

New Milford Public Schools 50 East Street New Milford, CT 06776 860-355-8406 www.newmilfordps.org





New Milford High School 860-350-6647 Mr. Raymond Manka, Principal Mr. Kevin Best, Asst. Principal Mrs. Liz Curtis, Asst. Principal Dr. Megan Dwyer, Asst. Principal



Schaghticoke Middle School 860-354-2204 Ms. Linda Scoralick, Principal Mr. Michael Boucher, Asst. Principal Mr. Frank Jawidzik, Asst. Principal Ms. Shannon Surreira, Asst. Principal



Sarah Noble Intermediate School 860-210-4020 Mrs. Anne Bilko, Principal Mrs. Jennifer Chmielewski, Asst. Principal Mrs. Jennifer Meyers, Asst. Principal



Hill & Plain Elementary School 860-354-5430 Mr. Eric Williams, Principal Mrs. Kerri Adakonis, Asst. Principal



Northville Elementary School 860-355-3713 Mrs. Gwen Gallagher, Principal Ms. Shannon Surreira. Asst. Principal

Spotlight on New Milford Schools



At the district convocation on September 2nd, NMPS Teacher of the Year Committee Co-Chairs Roxanne Kraft and Connie Williams recognized the school based



ntember 2022

teachers of the year for 2022-23: Katherine Ciparelli, Tara Gee, Jenna Giudice, Cheryl Reiner, and Daniel Savo. To open convocation, the honorees joined Roxanne and Connie on stage in the high school theatre to lead colleagues in the Pledge of Allegiance. Following the Pledge, the district-wide honoree was announced. Congratulations to NES Grade 2 teacher Jenna Giudice!



Volume 13, Issue

Ms. Giudice was born, raised and still lives in New Milford. She graduated from New Milford High School and went on to attend WCSU as an education student. Ms. Giudice has spent her entire career thus far in New Milford, even completing

her student teaching here. She has worked for NMPS for fourteen years, starting out as a long term substitute and instructional tutor prior to being hired as a 3rd grade teacher in 2011. For the last eight years, Ms. Giudice has taught 2nd grade. Ms. Giudice said she knew early on that she wanted to be a teacher, "I would come home from school and play school." Over the years, Ms. Giudice said she has worked alongside many amazing teachers, "NMPS is filled with talented and caring staff members. There are so many teachers in all of our schools that deserve the same recognition that I'm receiving today."

As a student at WCSU, Ms. Giudice was honored with the Alice Rumphius Award, given to an education student for outreach to the community. Miss Rumphius, a character invented by author Barbara Cooney, dreams of traveling the world when she grows up, then settling by the sea like her grandfather before her. Her grandfather also encourages her to do something to make the world more beautiful. Miss Rumphius does visit faraway places before settling by the sea where she spreads lupine seeds throughout the town, resulting in colorful flowers as far as the eye can see.

Ms. Giudice shares this story with her students each year and she said she is always gratified that her students notice the other things Miss Rumphius does to make the world a more beautiful place; she is kind, helpful and forms friendships with many others.

In her acceptance speech for Teacher of the Year, Ms. Giudice reminded colleagues that they too do so much each day to make the world a better place. "All of you have the ability to help shape the future as you work alongside our students, the future leaders of tomorrow." She encouraged them to reflect on the things they do every day that may seem small but in actuality mean the world to their students.

In closing Ms. Giudice said, "Each and every day I come to work I see so many examples of my colleagues striving to make a difference. My peers are extraordinary role models that are an inspiration for our students to go further and dream bigger. Like Miss Rumphius, your work this year will make the world a more beautiful place. May you see that beauty every day in the faces of your students."

Celebrating NMPS Staff

Nominate a NMPS Star of the Month for 2022-23!



1

Parents, students, and fellow staff members are invited to **complete a short online form** to nominate a New Milford Public Schools staff member: whether it be a teacher, guidance counselor, nurse, paraeducator, school psychologist, secretary, social worker, administrator, cafeteria worker, custodian, coach or another support person of your choice. You are welcome to make a nomination at any time and for

as many deserving staff members as you wish.

