

**New Milford Board of Education
Committee on Learning Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2021
Virtual via Zoom**

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NEW MILFORD, CT

Present:	Mrs. Tammy McInerney, Chairperson Mr. Brian McCauley Mrs. Leslie Sarich
Also Present:	Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Superintendent of Schools Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Ms. Linda Scoralick, Interim Principal, Schaghticoke Middle School

1.	Call to Order The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mrs. McInerney via Zoom.	Call to Order
2.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
3.	Items for Information and Discussion A. Attitudes and Behaviors Survey - Ms. Hollander and Jason O'Connor, Executive Director of the New Milford Youth Agency, provided information. - Mr. O'Connor said the survey has been given previously to grades 8, 10 and 12 in 2017 and 2019. It was scheduled for 2021 but was postponed due to the pandemic. This year's survey will include questions regarding vaping. There are 160 questions total, and it should take students approximately 30 minutes to complete. This is a widely used survey regionally and is very helpful in tracking trends. - Ms. Hollander said they are working with building administrators regarding when and how the survey will be implemented, perhaps in mid-March.	Items for Information and Discussion A. Attitudes and Behaviors Survey

	• Ms. DiCorpo said the cost of the survey had been a shared venture previously. She asked how it will be funded this time. • Ms. Hollander said the cost of \$2,824 will be split between the district and NMCAN. She said the district will use Title IV grant monies. • Ms. DiCorpo asked Ms. Hollander to double check that use since it may have been funded with operating funds in the past. • Mrs. McInerney said she was aware that questions are not shared publicly ahead of time and she asked how concerned parents could get a preview. • Ms. Hollander said they will be made available in the Assistant Superintendent's office. • Mr. O'Connor said they were previously available for view at the Youth Agency and the New Milford Public Library as well. No one took advantage of the offer previously. • Mrs. McInerney asked what the percentage of opt-outs were previously. Mr. O'Connor said they were in the single digits. • Ms. DiCorpo asked if the vaping questions will be the same as those asked in a previously approved survey. • Mr. O'Connor said no, they are different surveys. He said he will do a direct comparison to those asked in 2019 and report on the correlation. • Mr. McCauley said he thought it was great that these surveys are done to collect longitudinal data.	
	B. School Based Health Centers • Ms. Hollander said she and Mrs. Olson have been working on this project with Mrs. Bonjour in conjunction with the Technology and Facilities Directors. She anticipates that the behavioral health piece will start at the middle school and high school on January 10, 2022. They are making sure all the pieces are in place for licensing and communications. • Mrs. Olson said educating staff and faculty to the process is important too and there is a	B. School Based Health Centers

	meeting planned on December 13 for related services staff. She said they want to start small to ensure that the process is done well and to build the program successfully. The medical piece set up will begin in the summer. • Ms. McInerney asked if communications will go out to families and if the Board will have an opportunity to see the set up. • Mrs. Hollander said family communication will follow that of staff. Parent forums will be held. • Ms. DiCorpo said the set up is a basic office one for the behavioral piece but the Board will be invited to see the medical set up when it is ready. She had hoped to have the program up and running already but there is a shortage of behavioral health specialists at this time delaying the process. • Mrs. McInerney asked if the School Based Health Centers' staff will take the place of 211 resources called to the schools for students in crisis. • Mrs. Olson said no, 211 has a higher level of clinical expertise.	
C.	ARP IDEA Grant and ESSER II Special Education Recovery Grant • Ms. DiCorpo said they were notified about a month ago that federal money was available specific to special education needs. Mrs. Olson did a nice job with the Cabinet of determining how best to expend the funds. • Mrs. Olson said the ARP IDEA Grant is a two year entitlement grant supporting students school age, 5-22, and preschool, 3-5. Funding will be used for a social emotional coach for grades 6-8, expanded instructional services for the Extended School Year program, the purchase of a wheelchair accessible van for NMHS to replace one that is out of service, technology support, and increased early literacy skills. • Mrs. Olson said the ESSER II Special Education Recovery Grant is actually made up of three mini grants that will fund special	C. ARP IDEA Grant and ESSER II Special Education Recovery Grant

	education recovery activities of a summer recovery program for students with disabilities grades 9-12, including transportation; specialized instruction for students with diagnosed dyslexia (a requirement of the grant); and an online learning platform to support students with disabilities in addressing delayed, interrupted, suspended or inaccessible IEP supports and services to remediate skills and/or address lack of progress due to the pandemic. • Mrs. McInerney asked what percentage of students are dyslexic. Mrs. Olson said about 60 students or 10%. Some undiagnosed students may be serviced as well.	
4.	Discussion and Possible Action A. New Course Proposal 1. Freshman Seminar • Ms. Hollander said the proposal is attached to the agenda. She said Ms. Scoralick had been instrumental in supporting career pathways and Perkins at the high school and developed this proposal to support that work. This is a foundational course that would allow freshmen to explore CTE ideas and the types of skills needed to succeed in the workforce. It aligns with the work starting around the vision of a graduate. • Ms. Scoralick said this will help freshmen transition to high school. It will replace one of the half year electives that freshmen have now. The first year is proposed as a pilot so there is no request for additional staffing. • Ms. Hollander said if this is approved, curriculum writing will take place in the spring. • Ms. DiCorpo noted that the proposal addresses the possibility of additional staffing needs for year two on. • Mr. McCauley said he thinks this course is a great idea if staffing can be figured out. • Mrs. McInerney expressed concerns with making it mandatory for freshmen, since some	Discussion and Possible Action A. New Course Proposal 1. Freshman Seminar

	freshmen already have a clearly defined path and might not want to give up another preferred elective. • Ms. Scoralick said that a substantial number of students would benefit from the course but it could certainly be offered as a recommendation versus a requirement. • Mr. McCauley suggested that they look to see if the course could be tied into a current requirement. • Ms. DiCorpo agreed and suggested Ms. Scoralick and Ms. Hollander review the current graduation requirements to either determine whether to make a recommendation to amend them or see if the course could be added into one of the existing pathways and then report back on that information at the February meeting. • Mrs. McInerney said she hopes that this focus on transitioning will be looked at for 5th graders going into the middle school, because that is a huge transition as well.	
5.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
6.	Adjourn Mr. McCauley moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. seconded by Mrs. McInerney and passed unanimously.	Adjourn Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Tammy McInerney, Chairperson
Committee on Learning