

**New Milford Board of Education
 Committee on Learning Special Meeting Minutes
 October 7, 2025 6:30pm
 Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

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 NEW MILFORD, CT

Present:	Mrs. Sarah Herring, Chairperson Mrs. Tammy McInerney Mr. Dean Barile
Also Present:	Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent of Schools Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent Mr. Raymond Manka, Principal, New Milford High School Dr. Meg Dwyer, Assistant Principal, New Milford High School Mr. Kevin Best, Assistant Principal, New Milford High School Mr. Steve Donahue, Math Teacher, New Milford High School
Absent:	Mr. Randall Scofield

1.	Call to Order The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 6:30 pm by Mrs. Sarah Herring.	Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.
2.	Public Comment None	Public Comment None
3.	<p>Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>A. Course Proposals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intro to Career Readiness 2. Draft and Design 2 3. Intro to Drafting and Design 4. AP Business with Personal Finance 5. ECE-Human Geography - SCSU 6. Citizenship 7. Summit Math III 8. Summit Health and Wellness 9. Summit English III: Identity, Society and Capstone 10. Math Lab 11. Explorations in Physical Science 1 and 2 12. Nets and Recreational Games 13. Group Fitness 14. Yoga and Pilates 15. Team Sports <p>Intro to Career Readiness Ms. Hollander stated this is a way for students to begin to think about careers. They will work closely with the</p>	<p>Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>A. Course Proposals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intro to Career Readiness 2. Draft and Design 2 3. Intro to Drafting and Design 4. AP Business with Personal Finance 5. ECE-Human Geography - SCSU 6. Citizenship 7. Summit Math III 8. Summit Health and Wellness 9. Summit English III: Identity, Society and Capstone 10. Math Lab 11. Explorations in Physical Science 1 and 2 12. Nets and Recreational Games 13. Group Fitness 14. Yoga and Pilates

<p>high school to ensure there is no repetition. Mrs. Herring asked if this was to take the place of STEM since there is no STEM currently offered. Ms. Hollander stated yes, but that Intro to Career Readiness was something they were planning to offer, and there are still STEM related offerings at the middle school. Mrs. McNerney stated these classes are great for the kids who want to take it, but it would have been beneficial to reach out to parents to understand and see where interests may have lied. Ms. Hollander stated, the hope was to find a STEM teacher, but the district had to pivot when they couldn't. The semester had started and they were trying to avoid having students in study hall.</p> <p>Mrs. McNerney stated communication is key and parents and students should have input regarding courses. Mrs. McNerney asked what grades Intro to Career Readiness is offered. Ms. Hollander stated it is offered for 7th and 8th and added that they are trying to be responsive. The goal is to have interesting offerings given there are shortages in certain areas. Mr. Manka noted that he has had experience with a course like this and it became very popular. Dr. Dwyer stated that it helps segway into the Pathways and CTE (Career and Technical Education). It may not give a full scope of everything but it plants the seeds. Mr. Barile asked if it is inclusive for all students. Ms. Hollander stated yes.</p> <p>Mrs. McNerney stated she is very excited about the Pathways. It provides kids who need direction to see how these career paths apply to the real world and can help with making decisions about a path in college.</p> <p>Draft and Design 2 Mr. Manka stated this is a revamp with newer software. It will build upon concepts of 2D CAD from the Drafting and Design 1 class. It is a very hands on course that will be a great lead for Pathways. Mrs. McNerney asked if it required extra money for budgetary needs. Mr. Manka stated most of it is chrome book based with access to the cloud. The hardware to purchase for class redesign could be supported by Perkins. Mrs. McNerney stated monetary needs should be provided to support the class. Dr. Dwyer stated they are hoping this can be utilized in Career Readiness for 8th graders to get exposure.</p>	<p>15. Team Sports</p>
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Intro to Drafting and Design

Mr. Manka stated Mrs. Lori Cerra is spearheading this course. The course is designed as an introduction to drafting and design techniques and software. It will stress the importance of drafting, engineering, design and fabrication. Students will use AutoCad.

AP Business with Personal Finance

Mr. Manka stated this was co-authored by Mrs. Wargo, and they have reached out to Becky Hall at WCSU to see if it can be co-seated as an ECE course.

ECE-Human Geography - SCSU

Mr. Manka stated they are hoping to write this in the spring so it can be offered in the fall. New Milford is in the low percentile statewide of schools offering college credit courses. This will increase that offering.

Mrs. McInerney asked if the course is 3.0 college credits and 1.0 high school credits. Mr. Manka stated yes.

Citizenship

Mr. Manka stated the primary objective of this course is to prepare students to become informed and engaged members of society. We have flex time and guest speakers along with an opportunity for students to have internships and externships. Ms. Hollander stated it is already included in the budget under curriculum development.

Summit Math III

Mr. Manka stated this is a stand alone course designed to satisfy the 1.0 mathematics credit.

This course will focus predominantly on applications of mathematics. It will work to improve the students critical thinking and analytical reasoning skills.

Summit Health and Wellness

Mr. Manka stated this course will begin for sophomores that need to get back on track. The Summit program is an eclectic range of kids. It will span over four years in various stages and will be a comprehensive alternative education pathway designed to support students in developing the knowledge, habits, and practical skills necessary for lifelong success.

