

**New Milford Board of Education
 Committee on Learning Meeting Minutes
 June 4, 2024
 Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

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 NEW MILFORD, CT

Present:	Mrs. Tammy McInerney, Chairperson Mr. Brian McCauley Mrs. Sarah Herring Mr. Dean Barile
Also Present:	Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent of Schools Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent Mr. Jeff Turner, Director of Technology Mrs. Linda Scoralick, Principal of Schaghticoke Middle School Mrs. Megan Boswell, District Administrative Intern Mrs. Cindy Bonnell, K-5 STEM Teacher Mrs. Lori Cerra, Library Media Specialist, Sarah Noble Intermediate School
Absent:	

1.	Call to Order The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 7:32 pm by Mrs. McInerney.	Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m.
2.	Public Comment None	Public Comment None
3.	Items of Information A. STEM B. Educator Evaluation New Model 2024 - 2025 C. Kindergarten Entry Age STEM Mrs. Bonnell began by stating they are now in the 2nd year of STEM for K-5 students focusing on habits of mind. There is a plan for the program to segue into the summer and fall. It is interdisciplinary with academic subjects and state standards integrated into it. A program like this helps students to think about STEM careers at a younger age. Mrs. McInerney asked Mrs. Bonnell if she pushes into individual classes. Mrs. Bonnell stated yes. Ms. Hollander stated it was thought to be better as a push-in. It's a collaboration with the classroom teacher, and the teacher can continue on with next steps in students' learning if they choose to. Mr. Barile asked if the program is mandatory, so all students are getting the exposure. Mrs. Bonnell stated yes and noted Sarah Noble Intermediate School (SNIS), Hill and Plain	Items of Information A. STEM B. Educator Evaluation New Model 2024 - 2025 C. Kindergarten Entry Age

School (HPS), and Northville Elementary School (NES) all had STEM and STEAM nights that were extremely successful.

Ms. Hollander stated there is definitely evidence of positive impact, and stated Mrs. Bonnell will be working with the new STEM teacher and Mr. Cotter at SMS on a seamless transition from the K-5 program to middle school.

Mrs. Cerra began her presentation on the use of VR goggles in the library. The students experience social studies topics, as they relate to real life experiences, and are connected to the curriculum she is teaching. Mrs. Cerra referred to the experiences as “rooms,” and explained these rooms include places such as the Goodspeed Opera House, the Air & Space Museum, national parks, and more.

Mrs. Cerra stated the goggles have been extremely well received, with even non-speaking students asking to use them. Dr. Parlato noted the goggles are a great way to try out a potential job, such as observing surgery in an operating room. Ms. Hollander stated it will tie into STEM careers, Project Lead the Way, and career pathways programming experiences.

Educator Evaluation New Model 2024 - 2025

Ms. Hollander stated in the past there has been flexibility given for the teacher evaluator process. As educators, the focus has been on what needs to be done to grow and positively impact the students. What New Milford is currently doing already meets regulations. The guidelines provided by the state require there to be standards for teachers and other special services. The professional learning and evaluations are meeting three times a year, and doing classroom visits. The non-tenured staff have three informal visits and tenured staff have two informal visits.

Ms. Hollander stated a big shift is to go from student learning to adult learning. A focus is on honoring the adult who makes that impact for the student and continues on through the years. During time made available to teachers, there will be opportunities for self directed professional learning.

Ms. Hollander stated the focus on student learning is that all students meet or exceed their target growth. The focus is going to be on professional learning and materials to support it. This is a time for them to be learners. Small groups will work together throughout the year to evaluate the educator process with smaller groups happening during the day.

Mrs. Scoralick stated the guidelines have negotiables and non-negotiables, to make the educator evaluation system more robust.

Ms. Hollander stated the state model was published in March with articulated plans for the educators and the leaders.

Kindergarten Entry Age

Ms. Hollander stated there is a new state law and students must be five years old by September 1 to enter Kindergarten. She has been working with the Youth Agency to add space for four-year-olds, as well as meeting with others in, and outside the district, to create a plan of action for students born after September 1. The state's mandate gave little guidance and had a very quick turnaround. A communication plan has been put in place as well as a waiver process. There are 43 approved waivers for students born after September 1 and there has already been information sessions for families.

Mr. Barile asked how much lead time the state gave the districts. Dr. Parlato stated they found out July 1, 2023. Mrs. McInerney asked how many incoming kindergartners there were and Dr. Parlato stated that the number is fluid as students are still being registered. There is usually an influx over the summer.

Mr. Barile noted the tight time frame can cause undue hardship.

Mrs. McInerney asked if Ms. Hollander would accept waivers for the 2026 school year. Ms. Hollander stated the district is being lenient for this coming fall but will adhere to the September 1 deadline the following school year. She would love to have a transitional kindergarten, or universal pre-k eventually. It's a big

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	<p>commitment that requires space, resources, and funding. Since the law came so quickly, they afforded families the chance to submit a waiver for the upcoming fall. Ms Hollander stated she met with the Pratt Center and Youth Agency to work on game plans for families. Mr. Barile asked how it's being communicated. Ms. Hollander stated through preschools, email, and other means.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Public Comment None</p>	<p>Public Comment None</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Adjourn <i>Mr. McCauley moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Barile, with all voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:24pm.</i></p>	<p>Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.</p>

Respectfully submitted:



Tammy McInerney, Chairperson
 Committee on Learning