

**New Milford Board of Education**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**November 21, 2023**  
**Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

Present:	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson Mr. Pete Helmus Mrs. Tammy McInerney Mr. Tom O'Brien Mr. Brian McCauley Mrs. Leslie Sarich Mr. Eric Hansell Mrs. Olga I. Rella Mr. Dean Barile	RECEIVED TOWN CLERK 2023 NOV 27 P 1:50 NEW MILFORD, CT
Absent:		

Also Present:	Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent of Schools Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Mr. Matthew Cunningham, Facilities Director Mr. Jeffrey Turner, Technology Director Mrs. Teresa Kavanagh, Director of Human Services Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations Ms. Naomi Post, Student Representative Mr. Antonio Caldareri, Student Representative
---------------	---

1.	A.	<b>Call to Order</b> Pledge of Allegiance The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson. The Pledge of Allegiance immediately followed the call to order.	<b>Call to Order</b> Pledge of Allegiance
2.	A.	<b>Public Comment</b> Kimberly Moran of 1 Agnus Lane wanted to thank the Board and stated she felt heard last month when she spoke regarding the bus situation. Mrs. Moran stated she appreciates the early drop off option and her bus has now only been called once, when it was previously called 13 times.  Andrew Brusoe of 8 Wedgewood Dr. stated New Milford bus drivers make \$20/hour. He doesn't see why the district cannot bring up the salaries. Other districts pay \$30/hour, so why would someone choose to make less money. It would cost approximately \$250,000 to bring bus drivers up to \$30/hour. It sounds like a lot, but he stated it is not	<b>Public Comment</b>

		considering the current budget. Mr. Brusoe stated it is inexcusable that kids are not being able to get to school on time. He said kids are not offered any food if they have to stay late. Recently, he was not notified in advance that the bus was coming home late. He only had a few hours notice, which is not enough time. Sometimes the bus drivers will tell him in advance, but the school does not. Mr. Brusoe stated he wants to know when the situation is going to get better.	
3.		<p><b>STUDENT RECOGNITION:</b>  <b>SCHAGHTICOKE MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>  Dr. Parlato stated the district is recognizing Schaghticoke Middle School students, based on the four ideas we live by: focus, collaboration, heart, and creativity. The students recognized tonight were Chase Moran, Collin Duncan, Janae Rodriguez-Reid, Gunner Kilton, and Ryann Ramery.</p> <p>Chase Moran exemplifies leadership. He is kind, considerate and helpful.</p> <p>Colin Duncan always gives 100 percent effort in and outside of school. He is a leader and helpful with other classmates.</p> <p>Janae Rodriguez-Reid displays heart and collaboration. She is a leader for kindness, advocating for positive change.</p> <p>Gunner Kilton is a leader who has heart. Kindness is how he approaches life and he brings positivity to everything.</p> <p>Ryann Ramery is a model student. She embodies poise and grace with collaboration and creativity. Her keen insight and diligent attitude consistently supports her classmates.</p>	<p><b>STUDENT RECOGNITION:</b>  <b>SCHAGHTICOKE MIDDLE SCHOOL</b></p>
4.		<p><b>PTO REPORT</b>  Mrs. Byrd stated Hill and Plain, Northville, and Sarah Noble completed their Boosterthon Fun Runs and all schools exceeded their fundraising goals with a total of more than \$50,000 between all schools.</p>	<p><b>PTO REPORT</b></p>

		<p>All PreK-8 schools had successful book fairs and were able to provide books to school libraries, teachers, and students who otherwise would not be able to purchase a book.</p> <p>All school PTOs assisted to provide meals for teachers during conferences.</p> <p>The Sip and Shop vendor event took place this past Friday. It is a fundraiser for the PTO High School Scholarship fund and raised more than \$1,500.</p> <p>All schools are busy planning and organizing annual holiday treats for staff as well as winter events for families.</p>	
5.		<p><b>STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT</b></p> <p>Mr. Caldareri stated Northville Elementary School wanted to thank the parents participating in parent teacher conferences. They've done two community outreach events and celebrated the 50th day of school where students dressed in 1950's attire. Northville also celebrated Veterans Day and had a celebration recently for the school substitutes.</p> <p>At Schaghticoke Middle School, a player from Savannah Bananas came and spoke to the students. The school had Character Day and a successful book fair.</p> <p>Ms. Post stated at Sarah Noble Intermediate School, the PE teachers encouraged students to be active and displayed pictures of students outside of school being active. Clubs and activities are underway with intramurals, chess, and robotics. Students brought in loose change to donate to Ann's Place in Danbury.</p> <p>At Hill and Plain Elementary School, they celebrated Veterans Day with a breakfast sponsored by the PTO. They welcomed a new counselor and organized a food drive. Students celebrated the 50th day of school and played 50's music. Kindergarten had a sock hop.</p> <p>At New Milford High School, the Theatre Program successfully produced A Midsummer Night's Dream. The Athletic Council sponsored a care</p>	<p><b>STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT</b></p>

