

NEW MILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION



ANNUAL REPORT **2020 – 2021**

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
50 East Street
New Milford, Connecticut 06776

NEW MILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Mr. Joseph Failla, Vice Chairperson

Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny, Secretary

Mrs. Tammy McInerney, Assistant Secretary

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Board of Education Annual Report 2020 – 2021

The New Milford Public Schools served 3,905 students in PreK through grade 12 during the 2020-21 academic year with a staff of 359 teachers, 17.6 building administrators, and 254.5 support staff (non-certified staff). The operating budget for the New Milford Public Schools for 2020-21 totaled \$64,464,776.

July 2020

- The Board held a special meeting on July 2, where they agreed to waive the ninety-day notice requirement for the Superintendent's unilateral termination, effective July 31, of the current Contract of Employment between the Board and Superintendent Kerry Parker. At the meeting, the Board authorized the Board Chair to form an Ad Hoc Search Committee for the purpose of considering possible candidates for the Interim Superintendent position.
- On July 14 and 21, the Board held special meetings to interview and discuss candidates for the position of Interim Superintendent of Schools.
- At its Regular Meeting of July 21, the Board awarded the bid for the Student Information System to PowerSchool for services for a period of three years; approved the 2019-20 Capital Projects as recommended; approved COVID-19 Related Expenses as proposed; and approved the NMPS Path to Reopening 2020-21 Draft.
- On July 28, the Board held a special meeting to appoint Dr. Paul Smotas as Interim Superintendent of New Milford Public Schools.

August 2020

- At a special meeting on August 6, the Board approve the proposed New Milford Public Schools 2020-21 School Calendar as presented, with a student start date of September 8, 2020. Dr. Smotas said it was his intention to open schools under the Hybrid Model of instruction.
- At its Regular Meeting of August 18, the Board approved policies 6141.321-4118.4-4218.4 Responsible Use of Technology, Social Media, District Network Systems, 4118.113/4218.113 Title IX Sexual Harassment, and 5145.7 Title IX Sexual Harassment of Students. The Board authorized signatories on school district accounts and approved flexible spending account amendments. The Board suspended the NMHS Student Parking Fee for the first semester of the 2020-21 school year.
- At the August 18 meeting, the Board approved COVID-19 related materials requested not to exceed \$200,000. The Board also approved COVID-19 related staffing requests not to exceed \$750,000.
- The Board held an executive session on August 18 to discuss security strategy, as well as the deployment of security personnel, and/or devices affecting security, as well as emergency plans in the New Milford Public Schools. New Milford Police Chief Spencer Cerruto, Lieutenant Wheeler and Captain Wilcoxson attended. Following the executive session, the Board approved the MOU regarding School Safety and Security Initiatives Jointly Enacted by the New Milford Board of Education and the New Milford Police Department.

September 2020

- At a Special Meeting on September 15, the Board discussed Restorative Practices and approved the Title IV grant which will be used to fund the program.
- At its Regular Meeting on September 15, the Board congratulated **Mrs. Susan Brofford**, New Milford's Teacher of the Year for 2020-21. The Board recognized retiring paraeducators Mrs. Merete Bonacci, Mrs. Nancy Mowrey and Mrs. Christianne Urbanowski and thanked them for their many years of service.
- Building principals gave reports regarding reopening of schools.
- The Board approved policies 9320 Meetings of the Board and 9325 Meeting Conduct and the Computer Science curriculum for Schaghticoke Middle School. The Board also approved the Teacher Evaluation Flexibility Waiver. A substitute differential for retired teachers was also approved.
- On September 15, the Board held an executive session to discuss a possible agreement with CEA-New Milford and extracurricular stipends.
- At a Special Meeting on September 23, the Board ratified the proposed successor collective bargaining agreement between the New Milford Board of Education and CEA-New Milford, pending CEA-New Milford ratification.
- On September 29, at a Special Meeting, the Board held an executive session to discuss the superintendent search.

October 2020

- On October 7, at a Special Meeting, the Board held an executive session to review the superintendent's performance.
- On October 20, at a Special Meeting, the Board held an executive session to discuss the superintendent search.
- At its regular meeting on October 20, the Board recognized:
 - NMPS Retirees Mary Maloney and Ellamae Baldelli
- The Board discussed the NMPS Continuum for Learning and the continued use of the Hybrid model.
- Interim Superintendent Smotas provided an enrollment report.
- The Board accepted the following donations of masks:
 - Love Woolies in the amount of \$4,500.00
 - FEMA in the amount of \$9,000.00
 - Mask America's Kids in the amount of \$7,452.80
- The Board approved the Authorized Signatures Change Form for ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs.
- New policy 1900/4900/5900/6900 Wearing Masks and Face Coverings During the COVID-19 Pandemic and revised policy 6159 Special Education were approved.
- Tuition Rates for 2020-21 were set as follows:
 - New Milford High School: \$13,404.00
 - Schaghticoke Middle School: \$11,565.00
 - Sarah Noble Intermediate School and Elementary Schools: \$11,519.00
- The New Milford High School Graduation Date for the Class of 2021 was approved for Saturday, June 19, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