From all the forms submitted, honorees will be randomly selected each month for public recognition by the Board of Education at its monthly meeting and they will receive a "star" lapel pin as a small symbol in recognition of their many star qualities.

To see a listing of previous years' monthly winners, as well as past New Milford teacher of the year recipients, visit the <u>Staff Recognition page</u> of the district website.

News from Our Schools

Hill and Plain Elementary School

The start of the school year is always an exciting and fun time and this year is no different. Students have been working hard learning new routines and making new friends. It has been a pleasure this month to have numerous 2nd graders help Principal Williams deliver the morning announcements. They have been giving advice to others in the school as to how to make new friends, as well as sharing what they love about Hill and Plain School. There have been a lot of messages about how important being kind to others is and how much they love HPS' amazing staff.



Thank you to the families who have been able to attend the numerous events held this month. Many, many families attended Open House, Curriculum Night, PTO meetings and the annual Fall Festival. After the past couple of years, it is so nice to be able to have more opportunities for families to come into our school! The HPS PTO has many school events, as well as family events, planned for this year and we hope families take advantage of those in the coming months.

Northville Elementary School

It's nice to be back at Northville, where routines are being established, learning is well underway, and happy smiles abound. We were glad to see the friendly faces of our staff, and delighted by students returning to what will likely be a more "normal" school year.

We opened the year with several special events. All our schools hosted curriculum nights in September. NES was happy to host ours on September 13th. On September 15th, NES held our first CARES (Cooperate, Act Responsibly, Respect, Encourage) Assembly of the year. On September 23th, we celebrated our summer readers and math students. We love coming together as a community!



Students also visited the NES Plant Patch, a welcoming place for student gardeners in both spring and fall. Pictured above are second graders from Mrs. Tufts' class who harvested vegetables for a yummy soup.

Sarah Noble Intermediate School

Sarah Noble students have kicked off the year in a positive way! We were thrilled to see our students again and staff were excited to welcome them.

On September 14th, NMHS band members and Band Director Mr. Syzdek visited SNIS and demonstrated instruments that students can begin learning with Music teacher Mr. Fitzgerald this year. Always so inspiring for our younger students to see the older students in action!

> Our PTO Welcome Back night was packed with happy students and some recent SNIS alumni. Families were able to have dinner from several food trucks and students enjoyed the Deejay, face painting, photo booth, lawn games, and the bouncy house. It was a beautiful night and a great time for our students!

Students and staff just completed Start with Hello week. Each day this week we focused on kindness, inclusion, and making connections with each other!

Schaghticoke Middle School

At the start of this school year, students and staff at SMS focused on community and relationship building. During the first week of school, staff and students participated in

ice breaker activities, collaborated on team and classroom norms and expectations, and worked on establishing routines. We also kicked off the SMS Spirit Challenge during the first week of school with a school wide spirit day. Students and staff are encouraged to participate in the challenge with themed spirit days, showing good character, and being a role model in the SMS community. We're off to a great start with all teams on the board!

We built on our community building work during the week of September 19th, when students and staff at SMS participated in Start with Hello Week. This is a program created by Sandy Hook Promise to emphasize and train students in the importance of minimizing social isolation, empathizing with others, and creating a more inclusive and connected school. Each day of the week had a different theme and contained reflective activities and



collaborative discussions during Homeroom. Activities included brainstorming ways of starting a conversation and saying hello, ways to be an upstander, identifying common interests, and identifying the characteristics and qualities of trusted adults. Students and staff also participated in a school wide spirit day, Wear Green Wednesday, as a community building activity.

New Milford High School

This year's first issue of the <u>NMHS School Counseling eNews</u> is out. It is a great resource for the latest info on all NMHS counseling events. Bookmark the site for monthly updates.

Admissions Reps from colleges and universities are visiting the NMHS Career Center this fall, with over 35 scheduled for September alone! The in-person visits are scheduled during the NMHS school day, and interested junior and senior students register in advance.













