

# Sarah Noble Intermediate School

August 2023

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians:

On behalf of the entire school staff, let me welcome you back to school for the new school year. We hope you have enjoyed a relaxing summer vacation and had some new experiences that you can share with your new teachers and classmates. We would especially like to extend a very special welcome to all students *new* to Sarah Noble. We know you will enjoy making new friends at our school, which is filled with great students and many caring, helpful adults. If there is anything we can do to make your move to your new school more comfortable, please let us know!

Our primary goal is to prepare all students academically, emotionally, and socially so that they may be successful as they move to middle school. In order to meet this goal, we have high expectations for our students and our staff. We hope that your time with us will be academically challenging and filled with many new learning experiences.

This “Student-Parent Handbook” contains policies and procedures that will help you throughout the year. When everyone follows these policies and procedures, our school operates efficiently and effectively. Your knowledge of this information is important so be sure to take the time to read the handbook thoroughly.

It is our hope that all our parents or guardians take an active role in the life of the school. We encourage you to join the PTO and volunteer to help out in the school. There are many opportunities for parents and guardians to share time and talents with us. The PTO has many activities planned throughout this year. We invite all parents or guardians to be part of your school experience.

We are looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,



Anne Bilko  
Principal

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## **CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL**

Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent	860-354-8406
Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent	860-354-3235
Mrs. Teresa Kavanagh, Director of Human Resources	860-354-2200
Mr. Matthew Cunnigham, Facilities Director	860-354-6265
Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Fiscal Services	860-355-8406
Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Student Services	860-354-2654
Mrs. Sandra Sullivan, Director of Food & Nutrition Services	860-354-3712
Mr. Jeffrey Turner Director of Technology	860-354-3713

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS**

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## **SARAH NOBLE...PART OF NEW MILFORD'S HISTORY**

Sarah Noble was a typical girl and woman of her time. Although the facts concerning her life are meager and clouded by both time and legend, we can make certain assumptions that are based on our knowledge of the period and early records.

Sarah Noble was born in Westfield, Massachusetts on March 22, 1699, one of seven children born to John and Mary Noble. In those times, Westfield was on the fringe of the frontier and had provided John the means to support his family through farming, trapping, and fur trading. Anticipating civilization's encroachment upon the wild animals necessary for his trade, he moved his family to New Milford in the Colony of Connecticut. The new area offered the Housatonic River and sheltering mountains in which to live and friendly Indians, willing to share the land. John Noble set off with his eight-year-old daughter, Sarah, to establish the first homestead in this fertile new frontier. While Sarah's father worked to establish a dwelling for his family, Sarah provided the cooking, sewing, and other necessities of life. In a short period, the rest of the Noble family joined them.

Sarah's life in New Milford continued as it had in Massachusetts, centering on the household chores with occasional visits to her Indian neighbors. With the exception of Canadian Indian attacks during the colonial wars, trips to Woodbury for church, and an occasional illustrious visitor, Sarah grew quietly to maturity in her home on the west side of the green near Bank Street. By the fall of 1721, there were 25 families in New Milford, and it was decided that a school would be open for four months during the winter. Sarah was well educated and was elected to be one of New Milford's earliest teachers.

The values of responsibility to community and respect for others, coupled with a commitment to learning, are the hallmark for the school named in Sarah's honor. The Sarah Noble Intermediate School will strive to foster in its community of learners values' that are "noble".

## **SARAH NOBLE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

The staff at the Sarah Noble School views the educational process as a total human growth experience encompassing the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of the child. We hold high expectations for all students. In recognition of the individual differences of our children, we make a conscious effort to provide a variety of learning experiences that will enable the students to meet the goals that have been established for them. Our mission is to foster the love of learning in every child so that when he/she leaves this school, he/she will take with him/her the thirst for knowledge, the skills to be successful academically, the confidence to face new and difficult challenges, and the desire to be a successful contributing member of our society.

## **SARAH NOBLE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the mission of Sarah Noble Intermediate School community to embrace and empower all children to realize their dreams and potential by fostering the partnerships that ensure a positive, secure learning environment where learners are encouraged to develop an awareness of learning styles and strengths. In order to become independent successful citizens of good character, students will be provided experiences that will enhance the whole child so that they become active participants in an ever-changing world.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

All students are expected to perform to the best of their ability. A student's performance is assessed in a variety of ways and should always reflect the contribution and effort of the student. Failure to comply with this practice of academic honesty, including cheating, violates the philosophy and goals of Sarah Noble Intermediate School.

## **ACADEMIC RECORDS**

The school will maintain a cumulative record for each student. The records will include information on academic achievement, grade level, attendance, standardized test scores, and medical history. Student records are confidential. A parent or legal guardian has the right to examine their child's file, and may arrange to do so by contacting the principal. Student educational records will be handled in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g ["FERPA"] and Board of Education Policy 5125. As such, the release of student information or transfer of records will take place only with the written consent of the parent or legal guardian except as otherwise provided for under FERPA. This is handled through the grade level administrator's office.

## **ACCIDENTS**

When a student becomes ill or is involved in an accident at school during the school day, he/she is immediately sent to the nurse. Should further medical treatment be needed, the nurse will immediately attempt to contact the parents. If a parent cannot be reached, persons who have been listed as contacts on the child's registration card will be contacted in an attempt to locate the parent. If the parent cannot be located, the principal, with advice from the nurse, will determine the best course of action.

## **ADMITTANCE INTO BUILDING**

For everyone's safety, all exterior doors are kept locked during the day. Our school also has camera surveillance. When you enter the building at the front door between the hours of 8:50 AM and 3:15 PM, you will need to ring the buzzer, state your name, and the reason for your visit. The receptionist will unlock the door and direct you to the main office. If this is the first time someone is visiting the school, they will be asked to present a photo ID that will be scanned into our security system. Visitors will then be issued a nametag to wear for the duration of their visit.

## **AIDS INSTRUCTION EXEMPTION**

In accordance with state guidelines, the New Milford School System will offer instruction about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Parents will be afforded opportunities to notify school authorities in writing in the event they wish their child to be excluded from the AIDS program. If a parent has notified the school authorities that they wish their child to be excluded, that child will be given an alternative instruction program. No academic sanction will be levied against any student who is provided with this alternative. (Board of Education Policy #6164.12).

## **SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION PROGRAM**

The K-12 Health curriculum includes state-mandated lessons regarding sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention. Upon the written request of a parent or guardian, a student shall be exempt from participating in the sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program in its entirety or from any portion specified by the parent or guardian. During the period in which the student would be participating in the program, the student will be provided with an opportunity for other study or academic work.

# ATTENDANCE

**Parents must contact the school each day their children will be absent.** Please follow the procedure outlined below.

- Please call the school **each** day that your child is absent.
- Callers will be led through a telephone prompt to leave a message with their name, their child's name, and the reason for the absence. Please provide a **written note** or email with parent signature with the date(s) of absence(s) and the reason for the absence(s) within 10 school days for school records.

Students who are absent the day of the event, or who are serving in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, or expulsions may not attend day and/or evening school programs or performances.

Level	Total # of Days Absent*	Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to Be Considered Excused	Documentation Required within 10 Days
1	One Through Nine	Any reason that the student's parent or guardian approves.	Parent or guardian note only.
2	10 and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student illness (Note: to be deemed excused, an appropriately licensed medical professional must verify all student illness absences, regardless of the absence's length).</li> <li>• Student's observance of a religious holiday</li> <li>• Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.</li> <li>• Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required).</li> <li>• The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (parental documentation is not required for this reason).</li> <li>• Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators. (Must meet certain criteria. See below for details).</li> </ul>	Parent or guardian note and in some cases additional documentation (see details for specific reason).

\*The total number of days absent includes both excused and unexcused absences.

