

**New Milford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes and Motions
August 18, 2026 - 5:15 pm
Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

RECEIVED 50
TOWN CLERK

2026 AUG 20 A 11:24

Present:	Mrs. Leslie Sarich, Chairperson Mrs. Sarah Herring, Secretary Mrs. Tammy McInerney, Assistant Secretary Mr. Dean Barile Mr. Joseph Failla Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach Mr. Tom O'Brien	NEW MILFORD, CT
Absent:	Mr. Eric Hansell, Vice Chairperson Mr. Brian McCauley	
Also Present:	Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent	

1.	Call to Order The special meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Mrs. Leslie Sarich, Chairperson.	Call to Order
2.	Public Comment None	Public Comment
3.	<u>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION</u> A. Discussion and possible action regarding Board of Education goals for 2026-2027 Dr. Parlato opened the discussion regarding the Board of Education goals, noting that they are scheduled for adoption in September. She encouraged a comprehensive dialogue on what constitutes success for the district. Dr. Parlato further referenced a breakdown of Board of Education and Superintendent responsibilities recently provided by CAFE and CAPSS, which identifies essential goals, visions, and the alignment of agendas with those objectives. Mrs. Sarich inquired about the district's policy on student retention for those not meeting grade-level standards. Dr. Parlato clarified that retention is rare, noting that upwards of 50% of students who did not meet goal on standardized assessments might be affected if students were to be held back. Ms. Hollander emphasized the importance of considering	<u>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION</u> A. Discussion and possible action regarding Board of Education goals for 2026-2027

	social-emotional needs alongside academic performance. Mrs. Sarich expressed concern that promoting students who are not at grade level may negatively impact their peers who are meeting those standards. Mrs. Faulenbach acknowledged the challenges of student retention, observing that achievement gaps often widen as students progress. Early intervention is critical to closing these gaps. Mrs. McNerney suggested the implementation of a summer program to assist students in reaching grade level. Ms. Hollander noted that student availability often limits the reach of summer initiatives and highlighted 3rd and 6th grades as particularly challenging transition periods. Dr. Parlato outlined the primary goal categories in the current Board of Education goals: Student Achievement, Family and Community Engagement, Budget Development and Fiscal Management, District and School Environment, and District Workforce. Mayor Bass inquired about the characteristics of Blue Ribbon schools compared to New Milford. He suggested analyzing and implementing successful practices from these districts. Dr. Parlato stated she agreed that could be explored, noting that New Milford currently sits at the lower end of its District Reference Group (DRG) when it comes to standardized test scores. Mrs. Faulenbach recommended review of test scores in November when creating goals, citing early intervention and family participation as vital factors. Mrs. McNerney spoke to the disruptions caused when teachers must halt instruction to address individual student needs, leading Mrs. Sarich to suggest partnering with higher-performing districts for collaborative growth. Ms. Hollander added that some districts utilize administrative meetings with teachers to foster constructive conversations regarding class performance and growth. Mr. Barile advocated for a reduction in Chromebook usage in favor of returning to traditional writing.	
--	--	--

	Mrs. Herring emphasized that school readiness involves factors extending far beyond the classroom and parental participation is important. Mayor Bass, following discussions with Dr. Parlato, suggested integrating more play into the curriculum. Dr. Parlato noted that legislation supports play-based learning and suggested that the Board could revise policies to establish time constraints on Chromebook screen usage. Mrs. Faulenbach encouraged greater community involvement, suggesting that local citizens be invited to share their talents with students. Regarding school readiness, Ms. Hollander stated that universal Pre-K would be beneficial, though budget, space, and the impact on local Pre-K businesses must be considered. Mrs. Faulenbach inquired about the 2025 graduation rate, which Dr. Parlato confirmed was approximately 89%. Dr. Parlato suggested the formation of an Ad Hoc committee for district programming. Mrs. Herring inquired about the residency checks. Ms. Hollander reported that the process is going well and has resulted in a few disenrollments. Mrs. Sarich requested that a representative be stationed at the HART bus stop in front of the high school to assist with oversight.	
4.	Adjourn <i>Mrs. Faulenbach moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Herring.</i>	Adjourn <i>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:25pm.</i>

Respectfully submitted:



Sarah Herring
Secretary
New Milford Board of Education