		package drive. There was a pop-up teacher appreciation day. Student athletes participated in college signing day. The annual blood drive will start Wednesday, Nov. 29th.	
6.	A.	<p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b></p> <p>Approval of the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes:</p> <p>1. October 19, 2023 Minutes</p> <p>Mr. Helmus stated on page 19, the minutes are incorrect. At the bottom of the page, the last full sentence reads: This was an action that I assumed gave a final decision for the transfer date. The sentence should read: This was an action that I assumed gated a final decision for the transfer date.</p> <p><i>Mrs. Sarich moved to approve the October 19, 2023 minutes. Seconded by Mr. Hansell. Vote passed 8-0-1 with Mr. Barile abstaining.</i></p>	<p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b></p> <p>A. Approval of the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes:</p> <p>1. October 19, 2023 Minutes</p> <p>Motion made and passed in a vote of 8-0-1 to approve the October 19, 2023 minutes.</p>
7.	A.	<p><b>SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT</b></p> <p><b>Update on School Culture and Climate Efforts</b></p> <p>Ms. Hollander stated the goal is to help students to be ready for work, life, or school after graduation. The district's Safe School Climate Committee wants to build partnerships within the community as well as practices for deeper learning. The district-wide committee consists of several people and the purpose is to ensure a safe school environment in which all members participate. The committee has goals to support the work in each school and each school has its own climate committee.</p> <p>The committee did a self-assessment and came up with four goals to keep the committee progressing. The goals follow alongside board policies to create a safe and inclusive school environment. Anyone with questions can go to the district's website, as the link is on the home page.</p> <p>Ms. Hollander added there are now anonymous alerts at the high school and, in January 2024, SMS will also have anonymous alerts.</p>	<p><b>SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT</b></p> <p><b>A. Update on School Culture and Climate Efforts</b></p>

		<p>A recent survey went out to faculty, students, and families. From the survey, 58 percent stated they felt school was safe, 60 percent felt bullying was something that they could go and speak to a teacher or counselor about, 59 percent stated they felt like a child was not likely to be bullied online, and 76 percent of parents said their child felt safe in school. These numbers provide a good place to start. The committee is working out how to measure success and what data to use as evidence of that success.</p> <p>Mrs. Rella asked how the first year of anonymous alerts at the high school was going. Ms. Hollander stated it is mostly information the high school already knew, but it is a way for students to feel like they can communicate. The alerts first go to the assistant principal and then up the chain from there. Ms. Hollander has received approximately 10 alerts at her level, and they were drug/alcohol related.</p>	
8.	<p><b>A. Policy</b></p> <p>Mrs. Rella stated the committee has been busy with policies. Tonight, there are policies for discussion and possible action, which will require a vote on approval and deletion. Dr. Parlato stated the committee will hopefully be done with revisions by March. Mrs. Rella stated she appreciated all the work from the committee, Dr. Parlato, and Dr. Paddyfote.</p> <p><b>B. Committee on Learning</b></p> <p>Mrs. McInerney stated no curriculum will be discussed until early next year. In the last Committee on Learning meeting, a topic of discussion was district data. There was a slideshow report showing student growth, and the data showed that the district has a lot of work to do to get students up to grade level. Students fell in ELA and dramatically in math. The district needs to identify deficiencies, as well as update curriculum, especially at SMS. Mrs. McInerney reiterated what Dr. Parlato stated in the COL meeting that the strategic ambitions are what the district strives for. The numbers were not great, and it was frustrating to see it. The aim is to be at grade level or above and</p>	<p><b>SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS</b></p> <p><b>A. Policy</b></p> <p><b>B. Committee on Learning</b></p>	<p><b>SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS</b></p> <p><b>A. Policy</b></p> <p><b>B. Committee on Learning</b></p>