It is important to note that while the first nine absences in a school year can be deemed excused for any reason the parent or guardian provides, the 10th and each subsequent absence establish a more stringent and specific set of reasons for the absence to qualify as excused. The flow chart offers a visual tool to help determine if an absence is excused or unexcused. (CT State Dept. of Education, April 2013)

In cases where a student's extended absence crosses levels, the rules should be applied as if there were two separate absences, one under level 1 and the other under Level 2. For example, if a student is absent for five days on a family vacation and those absences represent numbers seven through 11, absences seven, eight, and nine would fall under Level 1 rules and can be accepted as excused; absences 10 and 11 would fall under Level 2 rules and would not be considered excused. (CT State Dept. of Education, April 2013)



## ATTENDANCE LAWS AND SCHOOL POLICIES

The New Milford Public School System considers regular attendance in school critical if a student is to maximize his/her benefit from his/her educational opportunities.

School attendance is such a serious matter that the State of Connecticut has passed a law which states that any student in grades K-8, who is absent from school without an acceptable reason, is considered to be committing an act of truancy. Connecticut's truancy law further states:

- *A "truant" is any student having four unexcused absences from school in any month or ten unexcused absences in a school year.*
- *A "habitual truant" is any student having twenty unexcused absences within the school year; and*
- *Each Superintendent of Schools shall file a written complaint with superior court for each habitual truant enrolled in the schools under his jurisdiction.*

To enable us to inform you if your child is absent without explanation, the law also requires that we obtain from you a telephone number or other means of contacting you during the school day. If your child is absent from school, you must call the Attendance Hotline to report the absence. You should dial the School Phone Number 860-210-4020. The Attendance Line is option number 4. Please leave a detailed message containing the following:

your child's name, home room teacher, and reason for absence. We would sincerely appreciate your cooperation in complying with this law.

In order to keep parents informed about the status of their children's attendance, a letter will be sent home beginning with the fourth absence and regularly after that. The school social worker will also contact parents of students with a pattern of excessive absences, tardiness, and/or early dismissals.

### **Definitions and Procedures Regarding Excused and Unexcused Absences**

In accordance with Board Policy and Connecticut General Statute 10-198a, the following procedures shall be followed for monitoring, reporting, and intervening with regard to unexcused student absences in elementary and middle schools.

**In accordance with the State Board of Education's definition of attendance, students need to be in school for at least half of the instructional school day/ four hours to be reported as in attendance for the day.** Any student who is tardy to school must report to the office for admission to school if entering after 8:50 a.m. (If there is a late opening or an early dismissal, then the student must be in attendance for half of the school day hours.) We solicit the cooperation of parents in helping their students to arrive at school on time.

#### **A. Definitions**

1. **"Student"** – a student enrolled in grades kindergarten through grade eight in the New Milford Public Schools.
2. **"Unexcused absence"** – any absence from an entire regularly scheduled school day for which absence is not excused as defined below.
3. **"Excused absence"** – an absence from an entire regularly scheduled school day for:
  - a. reasons of health, including illness, incapacity, or doctor's visits
  - b. religious holidays
  - c. court appearance
  - d. funeral in immediate family
  - e. approved school activities

- f. suspension or expulsion
- g. limited absences from school for special activities with parental consent, subject to the approval of the principal

### Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absence is defined as missing 10 percent or greater of the total number of days enrolled during the school year for any reason. It includes both excused, unexcused, out-of-school suspensions, and in-school suspensions that last more than one-half of the school day. A doctor's note(s) will be required of any student who is repeatedly absent. Students who have been chronically tardy will be reported to the administration. A student and/or parent(s) may meet with the principal and/or assistant principal to discuss methods to improve attendance. If a student continues to be a chronic absentee, paperwork will be filed with the juvenile court. Given reasonable cause to believe a student is truant from school, the school administration may ask the school social worker to visit the student's home to verify the cause of the absence. Such home visits may be scheduled outside regular school hours. The administration reserves the right not to excuse students who are chronically absent and to require written verification of reason. If absences are unexcused, a student may not make up missed work.

Furthermore, Connecticut law requires school personnel to promptly notify the State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families ["DCF"] under certain circumstances, including suspected educational neglect. Consequently, given that regular school attendance is essential to the educational process, and as chronic absenteeism or tardiness seriously impedes a student's academic progress. If a student continues to be chronically absent, the principal (or designee) may contact DCF or the New Milford Juvenile Review Panel.

### **Documentation of Absence**

Documentation is written explanation of the nature of and reason for the absence as well as the length of absence. This includes a signed note from the student's parent or guardian, a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with the parent or guardian regarding the absence, or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional. All documentation of absences must be provided within 48 hours of the absence. This note can be sent electronically, however, it must contain the parent/guardian signature.

*All absences not reported by a parent/guardian call and a note are considered unexcused, even if they would otherwise satisfy the criteria for an excused absence.*

## **AUDIENCE CONDUCT AT PERFORMANCES AND ASSEMBLIES**

Respectful and exemplary behavior is expected from our students at assemblies. Throughout the year, we have many opportunities to enjoy performances from our students as well as guest performers. These performers deserve a courteous and attentive audience. Parents who are attending any school event or performance with their younger children must supervise their children at all times for the safety of everyone. When performances are held in the gymnasium, children may not climb on or use the physical education equipment.

Students are taught to demonstrate courtesy toward performers and consideration of fellow audience members. Rules that apply in public venues such as movie theaters apply during school performances. Thus, students are required to remain seated, still, and quiet throughout a performance unless participation is encouraged by the presenter(s). Clapping is the acceptable means of demonstrating

appreciation for a performance. Behaviors such as whistling, hooting, and yelling are unacceptable ways of demonstrating enjoyment during an assembly. Booing is strictly prohibited.

If parents are invited to school performances during the day, students still must sit with their classes.

Parents, siblings, and guests will be provided seating in a separate area.

### **AUDIENCE CONDUCT FOR EVENING PERFORMANCES**

Please help us reinforce the common courtesy that is expected from students during school day presentations. In addition to the rules above, we ask that all audience members abide by the following:

- All children (students and their siblings) should remain seated **with** their parents.
- Students may not walk in the hallways unattended.
- For safety reasons, no adult or child is permitted to climb on any pieces of gym equipment.
- Families should remain for the duration of the performance, not just until their children have completed their part in a presentation. Performances hampered by inappropriate actions of the audience, may be stopped. Persons (adults and/or students) may be asked to leave the performance.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Students must be present in school to attend afterschool or evening events. Students who are absent the day of the event, or who are serving in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, or expulsions may not attend.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

We expect that all students at SNIS will know, understand, and support the behavior expectations set by the school. They can help us make our school a safe and enjoyable place for everyone by simply following those expectations. If a student's behavior is not consistent with our expectations, specific consequences shall be applied in accordance with the Board of Education's "Series 5000 – Students" policies, which can be reviewed on the New Milford Public Schools' website at: <https://www.newmilfordps.org/boepolicies>. The administration of this policy will not solely focus on discipline but on changing and controlling inappropriate behavior.

Therefore, SNIS staff will:

1. Provide a disciplinary structure for those who need it.
2. Ensure a fair, firm, and consistent enforcement of school regulations.
3. Identify the consequences for inappropriate behavior.

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

We know that birthdays are very special days that often your child enjoys sharing with their classmates. Individual teacher recognition of student birthdays may vary, but the day will be celebrated with your child. We ask that **non-food** treats be provided in order to avoid food allergy issues and to observe the district wellness policy. If you choose to send in birthday recognition, we ask that you please contact your child's teacher to discuss the specific **non-food** request.

Please note: teachers will determine at the beginning of the year, children who will not be able to participate in parties for religious reasons and provisions will be made to accommodate them.

## **BULLYING**

All of us at Sarah Noble Intermediate School are committed to promoting and maintaining a positive learning environment where all students are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically. We stand committed to continuing our efforts to eradicate mean behavior and bullying in all forms, as we strive to create a learning community that values respect and responsibility for all. As always, we work in partnership with parents, our School Resource Officer and community members in reinforcing this message and communicating our collective intolerance for “mean behavior.” The purpose of the Board of Education’s Policy #5131.911 is to address the existence of bullying in schools and to establish the district's Safe School Climate Plan. A full definition of “bullying,” including “cyberbullying,” is set forth in Board Policy 5131.911, which can be reviewed on the New Milford Public Schools’ website as part of the “Series 5000 – Students” policies, located at: <https://www.newmilfordps.org/boepolicies>.

Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, at school-sponsored or school-related activities, functions or programs whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the local or regional board of education. Bullying is also prohibited *outside* of the school setting if such bullying results in any of the following: (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Any form of discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying is also strictly prohibited. Any student who engages in bullying as defined in the board policy may be subject to discipline up to, and including, suspension and expulsion in accordance with Board of Education Policy 5114. Any school employee who fails to respond to bullying as required by this policy and the district's Safe School Climate Plan may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Bus route numbers are listed in the local papers prior to the opening of school. Children are to ride their assigned bus to and from school. There can be no changing of buses for activities such as scout meetings, play dates with another child, sports, etc. It is a parent’s responsibility to provide transportation to after-school activities.

Any long-term bus changes must be approved by the Director of Fiscal Services at (860) 355-8406.

### **Bus Safety:**

For safety’s sake, children should know and follow all bus rules. Ignoring or disobeying these rules will result in disciplinary action, ranging from the suspension of the student’s bus-riding privileges up to and including suspension and expulsion from school.

Students should:

1. Respect private property while going to and from the bus stop. Keep off lawns and porches.
2. Stand back, away from the road, until the bus has come to a complete stop.
3. Stay out of the road.
4. Respect other individuals and their property, both on and off the bus.
5. Follow the reasonable directions of the driver and other responsible adults.

6. Exercise caution at all times, especially while getting on and off of the bus.

Students should not:

1. Fight or “fool around” on the bus.
2. Enter or exit the bus other than at their designated bus stop.
3. Use profane/abusive language or gestures towards others.
4. Put any part of their body or objects of any sort out of the windows.
5. Move out of their seats or face the rear while the bus is in motion.
6. Ride on any bus after having their bus privileges suspended or revoked.
7. Obstruct the aisle with feet, legs, books, instruments, or other objects.
8. Fail to sit in an assigned seat if so designated.
9. Create excessive noise.
10. Damage or deface the bus or equipment. (Damage may result in financial restitution in addition to other administrative action.)
11. Smoke, display matches/lighters, or carry flammable materials.
12. Litter, eat food, chew gum, or drink beverages.
13. Tamper with doors, windows, or other bus equipment.
14. Throw objects either inside the bus or at the bus while outside.
15. Transport live animals.
16. Be disrespectful towards the driver and fellow passengers.
17. Possess weapons, alcohol, or drugs.

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION: CODE OF DISCIPLINE**

Students riding school buses are bound by the same behavioral expectations in force during the school day. Violations of proper behavior on school buses may result in loss of bus privileges as well as further disciplinary consequences including suspension and expulsion. Smoking, threatening, fighting, disruptions, and use of offensive language are among behaviors that will not be tolerated on the buses. Furthermore, any student who inflicts damage upon a bus will be held financially responsible for the cost of that damage.

Students who leave school grounds during the day without authorization are not permitted back on campus to ride a bus home. School buses are equipped with video cameras; students should be aware of the possibility of videotaping.

The following sanctions apply to student violations of the school’s and the school district’s behavioral expectations on or around school buses during regular daily bus runs, as well as on field trips and co-curricular bus trips, unless otherwise noted:

Disciplinary actions are defined at three levels given below:

### Level I

- eating food, chewing gum, or drinking beverages
- littering the bus

- refusing to use an assigned seat
- refusing to follow reasonable directions of the driver
- profane or obscene language
- leaving one's seat while bus is moving
- placing hands, feet, or head out the window
- pushing or shoving others
- disrespect of bus driver

After an initial warning, subsequent infractions will subject the student to the possible suspension of his or her bus-riding privileges in increasing increments of three (3) days, ten (10) days, and thirty (30) days. Should such behavior persist or escalate, or should the administration determine that this behavior resulted in, or posed a risk of, injury either to the student or to another individual, the student may be subject to further disciplinary consequences, including suspension and expulsion.

#### Level II

- Fighting/assault/battery
- Entering/exiting through rear door
- Interfering with driver controls
- Smoking
- Throwing articles
- Vandalism

The first offense will subject a student to ten (10) days suspension from riding. Subsequent offenses will result in the suspension of bus-riding privileges in increasing increments of thirty (30) days and sixty (60) days. In all cases involving vandalism, the student and/or parent/guardian will be assessed for all costs. Should the administration determine that this behavior resulted in, or posed a risk of, injury either to the student or to another individual, or should this behavior persist or escalate, the student will be subject to further disciplinary consequences, including suspension and expulsion.

#### Level III

- Using/possessing/distributing/selling a controlled substance  
Using/possessing a firearm, weapon, or dangerous instrument
- Carrying flammable materials  
Engaging in any other conduct which constitutes grounds for suspension and expulsion under Board Policy Section 5114

Students will be suspended and reported to the Superintendent for possible expulsion for up to one year.

## **CHARACTER CODE**

Good conduct at Sarah Noble Intermediate School is synonymous with good citizenship; students are expected to behave in a manner that is conducive to a safe, respectful, and caring learning environment. At Sarah Noble School we encourage all students to follow our pledge to be respectful, responsible, honest, safe, and kind.

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

If there is reasonable cause to suspect that any child under age 18 has had injury or injuries inflicted upon him/her by other than accidental means or has injuries that are at variance with the reasons given for

them or is subject to maltreatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessary food, clothing and shelter, cruel punishment, or access to education, then according to Sec. 17-38a(b) of the Connecticut Statutes, school employees are mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect cases to the proper authorities.

## **COMPUTERS & INTERNET USE**

Students use computers and Chromebooks for instructional practice and intervention, writing assignments, practicing computer skills, doing research, and participating in assessments.

Students must abide by the New Milford Public Schools Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Agreement. If a student commits any violation or in any way misuses the access to the school's computer network and the Internet, access privileges may be revoked and the student may be subject to further disciplinary consequences, up to and including suspension and expulsion.

## **CONFERENCES**

In the fall and spring of each school year, parent-teacher conferences are scheduled using the online portal. Teachers or parents may also request additional conferences to discuss student progress or behavior concerns. Parents may want to consider contacting the teacher whenever a situation occurs at home which might have an impact on their children's self-esteem or ability to learn.

## **DELAYED OPENINGS / EARLY SCHOOL CLOSINGS / EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

A delayed opening starts 2-hours later at 10:50 a.m. Early closing is 2 hours and 15 minutes earlier at 1:00 p.m. Here is a summary of what you can expect during the coming school year:

### **1. How is the decision made to delay, dismiss early or close schools?**

Decisions regarding school closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals are made by the Superintendent in consultation with the local police and highway departments, the school bus company, and area weather forecasters. The first consideration in making these decisions is student safety.

Morning decisions about delayed openings are made between 4:45 and 5:30 a.m. based on road conditions and weather forecasts available at that hour. Decisions must be made at that point because the first school buses begin their morning runs shortly after 6:00 a.m.

#### School Start Times with a Delayed Opening:

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School 9:35 a.m. Northville, Hill and Plain, & Sarah Noble Intermediate School 10:50 a.m.

Decisions about early dismissal due to weather problems or other emergencies are made during the late morning and announced around **11:00 a.m. Afternoon EXCEL Pre-K classes are canceled when early dismissal occurs.** During weather related early dismissals, students are dismissed **two hours and 15 minutes** early.

#### School Dismissal Times with an Early Dismissal:

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School 12:00 p.m. Northville, Hill and Plain, & Sarah Noble Intermediate School 1:00 p.m.

An accelerated early dismissal may be called when a storm happens unexpectedly or is anticipated to arrive between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. If this should occur, a rapid school message will be sent out and the words “accelerated early dismissal” will be part of the message.

