

New Milford Board of Education
Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2024
Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center

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NEW MILFORD, CT

Present:	<p>Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson Mrs. Leslie Sarich Mrs. Tammy McInerney Mr. Tom O'Brien Mr. Dean Barile Mr. Eric Hansell Mrs. Sarah Herring Mr. Brian McCauley Mr. Randall Scofield</p>
Absent:	

Also Present:	<p>Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent of Schools Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Mr. Jeffrey Turner, Director of Technology Mrs. Teresa Kavanagh, Director of Human Services Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations Mr. Matthew Cunningham, Director of Facilities Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Mr. Antonio Caldareri, Student Representative Ms. Penelope Morrissey, Student Representative</p>
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1.	A.	<p>Call to Order Pledge of Allegiance The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson. The Pledge of Allegiance immediately followed the call to order.</p>	<p>Call to Order A. Pledge of Allegiance</p>
	B.	<p>Moment of Silence: In Memory of Ana Aguirre, World Language Teacher, New Milford High School</p>	<p>B. Moment of Silence: In Memory of Ana Aguirre, World Language Teacher, New Milford High School</p>
2.	A.	<p>Public Comment Mrs. Megan Byrd, 2 Carlson Rd., stated she wanted to address the situation regarding the two AP Computer Science courses. The two courses lost the</p>	<p>Public Comment</p>

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		<p>instructor. One of the courses has remained an AP course but the other has dropped to an honors course. The students in the class that was dropped to honors completed all the AP summer work and are using the textbook for the AP class. Mrs. Byrd asked why it's not receiving the AP weight. Mrs. Byrd also suggested the district consider doing something to retain staff. Mrs. Byrd stated many good people are leaving due to the fact a person can make \$30,000 more a year going to the next town over. Mrs. Byrd suggested offering a stipend. She stated she looked into the AP course criteria and it is not a state or college board requirement to have an AP certified teacher.</p>	
3.		<p>IDEAL STUDENT RECOGNITION: SCHAGHTICOKE MIDDLE SCHOOL Dr. Parlato and members of the Schaghticoke Middle School staff presented certificates to the following students in recognition of being an ideal student:</p> <p>Erin Andreasen, grade 7 Abigail Bollaro, grade 6 Savannah Brown, grade 8 Rowan Cotter, grade 8 Igor De Castro, grade 8 Stella DeGregorio, grade 6 Nicholas Laughlin, grade 8 Douglas McCarthy, grade 6 Alexander Menconi, grade 8 Robert Mullen, grade 8 Grace Staller, grade 8 Olivia Taranto, grade 7 Shiloh Thompson, grade 7</p>	<p>IDEAL STUDENT RECOGNITION: SCHAGHTICOKE MIDDLE SCHOOL</p>
4.		<p>PTO REPORT Mrs. Byrd stated school photos are being distributed and they are working to rectify any issues that have come up. The schools are hosting upcoming Halloween events. The book fair is returning for the K-8 schools, and will be open during certain school hours and conference times. New Milford High School is selling flamingos. They also sold</p>	<p>PTO REPORT</p>

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		concessions and flowers at the Homecoming dance as well as “Class of…” shirts.	
5.	A.	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES Approval of the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Meeting Minutes September 17, 2024 <p><i>Mr. Scofield moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes, September 17, 2024. Seconded by Mrs. Sarich. Motion passed unanimously.</i></p>	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES A. Approval of the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Meeting Minutes September 17, 2024 <p>Motion made and passed to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes September 17, 2024.</p>
6.		<p>SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT Dr. Parlato yielded time for the Student Representatives’ Report.</p> <p>Mr. Caldareri stated Northville Elementary School (NES) had its monthly CARES citizen lunch. Kindergarten students enjoyed a trip to Silverman Farm. The school learned about fire safety. There is an upcoming spelling bee. Hill & Plain School (HPS) held a color run, raising more than \$20,000. The student garden construction project is complete and HPS is looking for volunteers to help fill in soil, and other tasks. There is a spooky reading night coming up. Kindergarten and 1st grade had Water Witch come for fire safety.</p> <p>Ms. Morrissey stated Sarah Noble Intermediate School (SNIS) learned about bees. They have started breast cancer awareness month and their annual food drive. Schaghticoke Middle School (SMS) had no report available. New Milford High School (NMHS) had their National Honor Society induction on October 2nd. October 10th was the advance chorus and winds concert. October 15th is the Departmental Student of the Month Awards. October 21st is the Math Honor Society induction. The German exchange students are headed back home.</p>	<p>SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT</p>