		<p>the district needs to put the systems in place to get kids what they need.</p> <p><b>C. Facilities</b>  Mr. McCauley stated woodshop and HVAC system is on the agenda for approval. The roof will be discussed. Gym ceilings have been painted. Central office will be discussed. Mr. McCauley highlighted the work Mr. Cunningham has done at the McCarthy Observatory and Larson Farm House.</p> <p><b>D. Operations</b>  Mrs. Faulenbach stated Operations dovetails off of Facilities. On the agenda are the monthly reports. Mrs. Faulenbach thanked Mr. Giovannone for the workshop last month and said tonight's agenda includes a memo of the breakdown of professional services as a result of that workshop. There will also be a discussion, that was brought up at Operations, regarding the Food Service Program.</p>	<p><b>C. Facilities</b></p> <p><b>D. Operations</b></p>
9.		<p><b>BOARD CHAIRMAN'S REPORT</b>  Mrs. Faulenbach stated she wanted to thank outgoing board member, Mr. Pete Helmus, for all his hard work. Mrs. Faulenbach then welcomed Mr. Dean Barile. Mrs. Herring will be back for the next board meeting. The December meeting will start at 6:30pm for officer elections and the regular board meeting will be at 7:00pm.</p>	<p><b>BOARD CHAIRMAN'S REPORT</b></p>
10.	A.	<p><b>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION</b>  Monthly Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Budget Position dated October 31, 2023</li> <li>2. Purchase Resolution: D-776</li> <li>3. Request for Budget Transfers</li> </ol> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated this year's balance is within .5% of last year's balance at this same time. There are no transfers. There is a break out of the revised capital reserve fund balance.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated the purpose of the revised capital reserve was because the most recent capital reserve request was taken to both the Board of Finance and the town; therefore it is now earmarked on the document.</p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION</b>  A. Monthly Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Budget Position dated October 31, 2023</li> <li>2. Purchase Resolution: D-776</li> <li>3. Request for Budget Transfers</li> </ol>

	<p>Mr. Giovannone stated that was correct, the only thing outstanding is the fund balance from the 2022/23 fiscal year end. That will be available once the audit is finalized in January. Mrs. Faulenbach noted that the process has already been approved by the town and Board of Finance, so in February, the Board of Education will not need to go into budget and ask for those funds. They are already approved through all three bodies. That makes the process much more seamless.</p> <p><i>Mrs. McInerney moved to approve monthly reports: Budget Position dated 10/31/23; Purchase Resolution: D-776; and Request for Budget Transfers. Seconded by Mr. Helmus. Vote passed unanimously.</i></p> <p><b>B. Policies for First Review</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2300 Policy and Administrative Regulations Regarding Holds on the Destruction of Electronic Information and Paper Records</li> <li>2. 5112 Admission to the Public Schools At or Before Age Five</li> <li>3. 5115 Recess and Play-Based Learning</li> <li>4. 5158 Policy and Administrative Regulations to Improve Completion Rates of the Free Application for Federal Student (Aid)</li> </ol> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated policies come before the board for first review, second review, and then approval. These policies will be reviewed a second time by the Policy Subcommittee in December. Mrs. McInerney asked if the December subcommittee meetings will be affected by the change in Board members. Mrs. Faulenbach stated the meeting dates will not be affected.</p>	<p>Motion made to approve monthly reports: Budget Position dated 10/31/23; Purchase Resolution: D-776; and Request for Budget Transfers. Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p><b>B. Policies for First Review</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2300 Policy and Administrative Regulations Regarding Holds on the Destruction of Electronic Information and Paper Records</li> <li>2. 5112 Admission to the Public Schools At or Before Age Five</li> <li>3. 5115 Recess and Play-Based Learning</li> <li>4. 5158 Policy and Administrative Regulations to Improve Completion Rates of the Free Application for Federal Student (Aid)</li> </ol>
--	--	---