Accelerated Early Dismissal Times:

New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School 11:00 a.m.

Northville, Hill and Plain, & Sarah Noble Intermediate School 12:00 p.m.

On a day when an accelerated early dismissal is called, morning EXCEL students will be dismissed at 12:00 p.m. with the elementary schools.

**2. How are delayed openings handled?**

If early morning conditions are poor but expected to improve by sunrise, school opening times are delayed by **two hours**. **Morning EXCEL Pre-K classes are canceled when there is a delayed opening.** If the weather does not improve during the **two hour** delay period, a decision to close school for the day may be made. Parents and guardians should check the TV stations listed below until the delay period has passed in order to make sure that school will be in session.

**3. How do I find out if schools are closed or there is an early dismissal?**

School closings and delayed openings are announced beginning around 6:00 a.m. and early dismissals are announced around 11:00 a.m. on the following stations:

TV:           WVIT-TV (Channel 6/NBC 30)  
               WTNH-TV (Channel 8)  
               WFSB-TV (Channel 3)

Parents are also encouraged to sign up for email and text notifications through [www.ctweather.com](http://www.ctweather.com) by selecting *e-Notifications*. There is a link on the district’s website at [www.newmilfordps.org](http://www.newmilfordps.org).

The district will also notify parents of school closings and early dismissal through a rapid notification service. This service will allow us to send a voicemail message to all parents within minutes. The ability to deliver a message is only as successful as the contact information that we have for your child, therefore, please make certain that your child’s school has the most up-to-date direct dial numbers. This information is updated annually at the beginning of the school year. If your information changes after the annual update please let your child’s school know immediately. Please note there will be one call at approximately **5:45 a.m.** to delay or cancel school. In rare instances a call will be made later if the weather conditions change.

**4. What if schools are open but my road is dangerous?**

New Milford is the largest town in Connecticut. It is quite possible for conditions on a few roads to be hazardous while conditions are good throughout the rest of the town. You should keep your child home if you believe that conditions on your particular street are unsafe. Inform the school by way of a phone call or an absence note that your child was absent due to hazardous road conditions.

**5. What if I work out of town and do not receive the early closing announcements?**

Arrangements should be made with a friend or neighbor who can hear the early closing announcements to call you or to care for your child until you arrive home.

**6. What can I do if I am concerned that my child might come home to an empty house in the event of an early closing?**

Parents and guardians should arrange with neighbors or friends to handle situations where young children might arrive home from school to find no one there. You need to make sure your children know what to do in case you may ever be delayed. Again, you can stay informed about early closing decisions by watching one of the TV stations listed, calling your child’s school, or by checking the district website at [www.newmilfordps.org](http://www.newmilfordps.org).



7. **What about school activities on days when school is closed?**

After school and evening activities are canceled if school is closed or dismissed early.

8. **Why are schools sometimes closed when the weather doesn't seem to be too bad?**

Given the uncertainty of weather forecasts, conditions can change considerably between 5:45 a.m. and normal school opening time. Occasionally, a storm warning will cause us to close schools, but a few hours later the storm may turn in another direction. We would rather have the schools closed on such a day than to risk having the storm hit while we have thousands of children in the schools or on the roads.

Changes in school hours can be difficult to handle given a family's busy schedule. However, we know you will understand that safety considerations must come first and that making decisions that affect thousands of people in a large area while facing uncertain weather forecasts can be difficult. Your patience and cooperation are appreciated.

## **DEMOGRAPHIC UPDATE**

- Each child needs a demographic update each year by parents.
- Parents are requested to be sure to supply the school with names, addresses, and phone numbers of local persons who can be called in emergency situations should the parents not be available.
- Parents must advise the school of changes, which occur in the registration information during the school year, including changes in email, addresses and cell phone numbers.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Maintaining discipline within the school is an essential component of ensuring a safe environment in which students can pursue their education and access the school's activities. Students and their parents are expected to learn and abide by the district's disciplinary policies and the school's behavioral expectations.

In order to establish a positive and safe learning environment for all of the students, the following rules are in place. All staff members are responsible for establishing, explaining, and enforcing these rules; parents are responsible for teaching their children about the need for respect and cooperation; students are responsible for showing respect and exercising the self-control needed to meet our expectations for appropriate behavior. Disruptive, discourteous, and unsafe behaviors or actions that violate the rights of others will result in disciplinary action. The use of profanity will not be tolerated at any time. Consequences for disregarding school rules will be fair, appropriate, and designed to teach the child the need for following school rules and ways to make better behavioral choices in the future.

Although the school will to the extent possible seek to implement progressive discipline, incremental interventions may not be appropriate in cases in which the misconduct is sufficiently serious as to constitute a basis for suspension or expulsion under Board Policy 5114. While this is not an all-inclusive list, examples of such behaviors include:

1. Assault/Threatening/Bullying
2. Theft/Extortion
3. Vandalism
4. Possession, use, or transmission of tobacco, drugs, or non-drug substances presented as drugs, alcohol, weapons, or explosives
5. Leaving school without permission
6. Insubordination
7. Other behaviors outlined in New Milford Board of Education Policy (#5114)

In such cases -- and except for conduct for which Connecticut law and Board Policy 5114 mandates expulsion – the administration will determine the appropriate disciplinary consequence, with the understanding that should a student be recommended for expulsion by the administration, the student will be entitled to a hearing before the Board of Education regarding that recommendation.

A complete listing of the school district’s student expectations, including student conduct, is set forth in the “Series 5000 – Students” section of the New Milford Board of Education’s Policies, which can be found in their entirety on the New Milford Public Schools’ website at <https://www.newmilfordps.org/boepolicies>.

## **DRESS AND GROOMING**

1. In order to promote a positive learning environment the Board of Education supports these standards for safe and appropriate dress; nothing in this policy shall be intended to infringe upon students’ freedom of expression.
  - a. Headwear: All headwear shall be removed prior to entering school and must be placed in the student’s locker or where outer garments are stowed, for the entire day.
  - b. Blouses/Shirts: Blouses/shirts should be constructed so that the tops of the shoulders are covered. Blouses/shirts will not allow exposure of any portion of the waist, hips, midriff or exposure of the chest.
  - c. Skirts/Shorts/Dresses/Pants: Skirts, shorts and dresses should have hemlines that are mid-thigh. With safety as our primary concern, pants should be worn to stay close to the waist; undergarments should be completely covered.
  - d. Outdoor Garments: All outdoor garments will be placed in the students’ locker immediately upon entering the school and will remain there for the entire day.
  - e. Shoes: Safe footwear must be worn at all times.
  - f. Attire: Attire that displays indecent language, pictures or symbols that contain sexual references, or that advertise or encourage the use of drugs, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages are prohibited. Messages of violence or gang allegiance are prohibited. Pajamas, slippers and other lounging attire are only allowed for special events.
  - g. Accessories: Students may not wear accessories that could cause injury to others or that are substantially or materially disruptive of the education process.
2. The administration and staff are responsible for the implementation of this policy. Exceptions to the above dress standards will be considered for medical reasons, special events, and cultural beliefs or to promote school spirit as determined by the principal or his/her designee.

3. When the above stated standards have not been met, any of the following will occur:
  - a. individual counseling;
  - b. sending the student home to change and return to school;
  - c. parental conferences;
  - d. Suspension and possible referral for expulsion, for insubordination (refusal to change and/or follow the directions of the administration/designee).

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

Early dismissal is discouraged since it interrupts class continuity. If it is absolutely necessary to remove a student prior to 3:15 P.M., the office should be notified in advance. A note should accompany the child to school that day.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Schools regularly conduct emergency drills to properly respond to emergency situations. There are a variety of drills for different circumstances.

- **Evacuation Drill** - instructs the students and staff to evacuate the building.
- **Lockdown** - prepares the school for lock down procedures to safeguard against dangers outside the building.
- **Secure-in-Place Drill** - prepares the school for possible natural disasters.