- The Board approved a part-time hourly COVID Liaison position and a proposed Administrator Evaluation Contracted Service.
- The Board reviews the BOE Annual Report for 2019-20.
- The East Street Roof/Cupola issues were discussed.
- The Board met in executive session to discuss an MOU regarding the Human Resources Reorganization.
- At a Special Meeting on October 22, the Board met in executive session to discuss interim superintendent candidates.
- On October 26, the Board held a Special Meeting discuss the Interim Superintendent search; the Board was appointed in its entirety as the Interim Superintendent Search Committee.
- At a Special Meeting on October 29, Ms. Alisha DiCorpo was appointed as Interim Superintendent of New Milford Public Schools and the Board authorized the Board Chair and/or the Board's legal counsel to negotiate the contract on behalf of the Board.

November 2020

- At a Special Meeting on November 4, the Board discussed potential learning models for the time frame of November 25, 2020 through January 3, 2021. Interim Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo said it is her intention to switch to remote learning for the district for the week of November 30-December 4 so as to allow for COVID testing results following the Thanksgiving holiday. At the meeting, the Board also approved the Interim Superintendent Contract as discussed in executive session.
- On November 16, the Board held a Special Meeting to interview and discuss candidates for the position of Human Resources Director.
- At its Regular Meeting of November 17, the Board recognized retiring paraeducator Patricia Shanahan.
- The Board approved the appointment of Mrs. Catherine Gabianelli as Director of Human Resources.
- A request by Camella's Cupboard regarding the East Street Gym was approved.
- NMHS Activities Stipends were approved as recommended to run.
- The Board approved an additional part time COVID Liaison.
- A reimbursement to the Food Service fund in the amount of \$295,172 from the 2019-20 Year End Balance was approved.
- The Board reviewed and discussed the current Five Year Plan.

December 2020

- At a Special Meeting on December 3, the Board approved appointing the Board of Education in its entirety as the Superintendent Search Committee.
- At Special Meetings on December 8, the Board approved a proposed memorandum of understanding between the Board and the New Milford School Administrators Association and authorized the Chair to sign the memorandum pending further legal review; the Board appointed **Catherine Calabrese** as Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools and authorized the Board Chair and/or Board's legal counsel to negotiate the contract; the Board held a workshop on the 2021-22 budget topics of enrollment projections and COVID budget.

- The Board held a second budget workshop on December 15 regarding the topics of ODP placements/excess cost and a capital update.
- The Board held its Annual meeting on December 15, and elected the following officers:
 - Chairperson – **Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach**
 - Vice Chairperson – **Mr. Joseph Failla**
 - Secretary – **Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach**
 - Assistant Secretary – **Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan**
- At its regular meeting, the Board recognized: NMPS Retirees **Marshia King, Irene Miller and Diane Taylor**
- The Board recognized NMPS Stars of the Month: **Sarah E. Herring, Dianne Johnson, Yvonne Lynch, Henry Marshall, Keith Nold and Jennifer Titus**
- The Board approved the following grants:
 - No Kid Hungry grant in the amount of \$70,200.00
 - Perkins grant in the amount of \$35,604.00
- The Board approved the Educational Specifications for the NMHS Roof Project and the SNIS Oil Tank Project.
- The Board discussed the temporary suspension of the waiver request process for substitutes without a Bachelor’s Degree.
- The Board discussed the status of the Lillis Building and a possible relocation of administrative offices.

January 2021

- The Board of Education conducted three evenings of hearings and adopted a budget on the fourth night for the 2020-2021 school year in the amount of \$65,846,024.

February 2021

- At a special meeting on February 10, the Board elected **Alisha DiCorpo** as Superintendent of New Milford Public Schools.
- At its regular meeting on February 23, the Board recognized NMPS Stars of the Month: **Carol Couch, Stacey Haleks, Donna Molinaro, Daisy Norlander, Adam Radday, Candice Schiesel and Stephanie Wilson**
- The Board of Education accepted the following Gifts:
 - New Milford PTO in the amount of \$4,799.95
 - Scholastic Books in the amount of \$4,900.00
 - Anonymous Donor in the amount of \$1,000.00
- The Board approved a revision to Policy 4118.112/4218.112 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment.
- The Board approved the following curricula:
 - English III CP & Honors
 - Journalism I CP
 - Journalism II CP
 - Grade 6 Social Studies
 - Grade 7 Social Studies
 - Grade 8 Social Studies
 - Spanish III CP & Honors
 - French III CP & Honors