	<p><b>C. Policies for Approval:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. 4116 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan</b></li> <li><b>2. 4118.25 Reports of Suspected Abuse and 4218.25 Neglect of Children or Reports of Sexual Assault of Students by School Employees</b></li> <li><b>3. 5141.5 Policy and Administrative Regulations Regarding Suicide Prevention and Intervention</b></li> <li><b>4. 5142 Administration of Student Medications in Schools</b></li> <li><b>5. 6147 Parental Access to Instructional Material</b></li> </ol> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated there were no changes on these in the policy meeting. Mrs. Rella confirmed that was correct and stated they are state statute and the Board must adopt them. Mr. Barile asked why the Board is forced to adopt policies. If it's up for vote but it's state statute, why vote. Mrs. Faulenbach explained that the Board is charged to vote. Occasionally, the Board will take the thrust of the policy but not the entirety. It has to be done formally, as a seated body, to acknowledge the vote. Mr. Barile stated policy 4116 is contradictory to EEOC, and asked how the district goes about increasing educator diversity.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated the steps are listed in the policy, and explains how to go about recruiting. It includes putting ads in certain places or attending certain hiring fairs.</p> <p>Mr. Barile stated, according to the EEOC policy, an employer cannot discriminate against any applicant for employment or any employee because of age, color, sex, disability, national origin, race, or religion. Policy 4116 says you need to go out and hire based on race or ethnicity. It is against the EEOC policy. Mr. Barile stated the EEOC policy is a federal statute and asked how that is reconciled.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated, for this policy, it's in Connecticut's general statutes. The hiring does not</p>	<p><b>C. Policies for Approval:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. 4116 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan</b></li> <li><b>2. 4118.25 &amp; 4218.25 Reports of Suspected Abuse and Neglect of Children or Reports of Sexual Assault of Students by School Employees</b></li> <li><b>3. 5141.5 Policy and Administrative Regulations Regarding Suicide Prevention and Intervention</b></li> <li><b>4. 5142 Administration of Student Medications in Schools</b></li> <li><b>5. 6147 Parental Access to Instructional Material</b></li> </ol>
--	--	---



	<p>mean the district is trying to establish a quota, it is a suggestion of increasing diversity from the Connecticut State Department of Education. The district has to submit their plan by March 2024.</p> <p>Mr. Barile asked how this will improve students' academic performance.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated it will give students a greater sense of belonging to someone who might not feel like they belong.</p> <p>Mr. Barile stated that he has done a lot of research on this and there's no empirical evidence there's an improvement in grades. He asked if there's a lot of Irish students, does it improve their grades to have Irish educators?</p> <p>Mr. McCauley stated it is a state statute. Also, he works in a city school, and kids identify with those who are like them. It is a state statute and schools are different from businesses.</p> <p>Mr. Barile explained he has no problem with diversity, but seeking it out, putting ethnicity and race at the center, is misguided. It takes away from the child themselves. It's about merit, not leading by example.</p> <p>Mr. McCauley stated if you walk into an inner city school, it's not very diverse among educators but more among the student body. It's about trying to encourage more diversity in the schools and candidates who apply for the school.</p> <p>Mrs. Rella stated she sees it as a suggestion from the state so students can see role models they can relate to and identify themselves with, for future careers they may want to pursue.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach added that this policy is one that was already adopted, but there was a slight change to the wording. The district has already been doing it.</p>	
--	--	--

	<p>Mr. Barile stated that looking at grades and performance over the years, diversity was less 30 years ago. He stated he grew up in White Plains, a diverse place, and doesn't see how this becomes part of a plan. If the district hires based on diversity, is there a way to measure that it helps the students.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated there are certain things that are not numerically measurable, such as a student's sense of belonging and motivation. It's about how a kid is successful in school. Success occurs because they feel like they belong.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus stated he has been a coach for many years for the girls high school hockey team, and in certain moments when a female coach was assisting him, the girls' engagement improved. There is a need for male teachers. Boys seem to listen more to male teachers than female teachers. There may not be academic improvement, but kids' engagement improves. If you could fill Hill and Plain with 50% teachers who speak Spanish, it would help all the kids who are now in the school who speak Spanish that have come from other countries. There's no harm in it. Diversity is a good thing.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated diversity is broadly defined to include not only racial diversity, but also disabilities.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked if there were any questions on any of the policies and stated there are various levels of policy, as some are discretionary.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated that there are changes that can be made, but the Board cannot violate the law, and if changes are made, it has to go through legal counsel before approval.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus stated some of these policies are becoming regulation, and there's more flexibility with regulation. It goes through three reviews so it can be thoroughly discussed.</p>	
--	--	--