Each of these drills is discussed with the students and prepares them to respond in an orderly and appropriate manner for their safety and well-being. These drills are regularly scheduled throughout the school year and usually last only a few minutes.

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (E.L.L. SERVICES)**

All of the New Milford Public Schools provide E.L.L. services for students who speak another language as their primary language. Students are provided with extra support to help them acquire English language skills. Each year, these students are administered an assessment which tracks their progress in the English language and helps in the planning of English language services that are needed by each child.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Classes may take a field trip during the course of the school year. Field trips to various points of interest are taken to enrich the child's learning experiences. Parents are required to sign a permission slip before their child can leave the school grounds. The permission slip will indicate the date, time, cost, and destination of the field trip. Field trips must be paid for by check; teachers may not accept cash for your child's field trip. Children who fail to return a signed permission slip will not be allowed to accompany their class on the field trip. These students remain at school in another classroom until their class returns from their field trip/or the end of the school day. District policy prohibits students being transported in private vehicles.

The cost of the field trip should be paid by a check made out to your child's school. If a check for the field trip has to be returned to a parent for "insufficient funds," an additional fee will be charged to the parent. If a parent issues the school a check with "insufficient funds," we can only accept certified checks and money orders for all future field trips. No child is ever denied access to a field trip because

of lack of funds. The PTO very generously donates money towards our school field trips and quietly sponsors anyone in need.

Please be aware that the school is not responsible for any lost belongings or damage to student clothing because of wearing name tags or participating in field trip activities. Therefore, it is very important that students wear comfortable and appropriate clothing on these outings.

All field trip chaperones must be fingerprinted according to the district's Board of Education Policy #1212. Due to laws regarding student privacy, photographs taken by parents during class activities at school or field trips **cannot** be posted on social network sites. Please refer to Board Policy # 6141.324.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

### **MySchoolBucks Program**

New Milford's Food and Nutrition Services Department provides parents with a convenient, easy, and secure online prepayment service to deposit money into their children's school meal accounts at any time. This service also provides you with the ability to view the account balances through a web site called [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com). In addition, you can print out a copy of your children's eating history reports. The history report lists dates and times of all food purchased within the past thirty days.

When parents choose not to take advantage of the online pre-payment service, advance payments via cash or check are made to the cafeteria. Checks are payable to the School Lunch Activity Fund and should include your child's full name and PIN.

If your child qualifies for free or reduced priced meals, this information is noted in the system and the meal is processed just as it is for all other students without any special indication to the student.

Applications for free or reduced priced meals will be sent home with students in the fall and are also available in the school office.

If you are concerned about your child's food allergy, please notify the cafeteria with this information. If indicated, a warning will appear on the cashier's screen for a review of the items on your child's tray.

When purchasing a meal, students enter their personal six-digit personal identification number (PIN). A practice keypad can be found on the district homepage.

Please feel free to contact the Food Services office at 860-354-3712 if you have any questions.

### **Breakfast**

A breakfast program is available to all students who attend our schools. **Breakfast begins at 8:30 a.m.** Classes begin at 8:50 a.m.

### **Lunch**

Monthly menus are listed in the newspaper and on the New Milford Public Schools website. Students have the option daily of choosing the traditional hot lunch or one of three other choices. The additional choices are 1) sandwich bar; 2) bagel, yogurt, and string cheese; 3) chef's salad. Accompanying these lunches will be fresh or canned fruit, 100% fruit juice, or fresh vegetables. Students may choose two (2) of these with their lunch.

## **FOOTWEAR**

It is important that your child wears safe footwear at all times. Safe footwear does not leave toes exposed and ensures proper balance while walking, preventing unnecessary injury, especially during physical education classes, on the playground, and during emergency drills.

## **GUIDANCE SERVICES**

The counselor is available to all students who may need help with problems that interfere with their learning. The guidance counselor provides school services and resources to support a positive and successful school environment. The counselor also gives classroom developmental guidance lessons to all students. The curriculum aligns with the district mission and enhances learning by assisting students to acquire critical skills in the five CASEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, relationships skills, social awareness and responsible decision making.

## **HARASSMENT**

The school environment shall be free from harassment, insults, or intimidation on the basis of a student's race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, disability or mental status. For a more detailed discussion of the school's policies and procedures pertaining to harassment, please see the "Non-Discrimination and Harassment" section of this handbook. See Board Policy #5145 (Statement in Relation to Civil Rights Act, Title IX, and section 504 of Rehabilitation Act) and #5145.6 (Grievance Procedure).

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Lunch and snacks, including beverages brought from home, should be nutritious. Nutrient-dense foods are those that provide students with calories rich in the nutrient content needed to be healthy and include whole grains, fresh fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

The school nurse is on duty when school is in session. He/she will assess any child who becomes ill or injured during the school day, administer first aid treatment defined by the medical advisor's standing orders, administer medications, conduct vision, hearing, and scoliosis screenings, monitor incoming physical examinations and immunizations, and will be available for other health related issues. The nurse can be reached by calling the main school number.

### **1. What if a child becomes sick or injured at school?**

The school nurse will assess the illness or injury. If it is necessary to send the child home, the nurse will call a parent to come for the child or to provide some means of transporting the child home. The school does not accept responsibility for transporting an ill child. If an illness or accident is an emergency, the nurse will contact the child's primary physician (or the school medical advisor) as well as the parent. Ambulance transportation will be activated if deemed necessary.

### **2. When my child is sick, how should I decide whether or not to keep him/her home from school?**

Sometimes it can be hard to decide whether to keep a child home from school. If a child has a fever (while receiving Tylenol, etc.) vomiting, diarrhea, rash or other skin eruption, acute illness

(i.e. severe cold symptoms, persistent cough, etc.) it would be best to keep him/her home. The child should be symptom free for 24 hours or cleared by the doctor before returning to school.

**3. What if my child needs to be given medications at school?**

Connecticut state law requires a physician's written order and the authorization of the parent/guardian for the school nurse to administer any oral medication. The medication is to be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult. The medication must be properly labeled indicating the child's name, type of medication, dosage, and the physician's name. Students are not allowed to bring medication to school.

**4. What is the school's procedure for administering medication?**

The New Milford Board of Education policy for the administration of medication specifies that school nurses, teachers, and properly trained para-professionals (under certain emergency conditions) may administer medications during school hours under the following guidelines:

- The school must receive the **written consent of the parent and the written order of the prescribing doctor to administer medication.**
- The **medication** must be **brought to school and taken home by a parent/or responsible adult.** Any medication not taken home will be disposed of by the nurse after one week.
- The medication container **must be labeled with the name of the student, name of the doctor, name of the medication, the date(s) it is ordered, and the directions.**

The proper consent and order forms are available in the health office and our local doctors have been supplied with them as well. A telephone call from you or your doctor will not suffice.

Your cooperation in this policy will be of great assistance in ensuring your child receives the medical assistance needed while maintaining a safe environment for the entire student body.

PLEASE NOTE: Neither the New Milford Board of Education nor any of its personnel, including but not limited to school nurses, is responsible for ensuring that the medication, or its recommended dosage, prescribed by a physician or other medical professional and/or provided by the parents or guardians, is appropriate for the student.

**5. What health screenings are provided?**

Vision, hearing, and postural screenings are provided as mandated by the state of Connecticut.

Both vision and hearing screenings will be done in the fall for all students in grades 3-5. Postural screenings will be done in the early spring for all female students in grade 5. Notices will be sent home with specific instructions prior to the postural screening day.

If your child scores below the mandated criteria in any of the screenings, a referral notice will be mailed to you urging you to seek professional attention as soon as possible. The form should be completed by the examining physician and returned to the health office.

## **HOMEWORK**

The purpose of homework is to strengthen classwork and to broaden a student's background and competency in a specific course area or basic skill. Reasonable and well-planned homework assignments can contribute significantly to a student's school progress. The type of homework and the length of the assignment will be reflective of the child's age and attention span.