The New Milford High School Marching Band and Color Guard hosted their annual USBands home competition on Saturday, September 24th. USBands serves as a competitive circuit for scholastic band programs nationwide and prides itself in providing world class performance venues and the best adjudication in the marching arts to thousands of students each year. Over 700 high schools will participate in USBands

events this fall. Our home competition featured performances from our award winning New Milford High School Marching Band and Color Guard as well as seven other schools from the surrounding area.



NMHS Theatre announced this year's schedule of performances. The Fall Play: *Puffs or Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic and Magic* will take place on Friday, November 18th at 7PM and Saturday, November 19th at 2PM and 7PM. With over 50 characters, *Puffs* is a fast-paced, off-brand, and hilarious re-telling of a certain magical book series told from the unique perspective of the students of the Puff House. For seven years, a certain

boy wizard went to a Wizard School and conquered evil. This, however, is not his story. This is the story of the Puffs...who just happened to be there too. Whether you are a fan of the books and movies that have become a global phenomenon or not, this is a fun show you will not want to miss! The Spring musical will spotlight *Mamma Mia!* Performances are scheduled for March 17-19 and 24-25.



District-wide



The Food and Nutrition Services Department will be celebrating CT Grown For CT Kids Week in all New Milford cafeterias the week of October 3-7. This event is celebrated annually as part of Farm to School Month and highlights the connections between schools, nutrition and healthy eating and our local farms and businesses!

During the week, Roger's Orchard from Southington will be providing all schools with fresh apple cider and freshly picked apples and pears. Our own Kimberly Farm, right here in New Milford, will be supplying butternut squash that will be served roasted. The popular Arethusa Yogurt from Bantam will be offered in both vanilla and maple flavor. Our menu will also feature fresh penne pasta from Villarina's, another New Milford business. Other highlighted items will include: Pan De Oro hand crafted tortilla chips produced in Hartford; Ardmore 100% Fruit Juice from Ellington; Scotts Jamaican Beef Patty from Hartford (high school menu); Longhini Sausage Links from New Haven (high school menu); and Brian's Fabulous Fry Bread out of Torrington. The cafeteria looks forward to serving all students and staff these wonderful CT products.



Please join us in welcoming our new staff as they start the 2022-23 school year:



Mrs. Amanda Anderson

Music teacher, Sarah Noble Intermediate School

Mrs. Anderson has six years teaching experience in schools in New York and overseas. She holds a dual certification in Music and Elementary Education. Mrs. Anderson earned her BA in Musical Theater from Wilkes University, her MEd in Elementary Education from Grand Canyon University and is working towards her Professional

Certification in Music from Berklee College of Music.

Ms. Gillian Barto Math Interventionist, HPS/NES

Ms. Barto earned her BS in Early Childhood and Elementary Education from SUNY and her MS in Curriculum and Instruction from Western Governors University. She has worked previously as a long term substitute for grades 1 and 2.





Ms. Lindy Behling

TESOL teacher, Grades K-5

Ms. Behling was an elementary classroom teacher in Alabama for over ten years. She has also worked as an ESL teacher for VIPKID, teaching English to students in China. Ms. Behling earned her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education (K-6) from the University of South Alabama and her Master's in ESL from the University of Alabama,

Birmingham.

Mrs. Alison Bergemann

Food Services General Worker, Schaghticoke Middle School

Mrs. Bergemann is familiar with kitchen operations and food prep, having worked previously at a general store. She also has customer service experience as a medical assistant.



Ms. Karla Bickmore

English teacher, New Milford High School

Ms. Bickmore has taught high school in Washington and Arizona and has most recently substituted in New York schools. She holds a BA in English and History from Washington State University and her MEd in Secondary Education from Grand Canyon University. She has AP Certifications in Language & Composition

and Literature & Composition.

Mr. Tyler Biondino

Paraeducator, Hill and Plain Elementary School

Mr. Biondino is a New Milford High School graduate. He has worked previously as a call center employee and for the past two years as a paraeducator substitute for NMPS





Page

Ms. Allison Burke

Grade 1 teacher, Hill and Plain Elementary School

Ms. Burke has worked for six years as a first grade teacher in New York. She earned her BS in Early Childhood and Childhood Education from SUNY and her MS in Education with a specialization in Childhood Special Education from Lehman College.