	<p><i>Mr. McCauley moved to approve the Policies for Approval. Seconded by Mr. O'Brien. Motion passes 8-1-0 with Mr. Hansell opposed.</i></p> <p><b>D. Policies Recommended for Deletion.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2000 Concepts and Roles in Administration</li> <li>2. 2000.1 Board-Superintendent Relations</li> <li>3. 2100 Administrative Organization</li> <li>4. 2112 Professional Development Opportunities</li> <li>5. 2120 Administrative Assignments</li> <li>6. 2130 Job Descriptions</li> <li>7. 2131 Superintendent of Schools</li> <li>8. 2132 Assistant Superintendent of Schools</li> <li>9. 2133 Principal</li> <li>10. 2141 Recruitment and Appointment of Superintendent</li> <li>11. 2151 Appointment of Administrative and Supervisory Personnel</li> <li>12. 2152 Assignment of Supervisory Personnel</li> <li>13. 2210 Administrative Leeway in Absence of Board of Education Policy</li> <li>14. 2231 Policy and Regulation System</li> <li>15. 2240 Educational Research in District Schools</li> <li>16. 2250 Monitoring of Product and Process Goals</li> <li>17. 2400 Evaluation of the Superintendent</li> </ol> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated these policies are primarily deleted because they are incorporated into other policies. Also, it is important to define and clean up Board policies. Mrs. Rella added that some are changed to regulation.</p> <p>Mr. Hansell stated it's great to get rid of 10,000 policies. Mrs. Faulenbach agreed and stated it made it very confusing.</p> <p>Mrs. Rella stated things change, society changes, and this assists with the needed changes.</p>	<p>Motion made to approve Policies for Approval. Motion passed 8-1-0.</p> <p><b>D. Policies Recommended for Deletion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2000 Concepts and Roles in Administration</li> <li>2. 2000.1 Board-Superintendent Relations</li> <li>3. 2100 Administrative Organization</li> <li>4. 2112 Professional Development Opportunities</li> <li>5. 2120 Administrative Assignments</li> <li>6. 2130 Job Descriptions</li> <li>7. 2131 Superintendent of Schools</li> <li>8. 2132 Assistant Superintendent of Schools</li> <li>9. 2133 Principal</li> <li>10. 2141 Recruitment and Appointment of Superintendent</li> <li>11. 2151 Appointment of Administrative and Supervisory Personnel</li> <li>12. 2152 Assignment of Supervisory Personnel</li> <li>13. 2210 Administrative Leeway in Absence of Board of Education Policy</li> <li>14. 2231 Policy and Regulation System</li> <li>15. 2240 Educational Research in District Schools</li> <li>16. 2250 Monitoring of Product and Process Goals</li> <li>17. 2400 Evaluation of the Superintendent</li> </ol>
--	--	--

		<p><i>Mr. O'Brien moved to approve Policies Recommended for Deletion listed above. Seconded by Mrs. Sarich. Vote passed unanimously.</i></p> <p><b>E. HVAC Evaluation Bid Award</b>  Mr. Cunningham recommended entering into a contract with Consulting Engineering Services. The company has a handle on what evaluations will need to be supplied to the state by January 2025. They can conquer the mandating reporting, help shepherd in the grant rounds, and will identify deficiencies.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus stated it is not yet determined what the state will want for 2025. Mr. Cunningham agreed, it is a broad assessment. The state has not released the forms that will have to be filled out.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus asked how the board will mandate the work if specific guidelines are still unknown.</p> <p>Mr. Cunningham stated that there are certain things the state will want and the firms interviewed have a good handle on what that will be.</p> <p><i>Mr. Hansell moved to approve the HVAC Evaluation Bid Award. Seconded by Mr. McCauley. Vote passed unanimously.</i></p>	<p>Motion made to approve Policies Recommended for Deletion.  Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p><b>E. HVAC Evaluation Bid Award</b></p> <p>Motion made to approve the HVAC Evaluation Bid Award.  Motion passed unanimously.</p>
11.	A.	<p><b>ITEMS OF INFORMATION</b>  <b>Regulation Updates</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2300 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Holds on the Destruction of Electronic Information and Paper Records</li> <li>2. 5141.5R Administrative Regulations Regarding Suicide Prevention and Intervention</li> <li>3. 5158 R Administrative Regulations to Improve Completion Rates of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</li> </ol> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated these are regulations that have been updated or changed.</p>	<p><b>ITEMS OF INFORMATION</b>  <b>A. Regulation Updates</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2300 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Holds on the Destruction of Electronic Information and Paper Records</li> <li>2. 5141.5R Administrative Regulations Regarding Suicide Prevention and Intervention</li> <li>3. 5158 R Administrative Regulations to Improve Completion Rates of the Free Application for</li> </ol>

			Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
	<b>B. Employment Report - November 21, 2023</b>	Mrs. Kavanagh stated they are working hard filling positions. Currently, there are 13 open positions not including coaches, three are teachers. Mr. McCauley stated he's happy to see the hiring of paraprofessionals. Mrs. Rella asked if there were any new hires that recently resigned. Mrs. Kavanagh stated yes, one teacher went to a nearby district.	<b>B. Employment Report</b>
	<b>C. Enrollment Report - November 1, 2023</b>	Dr. Parlato stated enrollment is on track. The district is 15 students short of what was projected, which is very close.	<b>C. Enrollment Report</b>
	<b>D. NMHS Roof Update</b>	<p>Mr. Cunningham stated Greenwood Industries did a mockup to seal the gutter seams, which are roughly every 10 feet. There is still no game plan for how they are addressing the inconsistencies of fasteners. Mrs. Faulenbach asked if the gutters are being paid with contingency money. Mr. Cunningham stated yes, that was always the plan. Mrs. Faulenbach asked what the timeframe was. Mr. Cunningham stated if Greenwood does the work, the timeframe is based on weather.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney asked if the work on the gutter seams is something we have control over. Mr. Cunningham stated it is a change order.</p> <p>Mr. Barile asked if the estimate was for repairing or replacing. Mr. Cunningham confirmed it was to repair. Mr. Barile asked if it would be better to go with seamless gutters. Mr. Cunningham explained because of the size of the gutters, seams are needed.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus stated, referring to the Fuss and O'Neill report, that the report suggests the wrong screws were used and there are not enough in certain zones. According to the Fuss and O'Neill report, there is no safety margin at all for this roof. It's the wrong screws, and they are not in the right place. Mr.</p>	<b>D. NMHS Roof Update</b>

	<p>Helmus hopes the pressure stays on this issue and stated he believes the roof will need to be torn off.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien stated they are not sure if the correct screws were used, so it's not a total loss, but agrees with Mr. Helmus that they need to find the answers.</p> <p>Mr. McCauley stated the roof is a fiasco. The district needs to go back to the beginning to find out why the company was even hired. The bid process should be looked into as well as an idea of how much extra this has cost the taxpayers, because it is more than the original \$4 million.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated in the MBC meetings and at the facilities subcommittee, everyone is frustrated with the roof project. There is no way to know how safe it is until we pull back roof pieces. Mrs. Faulenbach foresees a portion of the roof will have to come off. She understands the roof was not installed per the specifications, and the town may seek for it to be done correctly. There are safety concerns should that roof have to be taken off and there's no game plan and many unknowns.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney stated the project has been disappointing. The biggest concern is safety. There are a lot of bodies in the building with staff and kids. Mrs. McInerney asked if anyone has given assurances that it is safe. That it won't come flying off or collapse in a snow storm. The board needs assurances that the students and staff are safe.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus stated that the Fuss and O'Neill report believes there is a low probability that students will not be in the building in the case of a significant weather event, but what if they are in the building. It needs to be resolved.</p> <p>Mr. Hansell stated that weather will have to be observed daily.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach added that she has had many conversations with the Mayor about this, and expressed the need for detailed data. Dr. Parlato also</p>	
--	--	--

	<p>added that she is working on getting information on what exact screws were used.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney stated she appreciates the transparency. Parents and the community need to know about these issues and not many people realize there is this level of concern with the roof.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated she has seen nothing in writing from the MBC requesting a portion of the roof be peeled back.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien wanted to re-emphasize that it needs to be absolutely verified the right screws were used. The report is based on if the right screws were used. If they weren't the right screws, it changes everything.</p> <p>Mr. Hansell stated the right screws may be there, but the integrity of the roof is questionable given the weak way the report was written.</p> <p><b>E. Central Office Update</b></p> <p>Mr. Cunningham stated facilities got the permit to install the doors to divide Central Office from the classrooms. The framing is done and the hardware has arrived. Phase two will be the installation of an alarm so personnel have to swipe to get access. Mrs. Faulenbach stated the Central Office permanent move needs to be something that continues to be a conversation between the Board and the town. Being at SNIS is temporary.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien asked if this is an ongoing conversation that is still happening with the town.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated there is a lot going on, and it isn't a front conversation right now. The Board needs to know what the town may be thinking and express the needs, such as square footage and budgetary impacts. It hasn't been discussed much this week. Budget-wise, it will need to be discussed with the town. It won't come up at budget since it is too large of a project.</p>	<p><b>E. Central Office Update</b></p>
--	---	--