### **Absences and Homework**

A student with an illness of brief duration should obtain assignments from another student, or wait until the next school day when the student returns to obtain assignments. If a student is ill for at least three

consecutive days, parents should request the homework assignments from the teacher, and the work will be available for pick-up the following school day.

Absences from school for vacations, trips, or appointments outside of school detract from a student's learning. Please cooperate by scheduling family vacations during the summer or during school vacations. Please note that if your child is going to be absent from school for one of these reasons, it is not incumbent on the teacher to provide your child with the work that will be missed during such an absence. The instruction that your child would have received directly from the teacher during the absence cannot be easily replaced, and your child should make specific arrangements upon return to complete the missed work.

Reading is a skill. The more it is practiced, the better one gets at it. Therefore, we encourage parents to set aside time each day for their child to read.

## **HOME TUTORING**

Students absent for an extended period because of illness, may request homebound instruction upon completion and acceptance of the medical questionnaire. All parent requests for home instruction will be directed to the student's Administrator and will be provided for medical reasons that meet the State and Federal mandates for such services. Once instruction has been approved, a teacher will provide homebound instruction for at least one hour per day, or five hours per week. Typically, instruction will take place at the public library. Circumstances may sometimes require that instruction be provided to a student remotely or virtually, which will be at the discretion of the school administration. If it is determined that instruction needs to take place in the home, an adult person must be present in the home during the instruction period. Any questions or problems should be directed to administration.

## **INSURANCE**

Parents will have the opportunity to participate in a school insurance program approved by the New Milford Board of Education. These forms, with an explanation, are distributed to the children in the fall for your review. Participation is voluntary; however, all forms must be signed noting acceptance or denial and returned to the school so that we can be assured that parents are aware of the program.

## **LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER**

The school library media center is staffed by the library media specialist and the library clerk. Classes come to the media center to learn library media skills, and students may visit to choose a book to borrow or to conduct research for a paper or project.

The library media center has thousands of materials available to students and teachers. The materials have been carefully selected to support the curriculum and to arouse student interest. There are a variety of fiction and non-fiction books available for students to borrow, along with computers that can be used for additional research. Written parent permission is required for students, supervised by an adult, to access information on the internet. In addition to materials for student loans, there are many audio-visual and computer materials available for use in the classroom. Students are encouraged to utilize the media center as often as possible; they are always welcome.

## **LOCKERS**

Each student will be assigned a locker. Locks are not permitted on any lockers. Sarah Noble students understand that they are permitted access only to their own lockers. Neither Sarah Noble nor the New Milford Public Schools is responsible for the contents of a student's locker or for the loss, disappearance, or theft of any items from a student's locker. Lockers are the property of the school system and may not be defaced. Decorations such as balloons and streamers are not permitted.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Children and parents can look for lost personal articles in the school's lost and found section. Special items such as glasses, watches, and wallets with money may be located in the office. Placing your child's name on outer garments will help to identify misplaced items. The school is not responsible for any lost or broken items. Electronics, expensive toys, and valuable items should not be brought to school; they are distracting to the learning environment and can be lost or broken. All unclaimed items will be donated in December and June of each school year.

## **NEWSPAPER/MEDIA INFORMATION**

Throughout the course of the school year, there will be many opportunities for newspaper photographs to be taken of the students at our schools. If you do not wish to have your child/children photographed, you need to notify your child's teacher and the office each new school year and sign the media denial form sent home for this purpose.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

### **STATEMENT OF POLICY:**

All of the school district's programs and activities are offered without regard to race, color, gender, national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or any other basis prohibited by law, and it is the policy of the Board to prohibit conduct and behavior by any employee, agent, volunteer, student, or third party in the New Milford school system that may be deemed to be unlawful discrimination, including but not limited to harassment. Students will exhibit conduct that is respectful and courteous to employees, to fellow students, and to the public. Any person found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion from school for students or dismissal for school personnel.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is prohibited by both federal and Connecticut law, as well as by Board Policy. Sexual harassment does not only depend upon the offender's intention, but also upon how the recipient of it perceives the behavior or is affected by it. Sexual harassment can originate from a person of either sex against a person of the opposite or same sex and from peers as well as adults. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or any other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including, but not limited to:



- insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct;
- threats or suggestions that a student's submission to, or rejection of, unwelcome conduct will in any way influence a decision regarding the student;
- conduct of a sexual nature that substantially interferes with the student's learning or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment, including but not necessarily limited to: sexual name calling, display of unwanted affections, inappropriate gestures, inappropriate jokes/cartoons/pictures, inappropriate touching, sexual rumors, overly personal conversations, harassing telephone calls.

### **Other Harassment**

Federal and/or state law also prohibits harassment that is based upon or motivated by a student's race, color, religion, natural origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, disability or mental status. See Board Policy #5145.5 (Statement in Relation to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 5145.6 (Grievance Procedure).

Title IX protects students from gender-based discrimination, including harassment. Similarly, Title VI protects students from discrimination, including harassment, based upon race, color, or national origin. Section 504 protects students from discrimination, including harassment, that is based upon the student's actual or perceived disability. Connecticut law also protects students against discrimination that is based upon the student's race, color, religion, natural origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, disability or mental status.

**Guidelines for harassment are very simple. No person may do or say anything that causes another person to feel uncomfortable or threatened in a place where he or she must go: school, work, church, the corner store. People have a right to go to these places without fear of being in an uncomfortable, or worse, a threatening situation.**

If a student feels he or she is being discriminated against or harassed, the student should:

- First, request that the other person stop;
- Then, if the other person does not stop request assistance from an adult staff member in the immediate area;
- Finally, if it continues, the student should immediately request help from his/her school counselor and administrator.

### **Enforcement**

Discriminatory or harassing conduct is not and shall not be permitted and may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion from school for students or discharge for staff members.

**PLEASE NOTE: Board Policies 5145.5 and 5145.5 (regulation) set forth the Board's procedures for reporting, investigating, and resolving claims of unlawful harassment.**

For questions or complaints regarding the district's policy of non-discrimination, please contact the Title IX/Section 504 Coordinators:

Section 504 & Title IX Coordinator for Students  
Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent  
New Milford Board of Education  
50 East Street, New Milford, CT 06776  
**860-354-3235**

Title IX Coordinator for Staff  
Mrs. Teresa Kavanagh, Director of H.R.  
New Milford Board of Education  
50 East Street, New Milford, CT 06776  
**860-210-2200**

## **PARENT PORTAL**

The New Milford Public School District is continuing its efforts to communicate with parents and guardians of students. PowerSchool, our student information system, allows secure access to parents through the Parent Portal. Parent Portal will allow parents and guardians to create a single parent account that will give access to all their children in the district. Powerschool is an easy-to-use, web-based system that will allow you to stay informed of your child's courses, grades, and attendance. Technology resources for families can be found on the school's website at: <https://newmilford.schoolinsites.com/technology>.

## **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

Each year the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) offers parents the opportunity to become a member of this helpful organization. The PTO works to enrich the educational experience of the children in our school. The PTO generously provides a wide variety of cultural and educational events for our students, such as performances, storytellers, visiting artists and writers, theater groups, and science programs and pays for them with the money earned from various fundraisers throughout the year.

The Parent-Teacher Organization has general meetings monthly throughout the year. All parents are invited to attend these meetings. If any parent needs to get in touch with a PTO representative, please contact the school office for a phone number. The New Milford P.T.O website is [newmilfordpto.org](http://newmilfordpto.org).

## **PARKING**

Please be advised when visiting the school, drivers should observe all no parking zones. Under **no** circumstances should someone park in the fire lane as this creates a potential safety hazard.

## **PEER CONFLICT**

Conflict is a normal part of healthy relationships occurring when children attempt to manage situations and navigate their world. Conflict resolution is an important life skill and we encourage students to build self-advocacy skills. We teach children strategies to help them solve problems on their own. Teachers and support staff model feelings and use "I Messages" (see below) with students. Students

engage in discourse during read alouds and participate in role-playing opportunities. They also learn about the difference between reporting and tattling.