Mr. Ryan Carbone

Special Education teacher, Sarah Noble Intermediate School

Mr. Carbone has worked as a special education teacher for the Danbury public schools since 2017. Prior to that he was a teacher for CT Junior Republic. He has a BS in Political Science and a BA in History from CCSU and an MA in Special Education from St. Joseph University.

Mr. Sean Cotter

Computer Education teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School

Mr. Cotter worked at New Milford High School as a Math teacher for several years before going to work for Danbury public schools. He holds a BS in Mathematics Education Teaching from SUNY and an MS in Educational Technology from WCSU.



Career Pathways Coordinator, SMS/NMHS

Mr. Culbertson has over 25 years' experience in the field of education. He has served as Director of Education at Wellspring Arch Bridge School, as Director of ACCESS North and as a Principal and Department Head for DCF schools. He received his BS in Early Childhood Education from ECSU and his MA, CAGS, in Rehabilitation Counsel-

ing from Assumption College. He has his 092 certification in Educational Leadership from SCSU.

Mrs. Christina Darrah

Food Services General Worker, New Milford High School

Mrs. Darrah has worked previously as a teacher at a local preschool in New Milford.





Ms. Mariza Davila-Madwid

Spanish teacher, New Milford High School

Ms. Davila-Madwid has taught Spanish in the Bethel public schools for the past nine years. She earned her BS in Spanish, Secondary Education, and Masters in School Counseling from WCSU.

Mrs. Anastasia des Enfants Paraeducator, Sarah Noble Intermediate School

Mrs. des Enfants worked for many years in the business world. She is looking to start a new career after raising her family.





Ms. Sheera Desjardin-Tangredi

English teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School

Ms. Desjardin-Tangredi has taught English for the past seven years at the Hamden Collaborative Learning Center and for eight years previous to that in New York. She earned her BA and MAT in English from Stony Brook University.



English teacher, New Milford High School

Ms. DiFalco has worked as a substitute teacher for Newtown, Bethel and Trumbull schools. She holds a BA in American Studies, English from WCSU and her MA in Teaching, Secondary Education English, from Sacred Heart University.

Mr. Travis Durrwachter

Art teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School

Mr. Durrwachter earned his Bachelor in Fine Arts from Maryland Institute College of Art and his Bachelor of Science in Visual Art Education K-12 from SUNY. He has worked since 2014 as a Digital Media Arts teacher in New Haven.



Mrs. Epstein is a veteran educator, having worked as a Science teacher for Wilton Public Schools since 2001. She earned her BS in Biology and Masters in Education from Sacred Heart University.

Ms. Melissa Florio

Food Services General Worker, Schaghticoke Middle School

Ms. Florio is a New Milford High School graduate with a background in customer service.



Mrs. Jennifer Fodor

Library Media Specialist, New Milford High School

Mrs. Fodor has spent the past five years working in multiple libraries for schools in Sherman, Regional School District #6 and Seymour. A New Milford High School graduate, Mrs. Fodor holds a BA in American Studies English from WCSU, an MS in Education, Elementary Education, from the University of Bridgeport and her MA

in Educational Technology, LMS Cross-Endorsement, from Fairfield University.

Ms. Elizabeth Goldman

Special Education teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School

Ms. Goldman has eight years experience teaching in New York. She holds a BA in English and MS in Adolescent Education (7-12) from Hunter College.









Page



Ms. Kristen Hallecks

Special Education teacher, New Milford High School

Ms. Hallecks started her career as a paraeducator for NMPS. She has since gone on to teach in New York and Nevada before returning home to Connecticut. She earned her BA in History from WCSU and is currently pursuing her MS in Special Education at CCSU.

Mr. Paul Jussila Business teacher, New Milford High School

Mr. Jussila is an experienced educator with over seventeen years experience teaching in South Windsor and as a business teacher/finance head for a Colorado School District. He has been a CFO/COO for a small business. He holds his BS in Management from Quinnipiac University, his MAT in Business Education from Johnson and Wales and his MBA in Finance, Management and Marketing from Capella University.