	<p><b>F. NMHS Graduation Date</b>  Dr. Parlato stated she met with Mr. Manka and graduation date will be Saturday, June 15, 2024. The start time is still TBD but a later time of 6:00pm has been discussed. Mrs. Rella stated that it will impact the Grad Party, since the volunteers will be at the graduation along with all the deliveries for the Grad Party. Mrs. Faulenbach asked if there is a rain date. Dr. Parlato stated the date is firm and can be inside or outside. Mrs. Sarich suggested doing graduation in the morning. Mrs. Rella stated that would be a good idea, and it gives people a chance to celebrate with their own parties afterwards. Mrs. Faulenbach added that it will help with the concerns of the heat. Mr. Helmus stated if it has to be inside because of rain, doing the graduation in the morning will make it easier to work around the Grad Party.</p>	<p><b>F. NMHS Graduation Date</b></p>
	<p><b>G. Parent/Teacher Conference Data</b>  Dr. Parlato stated on November 2, 2023, the district had 1,059 scheduled parent teacher conferences between all the schools. These conferences affected 571 students. On November 7, 2023, the district had 2,159 scheduled parent/teacher conferences between all the schools. These conferences affected 1,319 students.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked if there is a way to compare this against previous years and that all families should be participating in conferences. Ms. Hollander stated the historical data is on paper to compare to this year and suggested adding time to the meetings.</p>	<p><b>G. Parent/Teacher Conference Data</b></p>
	<p><b>H. Professional Services Expenses Examples</b>  Mr. Giovannone stated he broke down Professional Services, as was requested in the October 19th budget workshop.</p>	<p><b>H. Professional Services Expenses Examples</b></p>
	<p><b>I. Food Service Fund Balance Towards Free Meals and Community Eligibility Provisions</b>  Mrs. Faulenbach stated the district has been provided this opportunity thanks to the positive cash flow in the Food Services Account. Dr. Parlato explained the district has to maintain three months operating expenses. Mrs. Faulenbach also stated that</p>	<p><b>I. Food Service Fund Balance Towards Free Meals and Community Eligibility Provisions</b></p>



	<p>if we can pay for meals out of this fund, we should and thankfully we have the funds. Mr. Giovannone stated, yes we do, we can use it to offset the cost of meals due to the state granting permission to do so.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach clarified that this is the first time the state has allowed the district to apply these funds to free meals for students.</p> <p>Mrs. Rella asked if the district is still seeing the same amount of kids not paying for meals. Dr. Parlato confirmed it is the same, and as of today it is \$14,000 of unpaid lunch debt. Mrs. Rella asked if the district is trying to collect those funds. Mrs. Sullivan stated an email goes out to parents stating they have a balance. If there is no response a letter goes out from the Principal, which includes information on how to apply for SNAP.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked when this will go into effect.</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated December 1st.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated this is a self-sustaining account, and it's not in the operational budget. Mrs. Faulenbach stated the initiative needs to be communicated out strongly to families.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated it will be free lunch for all students from December 1st until the end of the school year. She has communication ready to go out November 27th. Breakfast will remain free.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked if there are lunch specifications.</p> <p>Mrs. Sullivan stated it is whatever lunch choice students make. There will be no changes to the usual menus now that lunch will be free for all students.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked to clarify that everyone is eligible.</p> <p>Mrs. Sullivan stated yes.</p>	
--	--	--

	<p>Mrs. McInerney asked what happens to funds students have in their account. Some parents prepay a large amount.</p> <p>Mrs. Sullivan stated the funds will stay in the account. A parent can call to have a refund issued to them or transfer the funds to a sibling's account for future years.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney asked to clarify the parents can get a refund at any time</p> <p>Mrs. Sullivan stated yes.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato clarified that snacks are not free.</p> <p>Mrs. Sullivan confirmed, yes, those are at a cost, and a second meal is a cost. This initiative provides one free meal for breakfast and one for lunch.</p> <p>Mr. Hansell stated this will help offset the effects of high inflation.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked if this is across the state.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato answered that because New Milford is so well run, we are able to do this. That's a credit to Mrs. Sullivan and her ability to manage the program. Not all districts can do this because they don't have the positive cash flow like New Milford does.</p> <p>Mr. Barile asked what happens to the outstanding \$14,000.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated those will be covered by the general fund.</p> <p>Mrs. Rella stated that the district should be careful about erasing that debt. Covid made it so people are now used to not having to pay. The district should be careful going forward since it is not a permanent thing.</p>	
--	---	--