*I Message:*

🗨️ “Please stop that. I do not like it when you \_\_\_\_\_. It makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_ .”

We like to ensure our students have the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions and demonstrate remorse, which is key in the development of empathy. We encourage parents to spend time together with their children to talk about school and peer relationships. We also encourage your child to use “I Messages” when conflicts arise at home or in the community as well as in school.

## **PERSONAL ITEMS AT SCHOOL**

- Sports equipment needed for recess will be provided by the school.
- The use of aerosol spray containers may cause harm to others and should not be brought to school.
- Buying or selling personal or other items at school is not allowed.

*The staff may place other restrictions on personal items being brought to school when, in their judgment, their use is inappropriate for some or all of the children in the school.*

## **PHOTOGRAPHING STUDENTS**

Due to laws regarding student privacy, photographs taken by parents during class activities at school or field trips **cannot** be posted on social network sites. Please refer to Board Policy #6141.324.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES**

The school provides psychological services to children who are experiencing academic and/or social emotional difficulties. When deemed appropriate by a Planning and Placement Team or a Section 504 Team, the school psychologist can provide a thorough evaluation utilizing instruments designed to measure achievement, potential for learning, and emotional adjustment. Parental permission is necessary and consultation is provided.

## **RECESS**

Children are expected to play outdoors during their supervised recess period during reasonable, fair weather conditions. Your child should be properly dressed for the season and weather. Footwear is very important to protect children’s feet from wetness and cold temperatures. In the winter, children should wear snow pants, warm jackets, mittens, and boots to play outside during recess. If your child has been ill and your doctor requests that he/she stay indoors, a note should be sent to that effect.

During recess, children will be required to follow safety rules. For security reasons, parents are not permitted on the playground during recess.

When the weather is inclement, recess is conducted inside where space is restricted, and the children must practice responsible behavior in sharing space and materials.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued three times a year in November, March, and June for students in grades 3-5. They are a means to report academic progress. Progress indicators on the report card are the result of a variety of classroom activities. Occasionally a child's program may be modified or accommodated so that he or she may master a skill more easily. Questions regarding a child's achievement should be addressed directly to the teacher who has done the grading.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

The school day begins at 8:50 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. Students should not arrive at school before 8:35 a.m. unless attending intramurals or music performing group practice. School Hours for a 2 hour delayed opening due to inclement weather: 10:50 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Students may begin arriving at 10:35 a.m. Early dismissal due to *inclement weather*: 12:00 p.m.

## **SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH BASED INTERVENTION (SRBI)**

A standards-based core curriculum implemented with research-based teaching and learning practices (e.g., communicating the learning objective, modeling, guided practice, flexible grouping, formative assessment, explicit feedback, choice) ensures grade level proficiency for most students; however, some students often struggle with this approach. Scientific Research Based Intervention or SRBI is Connecticut's version of Response to Intervention (RtI). It is both an educational process and a systematic approach for addressing the needs of learners who have not been identified as needing special education. It is mandated by federal law, and its primary purposes are to intervene and support struggling students, to determine the possible presence of learning disabilities, and to help all students achieve grade level proficiency.

Schools create and implement general education strategies and interventions and various layers, or "tiers" of student support in an attempt to help students achieve standards. These interventions use assessment data to identify important learning needs. Then, educators develop related intervention plans. Teachers and support personnel use these intervention plans in the general education classroom with individual students, with flexible small groups, and in support programs. The SRBI process uses assessment data to identify students when data suggest that these students may be performing below grade level expectations. The SRBI process also allows educators to identify high priority learning objectives, design related interventions, and monitor student progress toward proficiency. While language arts and mathematics are the primary foci for this initiative, we also incorporate behavioral interventions in our work.

## **SOCIAL WORKER**

The social worker helps to coordinate school and community services and resources to provide a successful school environment for the children. The social worker is available to all students and families.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Provision for children with special needs is part of the total school program in the New Milford Public Schools. Eligibility for, and the nature of, special education and related services are determined in accordance with both federal and Connecticut law by a Planning and Placement Team ["PPT"].

## **STUDENT PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF PROCEDURES**

### **Student Pick-Up**

If your child is being picked up at school, please notify the teacher with a signed note specifying who is picking up the child. This is required for your child's safety. **We will not dismiss your child to anyone unless we have a note or a phone call from the parent or guardian directing us to do so.** While we understand that this may be inconvenient for you at times, it is for your child's safety.

- At dismissal time, parents will enter through the side door by the cafeteria and check in with the staff in the cafeteria lobby.
- If you need to pick up your child and you have not sent in a note, you should report to the office. We will notify the teacher of your plans. However, we **try not** to interrupt classrooms prior to 3:15 P.M.
- Please **do not** ask to have us release your child early unless it is an emergency.

**IMPORTANT: If we do not have a note from a parent, your child will be sent home on the bus.**

### **Student Drop Off**

Students should be dropped off at the curb of the visitor parking lot. A staff member is on duty from 8:35 to 8:50 A.M. For our children's safety, please wait and do not pass the car in front of you. After 8:50 A.M., students should report to the main office via the front doors.

**Note:** Early morning drop-off for instrumental music, chorus or before-school intramurals takes place between 7:30- 8:00 directly in front of the school. We respectfully request the following of all parents/guardians who drop their children off early for any of these activities:

- Pull up as far as you can to the front entrance.
- Do not pass cars that are dropping off children.
- Be careful of children or adults walking in the crosswalk. 🚶 Have your child ready to exit your car quickly.
- Once your child leaves your car, don't wait at the curb.
- Leaving your car unattended in the designated fire land may result in a \$100 fine!

## **TALENTED AND GIFTED SERVICES**

The Talented and Gifted ["TAG"] program serves a relatively small portion of the total school population whose learning characteristics and behaviors vary significantly from the norm. Although Connecticut law does not require school districts to provide TAG programming, enrichment opportunities may be available for these students. In third grade, all students complete the Cognitive Abilities Test (Cog At) screening. Additionally, all students are screened for extraordinary talents in art and poetry. Contact Mr. Daniel Delia, the district TAG Coordinator if you have any questions.

## **TARDINESS**

Prompt arrival at school is expected of all students. Late arrival disrupts class and causes loss of instructional time. Any student who arrives after 8:50 a.m. is considered tardy and will be asked the reason for arriving late. Students who arrive late for school need to report to the office and pick up a late pass before going to their classrooms. Students need to be in school for a minimum of four hours to be recorded as present. (If there is a late opening or an early dismissal, then the student must attend for half of the school day hours.)

# **TECHNOLOGY – BRING YOUR OWN DEVICES (B.Y.O.D.)**

## **Guidelines for the Use of Personal Technology on Campus**

Technology has changed the way we approach education as we prepare our students for future opportunities. We understand the many positive educational benefits of using technology in the classroom and the importance of the integration of technology in our curriculum. In an effort to encourage our students and continue to develop their technology skills, students in the New Milford Public Schools may use their own technology at school for educational purposes.

### **Use of Technology for Instructional Purposes**

Use of technology in school is a privilege, which comes with great responsibility. Students will only be allowed to use their laptops, tablets, cell phones or other electronic devices for educational purposes at school. Checking personal email, socializing via texts or instant messages, or otherwise engaging in personal pursuits is prohibited during the instructional day.

### **Internet Access on School Grounds**

Only the internet gateway provided by the school may be accessed while on campus. Personal technology, including cell phones and cell network adapters are not permitted to be used to access outside internet sources at any time.

### **Compliance with other Board Policies**

When participating in B.Y.O.D., students must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct, as well as all Board Policies, particularly the New Milford School District's Acceptable Use Policy. This means that students who use their personal technology at school must abide by the established policies regarding acceptable use of the Internet, bullying, harassment, cheating, threats, student confidentiality and other misconduct that violates school rules or causes a disruption of educational activities.

