

**New Milford Board of Education  
 Committee on Learning Minutes  
 May 17, 2016  
 Lillis Administration Building, Room 2**

**Present:** Mr. William R. Dahl, Chairperson  
 Mr. Dave Littlefield  
 Mr. Brian McCauley  
 Mrs. Tammy McInerney

**Also Present:** Mr. Joshua Smith, Interim Superintendent of Schools  
 Dr. Eugenia Slone, Acting Assistant Superintendent of Schools  
 Ms. Ellamae Baldelli, Director of Human Resources  
 Ms. Roberta Pratt, Director of Technology  
 Mr. Eric Williams, NMHS Assistant Principal  
 Ms. Sara Del Mastro, NMHS Science Dept. Chair  
 Mrs. Corby Kennison, K-3 Math Coach  
 Mrs. Cortni Muir, Grades 4-7 Math Coach  
 Mr. Michael Clyne, Data Coach  
 Dr. Len Tomasello, SMS Principal  
 Dr. Chris Longo, SMS Assistant Principal  
 Mrs. Jennifer Chmielewski, SMS Assistant Principal  
 Mrs. Kerri Adakonis, SMS Assistant Principal

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NEW MILFORD, CT

1.	<p><b>Call to Order</b></p> <p>The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 7:39 p.m. by Mr. Dahl.</p>	<p><b>Call to Order</b></p>
2.	<p><b>Public Comment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was none.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public Comment</b></p>
3.	<p><b>Discussion and Possible Action</b></p> <p><b>A. Review and Approval of Curriculum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Dahl said these are all revisions to curricula and he would consider them altogether for a motion following the presentations.</li> </ul> <p><b>1. Developmental Guidance K-2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Slone said counselors and a special education teacher revised this curriculum based on three standards: personal, social, and academic/career. There are seven units</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discussion and Possible Action</b></p> <p><b>A. Review and Approval of Curriculum</b></p> <p><b>1. Developmental Guidance K-2</b></p>

altogether which focus on age/grade appropriate discussions.

- Mr. Dahl said he appreciated the key to common core standards and would like to see that in all guides.
- Mr. McCauley asked if this was offered to all students and how often. Dr. Slone said all K-2 students receive instruction. Mr. Smith said the program alternates with Health instruction.
- Mr. Dahl asked if this is carried through to middle school. Mr. Smith said it does but shifts to focus more on risk behaviors.

**2. Accounting II College Level**

- Mr. Williams said this full year course focuses on actual accounting practices and is similar to a college 101 course.
- Mr. Dahl asked why Accounting I was not a prerequisite. Mr. Smith said it is so as not to limit student access since students can enter through courses such as Personal Finance and other courses such as Pre-Calculus.
- Mr. Dahl said he really liked the performance tasks used.

**3. Business Law**

- Mr. Williams said this is a half year elective course which focuses on the ethical and morale nature of business law. The material used is heavy on current events such as corporate scandals and case studies so it changes frequently. It uses criminal and civil law as well when it ties into the business aspect. The class typically takes a field trip to Bantam Court where they meet with a judge. It also may include a Mock Trial piece.
- Mrs. McInerney asked if it includes a forensics piece and Mr. Williams said that course is taught separately.