- The Board approved a Staff Laptop COVID-19 Equipment Request in the amount of \$225,186.00 and a COVID-19 Related Materials Request in the amount of \$15,868.00.
- The Board approved a Human Resources Support Proposal in the amount of \$16,500.00
- The Board approved funding in the amount of \$6,500.00 for a Relocation Feasibility Study to explore moving administrative offices to Sarah Noble Intermediate School.
- Under items of information, the Board reviewed regulation revisions, previewed textbooks, discussed the Town of New Milford Audit Report dated June 30, 2020, the NMPS 2021-2022 School Calendar, and ESSER II Funding.
- The Board approved the proposed draft contract of employment for the Superintendent of Schools, authorized the Board counsel to finalize the contract and for the Board Chair to sign the contract on behalf of the Board.

March 2021

- At a Special Meeting on March 9, the Board approved the appointment of Michael Rafferty as Interim Schaghticoke Middle School Principal.
- At its regular meeting on March 16, the Board recognized NMPS Stars of the Month: **Cindy Cotter, Todd Miltimore, Jennifer Morrison, Nicole Orletski and Giles Vaughan**
- In honor of Board Appreciation Month, Superintendent DiCorpo thanked the Board for their countless hours, tireless effort and commitment to help the district achieve goals, align funding in the local budget to support the schools and adopt policies in support of the district.
- According to policy 3300, the Board authorized up to \$12,000 for NMHS tennis court repairs.
- The Board of Education accepted the following Gifts:
 - New Milford PTO in the amount of \$8,939.40
- Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo was approved as an authorized signatory on district accounts.
- The Board approved the following curricula:
 - Introduction to Video Productions
 - Kindergarten General Music
 - Grade 1 General Music
 - Grade 2 General Music
 - Grade 3 General Music
 - Health Grade 1
 - Health Grade 2
 - Health Grade 3
 - Health Grade 4
 - Health Grade 5
- The Board approved COVID-19 Related Materials and Staffing Requests in the amount of \$160,894.20
- Textbooks Ways of the World and Updated Myers' Psychology for the AP Course were approved by the Board.
- The Board certified the NMHS Roof Replacement Project for bidding.
- The Board authorized its legal counsel to take the appropriate steps discussed in Executive Session, up to and including litigation, to seek reimbursement of tuition paid to

a subsequently closed, out-of-district educational program; and to further move that the Board authorize its Chair, Superintendent DiCorpo, and its legal counsel to negotiate and otherwise amend the terms and conditions of the Agriscience agreement currently in place with Regional School District No. 12 as discussed in Executive Session, with the understanding that any final agreement will be subject to Board approval.

- On March 23, the Board held a Special Meeting to approve the proposed Director of Information Technology temporary staffing agreement and to authorize the Board Chair to sign the agreement on its behalf.

April 2021

- On April 6, the Board held a Special Meeting to approve the MOU between the New Milford Board of Education and the New Milford School Administrators Association and authorize the Board Chair to sign it on its behalf; and to approve the appointment of Nestor Aparicio as Interim Facilities Director.
- At its Regular Meeting on April 27, the Board recognized NMPS Stars of the Month: **Alessandro Amenta, Donna Difabbio, Amy D’Orio, Danielle Kiser, Tammy Siegle, and Christine Zona**
- The Board of Education accepted the following Gifts:
 - New Milford PTO in the amount of \$6,452.00
 - Anonymous Donor in the amount of \$1,000.00
 - Kimberly Clark in the amount of \$7,477.00
- The Board approved Adult Education ED-244 in the amount of \$147,436.00
- The Board approved the annual Healthy Food Certification Statement, Food Certification Exemptions for School Fundraisers and Beverage Certification Exemptions.
- Maxx Facilities Upgrades not to exceed \$25,000.00 were approved by the Board.
- The Board approved \$45,229.00 to replace the NMHS electronic sign.
- Following executive session, the Board approved the Superintendent’s request regarding her employment contract’s carryover provision; approved the appointment of James Matranga as Interim Schaghticoke Middle School/Northville Elementary School Assistant Principal; and approved the Agreement between the New Milford Board of Education and the Sherman Board of Education and authorized the Board Chair to sign the Agreement on its behalf.