### **Additional Guidelines**

- Teachers have the discretion to determine when students may use personal technology in the classroom. Students must immediately comply with their teachers' request to shut down or put away personal technology.
- All personal technology must be in silent mode.
- Students may not use personal technology during any assessments or tests unless otherwise directed by school personnel.
- Students shall not transmit, post or otherwise publicly share photographs or videos that they have taken of any person on school grounds or in a school vehicle.

### **Security and Damage**

Responsibility to keep a student's personal technology secure rests with the individual owner. New Milford School District, including its staff or employees, is not liable for any device stolen or damaged on campus. If a device is stolen or damaged, it will be handled through the administrative office in a manner similar to other personal property. It is recommended that students personalize their devices for easy identification and utilize protective cases.

The New Milford District Technology Department will not service any non-district owned technology, which includes troubleshooting, software or hardware issues. Students are responsible for securing their devices and making sure that they have up-to-date anti-virus software installed, if applicable.

### **Failure to Follow B.Y.O.D. Guidelines**

Misuse of personal technology in violation of these guidelines may result in the loss of access privileges, a prohibition on the use or possession of personal technology on school grounds, or other disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion, as well as possible criminal prosecution or other legal action.

We would prefer that students NOT bring electronic items to school, unless otherwise specified by their teachers.

### **Laptops/Tablets**

The use of personal laptops/tablets by a student is permitted at the teacher's discretion. Further, the school does supply students with computer lab facilities and Chromebooks in the classrooms, which are utilized for research and instruction. A student has this access to technology under the supervision and direction of school staff. **Students are required to read and sign a usage policy outlining the guidelines and restrictions to be followed for appropriate use of the computers.**

### **Laser Pointers**

In accordance with state law, possession of laser pointers by minors on school grounds or other public places is prohibited unless being used under the direction of a teacher. Shining, pointing, or focusing a laser pointer directly or indirectly at or on anyone for the purpose of harassing, annoying, or causing a person to fear injury is prohibited. Infractions are punishable by fines set by a judge of the Superior Court.

## **TITLE IX**

As noted in the "Non-Discrimination and Harassment" section of this handbook, the New Milford Public Schools are committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons and does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal non-discrimination laws. Any concerns, questions, or information regarding the school district's non-discrimination policies, including those pertaining to Title IX, Title VI, and/or Section 504 may be obtained by contacting Ms. Holly Hollander, Title IX Coordinator for the New Milford Public Schools, 50 East Street, New Milford, CT 06776 (860-354-3235).

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks and library books are the property of the New Milford Board of Education. Textbooks are loaned to the students and will be collected when their use is completed or at the end of the year. Children are responsible for their books. They must be covered and returned in good condition. Parents will be required to pay for any books that are damaged or lost.

## **UNIFIED ARTS**

## Art

The art program at Sarah Noble School provides for rich experiences in the study of painting, drawing, graphics, sculpture, multi and mixed media, and crafts. Student artists experience, develop, and refine the use of art materials, tools, techniques, composition, forms and artistic language and vocabulary. Students experience and develop their level of understanding of the elements and principles of design, gain an appreciation of art history and the role of the visual arts in culture. Instruction is given in art analysis, interpretation, and evaluation appropriate to grade level and ability. The connections of individual student works to the art world and to art as a career are made.

Creativity, imagination, focus, self-discipline, and informed aesthetic choices are strengthened and refined. The program is designed to make maximum use of the resources of the studio art rooms and to holistically link to classroom learning and the community. Student artists experience the works of professional artists and master artists, and grow as artists themselves.

## Music

Music education at Sarah Noble School has been designed to provide the student with a variety of musical learning experiences. The general music program offers the student an overall appreciation of music and encourages both group and individual expression. It provides an understanding of musical terms, techniques, and instruments, and stimulates historical and cultural awareness. All students have the opportunity to participate in the instrumental music program. In addition to the general music program, students can participate in extra-curricular activities such as chorus, band, and orchestra.

## Physical Education

The physical education program at the Sarah Noble is designed to meet the needs of students in grades three through five. The main philosophy is to develop the whole child and to foster self-discipline, creative thinking, problem-solving skills, self-awareness, and social interaction. Special emphasis will be placed on health and physical fitness. Students will engage in activities to develop physical fitness, while developing an understanding of the need to maintain a life-long healthy lifestyle. Students in grade four will be administered a test to assess the level of fitness to determine future areas of emphasis. Students are required to wear gym shoes and appropriate, loose-fitting clothing that will allow them to participate to the best of their ability.

## VISITORS

**All visitors must check in at the office.** For the safety of both the students and staff members, a security system is in place in each of the New Milford Public Schools. The outside doors are locked during school hours. All visitors must ring the buzzer located at the main school entrance and provide their name and purpose of their visit before they may enter the building and proceed to the main office. Using our Raptor Ware System, visitors will be asked to submit their driver's license to be used to create a personalized Visitor's Badge. This badge will be handed in to the main office before exiting the building. All visitors must display a visitor's badge at all times. Visitors not wearing this identification will be directed back to the office to obtain one.

**Please be aware that visitors cannot use the driveway in front of the school building during bus arrival and dismissal times.** It is against the law to pass a school bus that has activated its flashing red lights. Visitors who pass any school bus during bus arrival or dismissal times will be reported to the police and may be required to pay a fine. Parents must use the area designated for student pick-up and drop-off.



Due to safety concerns, parents and visitors are not permitted on the playground during school hours. Since our school is such a large building, it is impossible for all of our staff members to know every parent and visitor.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Parents/guardians and other members of the community are welcomed and encouraged to volunteer in their children's classrooms or school. These offers of support are always appreciated and may be accepted, subject to the discretion of the teacher and school administration. All New Milford Board of Education policies and CT state laws pertaining to volunteers will be adhered to.

**Please note: All volunteers and mentors must be fingerprinted according to Board of Education Policy #1212.**

## **W.I.N. (WHAT I NEED)**

Teachers in grades 3-5 have a scheduled WIN time (blocks) daily for targeted reteaching and enrichment activities in reading or math. WIN blocks are separate from the daily instructional time. During WIN time, all new instruction stops, this is a time to reinforce or extend skills that have already been taught. Students are grouped by instructional need as indicated by assessments, report cards, and teacher observation. Intervention or enrichment instruction may be provided by a student's classroom teacher or by other staff members such as another teacher at the grade level, a reading specialist, interventionist, ELL teacher, music teacher, tutor, or special education teacher.

***Thank you for your help and support.***

***By working together in partnership, we***

***can truly make a positive difference for***

***our students!***

## **SCHEDULES (Samples)**

(Individual schedules will vary)

### **Grade 3**

8:35-8:50	Homeroom:
8:55-9:05	Morning Meeting
9:05-10:50	ELA
10:55-11:20	Recess or Lunch
11:25-11:55	WIN
12:00-12:25	Lunch or Recess
12:30-1:30	Math
1:30-1:50	Read Aloud
1:50-2:30	Unified Arts
2:30-3:00	Content
3:00-3:10	Afternoon Meeting
3:10-3:15	Dismissal

### **Grade 4**

8:35-8:50	Homeroom
8:55-9:05	Morning Meeting
9:05-11:10	ELA
11:10-11:50	Unified Arts
11:50-12:30	Content
12:30-12:55	Lunch or Recess
1:00-1:30	WIN
1:35-2:00	Lunch or Recess
2:30-3:10	Content
3:10-3:15	Dismissal

### **Grade 5**

8:35-8:50	Homeroom
8:55-9:05	Math warm-up
9:05-9:45	Unified Arts
9:45-10:55	Math

10:50-11:30 Content  
11:30-11:55 Lunch or Recess  
11:55-1:00 ELA  
1:00-1:25 Recess or Lunch  
1:25-2:25 ELA  
2:30-3:00 WIN  
3:00-3:10 Afternoon Meeting/Read Aloud  
3:10-3:15 Dismissal