target population for the Pathway to Engineering courses includes students who are interested in the STEM field, have an aptitude for science, math and design, enjoy working with computers, and learn best in hands-on classes.

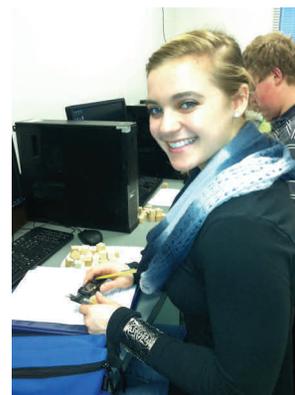


Developed originally in response to the need for college graduates to fill a growing number of STEM positions, PLTW is now a fixture in over 4,700 schools across the country. According to PLTW's website "PLTW alumni are studying engineering and technology...at rates five to ten times the average of all U.S. students." New Milford is one of approximately 30 Connecticut school districts offering PLTW. Currently, NMHS is offering the two Pathway to Engineering foundational courses: Introduction to Engineering and Principles of Engineering.

In the 2014-2015 school year, two PLTW specialty courses are expected to be added to the sequence: Digital Electronics and Civil Engineering and Architecture.

In 2011, when the PLTW proposal was first presented to the NMPS Board of Education, Eileen Reed, Science Department Chair, said that she felt there was a pool of students who would thrive in such courses. Today, there are over 106 NMHS students enrolled in the two foundational courses, many more than first anticipated. Of these students, there are 52 freshmen, 27 sophomores, 14 juniors and 13 seniors. Many of these students are planning on taking several or all of the courses in the 'pathway,' while others choose to test the engineering waters with only one course. With the success of the program thus far, and the expected addition of Digital Electronics and Civil Engineering and Architecture, the larger plan is to grow the engineering program to include a variety of specialty courses, and to increase even further student interest in the program.

One of the goals of the NMHS program is to increase enrollment of female students in the engineering courses. Of the students currently enrolled in the foundational courses, 81% are males and 19% are females. This ratio of males to females mirrors that in college engineering programs. While female enrollment in college continues to outpace male enrollment, the percent of women who graduate with undergraduate engineering degrees is only about 18%, and according to the American Society of Engineering Education, this number was a 15 year low in 2009.



Continued next page...

Project Lead the Way (*continued*)

In the workforce, female engineers represent only about 14% of the total according to the Congressional Joint Economic Committee. According to Ms. Reed, “We hope that increasing the variety of engineering offerings will attract more females, who will then be more likely to further explore engineering as a possible career option.”

A walk into an Introduction to Engineering class at NMHS will leave the visitor impressed to see 20 students engaged in project-based learning. Situated at high-powered computers, with puzzle cubes and calipers nearby, students are designing toys. In the process, they are learning how to take precise measurements, using statistics, learning how to use computer spreadsheets, and creating computer models of their design. Ultimately they will make a physical model of their design. At the same time, teacher Brad Jones is making a model with a 3-D printer, with a group of students watching around him. According to Mr. Jones, “One of the most rewarding aspects of teaching this course is the ability to help students build a variety of skills, including math and manipulating computer spreadsheets, while they learn engineering concepts.”

In a visit to a Principles of Engineering class, one encounters students working in teams and incorporating physics principles in designing simple machines and even hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. According to teacher Erin Lucia, the best part of teaching the class is “seeing students taking charge of their learning and designing projects.” Freshman student Alison Falder decided to take the class when her 8th grade teacher suggested that she might be interested in it. Her favorite part of the class is doing projects. According to Alison, “Doing projects helps me make sense out of the math.” Alison is glad she took the class and plans to take another engineering course next year. According to Mrs. Lucia, she finds that “girls are finding the course as rewarding as guys” and the “girls are often taking leadership roles” in their groups.

So far, the feedback from both students and parents about New Milford High’s new engineering courses has been very positive. Regardless of whether students go on to major in a STEM-related field in college, the courses provide students with an opportunity to practice and build a variety of skills that will be beneficial in any field. In the meantime, a STEM continues to grow in New Milford...



Don't miss New Milford High School's All-School Musical production of “**Cats**”

Evening performances will be presented March 21, 22, 28 and 29 at 7 p.m. in the NMHS theatre.

Matinees will be offered March 23 at 3 p.m. and March 29 at 2 p.m.

All seating at \$10 per person is reserved. Tickets can be purchased by visiting the high school box office Mondays through Fridays from 2:15 p.m. to 4 p.m.

and Mondays through Thursdays from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Tickets are also available by calling 860-350-6647 ext. 1552.

Senior Citizen passes for FREE admission may be obtained from the Central Office (860-355-8406).

FOOD and NUTRITION SERVICES presents the Rainbow Fruit & Vegetable Tray

Top 10 Reasons to Eat MORE Fruits & Vegetables (courtesy of [fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org))

10. *Color & Texture.* Fruits and veggies add color, texture and appeal to your plate.
9. *Convenience.* Fruits and veggies are nutritious in any form—fresh, frozen, canned, dried and 100% juice, so they're ready when you are!
8. *Fiber.* Fruits and veggies provide fiber that helps fill you up and keeps your digestive system happy.
7. *Low in Calories.* Fruits and veggies are naturally low in calories.
6. *May Reduce Disease Risk.* Eating plenty of fruits and veggies may help reduce the risk of many diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure, and some cancers.
5. *Vitamins & Minerals.* Fruits and veggies are rich in vitamins and minerals that help you feel healthy and energized.
4. *Variety.* Fruits and veggies are available in an almost infinite variety...there's always something new to try!
3. *Quick, Natural Snack.* Fruits and veggies are nature's treat and easy to grab for a snack.
2. *Fun to Eat!* Some crunch, some squirt, some you peel...some you don't, and some grow right in your own backyard!
1. *Fruits and Veggies are Nutritious AND Delicious!*

Eating fruits and vegetables in a variety of colors is both visually appealing for children and provides a wide range of nutrients for staying healthy. The Food and Nutrition Services daily Rainbow Fruit & Vegetable Tray is fun, nutritious, and meets the requirements of the National School Lunch Program.

