

**New Milford Board of Education
Committee on Learning Special Meeting Minutes
August 1, 2017
Lillis Administration Building, Room 2**

Present: Mrs. Tammy McInerney, Chairperson
Mr. Bill Dahl
Mrs. Angela C. Chastain, Alternate
Mr. Dave Littlefield (arrived at 7:11 p.m.)

Absent: Mr. J.T. Schemm

Also Present: Mr. Joshua Smith, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Yvonne de St. Croix, Talented and Gifted teacher
Mrs. Susan Brofford, K-5 Science Enrichment teacher

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NEW MILFORD, CT

1.	Call to Order The special meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 6:45 p.m. by Mrs. McInerney. Mrs. Chastain was seated in the absence of Mr. Schemm.	Call to Order
2.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
3.	Presentation A. TAG and Enrichment • Ms. DiCorpo introduced Mrs. Brofford, K-5 Science Enrichment teacher, and Ms. de St. Croix, Talented and Gifted teacher. Ms. DiCorpo said the two teachers work closely together to coordinate services for students. • Mrs. Brofford said she had completed her second year as the K-5 Science Enrichment teacher. In 2015-16, her first year, Mrs. Brofford was able to offer four Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses over six sections to approximately 55 students. She also offered the Hour of Code at SNIS and computer science instruction to Grade 2 at HPS. • Mrs. McInerney asked why no courses were offered at the third-grade level in 2015-16 and why	Presentation A. TAG and Enrichment

	NES Grade 2 did not receive computer instruction. Mrs. Brofford said there were time and materials issues in the first year of setting up the program. • Mrs. Chastain asked if courses met multiple times and Mrs. Brofford said they did, typically 12-14 sessions each. • Mrs. Brofford said in 2016-17, the second year of the program, she was able to offer ten PLTW courses over 16 sections to 164 students. She offered the Hour of Code school-wide at SNIS and to Grade 2 at both HPS and NES. She ran after school clubs for grades 3, 4, and 5 in computer science for any interested student, as well as a Robotics workshop for fifth graders during their recess time. • Mrs. McInerney asked how Mrs. Brofford meets with students. Mrs. Brofford said it is a pull-out program for students who have been recommended by teachers and are in the top 10% in MAP testing. • Ms. DiCorpo said in addition to the pull-out program, Mrs. Brofford works with teachers to coordinate curriculum to be used in their own classrooms for general instruction. She said the Mystery Science units are a good example of this. • Mr. Dahl asked if there is a cap to the number of students in the enrichment program. Mrs. Brofford said not yet; currently, they take any student who qualifies. • Mrs. Chastain asked if Mrs. Brofford had tried to involve the PLTW high school students to help with clubs. Mrs. Brofford said she is working on that but the differences in school times make it challenging. She said the students did assist with the family science fairs and were a great help. Mrs. Brofford said she is also trying to involve the high school Astronomy students. • Mr. Dahl asked if Mrs. Brofford had time for planning. She said she did have some, as well as time for set up and breakdown of activities. At SNIS, she has a dedicated lab room. Space in the elementary schools are a little tighter, but she does have some at both schools. Mrs. Brofford said she and Ms. de St. Croix are purposeful in scheduling their time so that they do not overlap at the	
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	schools, making the most efficient use of the space and programs. • Ms. de St. Croix said her role as a TAG teacher is to identify students with high potential. Then, develop or modify enrichments and curriculum extensions in response to their needs. She also identifies and provides the training and curriculum needed to prepare teachers to differentiate for TAG students. Her goal is to structure gifted services to be sustainable so that they grow from year to year, and to facilitate frequent and ongoing communication with TAG students and stakeholders. Additionally, Ms. de St. Croix works to nurture the social and emotional well-being of TAG students by recognizing their individual strengths and learning styles and diverse backgrounds. • Mrs. McInerney asked when students are tested for the TAG program. Ms. de St. Croix said students are tested beginning in third grade, but many are on the radar even before then. She said once a student hits 90% on any testing metric, they start to watch them, in coordination with the classroom teacher. • Mrs. McInerney asked what types of TAG programs are offered. Ms. de St. Croix said the general TAG students are pulled out during the day for programming in the areas of social studies, math and literacy, as scheduling permits. Fine arts TAG is done after school by grade level and students are selected by a pre-assessment. • Mrs. McInerney asked about community partners. Ms. de St. Croix said there are many great community connections being built. There are current partnerships with the Observatory astronomers, the Silo, and the Village Center for the Arts. She is working to add programming support from the New Milford Historical Society in the near future. • Ms. de St. Croix said she had planned for 24 program offerings last year for TAG and high achieving, non-identified students but ended up adding offerings in music and poetry to bring the	
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	total to 29. This year she is planning for 26 offerings, but believes it will reach more than 30 as gaps to programming are identified. • Mrs. Chastain said she is very glad to see the push for identification in the younger grades as well as the wide variety of sustainable programming. • Ms. de St. Croix said one of her goals for this coming year is to make ongoing improvements to the www.nmpstag.com website she has developed. Another is to start a quarterly TAG newsletter. • Ms. de St. Croix outlined new state legislation regarding TAG that went into effect in July. The act requires that the Department of Education have a designated expert to be responsible for providing assistance regarding TAG; that they develop “best practices” guidelines for academic and social-emotional services to gifted and talented students, as well as professional development for teachers; and ensure that all high-ability students in CT receive appropriate services. • Ms. DiCorpo said the state sent a survey to TAG coordinators across the state as a first step in the process. She is confident that New Milford’s program has a strong foundation and the work this year will focus on identifying students and building for the future. • Mrs. McInerney asked if there is any state funding associated with the new legislation and Ms. DiCorpo said none is expected.	
4.	Discussion and Possible Action	Discussion and Possible Action
A.	Theories of Action • Mrs. McInerney said these theories of action had been presented and discussed at the Board’s annual retreat where it had been agreed to bring them to COL for any further tweaks before moving them forward for full Board approval. They will then be used as a guide for strategic planning. • Mr. Smith said the four areas covered in the theories of action coalesced at the retreat and will be used to develop an action plan for the district to help ensure that all work is connected and has the	A. Theories of Action

	same focus. Mr. Dahl moved to bring the proposed Theories of Action to the full Board for approval. Motion seconded by Mrs. Chastain. Motion passed unanimously.	Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the proposed Theories of Action to the full Board for approval.
5.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
6.	Adjourn Mr. Dahl moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Chastain and passed unanimously.	Adjourn Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Tammy McInerney, Chairperson
Committee on Learning