

**New Milford Board of Education
Committee on Learning Minutes
June 4, 2019
Lillis Administration Building, Room 2**

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NEW MILFORD. CT

Present: Mr. J.T. Schemm, Chairperson
Mrs. Angela C. Chastain
Mr. Bill Dahl
Mrs. Tammy McInerney

Also Present: Dr. Stephen Tracy, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Diana Beddows, Music Teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School
Mr. Daryl Gregory, Music Teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School
Mr. Tim Polhemus, Music Teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School
Mr. Paul Shim, Music Teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School
Mrs. Carrie Allen, Grades K-2 Math Coach
Mrs. Cortni Muir, Grades 3-5 Math Coach
Ms. Betsy Stewart, Grades 6-8 Instructional Coach

1.	Call to Order The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by Mr. Schemm.	Call to Order
2.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
3.	Discussion and Possible Action A. Review and Approval of Curricula 1. Grade 6 General Music 2. Grade 7 General Music 3. Grade 8 General Music - Ms. Beddows said these curricula were written together as a team. They are aligned with the newly adopted art standards and the focus is on creating, performing, and responding. Grades 6 and 7 are revisions. The grade 8 curriculum is new. - Mr. Shim said the grade 6 curriculum is a full year revision. Students use traditional classroom instruments to perform and create. They learn to read sheet music. Digital tools, such as classroom iPads, are used for creating and performing as well. The curriculum also covers the science of sound; students make their own instruments to	Discussion and Possible Action A. Review and Approval of Curricula 1. Grade 6 General Music 2. Grade 7 General Music 3. Grade 8 General Music

finish the year.

- Mr. Gregory said the grade 7 curriculum features performance and creation on small classroom keyboards. They discuss music theory in the beginning and study popular music leading to jazz. It also features a comparison to world music.
- Mr. Polhemus said the new, proposed grade 8 curriculum is written as a full year course. It begins with a study of music and film, with students creating their own digital music and made sounds to go with a 30 second video clip. The evolution of Rock and Pop music and their effect on culture is studied. Students use guitars to create and perform and use their knowledge to form a "rock band".
- Ms. Beddows said the goal with all three curricula was to provide a general overview without overtaxing the general interest student. The goal is to provide a wide variety of engagement.
- Mrs. McInerney asked if band, chorus and orchestra students take these classes. Mr. Shim said they are for non-performing students.
- Ms. Beddows said the standards are the same regardless, just the activities are different.
- Mr. Gregory agreed saying they are just different paths to the same concepts.
- Mrs. McInerney asked if these curricula would start in the fall. Ms. DiCorpo said yes, if approved.
- Mrs. Chastain asked what the district is required to offer for music.
- Ms. Beddows said that general music is required through grade 7, but she believes grade 8 is optional.
- Ms. DiCorpo said she would check. She said the choices have been guided by scheduling in the past.
- Mrs. Chastain asked if the addition of grade 8 music would result in additional staffing. Ms. DiCorpo said not that she was aware but that the scheduling process is still ongoing.
- Ms. Beddows said the curriculum was written so they would be ready should the district decide to offer the course.
- Ms. DiCorpo said courses are always reviewed for section numbers and how they balance with other offerings.
- Mrs. Chastain said she isn't comfortable approving

	a course without knowing what the budget is for it. • Mr. Schemm said the writing has already been funded. He is in favor of approving it as it will provide flexibility down the road. It also provides a pathway. • Mr. Dahl said he agreed. He thinks the work has been done so we should at least have it to use when appropriate. • Ms. DiCorpo said budget is separate from curriculum writing. This work continues alignment to standards. • Mr. Schemm asked if there were sufficient supplies for these courses. Ms. Beddows said they are at about two thirds for everything. Mrs. McInerney moved to bring the Grade 6 General Music curriculum to the full Board for approval, seconded by Mr. Dahl and passed unanimously. Mr. Dahl moved to bring the Grade 7 General Music curriculum to the full Board for approval, seconded by Mrs. McInerney and passed unanimously. Mrs. McInerney moved to bring the Grade 8 General Music curriculum to the full Board for approval, seconded by Mr. Schemm. • Mrs. Chastain said she appreciated the work, but would not approve this curriculum, since it could result in additional costs. There is no additional funding available at this time. Motion passed 3-1. Aye: Mr. Schemm, Mr. Dahl, Mrs. McInerney No: Mrs. Chastain B. Five-Year Curriculum Plan (2020-2025) • Ms. DiCorpo said this plan was developed after reviewing all the stored curriculum in office files, and in conjunction with department chairs at the high school. It reflects renamed curricula as well. Curriculum writing is offered three times throughout the year. This year, 16 total curricula will be written.	Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the Grade 6 General Music curriculum to the full Board for approval. Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the Grade 7 General Music curriculum to the full Board for approval. Motion made and passed to bring the Grade 8 General Music curriculum to the full Board for approval. B. Five-Year Curriculum Plan (2020-2025)
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	• Mr. Dahl asked how summer postings are determined. Ms. DiCorpo said she starts with who is available to write and then matches up the needs. They try to avoid burnout due to multiple curriculums being written by the same teacher. If they do not get any takers to write a scheduled curriculum, they will put it back on the list and keep trying. • Mr. Schemm asked why PLTW is included since that is a proprietary program. Ms. DiCorpo said it is adapted/adjusted to allow district teachers to interpret the standards and match the program to the actual schedule of learning our students follow in district. • Mrs. Chastain asked if having an external curriculum writer position might be cheaper and more efficient than doling out individual stipends. • Ms. DiCorpo said she is not in favor of letting go of the internal writing because it is very helpful, but that more eyes during vetting would be very helpful. • Mrs. Chastain suggested that even having someone to create an outline for teachers to fill in might encourage more participation and allow for a decreased stipend. • Ms. DiCorpo said that could be one of the tasks for a Director of Curriculum position. • Mr. Dahl asked if the Curriculum Council could do any of this work. Ms. DiCorpo said she would have to defer to Human Resources regarding that question. She said the Council is all volunteers at this time and right now they are focused on vertical alignment work. • Dr. Tracy said he thought it was important to retain the role of the district's teachers in curriculum writing since they know our students best. • Mr. Schemm reminded all that the curriculum plan is a living document and subject to change as needed. Mr. Dahl moved to bring the Five-Year Curriculum Plan (2020-2025) to the full Board for approval, seconded by Mrs. Chastain and passed unanimously.	
4.	Presentations 1. Summer Reading/Math	Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the Five-Year Curriculum Plan (2020-2025) to the full Board for approval. Presentations 1. Summer Reading/Math

