

**New Milford Board of Education
Committee on Learning Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2024
Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

Present:	Mrs. Tammy McInerney, Chairperson Mr. Brian McCauley Mrs. Leslie Sarich
Also Present:	Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent of Schools Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent Mr. Raymond Manka, Principal New Milford High School Mrs. Gavi Ziu-Pires, 6-12 Math Coordinator Mrs. Claudia DeMoura, Department Chair NMHS Counseling Department Mr. Kevin Best, Assistant Principal New Milford High School Mrs. Linda Scoralick, Principal Schaghticoke Middle School Mr. Jason O'Connor, Director of the New Milford Youth Agency
Absent:	Mr. Dean Barile Mrs. Sarah Herring

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TOWN CLERK
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NEW MILFORD, CT

1.	Call to Order The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 7:30 pm by Mrs. McInerney.	Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.
2.	Public Comment None	Public Comment None
3. A.	Items of Information: A. Middle School Math Acceleration Update B. AB Survey C. NMHS/SMS Pathways Update Middle School Math Acceleration Update: Ms. Hollander stated they used Covid as a time to refine the process of placing students, and ensure they are not skipping over any content. Mrs. Scoralick added it's about building on the past and what has been learned. The previous version of accelerated math resulted in students skipping standards and losing the foundation needed for upper level mathematics. Now they are adding in critical thinking and utilizing new info on how students learn. Mrs. Ziu-Pires stated it is built to give the foundation for moving into high school. Mrs. Scoralick added that, developmentally, few students are prepared for the concepts and that is the real question, are students prepared. Mrs. Scoralick stated they began looking at courses such as Algebra as a progression rather than a	Items of Information: A. Middle School Math Acceleration Update B. AB Survey C. NMHS/SMS Pathways Update

checkbox for a course. Mrs. Ziu-Pires has been wonderful at synthesizing the info and seeing an alternate path. There are still the traditional pathways for non-accelerated students, or a new path for students who are accelerated. The criteria for a student to be in the accelerated program is based on multiple data points, including work habits the students have, performance in group work, ability to problem solve, etc.

Mrs. McInerney clarified what the pathway is for traditional pathways and accelerated. Mrs. McInerney added that AP STATS is something that can be considered as well. Mrs. Ziu-Pires stated it depends on the student. The AP choices can be about meeting a goal or taking a class that helps with future interest, and it needs to be appropriate for the age.

Mrs. Scoralick explained that accelerated math 6 is all of the math 6 and the first half of math 7 in sixth grade. Accelerated math 7 is the second half of math 7 and all of grade 8, while still in seventh grade. It moves quickly. Mrs. Ziu-Pires stated it is important to ensure the student has the maturity level to handle the workload. Ms. Hollander noted that students in accelerated math will take the same final as the students in the high school. Dr. Parlato stated those students should be earning it as high school credit.

AB Survey:

Mr. O'Connor gave an overview of gathering youth opinion data and a brief history. He explained how it can be utilized for town and school purposes by taking in the data, assessing it, and making strategic planning based on it. The Search Institute is the creator of the Attitude & Behaviors survey, and is an organization that studies and works to strengthen youth success in schools, youth programs, families, and communities. They focus on internal assets and external assets and found the more assets a youth has, the less likely they are to engage in risk taking behaviors.

Other core measures include thriving indicators, risk behaviors, high risk behaviors, and what peers and parents think of them. Vaping questions and behaviors have recently been added. The survey is done every 2 years with eighth, tenth and twelfth graders. Bordering towns participate as well. The 2022 data will become

the new baseline because the prior surveys were pre-covid. The goal of the survey is to build on previous measurements. It's an asset and resource to compound existing programming in how to assist kids going forward. Whether it's workshops, mentoring programs, book giveaways, counseling, and more.

Ms. Hollander stated the 2024 survey will happen over the next few months, and the results will be shared in the fall.

Mr. O'Connor thanked the administrators.

Mrs. McInerney asked when this survey will be distributed during the school day. Mr. Manka stated it will be done during the third block of the day, which is advisory. The process has been streamlined for efficiency so the students can complete it in time.

NMHS/SMS Pathways Update

Mr. Manka stated there are currently 14 pathways being considered, with seven currently under construction. The Pathways Committee is working with the stakeholders and Mr. Manka stated he would like to focus on having students make connections between high school and post secondary. Students can meet with guest speakers, go on field trips, etc. To start, the district will focus on the Pathways that already have credential staff and local partners. Before Covid, the internship program was robust, and they are working on resuscitating it. Mrs. DeMoura stated there are currently 10 students in internships and they are working on making that grow.

Mr. Manka stated, when it comes to the Pathways, a child is not anchored. It is flexible. They can shift to another path, especially since courses may overlap with another subject. Each student in Pathways will be in the Freshman Academy. It is growing in popularity. As students gain interest in it, they are transferring in half way through the school year. Freshman year is when they want students to be exposed to opportunities to spark interest. One area of growth is work based learning (WBL), which will help prepare students for the future. Work is being done with Ready CT to get youth employment opportunities and there is a heavy emphasis on cultivating business partnerships.

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	Mr. Manka stated he would like to have guest speakers, a career expo, field trips, internships, and experiential learning opportunities with WBL. There is the opportunity for intense two-to-three week summer internships, where students can immerse themselves in their area of study, as well as the reintroduction of the CNA program. Mr. Manka stated they have been working with Institutes of Higher Education (IHE). The New Milford Chamber of Commerce has been helping recruit businesses and company leaders. It is all connecting to the community. Mrs. Sarich stated she loves the program. Mrs. McInerney agreed and stated it is a great way to help students follow an area of interest and still be able to pivot if it ends up not being something they wish to pursue. Mrs. DeMoura stated the guidance counselors will help as well. The Pathways will not interfere with students getting their STEM and Humanities requirements. They will still have all their graduation requirements.	
4.	Public Comment None	Public Comment None
5.	Adjourn <i>Mrs. Sarich moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. McCauley with all voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:26pm.</i>	Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Tammy McInerney, Chairperson
Committee on Learning