

**New Milford Board of Education
 Committee on Learning Minutes
 May 1, 2018
 Lillis Administration Building, Room 2**

Present: Mrs. Tammy McInerney, Chairperson
 Mr. Bill Dahl
 Mr. Joseph Failla
 Mr. J.T. Schemm

Also Present: Mr. Joshua Smith, Superintendent of Schools
 Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
 Mr. Brad Jones, New Milford High School teacher
 Mr. Pierre de St. Croix, Schaghticoke Middle School teacher
 Ms. Roberta Pratt, Director of Technology

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NEW MILFORD, CT

1.	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 7:34 p.m. by Mrs. McInerney.</p>	<p>Call to Order</p>
2.	<p>Public Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was none. 	<p>Public Comment</p>
3.	<p>Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>A. Review and Approval of Curriculum</p> <p>1. Introduction to Engineering Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. DiCorpo said the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) curriculum is proprietary and teachers must be trained before being allowed to access course content. This curriculum takes the proprietary content and fits it into the district template, which includes additional requirements for formative data and assessments. • Mr. Jones said there are four sections of this course currently. It is one of two foundation courses for PLTW's Pathways to Engineering program. It is a full year course open to students in grades 9-12. Students are required to take a national exam at the end of the course and receive a statistical score versus the national average. If the score is good enough, it can be used to apply for college credit at 	<p>Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>A. Review and Approval of Curriculum</p> <p>1. Introduction to Engineering Design</p>

	<p>over 85 colleges nationwide. New Milford primarily aligns with Rochester Institute of Technology and the University of New Haven. Students receive an actual transcript from these colleges if they meet the requirements for college credit at each school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Failla said he was glad to see these types of courses which are open to all grade levels. • Mr. Schemm had a question regarding certification. He said he was aware that the program was offered in other districts through other departments such as Technology and VoTech. Since the program is offered through the Science department here, he wondered if other teachers outside of the Science department could teach it. Ms. DiCorpo said New Milford students receive a science credit, so science certification is required. <p>Mr. Failla moved to bring the curriculum for Introduction to Engineering Design to the full Board for approval, seconded by Mr. Schemm and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the curriculum for Introduction to Engineering Design to the full Board for approval.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Presentations</p> <p>A. New Milford High School PLTW Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. DiCorpo said the Engineering Design and Development students had presented in the fall and were back to give an update on their final projects. • Mr. Jones said with all the snow days, students still have almost a quarter to go. • Student presenters summarized their projects including review of the problem, possible viable solutions, design requirements, need/want survey results, products already on the market, patent research, scope of their project which includes consultation with outside experts, review of product designs including a design matrix for their choices, what STEM principles were used, product models and materials, construction of prototype and testing for workability. • Products presented included a water turbine to charge jet ski batteries, a “LiftaBike” which will 	<p>Presentations</p> <p>A. New Milford High School PLTW Students</p>

provide a means for people to transport a bike up and down stairs without having to lift it up and down, "Skatenamo" which will use the rotational motion of skateboarding to charge electronic devices, the "Disturbance Defender" which is an improvement to riot shields used by law enforcement, and a table designed to help a disabled person move and identify ownership of packages.

- Committee members thanked the students for their informative and well done presentations.

B. PLTW Update

- Ms. DiCorpo said the update was in response to a Board member's request. She showed a chart which illustrated PLTW enrollment by grade and gender. In 2012-13 there was more female enrollment than at present. There were 55 students in grades 9-12 that took the first intro course offered in 2012-13, of which 34 were freshmen. A total of 12 students took the series of four-year classes. Since 2014-15, when PLTW was certified for college credit, 47% of the 562 students who have participated met the University of New Haven's requirement for credit, which is a score of at least a 75% and 6 on the national test assessment.
- Mrs. McInerney asked why other students were not successful in obtaining credit. Mr. Jones said the score of 6 on the national assessment is well above the national average so not all students qualify even though they do well in the course.
- Mr. Dahl asked how many credits are possible over the course of the program and Mr. Jones said 11 over four years.
- Ms. DiCorpo distributed PLTW end-of-course assessment score interpretation guides for some of the courses so that committee members could see how credit is earned in each course. For Intro to Engineering Design, for example, the assessment measures achievement level by concept, of which there are 29 areas.
- Mr. Failla noted the nationwide trend of fewer women in engineering. Ms. DiCorpo said the same issue exists in computer science. They are trying to

B. PLTW Update

build pathways in these areas at SNIS and SMS to encourage more female students to participate.

