

**New Milford Board of Education
 Operations Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
 November 14, 2023
 Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

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 NEW MILFORD, CT

Present:	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson Mr. Tom O'Brien Mr. Eric Hansell Mr. Pete Helmus
Absent:	

Also Present:	Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent of Schools Mr. Jeffrey Turner, Technology Director Mr. Matthew Cunningham, Director of Facilities Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Finance Mrs. Teresa Kavanagh, Director of Human Services Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent Ms. Sandra Sullivan, Food Services Director
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1.	Call to Order The New Milford Board of Education Operations Subcommittee was called to order at 7:30pm by Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson.	Call to Order
2.	Public Comment There was none.	Public Comment
3.	<p>A. Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>Monthly Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Position dated October 31, 2023 2. Purchase Resolution D-776 3. Request for Budget Transfers <p>Mr. Giovannone gave some highlights and stated that the insurance claim shortfall and the Capital Reserve Withdrawal of 23/34 are on this month's report because of action recently taken by the Board of Finance. The accounts will be set up so the money can be distributed.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus asked about Special Education Transportation and if there was still price gouging. Mr. Giovannone confirmed it was still happening, mostly on the athletic transportation portion of it.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked what was driving that.</p>	<p>Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>A. Monthly Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget Position dated October 31, 2023 2. Purchase Resolution D-776 3. Request for Budget Transfers

		<p>Dr. Parlato stated there just aren't buses available and sometimes the district has to rent coach buses, which are much more expensive. Even if a school bus is available to charter it is also much more expensive than it used to be.</p> <p><i>Mr. Helmus moved to approve the Operations Subcommittee monthly reports to the Board of Education, seconded by Mr. O'Brien. The motion passed unanimously.</i></p>	<p>Motion passed to approve the Operations Subcommittee monthly reports to the Board of Education Motion passed unanimously.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>A.</p> <p>Items of Information Employment Report - October 2023</p> <p>B.</p> <p>Enrollment Report - November 1, 2023</p> <p>C.</p> <p>November Fundraising Report</p>	<p>Mrs. Kavanaugh stated there are several new hires, including an HVAC person as part of the maintenance team, which replaced a general maintenance worker position. There are a few paraeducator positions open. Mrs. Faulenbach asked which positions they have open that are the most challenging. Mrs. Kavanaugh stated computer technology.</p> <p>Ms. Hollander suggested looking at the current Unified Arts program and perhaps switch the curriculum to something else, or keep it the same. Programming change is something to think about with difficult certification areas.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated that was a good idea.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien asked about Spanish teachers and if the goal is to have the program restored for next year.</p> <p>Mrs. Kavanaugh stated the district does plan to have it fully restored for next year.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated it is still stable from October 1st - November 1st. The district was projected to be down 75 students and the actual was 90 students.</p>	<p>Items of Information A. Employment Report - October 2023</p> <p>B. Enrollment Report - November 1, 2023</p>