Mr. Peter Kivela

Technician I, Schaghticoke Middle School

Mr. Kivela has worked previously as a webmaster and database administrator for a day camp and as a quality assurance test engineer. He has his BS in Computer Information Systems from Albertus Magnus College and his MS in Data Analytics and Systems from the University of Bridgeport.

Ms. Hallie Kopicki Library Clerk, Schaghticoke Middle School

Ms. Kopicki has worked as a paraeducator substitute for NMPS and as a secretary substitute for the Kent Education Center and Nursery School.





Ms. Denise Landry

Athletic trainer, New Milford High School

A graduate of New Milford High School, Ms. Landry went on to attend Lasell College where she earned her BS in Athletic Training. She has worked previously as the Head Athletic Trainer at Brookfield High School.

Mr. Nicholas Lauzon

Chemistry teacher, New Milford High School

Mr. Lauzon has worked at Holy Cross High School in Waterbury since 2014 as a Science teacher of Biology and Chemistry. He earned his BS in Biology with a concentration in Secondary Education from SCSU and his MS in Science Education from Montana State University.



Mrs. Bernadette Maresca

Paraeducator, Hill and Plain Elementary School

Mrs. Maresca has been working in the Danbury public schools since 2014 as a special education tutor assisting students in grades K-5.





Mrs. Patricia Martin

Special Education teacher, Sarah Noble Intermediate School

Mrs. Martin is an experienced educator, having taught for twelve years in Derby schools and three years for Hartford schools. She has a Bachelors in Business Administration from WCSU and her MA in Special Education with Teacher Certification from St. Joseph University.

Ms. Kaitlyn McManus Biology teacher, New Milford High School

Ms. McManus has worked as a Biology tutor, as a long-term substitute for the Wilton Public Schools, and as an Academic Interventionist for the Danbury Public Schools. She earned her BA in Biology with a minor in Secondary Education from Arcadia University.



Mrs. Susan McManus

Paraeducator, Litchfield Hills Transition Center

Mrs. McManus has worked as a teacher assistant in New York and as a MTSS interventionist and coordinator in North Carolina.

Ms. Bunny Mensinger English teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School

Ms. Messinger taught in CA for over fifteen years before moving east to teach at Education Without Walls in New Milford and a private school in NY state. She has her BA in Creative Writing and English Education from NYU and her MA in Educational Leadership from San Jose State University.



Mr. Derrick Mimms

Food Services Assistant Cook, New Milford High School

Mr. Mimms has worked as a line cook and, most recently, as a chef at an assisted living facility, so is well versed in food services industry requirements.

Ms. Jennifer Moriarty

English teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School

Ms. Moriarty comes to New Milford from Maryland schools where she has worked as a teacher for grades 1, 2 and 3 since 2018. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Salisbury University and her Master's degree in Education, Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Phoenix.



Ms. Amanda Morse

Paraeducator, Hill and Plain Elementary School

A New Milford High School graduate, Ms. Morse has been a paraeducator substitute for NMPS for the past three years.







Page 11



Mrs. Jennifer Muckerman Mail Courier, District-wide

Mrs. Muckerman will be facilitating mail delivery among the schools, district offices and Town of New Milford.

Ms. Melissa Olin Math Interventionist, Northville Elementary School

Ms. Olin is an experienced educator, having taught for over 25 years in schools in Florida, North Carolina and South Carolina. She holds a BA in Sociology from Binghamton University.





Mr. Philip Passero Paraeducator, Sarah Noble Intermediate School

Mr. Passero is returning to Sarah Noble for his second stint as a paraeducator.

Ms. Hetalben Patel Food Services General Worker, New Milford High School

Ms. Patel has experience in both the hospitality and fast food industries.





Ms. Gabriela Payano

School Psychologist, SNIS/SMS

A New Milford High School graduate, Ms. Payano earned her BA in Psychology from WCSU and her MA in School Psychology from Fairfield University. She completed her internship at Farmingville Elementary School in Ridgefield.