- Mrs. Muir and Mrs. Allen presented the Summer Math Passport program. The district has not offered summer math work in the past to help prevent the “summer slide”. This program is designed to engage students in a fun way in math activities and to build a sense of community at the same time. Every student incoming to grades 1-5 will be given a “passport” to bring to local businesses where they will attempt to solve an onsite math problem and receive a stamp. Students who complete 10 of 14 stamps will receive a certificate when they return to school. Anyone completing all 14 will receive special recognition. A conscious decision was made not to include prizes because the emphasis is on the work, not the prize. Mrs. Muir and Mrs. Allen will be sharing updates on Twitter under the hashtag #NMSummerMath.
- Mrs. Chastain said she loved the idea of the program but expressed concern that not all students would be able to visit the businesses due to family constraints. She asked if there was a way they could get stamped too.
- Dr. Tracy suggested a note be added to the letter announcing the program to provide a district contact for anyone with concerns.
- The group brainstormed additional ideas.
- Mr. Dahl said he thought this was a tremendous program and a great start.
- Mr. Schemm asked what would happen if students lose the booklet. Mrs. Muir said there will be a pdf version on the district website.
- Ms. DiCorpo said they will be adjusting as needed for next year. She said they are involving high school students through video and photography during the summer.
- Ms. Stewart said K-8 students will participate in the Governor’s Reading Challenge. At SMS, the PTO has provided funding so that all students in each grade will receive a copy of the same book for their level to read and discuss in the fall. In addition, PLTW classes are creating Lending Libraries to be placed around town for students to pick up books to read.
- Ms. DiCorpo said she was approached by Compass

Inspections regarding an idea for a book drive. This has developed into donations for the lending libraries. Compass has already started advertising for donations. The district will vet the books that are donated before adding them to the libraries. Ms. DiCorpo said she is so grateful for the community support.

- Mrs. McInerney asked if monitoring of the lending libraries themselves will take place to check that inappropriate books are not added. Ms. DiCorpo said there is no real way to do that but she thinks the benefits of the program are worth the risk.
- Mrs. Chastain suggested the public library be contacted for future discards.
- Ms. Stewart said Mr. Clyne will be coordinating the district's Summer Reading Blog again this year to keep information updated.

2. Summer School

- Ms. DiCorpo said they are running the Summer Bridge Program again this year for 120 invited students in grades 3-5 for Reading and Math from July 22 – August 8 on Monday through Thursday mornings. One EL class is being added new this year with a Bilingual teacher. The program will be located at NMHS; transportation is included.
- Mrs. McInerney asked how many of the invited students accept. Ms. DiCorpo said the first summer they had a 95% acceptance rate. Last year, it was closer to 70% but it was a very late ending school year and many parents expressed a desire to give their families a break.
- The district is also running the Algebra Readiness Program at SMS again this year. It is open to students in grade 7 who met criteria. This year, 17 students were invited. It provides exposure to the Pre-Algebra curriculum for potential entrance into Algebra in grade 8. Two sessions are being offered at NMHS: July 22-26 or August 5-9. A student attendee must demonstrate 80% mastery on the concepts of Algebra in order to qualify for Algebra I in Grade 8 for the 19-20 school year.
- Mr. Dahl asked what would happen if not all 17 signed up. Ms. DiCorpo said if the numbers do not warrant two sessions they would only run one

2. Summer School

	session. • Mrs. Chastain asked if a student was not successful in the first session could they take the second session if there was room. Ms. DiCorpo said not at this time as there is no session offered after the second session, the opportunity would not be equitable. • Mrs. McInerney asked that results of these programs be shared in September. • Mr. Schemm asked for confirmation that the district does not offer summer school at the high school level. Ms. DiCorpo said that is correct. She said that is a concern and they have started to brainstorm ideas, including the possibility of using some Odysseyware licenses. • Dr. Tracy thanked Ms. DiCorpo for her hard work. Ms. DiCorpo said it was a collaborative effort with her team.	
5.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
6.	Adjourn Mr. Dahl moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Chastain and passed unanimously.	Adjourn Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



J.T. Schemm, Chairperson
Committee on Learning