**2. Accounting II College Level**

**3. Business Law**

	<p><b>4. Introduction to Web Design</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. Williams said this is a half year elective course which focuses on code, formatting and design concepts. The end goal is to have an electronic portfolio to show.</li><li>• Mr. Dahl said he thought this curriculum was very well done.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney asked why this course was in the business section and not the arts section since design is part of the curriculum. Mr. Williams said Business is considered part of the Practical Arts and that the course focuses more on the coding, formatting aspect, with the artistic piece being secondary.</li></ul> <p><b>5. Biology Honors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. Del Mastro said the focus with the three revisions presented tonight is on aligning to the next generation science standards that were formally adopted this year. The shift is in sequencing and pacing primarily.</li><li>• Biology has five major units with a heavy emphasis on hands on learning.</li></ul> <p><b>6. Chemistry Honors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. Del Mastro said this course has eleven units and features extensive lab use.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney asked if these are elective courses. Ms. Del Mastro said students must take three credits of science to graduate and usually follow a sequence.</li></ul> <p><b>7. Astronomy College Level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. Del Mastro said this is a half year elective course which is usually offered twice a year due to heavy student interest. They are increasing their partnership with the observatory and the teacher is a volunteer there. Students visit during the day</li></ul>	<p><b>4. Introduction to Web Design</b></p> <p><b>5. Biology Honors</b></p> <p><b>6. Chemistry Honors</b></p> <p><b>7. Astronomy College Level</b></p>
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	<p>and are also required to make two visits outside of class, preferably at night.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. McInerney asked if other observatories are visited, such as college level. Ms. Del Mastro said the observatory at the high school is more advanced than most colleges. The class does typically visit the National History Museum in New York as a field trip.</li> <li>• Mr. Littlefield said the observatory is a wonderful resource and mentioned the recent viewing of Mercury by hundreds of students.</li> <li>• Ms. Del Mastro said they are coordinating with advisories at the high school to foster a volunteer program for the observatory with students in other classes. She said the AP students are currently designing a water feature for the garden.</li> <li>• Mr. Smith commended Ms. Del Mastro and her department on the great job they did in rewriting to the standards.</li> </ul> <p>Mrs. McInerney moved to bring the following curricula to the full Board for approval: Developmental Guidance K-2, Accounting II College Level, Business Law, Introduction to Web Design, Biology Honors, Chemistry Honors, and Astronomy College Level, seconded by Mr. McCauley and passed unanimously.</p>	<p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the following curricula to the full Board for approval: Developmental Guidance K-2, Accounting II College Level, Business Law, Introduction to Web Design, Biology Honors, Chemistry Honors, and Astronomy College Level.</b></p>
<p>4.  A.</p>	<p><b>Items of Information</b></p> <p><b>Using Math Data to Inform Math Teaching and Learning in the District</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Slone said Mr. Dahl had requested an update on the coaches' role. She said all work is grounded in student achievement: what it looks like and how we measure it.</li> <li>• Mr. Clyne gave examples of some of the reports they create and share with teachers that are designed to provide individual student data and student data for</li> </ul>	<p><b>Items of Information</b></p> <p><b>A. Using Math Data to Inform Math Teaching and Learning in the District</b></p>

comparison.

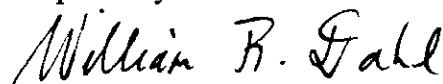
- Mrs. Muir said they are working on common end of unit assessments aligned with standards by grade as well as rubrics for teacher use.
- Mr. Clyne said one of the reports provided to teachers is a heat map based on the MPI (meets, proficient, or improving) system of standards mastery. Teachers can easily see where their students fall and use the data for intervention or challenge as needed. This data also helps with the WIN math intervention groups.
- Mrs. McInerney asked if all students participate in WIN. Dr. Slone said they do. WIN stands for “What I Need” and as such includes both intervention and enrichment pieces. Groups are fluid with students moving in and out as needed.
- Mrs. Muir said the reports are great tools for report cards and parent discussions as well.
- Mrs. Kennison said the coaches attend teacher PLC (Professional Learning Community) meetings where the focus is on looking at math practice standards with teachers. Coaches also go into classes when invited and model learning in conjunction with the teacher. They provide teachers tools for strategy and do individual consults if requested.
- Moving forward the coaches are working on creating common performance tasks at each grade level, blind scoring and scoring calibration of unit assessments, and professional development for PLCs.
- Mr. McCauley asked how often the coaches go into each class. Mrs. Kennison said since it is by invitation it varies by time and unit. They see all teachers through PLCs.
- Mr. McCauley asked how the coach approaches a class that has shown issues in the data with test results. Mrs. Kennison said they share the data with the teacher with an offer to work together if the teacher wishes.