May 2021

- At its Regular Meeting on May 18, the Board recognized NMPS Stars of the Month: **Tori Backer, Toni Bentley, Ashley Kivela, Jennifer LaCava and Karen Matthews**
- The Board of Education accepted the following Gifts:
 - New Milford PTO in the amount of \$4,000.00
- The Board approved the following grants:
 - Adult Education PEP Grant in the amount of \$40,000.00
 - IDEA Section 611 grant in the amount of \$923,834.00 and the IDEA Section 619 grant in the amount of \$33,714.00.
- The Board awarded the following bids:
 - Boiler Cleaning: to Penn Marr Boiler Cleaning for a period of one year
 - Septic Cleaning: to New Milford Septic for a period of one year

- The Board approved the following policies:
 - 3000 Concept and Roles in Business and Non-Instructional Operations
 - 3110 Budget Planning
 - 3160 Budget and Transfer of Funds
 - 3230 Federal Funds
 - 3231 Medical Reimbursement for Special Education Students
 - 6200 Adult Education
- The Board approved the New Milford Fire Facility Usage Agreement and authorized the Board Chair to sign on its behalf.

June 2021

- At a Special Meeting on June 2, 2021, the Board heard a presentation from Energy Systems Group (ESG) regarding a town-wide plan for energy efficiencies.
- At a Special Meeting on June 10, 2021, the Board heard a presentation on School-Based Health Centers.
- At a Special Meeting on June 14, 2021, the Board heard a presentation on Strategic Coherence Planning and then moved into executive session for discussion and evaluation of Board members' roles and performance.
- At its Regular Meeting on June 15, 2021, the Board approved the appointment of **Raymond Manka** as NMHS Principal.
- The Board of Education accepted the following Gifts:
 - New Milford PTO in the amount of \$6,959.30
- The Board awarded the following bid:
 - NMHS Electronic Sign to Herkimer Industries in the amount of \$45,829.00
- The Board approved the following policies:
 - 3152 Spending Public Funds for Advocacy
 - 3300 Purchasing
- The Board approved the following new courses:
 - Sports Literature
 - Graphic Novels
 - World History
 - Modern World History
 - African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies
- The Board approved ten curricula:
 - Instrumental Music - Grades 6 and 7
 - Instrumental Music - Grade 8
 - Public Speaking
 - English I College Prep
 - English I Honors
 - English II College Prep
 - English II Honors
 - Grade 4 Social Studies
 - Grade 5 Social Studies
 - Forensic Science

- The Board approved the Memorandum of Understanding by and between the Town of New Milford and the New Milford Board of Education Pertaining to Energy Conservation Services and authorized the Board Chair to sign on its behalf.
- The Board approved the Architecture and Engineering Services Proposal from Silver/Petrucelli and Associates in the amount of \$6,600.00.
- The Board approved the MBC's recommendation to disconnect the SNIS boiler and generator from the UST and remove the existing UST.
- The Board approved \$200,000.00 from NMHS Roof Replacement from the roof insurance account and end of year balance.
- The Board agreed to make a request to the Town Council and Board of Finance to allocate the end of year balance for 2020-21 (subject to final audit) to the following: \$200,000.00 to the already established COVID account; \$100,000.00 to the Turf Field Replacement account; and the remaining balance to the Capital Reserve account.
- The Board approved the local COVID budget for fiscal year 2021/22 totaling \$280,107.00 from the already established COVID account.
- The Board agreed to make a request to the Town Council and Board of Finance to remove \$282,889.73 from the Capital Reserve account to fund the following projects:
 - NMHS Electronic Sign - \$45,829.00
 - NMHS Gym Floor Dry Scrub and Resurface - \$8,675.00
 - Architecture and Engineering Services Proposal from Silver/Petrucelli and Associates - \$6,600.00
 - Local portion of funding required for the forthcoming State of CT Security Grant - \$201,785.73
 - Maxx renovations - \$20,000.00
- The Board approved the appointment of the Assistant Superintendent, and in his/her absence, the Director of Human Resources, as the Designee for the Superintendent of Schools from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.
- The Board approved authorization for the Superintendent to accept resignations and make appointments, excluding administrative appointments, from June 16, 2021 through September 21, 2021.
- The Board approved authorization for the Superintendent to purchase budgeted instructional materials, COVID-19 related materials, and other supplies, equipment and services from June 16, 2021 through September 21, 2021.
- The Board approved the employment and salary of the Assistant Superintendent, Director of Human Resources, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations, Director of Technology, Director of Food Services, Systems Analyst, Account Data Specialist, Network Administrator, Accounting Manager, Facilities Director, Assistant Facilities Director, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Adult Education Facilitator, Board Certified Behavior Analyst, and Substance Abuse Counselor as discussed in executive session.
- The Board approved the Superintendent of Schools' evaluation protocols, the Superintendent's new, three-year contract of employment and authorized the Board Chair to sign the contract on behalf of the Board.
- The Board approved the appointment of **Holly Hollander** as Assistant Superintendent.
- The Board received the following annual reports:
 - Annual Emergency Preparedness Report

- Annual Wellness Report
- Annual Report of the John J. McCarthy Observatory