Fruit

The National School Lunch Program requires that all students get a fruit or vegetable with their lunch. Our fruit may be fresh, frozen, or canned. Fruit choices include grapes, an apple, kiwi, pineapple, strawberries, grapefruit, applesauce, and 100% fruit juice.



Vegetables

The National School Lunch Program has five subgroups that count towards daily and weekly vegetable requirements. These subgroups include: dark green, red/orange, beans and peas (legumes), starchy, and other. Our vegetables can be fresh, frozen, or canned. Some examples of each subgroup:



- Dark green—broccoli, romaine lettuce, and baby spinach
- Red/orange—sweet potatoes, carrots, red or orange peppers, and butternut squash
- Beans and peas—black beans, pink beans, chickpeas, and refried beans
- Starchy—potatoes, corn, and green peas
- Other—cucumbers, green beans, cauliflower, yellow squash, zucchini, celery, and green peppers

Want some ideas for eating more fruits and vegetables at home?
Visit <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>

Adult Education Provides Opportunities for Further Learning

Learning continues for many students and lifelong learners through the New Milford Public Schools Adult Education program. Classes are offered for a variety of interests and levels.

The Adult Education program provides instruction in Basic Education, high school diploma completion, GED test preparation, English as a Second Language (ESL), Citizenship, family and workplace literacy. Classes include academic instruction, career and college speakers, college fair visits, and other related career readiness skills.

According to Dr. Joanne Brogis, the Adult Education Program Director, “Second semester classes are well underway for diploma students. These classes include offerings such as Literature through Film, Global Studies, and Reading the World. English as a Second Language instruction includes three levels which provide language skills enabling individuals to enhance their daily living, employment, and academic skills. Mini sessions include criminal justice, self-esteem, and an intensive workshop at Ridley Lowell. All enrolled students complete a three day orientation workshop which includes school policies and procedures, career interest exploration, learning style identification, and communication skills. There is a Student Council which consists of student representatives who meet monthly with a facilitator to discuss student initiatives, input, and feedback for program improvement. The meetings serve as a forum for developing leadership skills and mentoring other students.”

Adult Education classes are offered for enrichment purposes as well. Interested adults pay a reasonable fee to sign up for one or more classes in such areas as computers, crafts, career enhancement or well-being and fitness. Courses offered vary from season to season and are advertised in the [Adult Education Brochure](#). Sign up is on a first-come, first-served basis. Sample offerings in this season’s winter/spring brochure include: Using Your iPad and iPhone, Successful Investing, Absolute Beginner’s Bridge, American Sign Language, Easygoing Yoga, Cake Decorating 101, and Sewing, just to name a few. Professionals and hobbyists from our community or surrounding communities instruct these courses. The Adult Education program administrators are always looking for enthusiastic, qualified people to join their program as instructors. You can even download an [enrichment course proposal form](#) for consideration from the district website.

Still have questions about the program? Dr. Brogis invites you to contact the Adult Education Office by e-mail at adulthood@newmilfordps.org or by calling 860-350-6647 extension 1170 for more information.

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ADULT EDUCATION**
WINTER/SPRING 2014

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National Haiku Writing Month

*Wakened by birdsong;
drifting from one world of dreams
into another*

National Haiku Writing Month takes place every February, fitting in that it is the shortest month for the shortest genre of poetry!

According to www.poets.org, a traditional Japanese haiku is a three-line poem with seventeen syllables, written in a 5/7/5 syllable count. Often focusing on images from nature, haiku emphasizes simplicity, intensity, and directness of expression.

Haiku began in thirteenth-century Japan as the opening phrase of renga, an oral poem, generally 100 stanzas long, which was also composed syllabically. The much shorter haiku broke away from renga in the sixteenth-century, and was mastered a century later by Matsuo Basho, who wrote this classic haiku:

*An old pond!
A frog jumps in--
the sound of water.*

Haiku was traditionally written in the present tense and focused on associations between images. There was a pause at the end of the first or second line, and a "season word," or kigo, specified the time of year.

As the form has evolved, many of these rules--including the 5/7/5 practice--have been routinely broken. However, the philosophy of haiku has been preserved: the focus on a brief moment in time; a use of provocative, colorful images; an ability to be read in one breath; and a sense of sudden enlightenment and illumination.

For ideas on how to write your own haikus visit <https://sites.google.com/site/graceguts/essays/becoming-a-haiku-poet>

February

The mission of the New Milford Public Schools, a collaborative partnership of students, educators, family and community, is to prepare each and every student to compete and excel in an ever-changing world, embrace challenges with vigor, respect and appreciate the worth of every human being, and contribute to society by providing effective instruction and dynamic curriculum, offering a wide range of valuable experiences, and inspiring students to pursue their dreams and aspirations.