- Mr. Smith said they are hoping the introduction of PLTW at the middle school over the last two years will help high school enrollment. In addition, PLTW teacher Erin Lucia hosted an information session for female students at SMS this year.
- Ms. DiCorpo noted that the K-5 Science enrichment teacher is also female, so students have built in role models.
- Mrs. McInerney asked if there was any thought to offering afterschool engineering activities at SMS. Ms. DiCorpo said they are currently working with the high school to start afterschool Robotics that would be funded through the Perkins grant. To start a similar program at the middle school would require additional funding.
- Mr. Schemm said he would be interested in knowing how many students have taken 1, 2, 3 or 4 courses but not the full pathway. Mr. Smith said they would have to review and collate individual student transcripts for that information.
- Mr. Jones said a high percentage of EDD students go on to take engineering in college.
- Mr. Schemm said that might provide a good opportunity to pull alumni back in to consult and make connections with students and also to show their success.

C. Alumni Survey

- Ms. DiCorpo said this is the first time this survey has been conducted. The presentation began with the class profile: 342 students made up the class of 2017, 6 students transferred out of district, 11 students went to adult education, 6 students were retained, 13 students discontinued schooling and 306 students graduated from the high school.
- Ms. DiCorpo said 25 students were coded incorrectly, as still enrolled, but had graduated. She said Mr. Smith spoke at the Board meeting that the state reported a graduation rate of 82.8%, however with the 25 incorrectly coded students, the new rate of graduation would be 89.5%. Litchfield Hills Transition students don't graduate in 4-6 years and therefore decrease the number of

C. Alumni Survey

graduates; there were approximately six students who transferred to LHTC in 2017. If they were counted, the graduation rate would have been 91.2%.

- Any member of the class for which the district had a personal email, in this case 249, was mailed the survey, which was open from January 4 through January 31. The response rate was 24.9% or 62 students.
- High school administrators and BOE members gave input into survey questions and these questions were also shared with the high school faculty for input. Panarama, the district's survey vendor, crafted the open-ended responses. Questions included courses taken in high school, AP courses taken, current status of postsecondary pursuits, major course of college study for those enrolled, and reason for stopping college if applicable. Ms. DiCorpo distributed the full results.
- Ms. DiCorpo also distributed materials regarding college and career readiness, including how that is defined by the state of CT, and definitions of key concepts in college and career readiness. The goal is to have a common language for discussion in determining where the district stands in these areas. Ms. DiCorpo also shared the "Seven Principles of College and Career Readiness" and examples of what a college and career ready student should be able to do. She said this focus begins as early as kindergarten with the building of skills. The goal is for all students to have these elements and to help students think about their pathways to future plans and align courses appropriately to serve the needs of the many. Ms. DiCorpo said managing the complexity of preparing and applying to post-secondary education can be especially challenging for students whose family members do not have that background.
- She said the district is focusing on smaller assessments over time in addition to traditional mid-year exams so as to provide more timely intervention prior to the ending assessment. They also want to make sure the senior year is meaningful and appropriately challenging, as

	<p>required in the principles, so they are working hard to engage community stakeholders for internship opportunities for seniors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. DiCorpo said the district wants to make sure that students have the necessary tools to plan for post-secondary pursuits. These include technology as needed, and tools such as Naviance. She said there is preliminary discussion about using an advisory period at the middle school so that there is more focused discussion in the area prior to high school. • Mrs. McInerney said it will be important to include parents in training for Naviance use. • Mrs. McInerney asked that all presentations shared this evening be provided to the full Board. • Mr. Failla said he will continue to advocate for the middle level student at the high school who he thinks are at a loss sometimes for post-secondary plans and may need more assistance than that offered by guidance. He suggested advisory might be good for this. • Ms. DiCorpo said they are always reviewing data to see if there are trends that can guide improvement. The priority is always to build consensus on what is needed to move forward and accomplish goals. 	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Public Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was none. 	<p>Public Comment</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Mr. Dahl moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 p.m., seconded by Mrs. McInerney and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 p.m.</p>

Respectfully submitted:



Tammy McInerney, Chairperson
 Committee on Learning