	<p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated it is worth the extra effort to communicate that this free lunch program is not forever.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney stated she hopes parents are reading the correspondences that come from their children's schools as they do communicate these types of things.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus thanked Mrs. Sullivan and Mr. Giovannone for their efforts on this. There were some concerns regarding feeding students, and the community asked a question about if they can donate. The answer is, they can. The community can raise the money to cover what is outstanding now. The board can accept that donation.</p> <p><b>J. Update on Transportation</b></p> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated there has been one late bus this week. Notifications go out to families as soon as they are communicated by the bus company. Staff sends out notifications in the evening for the next day. They send it out as soon as they know and sometimes it is done as early as 5am. There have been notifications close to dismissal time, which he understands is not ideal.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato confirmed that the communication goes out as soon as it is known.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated when people come before the Board, they understand what parents are going through. The disruption is real. The district has tried to accommodate by offering early drop off or paying staff to stay later. When it comes to bus driver pay, the pay scales are not under the purview of the Board of Education. They are not district employees, so there is no control over that. It doesn't take away the frustration, but she wanted to clear that up.</p> <p>Mr. McCauley stated there's not a school in the state of CT where buses have not been an issue, and he also sympathizes with the parents.</p>	<p><b>J. Update on Transportation</b></p>
--	---	---

	<p>Mr. Helmus stated he saw an announcement on Facebook that a new bus driver passed his test.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney brought up the point made in public comment about snacks and said if kids are staying late, the snack issue is a problem. The district should remedy this.</p> <p>Ms. Hollander replied that the district has been offering snacks and water to students since instating the early drop off and late bus runs. The snacks are being covered by Title 1 funds.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated they are doing what they can on the district's side with the early drop offs and staff staying late with students with late bus runs. It does not fix the problem, but she appreciates the plan until it is ironed out.</p> <p>Mrs. Rella asked if there is a way to communicate with bus leadership about New Milford drivers making a lot less than other districts.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated she mentioned it to the VP of the bus company.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated that communication and conversations are happening frequently.</p> <p><b>K. District Data</b></p> <p>Ms. Hollander stated there is a plan with specific growth targets for students to achieve. She had a meeting with administrators today and shared with them the expectation that all students will meet the growth target. She will present winter data in March.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated recognizing the shortfalls, breaking it down, and giving it direction is very important to move the district forward.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated she wants to hold a workshop on what is happening with test scores as well as a game plan.</p>	
		<b>K. District Data</b>

	<p>Ms. Hollander stated she is hopeful they will meet students' needs and it's a group effort to make sure people can have success. There are good systems in place including a diagnostic tool that staff is utilizing.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated they will not spin the numbers. She recognizes there is room for growth and is prepared to talk about it.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach agreed that they cannot fix the problem if they do not candidly address it and would welcome a workshop.</p> <p><b>L. ESG/NV5 December 2023 Billing Status</b></p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated the purpose of this project is energy conservation. The lease payments are coming due and the district is trying to quantify the dollar amounts of savings, and wants to get it right. Drilling down has been difficult. The plan was to take the money from capital if needed for the lease payments, but can't give a number of what has been saved right now. Mrs. Faulenbach stated the town feels the same. It's a 20 year commitment and they have to get it right.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus stated if the payment came before him tonight to pay the lease, he would say no. He's been asking for a dashboard for a year, with nothing to see.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach agreed with Mr. Helmus and stated that is why it's not on the agenda for Discussion and Possible Action. There is a need to quantify year by year and building by building and until all the work is performed, she will not bring it forward.</p> <p>As the meeting concluded, Mr. McCauley expressed his appreciation to Mr. Helmus for his years of service to the board.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus stated he wanted to thank the district staff, Dr. Parlato, Mrs. Faulenbach and the board members. He has learned a great deal.</p>	<p><b>L. ESG/NV5 December 2023 Billing Status</b></p>
--	--	---

12.	<b>ADJOURN</b> <i>Mr. Helmus moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m. Seconded by Mr. O'Brien. Vote passed unanimously.</i>	<b>ADJOURN</b> Motion made to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.
-----	---	--

Respectfully submitted:



Tammy McInerney  
Secretary  
New Milford Board of Education