	<p>Dr. Parlato stated fundraising gets approved through the school office, goes to the Principal, to Mr. Giovannone and then to her. This way they know all the fundraising that is going on in the school district. The high school does a lot of fundraising. The PTO throughout the district also does fundraising.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked if there are any fundraisers that do not get approved.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated in the 9 months she's been here that has not happened. They have all been in compliance.</p> <p>D. Professional Services Expenses Mr. Giovannone confirmed these line items are in the budget, he just pulled them out with specific examples per last month's meeting request.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus stated there are 85 separate line items. What Mr. Giovannone has given an overview.</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated yes, and he could go deeper if needed.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated other items in the budget are easily identifiable, and these line items are not always the case.</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated this overview provides examples of items in professional services.</p> <p>E. Food Service Fund Balance towards Free Meals and Community Eligibility Provision Mr. Giovannone stated there are opportunities to reinstate free lunch for all students. The district can use the surplus balance in the food service program.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato pointed out that the food service department is a self sustaining program with its own budget.</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone agreed, and given operating expenses there is an excess amount above that, and he and Ms. Sullivan came up with a plan through</p>	<p>C. November Fundraising Report</p> <p>D. Professional Services Expenses</p> <p>E. Food Service Fund Balance towards Free Meals and Community Eligibility Provision</p>
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	<p>the state on how to spend down the excess. The state is now letting the district use those excess funds to go towards the cost of students and school lunch.</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated if just using local funds, that would help fund free lunch for about 6 months but with the new option it could possibly extend it.</p> <p>Ms. Sullivan stated the state lowered the threshold for districts that would be eligible for the Community Eligibility Program from 40% to 25%. If you take all the schools in New Milford and average them out, then New Milford meets the new threshold. This allows for New Milford to offer free lunch with our excess food services account balance. The first 50% of the students will be covered for free lunch. The remaining students will be at \$.42, and the excess funds from the district's Food Service Fund Balance can cover that cost.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked Mr. Giovannone to confirm, that would mean \$12,000 a month cost for free lunch for all with this program that we are now eligible for from the state. Mr. Giovannone stated yes, and given all the possible combinations this is the most cost effective one on the budget.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked to confirm there are funds to support the \$12,000 a month, and asked how the papertrail works.</p> <p>Ms. Sullivan explained the process and how it was not overly cumbersome.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien asked to confirm that the meals are free for everyone; it's just we're using a newly-eligible funding source.</p> <p>Ms. Sullivan stated yes and explained it has to do with the use of Federal Funds vs. Non Federal Funds.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien asked if this would be ongoing.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated right now it will be from December to June 2023.</p>	
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	<p>Mr. Hansell stated it's still using the surplus from Food Services and asked what happens if it goes down too much.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated money isn't all going out the door, there is still money coming in from a la carte purchases, from federal reimbursement, and that we must always have three months' operating budget in the account. Not many districts in the state are not in the same wonderful financial state the Food Services account is in.</p> <p>Ms. Sullivan stated the district is in a unique position to use the excess funds and now that the CEP is available, the thought is the \$12,000 month could be offset through a la carte sales and reimbursement. It can be looked at over the next 6 months to see if that might be able to continue next year.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach wanted to clarify that, even without the CEP funds, there was enough money in the account to offer free lunch to the district.</p> <p>Ms. Sullivan stated yes, the state of CT was allowing districts to use the excess funds towards free lunch.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated not many districts could do this. It was because they had 3 months of operating costs in the budget, so they were able to cover the \$12,000 per month overage.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated some districts don't have the ability to do this, and because we do it allows New Milford to take advantage.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien asked how much it is.</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated \$12,000/month out of New Milford's budget.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien stated, given the current surplus, it could possibly go for 3 years.</p>	
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	<p>numbers make sense and the community is comfortable with it. There is a meeting Friday to help finalize everything.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated that it will include specific Board of Education requests to see savings school-by-school.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach agreed, and stated there needs to be a plan. This is a 20 year commitment and there needs to be an idea of where we are going from here.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated it will be on the full board meeting agenda since there will be more information at that time.</p> <p>Mr. Hansell stated NV5 stated it would be 6 weeks to be online, and come the end of November there should be information to look at.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus added that there should be a way to at least see what it will look like, even if the information is not all there yet. It's ridiculous they cannot show an example of a dashboard.</p> <p>Mr. Hansell agreed, and stated it becomes even more ridiculous if by November 30, they have everything online and they cannot show the district's actual dashboard.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated the dashboard will give a breakdown of savings and cost, but the switch has to be turned on. It hasn't yet and hopes to have more info by the full board meeting next week.</p> <p>H. Upcoming HVAC Evaluation Bid Award</p> <p>Upcoming HVAC Evaluation Bid Award Dr. Parlato stated there was an RFP/RFQ out. There were 6 companies that submitted to the district. Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Giovannone and Dr. Parlato vetted them. They narrowed it down to 3 through a screening process. The 3 remaining have been interviewed. By November 21st there will be a finalist to be brought for approval.</p>	<p>H. Upcoming HVAC Evaluation Bid Award</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Public Comment There was none.</p>	<p>Public Comment</p>

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6.		Adjourn <i>Mr. O'Brien moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20pm, seconded by Mr. Helmus and passed unanimously.</i>	Adjourn <i>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm.</i>

Respectfully submitted:



Wendy Faulenbach
Chairman, Operations Subcommittee