Mrs. Lori Pecukonis-Rinaldi

Special Education teacher, New Milford High School

Mrs. Pecukonis-Rinaldi has over 25 years experience with the Waterbury Public Schools. She has served as a special education and transition teacher, most recently at the School to Work Transition Academy. She has her BS and MS in Special Education from SCSU.





Ms. Alecia Pickett

English teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School

Ms. Pickett has worked as an English teacher in Maine for the past six years. She earned her BA in English Language from Union College and her MS in Education from the University of New England.

Mrs. Glendaly Rosado

Computer Scheduler, New Milford High School

Mrs. Rosado comes to New Milford from the Danbury Public Schools where she worked as a parent liaison and secretary.



Ms. Lynda Rushka

Food Services General Worker, New Milford High School Ms. Rushka has past experience as a waitress and as a preschool teacher.



I

Ms. Wendy Sapione

Alternative Learning Program teacher, District-wide

Ms. Sapione is a seasoned educator, having worked as a teacher in various capacities for over 25 years at both elementary and secondary levels. She earned a BA in English and an MA in Education, with a concentration in Special Education, from Fairfield University.

Mrs. Darcilyn Schriver Paraeducator, Hill and Plain Elementary School

Mrs. Schriver has worked as a substitute for NMPS and as a children's library associate for the New Milford Public Library. She has a BS in Child Development and Family Studies from Purdue University.





Ms. Caitlin Skelly

Special Education teacher, Hill and Plain Elementary School

Ms. Skelly has worked as a tutor in Danbury schools, a paraeducator in Ridgefield schools, and as a teacher at a private school. She holds a BS in Elementary Education from SCSU and an MS in Special Education K-12 from WCSU.

Ms. Janna Stratman

Physical Education teacher, Hill and Plain Elementary School

A New Milford High School graduate, Ms. Stratman has worked for Newtown and New Fairfield schools. She has her Bachelor of Health and Human Services, Exercise Science K-12, with a minor in Health Education from SCSU.



Mrs. Amy Taylor

Kindergarten teacher, Hill and Plain Elementary School

Mrs. Taylor has worked at the Rotella Magnet School in Waterbury for the past five years. She earned her BA in Marketing & Management at the Art Institute of Charlotte and her MS in Elementary Education K-6 from the University of Bridgeport. She is a New Milford High School graduate.







New Milford Public Schools

50 East Street New Milford, CT 06776 860-355-8406

Dr. JeanAnn C. Paddyfote Interim Superintendent

Ms. Holly Hollander Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Rebecca Adams Human Resources Director

Mr. Matthew Cunningham Facilities Director

Mr. Anthony Giovannone Fiscal Services & Operations Director

Mrs. Laura Olson Pupil Personnel & Special Services Director

Mrs. Sandra Sullivan Food Services Director

Mr. Jeffrey Turner Technology Director

Board of Education

Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach Chairperson

Mr. Pete Helmus Vice Chairperson

Mrs. Olga I. Rella Secretary

Mrs. Tammy McInerney Assistant Secretary

Mr. Eric Hansell

Mr. Brian McCauley

Mr. Tom O'Brien

Ms. Leslie Sarich

Mr. Keith A. Swanhall Jr.

The First Day of Fall

According to the <u>Old Farmers' Almanac</u>: "The autumnal equinox, also called the September equinox or fall equinox, arrived this year on Thursday, September 22. This date marks the start of Fall in the Northern Hemisphere and spring in the Southern Hemisphere. During an equinox, the Sun crosses what we call the celestial equator, an imaginary extension of Earth's equator line into space. The equinox occurs precisely when the Sun's center passes through this line. The word equinox comes from Latin *aequus*, meaning equal, and *nox*, night. On the equinox, day and night are roughly equal in length. After the autumnal equinox, days become shorter than nights as the Sun continues to rise later and nightfall arrives earlier. This ends with the winter solstice, after which days start to grow longer once again."

Here are some suggestions for Fall activities courtesy of happymomhacks.com



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.

_ _ _ _ _ _ _