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		Dr. Parlato stated we are nicely settled into the school year with many recognitions going on. Each school is working hard and there is a lot of good happening.	
7.	<p>A. Policy Mrs. Sarich stated the Board will be looking again at the Connecticut School Climate Policy.</p> <p>B. Committee on Learning Mrs. McInerney stated there were several items discussed in the October Committee on Learning meeting, one being the Science of Reading update and the second a presentation on Early College Learning Experience. She encourages everyone to read through the minutes. Also, tonight on the agenda are four course proposals.</p> <p>C. Facilities Mr. O'Brien stated Mr. Cunningham will speak to the ongoing projects later in the evening. Since he's been on the Board, the SNIS oil tank, NMHS woodshop, and the NMHS roof, which is winding down, are coming off the Facilities agendas and Mr. O'Brien stated he was very happy about that. Mr. O'Brien thanked Mr. Cunningham and his team for ensuring the projects were handled in the right manner.</p> <p>D. Operations Mr. Hansell stated the Board will see an item for the NES roof evaluation.</p>	<p>SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS</p> <p>A. Policy</p> <p>B. Committee on Learning</p> <p>C. Facilities</p> <p>D. Operations</p>	
8.	<p>BOARD CHAIRMAN'S REPORT Mrs. Faulenbach stated she attended the National Honor Society induction and will try to get a board meeting at the observatory. On the agenda tonight is an Executive Session that comes from the hard work of the negotiations team, and an opportunity for the Board to weigh in. We are approaching budget season and are always looking for ways to cut costs. Mrs. Faulenbach stated it is time we send out a survey to parents regarding transportation. It's necessary to get a clearer picture of bus usage, and that will help prepare for budget. Mrs. Faulenbach</p>	<p>BOARD CHAIRMAN'S REPORT</p>	