	<p>Summit English III: Identity, Society and Capstone Mr. Manka stated this was designed to help students become effective communicators with critical thinking, synthesis and independent work.</p> <p>Math Lab Mr. Manka stated this is an intervention course offered to regular education 9th grade students that have been identified as needing math support. There was a need to be able to better identify students' needs. This is a stand alone course, offered to 9th graders. The course is based on current student's iReady test scores and MyPath placements. This is designed to help them fortify their mathematical computation skills. Math Lab will support new learning as well as helping to fill in prior gaps.</p> <p>Explorations in Physical Science 1 and 2 Mr. Manka stated this course is intended to be project based with a heavy emphasis with STEM. It includes additional fees for science kits.</p> <p>Nets and Recreational Games Mr. Manka stated this is a course that has high interest and high energy. Upper level course to keep students engaged to develop healthy lifestyles and habits.</p> <p>Group Fitness Mr. Manka stated this course is designed to give students an opportunity to explore different styles of group fitness classes to keep kids engaged. The courses will consist of activities such as Zumba, circuit training, dance/cardio, spinning, barbell workouts, HIIT, and others.</p> <p>Yoga and Pilates Mr. Manka stated a teacher at NMHS started offering free yoga classes to teachers, and the students also became interested. The thought is to offer this to increase healthy habits for mind and body for students.</p> <p>Team Sports Mr. Manka stated this course will provide students opportunities to engage in team sports that will have a competitive nature to the activity being played. Students will develop game strategies, research rules and practice skills needed to perform. It would include focusing on motor skills, looking at game film,</p>	
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	<p>analyzing it, with a focus on health and well being.</p> <p><i>Mrs. McInerney moved to approve the curricula listed above be brought to the Board of Education for discussion and possible action. Seconded by Mr. Barile. Motion passed unanimously.</i></p>	<p>Motion made and passed to bring the curricula listed above to the Board of Education for discussion and possible action. Motion passed.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Items of Information A. Mathematics for 9-12 Mr. Best began by displaying data that was as of October 2nd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 232 / 268 (87%) of 9th graders have taken the iReady assessment as of Oct 2. ● Two or More Grade Levels below: 48.3% ● One Grade Level below: 15.5% ● Early, At or Above Grade Level: 36.2% <p>Mrs. Herring asked how this compared to last year. Mr. Best stated it was similar. Mrs. Herring asked what percentage of freshmen are enrolled in Algebra 1. Mr. Donahue stated about 70% of freshmen are in Algebra 1. Mr. Best stated the positive is the students that are one grade level below usually make it to grade level before the end of the year. The goal is to try and raise the bar in the classroom.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney asked when the students take the fall iReady. Ms. Hollander stated it is done in September and they take it 3 times a year. Mrs. McInerney asked if any steps should be taken at the middle school to help increase scores in the future for the high school. Ms. Hollander stated that is happening now with the new core materials. She is hopeful with the strengthening of bringing the kids in from a strong elementary school experience, they will be more on grade level.</p> <p>Mr. Best stated they are starting to see more resilience in kids in math. The stamina is going up. It's clear that Algebra and Algebraic Thinking needs support and growth. Geometry is also low, but that is also to be expected because the students are not exposed to Geometry until they get to high school.</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney asked if there is a way to help provide opportunities that give students tips and tricks to try and help increase scores. Mr. Best replied that they are</p>	<p>Items of Information A. Mathematics for 9-12</p>

<p>looking at ways to introduce something of that nature to FLEX, and incorporating opportunities within the classroom. There is also the need for teachers to not only see that perhaps students are not choosing the correct answer to a question, but also understand why.</p> <p>Mr. Donahue stated the hope is to have every class carve out time to focus on SAT style questions. Mr. Barile stated if the class scores are not reflective of the test scores, maybe think of teaching to the test more. Mr. Donahue agreed that was an excellent point. For instance, AP Calculus doesn't cover Geometry but the SAT covers Geometry, so there is a need for retention.</p> <p>Mr. Best stated, iReady can provide questions that model our "gap areas." Increasing the Depths of Knowledge brings deeper thinking, strategic and extended thinking, solving real-world problems with multi-step solutions, and using open-ended questions to promote critical thinking.</p> <p>Mrs. McNerney asked when the PSAT was. Dr. Dwyer stated it's next Thursday and the SAT is in March.</p> <p>Mr. Best stated additional next steps include writing updated curricula, ECE Statistics & Calculus in 26-27, and supporting teachers. Make sure they differentiate Depths of Knowledge, so there's evaluation and creation of mathematics. It is important to use individual and classroom data to inform decisions on future lessons/instruction. The students are stronger than what the test scores are showing.</p> <p>Mr. Barile asked about being proactive about helping kids struggling with math. Mr. Donahue replied that it is offered through the FLEX program. It's designed to help students who are falling behind. This also works in the reverse where a teacher can see what students are struggling and where they need help. The teacher can call those students in during FLEX time to address those weaknesses.</p> <p>Mr. Donahue stated there is a definite disconnect with what students know and what they do when taking the tests. It's important to ensure they are getting enough repetition and previews. The constant reflection on what they know is an important part. Mrs. McNerney agreed that FLEX is a great option for students to get</p>	<p>B. Pathways Explorations at SMS</p>
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	<p>the help they need.</p> <p>B. Pathways Explorations at SMS Ms. Hollander stated, with the challenge of not having a STEM teacher, the choice was made to pivot and offer this alternative that would also avoid an unproductive study hall. Instead of a roadblock, we saw an opportunity to provide our students with a new skill set that is essential for their future. Some are covered in Freshman Academy, but there is no overlap.</p> <p>This course is designed to equip our students with the skills they need not just for high school, but for their future careers.</p>	
5.	<p>Public Comment None</p>	<p>Public Comment None</p>
6.	<p>Adjourn <i>Mr. Barile moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. McInerney, with all voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:44pm.</i></p>	<p>Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.</p>

Respectfully submitted:



Sarah Herring, Chairperson
 Committee on Learning