<p><b>B.</b></p>	<p><b>SMS Daily Schedule Revisions for 2016-2017: A Preliminary Look</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Tomasello said this process has been ongoing for eight months and it has been a true team effort involving all four assistants and the general staff. They have been looking at how to use personnel and time resources most effectively for student learning opportunities and to strengthen the professional learning community.</li><li>• Mrs. Chmielewski said the emphasis this year was to smoothly transition the 6<sup>th</sup> grade to their new school. Going forward, the emphasis is to align the structure of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade with that of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.</li><li>• Dr. Longo said the new schedule will include realignment of 6<sup>th</sup> grade instructional teams to three teams; integration of reading and writing (ELA); reassignment of literacy teachers; implementation of grade level content area PLC time; orchestra during school; and increased Unified Arts (UA) opportunities and decreased study halls for 6<sup>th</sup> grade.</li><li>• Mr. Dahl asked if UA will only increase for 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Mrs. Chmielewski said 7<sup>th</sup> grade will see an increase in Health and 8<sup>th</sup> grade will increase PLTW and Practical Arts opportunities.</li><li>• Mr. Dahl asked if ELA will only take place in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Mrs. Chmielewski said yes, at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade level students will take a language or remedial reading.</li><li>• Mr. Smith commended the group on the tremendous work done to increase student instruction without adding staff or budgetary funds. He said he thought the expansion of Health was very important.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney said the staff deserves credit as that school bore the brunt of the transition. She commended them on the work done to move the school forward and will be excited to see their progress.</li></ul>	<p><b>B. SMS Daily Schedule Revisions for 2016-2017: A Preliminary Look</b></p>
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<p><b>C.</b></p>	<p><b>Middle School Coaches for 2016-17: A Proposal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Slone said PLC time is now included in the SMS schedule moving forward and as such she is suggesting the addition of an additional coach for the district, something that had already been discussed at budget time. The proposal is to assign two coaches to the K-2 level, and one coach each as SNIS and SMS. The cost would be budget neutral due to the concentration of teams at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level.</li><li>• Mr. Smith said the budget is not static and they are constantly looking at staff efficiencies to improve district structure and fill areas of need.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney said she supports this proposal. It will cut down on travel time by the coaches and make them more accessible to staff.</li><li>• Mr. Dahl said his only concern is whether the district has someone qualified to do all areas at SMS.</li><li>• Mr. Smith said even if the person in the position is stronger in one area than another it will still be an upgrade. Having someone to assist with data to help plan future lessons will be a huge asset to teachers.</li><li>• Mr. Dahl asked what the next step is and Mr. Smith said a line item adjustment to the budget will be requested at the next Operations meeting but he wanted to have the discussion here for transparency.</li><li>• Mr. Littlefield said he supports the concept.</li></ul>	<p><b>C. Middle School Coaches for 2016-17: A Proposal</b></p>
<p><b>D.</b></p>	<p><b>“Word Study” in the K-5 Academic Program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Slone said the K-5 schools have been reviewing their daily schedules and will refine then at the K-2 level to explicitly include thirty minutes of “word study” time for grammar, punctuation, spelling and vocabulary development. Testing has shown</li></ul>	<p><b>D. “Word Study” in the K-5 Academic Program</b></p>

<p>E.</p>	<p>a need for increasing student achievement in this area. November professional development will include a presentation in this area as well.</p> <p><b>Current Enrollment for 2016-17 NMHS Elective Courses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Slone presented the tallies so far for the 2016-17 school year for electives at NMHS. At this time, seven courses are below 10 students. These include Architectural Drafting, CAD, German and AP Art. Courses have been combined in an effort to increase numbers where possible. She said this speaks to the district's ability to maintain a comprehensive high school that appeals to a wide variety of students.</li> <li>• Mr. Dahl asked if this will be re-examined in the fall when students may drop or pick up a course. Mr. Smith said that would be the case.</li> <li>• Mr. Smith said the additional credit requirement should ultimately lead to higher numbers as well.</li> <li>• Mr. Dahl said this would be Dr. Slone's last meeting with the Committee on Learning and he thanked her for her work.</li> </ul>	<p><b>E. Current Enrollment for 2016-17 NMHS Elective Courses</b></p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Public Comment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was none.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public Comment</b></p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Adjourn</b>        Mrs. McInerney moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m. seconded by Mr. Littlefield and passed unanimously.</p>	<p><b>Adjourn</b>  <b>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m.</b></p>

Respectfully submitted:



William R. Dahl, Chairperson  
 Committee on Learning