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	reminded the Board there are a lot of dates being put on calendars. Town leaders have also been included.	
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9.	<p>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION</p> <p>A. Monthly Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Position dated September 30, 2024 2. Purchase Resolution: D-787 3. Request for Budget Transfers <p><i>Mr. Hansell moved to approve the Budget Position dated September 30, 2024; Purchase Resolution D-787; and Request for Budget Transfers. Seconded by Mr. McCauley. Motion passed unanimously.</i></p> <p>B. Bid Award - NES Roof Evaluation</p> <p>Mr. Cunningham stated the RFP is for cost estimates. Mrs. McInerney asked why Silver Petrucelli & Associates was chosen, given they were not the lowest bid. Mr. Cunningham stated Silver Petrucelli & Associates are the ones most familiar with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) grant process. The two lower bids were from companies outside of the state and not familiar with CT schools.</p> <p>Mr. Hansell asked if there are takeaways from the NMHS roof that can be applied to the NES roof. Mr. Cunningham stated any project goes through a debriefing process, and much was learned from the NMHS roof. One of the reasons Silver Petrucelli & Associates was chosen was because if the district wants to pursue DAS reimbursement, they will need a holistic approach. It is about the core of the roof,</p>	<p>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION</p> <p>A. Monthly Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Position dated September 30, 2024 2. Purchase Resolution: D-787 3. Request for Budget Transfers <p>Motion made to approve the Budget Position dated September 30, 2024; Purchase Resolution D-787; and Request for Budget Transfers. Motion passed.</p> <p>B. Bid Award - NES Roof Evaluation</p>
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	<p>and ensuring it is improved as a whole: gutters, seams, etc.</p> <p>Mr. Barile asked why Russel & Dawson was so much higher. Mr. Cunningham stated he could not speak to why it was so different. Everyone received the same RFP notice and directions.</p> <p><i>Mr. O'Brien moved to approve the Bid Award -NES Roof Evaluation. Seconded by Mr. Hansell. Motion passed unanimously.</i></p> <p>C. Policy for Second Review Mrs. Faulenbach stated this will be going back to the Policy Committee and does not require a motion. There are more conversations to be had and questions to be answered. Mr. Scofield stated this was discussed at Policy and it was agreed to bring it in front of the Board so that it could be brought back to Policy.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach agreed that bringing it to the Board opens it up to further discussion and gives the opportunity for more information to be brought back to Policy. Since it is going back to Policy, timelines need to be kept in mind because there is a legislative timeline to keep.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney stated she wanted to make a clarification of the October 1, 2024 Policy Subcommittee meeting minutes. Mrs. McInerney stated, "As a point of clarification, I would like the minutes to reflect that I did not introduce religion into the 5131.91 Connecticut School Climate Policy discussion on Oct. 1 (page 7). I was merely responding to a statement made by another committee member regarding their comment on religious beliefs."</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney continued by stating, as a member of the Policy committee, she would move forward</p>	<p>Motion made to approve the Bid Award - NES Roof Evaluation. Motion passed.</p> <p>C. Policy for Second Review 1. 5131.91 Connecticut School Climate Policy</p>
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	<p>with the policy, as it is written. It has been vetted and while it's ok to wait a month or two, the district needs enough time so the policy is ready to go into effect on July 1, 2025, which includes training for faculty.</p> <p>Mr. Scofield asked Dr. Parlato, what changes will happen if the Board adopts the policy. Dr. Parlato stated once it is adopted, there are two major pieces to it. One would be to make sure there is an understanding of the restorative piece of student consideration/student discipline. The second is understanding what the statutory understanding of "challenging behavior" is. We're accustomed to the notion of bullying. This broadens that phrase from "bullying" to "challenging behavior" and the challenging behaviors' impact on the classroom. Some of the training that goes along with it is not only understanding the definition of challenging behavior, but what are some ways we can address it at the classroom, school, and district levels. It is a broader way to look at students' conduct. Mr. Scofield replied stating challenging behavior may be different to me than someone else, and asked who perceives what challenging behavior is. Dr. Parlato stated it is defined in the policy and reporting form. It is behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of students or safety of school employees.</p> <p>Mr. Hansell stated he is worried about the personally identifiable information and the management of the policy, as a whole. Mr. Hansell stated he is also concerned about the restorative practice section and the broad definitions of certain behaviors and how those behaviors might intersect with protective class definitions. We may have trouble figuring out who is the one being persecuted and who is not. When reading about restorative practice, the statement regarding reintegration implies that the punishment can be part of the process. Particularly the phrase</p>	
