

**New Milford Board of Education
Committee on Learning Minutes
June 20, 2017
Lillis Administration Building, Room 2**

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

Absent: Mr. Dave Littlefield

Also Present: Mr. Joshua Smith, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services

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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 7:35 p.m. by Mrs. McInerney.	Call to Order
2.	Public Comment There was none.	Public Comment
3.	Discussion A. District Literacy Evaluation Tool - Early Literacy - Data Teams - IEP Rubric - Mrs. McInerney said at this meeting, we would hear a presentation from Ms. DiCorpo and Mrs. Olson about the district literacy evaluation tool. She noted there would be no meeting on July 4th. - Ms. DiCorpo said this work has to do with the state visit around the district literacy tool. New Milford was chosen to participate due to the gap in reading between those with disabilities and those without. She said the goal is to have kids reading at grade level by the end of third grade. Mrs. Olson said students should have the fundamental skills by that time. - The gap for New Milford was 19.2 points. Mr. Dahl asked if that was a large gap and Ms.	Discussion A. District Literacy Evaluation Tool

	DiCorpo said it was. She said they were aware there was a gap but they were working to address it. • Mrs. Olson said with the smarter balanced assessment, they were able to look at different factors than before. • Ms. DiCorpo went over briefly the process of how New Milford was chosen and what they had to do. The presentation explained that in 2013-2014, the federal Office of Special Education Programs added the SSIP as an indicator to the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report. • The states goal is to increase the reading performance of all 3rd grade students with disabilities statewide, as measured by Connecticut's English/Language Arts (ELA) Performance Index. 1. Early Literacy • Phase one included assessment of systems and areas to focus and work on as a district. • Out of that assessment, came an action plan with goals to work on. Goal number one is that district staff will develop and align a system of formative and summative assessments reflective of the five components of early literacy to be used to inform instructional decision making. • The objectives to meet goal number one include: a) Inventory existing diagnostic assessments. b) Analyze the alignment between existing assessments and the five areas of early literacy (Phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension). c) Select and purchase research-based assessments to fill the gap and ensure that staff have tools for all five areas of reading. d) Review current assessment practices. e) Assess staff implementation and analysis of universal screening tools, diagnostic tools, and progress monitoring. f) Develop Professional Learning to build staff capacity in areas identified in the needs	
		1. Early Literacy

assessment.

g) Develop an assessment calendar that includes times for administration, collection of data, data entry, and review of data.

h) Develop a data management model for literacy (similar to math) that includes class and individual student profiles.

- Mr. Schemm asked if the coaches will be used and Ms. DiCorpo said they would in various ways. Their first focus will be on the training necessary to conduct running records. She said the next phase of work is data teams.
- Mrs. McNerney asked what was used to define students with disabilities, IEP's? Mrs. Olson said that was correct, students with IEP's.
- Mr. Smith said the conversation is starting to grow about the gaps between special education and regular education especially in literacy. He said the staff says the district tests too much and the state department says the district is not testing enough. He said the goal is to get this to become a teacher driven conversation.
- Mr. Schemm asked if the district had too much time away from non-disabled peers and Ms. DiCorpo said that has vanished as New Milford has many good systems already in place.

2. Data Teams

- Phase two is that district staff will develop and align data teams at the grade, building and district levels to identify effective practices and student needs as well as promote consistent instructional/intervention practices.
- Ms. DiCorpo said this will assure consistent experiences in all classes at all grade levels. Mrs. McNerney asked if this meant they were moving at the same pace and Mr. Smith said within reason they would be.
- Mr. Dahl asked what happens in pacing if one child lags behind and Mrs. Olson said there is customization of learning for each child. Mr. Smith said this is the challenge as nobody is telling

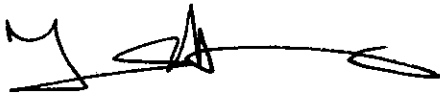
2. Data Teams

	you what to do but there are systems in place to catch a student up. • Mr. Dahl asked if summer school was designed to help this and Mr. Smith said it is driven by these assessments as the district can now say to the parents this is what your child needs. • The objectives to meet goal number two include: a) Identify data team membership at district, school, and grade levels. b) Review data team resource (link provided to staff). c) Establish and develop building and district-level data teams and structures. d) Diverse membership. e) Identify common data team protocols. f) Meeting schedules. g) Establish Norms. h) Standing agenda that includes data review and goal setting. i) Communication system development. j) Establish expectations for school-based and grade-level teams and system/schedule for monitoring. • Ms. DiCorpo said this ongoing collaboration helps break the barrier of the district office telling us what to do when the teachers begin to participate in the process. • Mrs. McInerney asked if there was a stipend for this or if this was considered part of the salary and Ms. DiCorpo said it is a professional responsibility. Mr. Smith said most of the teachers on data teams do understand the needs and the data culture. Ms. DiCorpo stated that this data helps to determine the gaps in the curriculum. • Mr. Dahl said one complaint he has heard is the professional development should be over several afternoons and not just held one day per month. Mrs. Olson said this will now be ongoing and embedded. 3. IEP Rubric • Phase three is the SERC IEP Rubric which Mrs.	3. IEP Rubric
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	Olson said will bring general and special education together districtwide. • The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a living and breathing document revised to meet the needs of the student. It is also a legal document which uses comprehensive general education-drive assessments and benchmarks to isolate and target specifically designed instruction to address missing concepts, skills, or strategies that assist students in making progress in general education. • Mrs. Olson said there are 14 different areas in the gap analysis. The IEP looks at the strengths of a student which drives the goals and objectives. The rubric will be a process and a professional learning activity that will be ongoing throughout the year. • Mrs. McInerney said many parents do not understand the IEP and find it difficult to find resources. Mrs. Olson said they offer additional meetings for evaluation of the IEP. • Mrs. Olson said the district will introduce Foundations, which provides K-2 instruction for specific students and SERC will provide training as it has proven effective for these grade levels. She said Wilson has proven successful for grades 3-12. • Mr. Schemm asked if there was any internal testing as the students continued for 5th grade, 8th grade, etc., and Ms. DiCorpo said the literacy assessment scores are based on the smarter balanced assessments which have currently only been released to districts for 2016 so they are being monitored internally and looked at in conjunction with NWEA data. • Mr. Schemm asked if there would be a data workshop and Mr. Smith said they are looking at the numbers to determine what data to bring to the board. He said the data coach allows the district to move faster to catch up to other districts in the DRG as there is no reason that New Milford should be 23rd. • Mrs. Olson said this process helped the district move forward as the rubric can be used as more of an instructional tool.	
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	Ms. DiCorpo said SERC commended the district on the joint work done by regular education and special education departments.	
4.	Public Comment There was none.	Public Comment
5.	Adjourn Mr. Schemm moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m., seconded by Mr. Dahl and passed unanimously.	Adjourn Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Tammy McInerney, Chairperson
Committee on Learning