

**New Milford Board of Education
Committee on Learning Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2025
Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

Present:	Mrs. Sarah Herring, Chairperson Mrs. Tammy McInerney Mr. Dean Barile
Also Present:	Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent of Schools Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent Mrs. Anne Bilko, Sarah Noble Intermediate School Principal Mr. Raymond Manka, New Milford High School Principal Mrs. Linda Demeyer, Schaghticoke Middle School Principal Mrs. Karen Bosco, Data Coach
Absent:	Mr. Randall Scofield

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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 7:21 pm by Mrs. Sarah Herring.	Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 7:21 p.m.
2.	Public Comment None	Public Comment None
3.	Items of Information A. 2024-2025 Student Performance Mrs. Bilko, reviewing the information regarding instructional keynotes, stated these instructional keystones are connected to everything we do. It is about purposeful learning, and clarity of the lessons. The more it resonates, the greater the success. The district is working hard for high value assignments, so gains can be made in learning. With sustainable goals, and students feeling successful, it gives them motivation. Behavior is a huge piece of how a student becomes successful. All of our educators reinforce these attributes in students. Mrs. Bilko continued by speaking to proficiencies, stating that there is growth and evidence that the instruction is taking root. The angles of achievement are going up each year, indicating strength and allowing for more challenging instruction. Ms. Hollander added that the support from the Board of Education has helped with getting K-5 instructional materials that provide solid foundations. Mrs. Calabrese reviewed ELA by grade and stated that they are showing strong results. There is softening in	Items of Information A. 2024-2025 Student Performance

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the middle grades. The thought is to update the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. There is also a plan to not only sustain the early grades but help keep up the momentum in the middle grades. Ms. Hollander added they are working on making sure there is a clear transition from grades 3-5 to 6-8.

Mrs. Gallagher reviewed the Math by Grade metrics, stating math is seeing a strong growth through iReady. There is a slight decline in the middle grades. The next steps are to continue the middle school core instruction. Mr. Barile asked if covid could be a factor with the softening in middle school grades. Dr. Parlato replied that multiple things can be happening but there was a gap with incomplete learning.

Mrs. Bosco reviewed the metrics for the ELA Subgroup Gaps, stating the percentage of students meeting standard is up, but there are still significant gaps with students with disabilities vs. students with non-disabilities. English learners and economically disadvantaged learners are also struggling. Ms. Hollander stated the core material for English learners is now more coherent and there is collaboration with Special Education to ensure cohesiveness.

Mrs. Herring noted that English learners tend to be a transient population and asked if it was possible to track how long students are typically in the district. Perhaps the declines are due to brand new English learner students coming in, while ones that have been in the district for a while have moved. Mrs. McInerney agreed that was an excellent point. The cohort could be a completely new group. Mrs. Bosco also noted the percentage of English learners fluctuates since some students exit out of the program but stay in district. Also, in some instances, the number is so small the data cannot be utilized due to confidentiality.

Mrs. Demeyer stated there is a need for continued focus in the math subgroup. There is some improvement for students with disabilities, but it is still low. English learners and economically disadvantaged students are low as well, with intervention needed. Math is twofold because it requires reading. Mr. Barile asked if there is overlap of students in the subgroups. Mrs. Demeyer stated yes; some students span multiple subgroups.

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Mrs. Bosco went on to review the PSAT and SAT stats, stating the ELA for PSAT fell from 59% to 55% for meeting standard. SAT holds steady at 59% meeting standard. For math it dropped 4% in the PSAT and 7% for the SAT. There is clearly a need to review the curriculum and offer support for struggling students.

Mrs. McInerney stated she would like to see the district support SAT prep at the high school. It can be very expensive to go offsite. If students could learn a few tricks and tips, it could raise their score significantly. Perhaps provide it after school, or during advisory.

Ms. Hollander stated after school would be an issue because of busing. Mr. Manka also added that the SAT's became optional during covid. Trying to put it into FLEX is problematic because it is not long enough and many of the platforms would monopolize the time towards test taking. Not all the students are interested in it. Mrs. McInerney suggested letting families opt into the prep.

Ms. Hollander reviewed the statistics on graduation rates, stating it is something the district is working on. Truancy is a large part of it. Mr. Manka stated students with disabilities and English learners are at a lower rate, and suggested additional support be given there. The size of the graduating class has declined while English learners have increased.

Mrs. Bosco reviewed last year's 6th grade cohort and the progress made over the last 3 years. ELA and math achievement went up going into 5th grade and down going into 6th grade. This is showing there is need to focus on that transition year of 5th into 6th.

Mr. Barile suggested there could be issues with students going from having one teacher to suddenly having multiple teachers. It's harder to form a bond and establish a relationship in the classroom. Mrs. Demeyer added that socially it's a different environment and peer development is a large factor. Mrs. Herring noted the structure of test taking is also different and could be part of the cause.

Mrs. Bosco stated they are seeing similar issues within the subgroups of English learners, economically

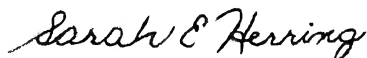
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	<p>disadvantaged, and special education. For these groups, ELA needs more focus.</p> <p>Ms. Hollander reviewed the metrics of New Milford compared to other towns in District Reference Group (DRG) D. Dr. Parlato noted New Milford has the least staff and it impacts how quickly changes can be made. The district went up in 16 indicators and stayed the same or went down in only 6. Ms. Hollander stated the district is slowly seeing gains and the work being put in is paying off.</p> <p>Mr. Barile stated it's great work over the last year. It takes a while to turn things around.</p> <p>Ms. Hollander stated there is a clear need to focus on transition grades, 5-6 and 8-9.</p> <p>Mrs. Bilko stated, for the students, it is understanding the data in a different way. Numbers and operations are getting stronger, which allows the teachers to be more agile and take students to the next level.</p> <p>Dr. Parlato stated we don't use data as a weapon. It is a conversation about how we can do better by kids and provide what they need.</p>	
4.	Public Comment None	Public Comment None
5.	Adjourn <i>Mrs. McInerney moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Barile, with all voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.</i>	Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Sarah Herring, Chairperson
Committee on Learning