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	<p>“reintegration back into the school environment.” Mr. Hansell stated, to him, it sounds like a student will be taken out of the environment, and there are no clear definitions or lines where behavior is drawn. It needs to be flushed out more.</p> <p>Mrs. Herring asked who would oversee the restorative practice training. She stated that restorative practices training was attempted in the past and it was not helpful at all, and during that time it was felt as though the teacher was at fault. Mrs. Herring would like to know who is an expert on this and who would speak on how to realistically execute it. Dr. Parlato replied that the district has a Professional Learning and Evaluation Committee, and one arm of that is people who work on professional learning. Dr. Parlato stated she prefers training from people in-house. The training would include administrators and teachers interested in professional learning. That can be done and flushed out once the policy passes.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach clarified, what Dr. Parlato is stating, would happen once the policy is adopted. What Mrs. Herring is wondering is how it would be implemented. Mrs. Herring stated that was correct.</p> <p>Mr. Barile quoted an article written by Stephen Sedor of Pullman & Comley, citing bullying is one type of challenging behavior. The article mentions the school climate improvement plan will be developed in collaboration with the coordinator and climate specialist utilizing survey data, etc. Mr. Barile stated, based on what he read, the Board will receive guidance, meaning the Board will have some oversight into the development of that plan. Mr. Barile mentioned this is of importance, because someone should not have sole discretion on oversight of school climate policy for the entire school district. It should be the elected officials of the Board, who represent the people who put them into their roles.</p>	
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	<p>Mr. Scofield asked if this policy needs to pass by July 1, 2025. Mrs. Faulenbach stated yes. Time is a component so we are in compliance with new legislation. Mrs. Faulenbach recommended the Board and Policy Committee go back and break down what parts of this policy they are looking to change, keep, and move forward with. Questions on professional development are brought up after. It needs to be handled in two parts.</p> <p>Mrs. Sarich asked for board members to send what they wanted changed in writing.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach noted the attorney suggested to keep as it is and not change anything.</p> <p>Mr. Barile clarified that the attorney suggested to not change anything but then said the fallout would be if the Board did not adopt the policy, they would be in legal jeopardy. That is not what was discussed, what was discussed is modifying the policy, so the analogy the attorney made was not applicable.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated legislation states we should adopt as it is written.</p> <p>Mr. Scofield asked for clarification, and if the Board is told it needs to be adopted. Mrs. Faulenbach answered it is understood to adopt it the way it is.</p> <p>Mr. Barile stated there is a history of bad laws. If it's a bad law that will put us into greater litigation, we, as board of education members, have a fiduciary duty to protect them. We need to look at the potential risk of adopting a policy and protect all those involved. Another conversation with the attorney is a good idea.</p>	<p>D. Course Proposals: a. Academic Reading/9th Grade Reading</p>
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	<p style="text-align: center;">Academy</p> <p>b. Introduction to Ceramics c. Political Science d. Treble Chorus</p> <p><i>Mr. Barile moved to approve the following Course Proposals: Academic Reading/9th Grade Reading Academy, Introduction to Ceramics, Political Science, and Treble Chorus. Seconded by Mrs. McInerney. Motion passed unanimously.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Academy</p> <p>b. Introduction to Ceramics c. Political Science d. Treble Chorus</p> <p>Motion made to approve the following Course Proposals: Academic Reading/9th Grade Reading Academy, Introduction to Ceramics, Political Science, and Treble Chorus. Motion passed.</p>
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<p>10.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ITEMS OF INFORMATION</p> <p>A. Employment Report October 2024 Mrs. Kavanaugh stated they now have four certified and six non-certified openings.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney asked if Mrs. Kavanaugh could add in the dollar amount for the coaching stipends.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach made a note of Roxanne Kraft, retiring after 37 years in the district.</p> <p>Mr. Scofield asked Mrs. Kavanaugh if she could send him the number of open positions and how much in combined salary is not being spent. He has been told people leave because they can make more money in another district, and asked if that available money can be utilized in different ways. Mrs. Kavanaugh stated she would get that information for Mr. Scofield.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato asked Mr. Scofield what would be the next step after getting that information. Mr. Scofield answered that he would like to utilize it for retention somehow since the positions are not filled and see about moving it into the budget cycle.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ITEMS OF INFORMATION</p> <p>A. Employment Report October 2024</p>
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	<p>Dr. Parlato noted some positions are bound by a collective bargaining agreement. Mr. Scofield stated he understood, but there are jobs hanging out there and we need to figure out a way to pull them in. Mr. Scofield then asked where the unspent money goes. Mrs. Faulenbach stated anything not spent by the district is turned over to the town. It is audited, vetted, and is asked to be put into the Capital Reserve, which goes back into the school district through approved capital projects.</p> <p>Mr. Scofield stated it is important for people to know they are appreciated and it would be nice to know what the salary challenges are between different towns. Mrs. Faulenbach replied they see salary comparisons through negotiations. A caveat is the budget is done 18 months in advance.</p> <p>Mr. Barile asked who is the head coach for soccer. Mrs. Kavanaugh stated it is Zach Pereira. Mrs. Faulenbach asked if all the coaching positions were filled. Mrs. Kavanaugh stated they have a few posted but it is usually done when the season comes up.</p> <p>B. Enrollment Report - October 1, 2024 Dr. Parlato stated October 1st is the snapshot the state of CT uses. NES is six students under projection. HPS is 26 students under projection. Those are K-2 schools, and affected by the new kindergarten entry date. SNIS is 10 students over projection. SMS is four students over projection. NMHS is 39 students under projection. There will be another enrollment study done in the near future.</p> <p>C. 5 Year Capital Projects Mr. Cunningham stated the town has approved the capital projects. Many projects are already underway.</p> <p>D. NMHS Roof Update</p>	<p>B. Enrollment Report - October 2024</p> <p>C. 5 Year Capital Projects</p> <p>D. NMHS Roof Update</p>
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	<p>Mr. Cunningham stated it is 95% completed and should be done by the end of the month.</p> <p>E. Northville Elementary School Roof No discussion.</p> <p>F. Grading Mr. Barile stated he believes we should have a more structured way to determine grades. Currently it is too subjective.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney stated procedures about grading are not the role of the Board. It is the role of the Superintendent. The district hires people to handle grading and it is professionally vetted. Mrs. McInerney stated she is worried we are going into territory that is not the Board's purview. Mr. Barile stated, the concern is, if test scores continue to fall, we have to be careful because correlation is also causation. The question we have to ask is how are we grading these kids. They may get A's and B's in class but are below state average.</p> <p>Mr. McCauley reiterated, stating Mrs. McInerney addressed that, it's not our purview. Dr. Parlato added the district has not released 2024 testing results yet. Mr. Barile replied the Board has seen prior test scores. Mrs. Faulenbach stated this conversation began at Committee on Learning and there's nothing wrong with the conversation, when we have the discussion during a presentation, as that's where it is warranted. We may not have the authority to do something but we should have the conversations. Mr. Barile stated he is concerned when a student passes all their tests with A's and B's, but because they miss class or they don't do class work, they are graded poorly. If it's flipped the other way, it's not the same. If a teacher can assess that a child knows the information, but is not a good tester, the teacher should know the child who doesn't do the class work also knows the information. It has to be equally balanced. As a parent, he is concerned</p>	<p>E. Northville Elementary School Roof</p> <p>F. Grading</p>
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	<p>when there is not an equal playing field. Mrs. Faulenbach suggested, when these concerns come up, workshops on this will be helpful so data can be looked at and questions asked. When the Board gives guidance and opinions, it is also done through our policies and budget support.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney stated her own son has a syllabus for his classes, and found that very helpful. The syllabus explains what the breakdown of the grade is going to be. It's even easier to see now that it's all online in Google Classroom.</p> <p>G. Textbook Preview October 2024 No discussion.</p> <p>H. 2025 Board of Education Meeting Dates No discussion.</p> <p>I. Field Trip Report No discussion.</p> <p>J. Gifts and Donations Dr. Parlato stated fundraising is happening and it's going very well.</p>	<p>G. Textbook Preview October 2024</p> <p>H. 2025 Board of Education Meeting Dates</p> <p>I. Field Trip Report</p> <p>J. Gifts and Donations</p>
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11.	<p><u>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:</u> A. Discussion and possible action concerning proposed collective bargaining agreement between the New Milford Board of Education and the New Milford Paraeducators - United Public Service Employees' Union - Local 424, Unit 107. Executive session anticipated.</p> <p><i>Mr. McCauley moved that the Board enter into executive session for the proposed collective bargaining agreement between the New Milford Board of Education and the New Milford</i></p>	<p><u>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:</u> A. Discussion and possible action concerning proposed collective bargaining agreement between the New Milford Board of Education and the New Milford Paraeducators - United Public Service Employees' Union - Local 424, Unit 107. Executive session anticipated.</p> <p>Motion made to move that the Board enter into executive</p>
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	<p><i>Paraeducators - United Public Service Employees' Union - Local 424, Unit 107; and further moved that the Board invite into the session all members of the Board of Education, Anthony Giovannone, Director of Fiscal Services, Teresa Kavanagh, Director of Human Services and Superintendent, Dr. Janet Parlato. Seconded by Mr. Hansell. Vote passed unanimously.</i></p> <p><i>The Board entered Executive Session at 8:22pm.</i></p> <p><i>The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:40pm.</i></p> <p><i>Mrs. Herring moved to approve the proposed collective bargaining agreement between the New Milford Board of Education and the New Milford Paraeducators - United Public Service Employees' Union - Local 424, Unit 107. Seconded by Mrs. McInerney. Motion passed unanimously.</i></p>	<p>session for the proposed collective bargaining agreement between the New Milford Board of Education and the New Milford Paraeducators - United Public Service Employees' Union - Local 424, Unit 107; and further moved that the Board invite into the session all members of the Board of Education, Anthony Giovannone, Director of Fiscal Services, Teresa Kavanagh, Director of Human Services and Superintendent, Dr. Janet Parlato. Motion passed.</p> <p>Motion made to approve the proposed collective bargaining agreement between the New Milford Board of Education and the New Milford Paraeducators - United Public Service Employees' Union - Local 424, Unit 107. Motion passed.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>ADJOURN <i>Mr. O'Brien moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m. Seconded by Mrs. Sarich. Vote passed unanimously.</i></p>	<p>ADJOURN Motion made to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.</p>

Respectfully Submitted,



Mrs. Tammy McInerney
Secretary
New Milford Board of Education