

**New Milford Board of Education
Committee on Learning Minutes
November 15, 2016
Lillis Administration Building, Room 2**

Present: Mr. William R. Dahl, Chairperson
Mr. Dave Littlefield
Mrs. Tammy McInerney

Absent: Mr. Brian McCauley

Also Present: Mr. Joshua Smith, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Roberta Pratt, Director of Technology
Mrs. Shana Bergonzelli-Graham, Teacher, New Milford High School
Mr. Jeffrey Bronn, Teacher, New Milford High School
Dr. Kathleen DelMonico, English Dept. Chair, New Milford High School
Mr. Bradford Jones, Teacher, New Milford High School
Mrs. Jennifer LaCava, Teacher, New Milford High School
Mrs. Jennifer Morrison, Teacher, Schaghticoke Middle School
Ms. Julia Rose, Teacher, New Milford High School
Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal, New Milford High School
Mr. Eric Williams, Assistant Principal, New Milford High School

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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 7:32 p.m. by Mr. Dahl.	Call to Order
2.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
3.	Presentation A. New Milford High School PLTW • Ms. DiCorpo said the PLTW Engineering Design and Development class is the senior capstone course for the pathway which now begins in middle school. • Mr. Jones said students come up with their own problem to solve through open ended design. They are required to research the idea, look at similar items which have patent, present the concept to adult groups, design a brochure, and build a prototype. They keep an engineering notebook,	Presentation A. New Milford High School PLTW

	course binder, and electronic portfolio. He said this is the closest a course can come to duplicating professional work. • Mr. Dahl asked if students select the course in middle school. Mr. Smith said all 7th grade students get a taste of the course and then in 8th grade it is a full elective choice. • Mr. Dahl asked if students can jump in at a later grade if they did not elect it early on and Mr. Jones said they could and that the courses have varied grade levels enrolled. • PLTW student James Kane presented his idea for an improved oil splatter guard saying he thought his prototype would improve on existing models with a few innovations. • Students Darius Baker and Michael Carroll presented their idea for a portable power pack which looks at combining solar, wind, and hand crank power for a portable charger for people living off the grid. • Students Matt Adamou and Tommy Schneider call their project the U-Desk. They are seeking to redesign a student desk to make it comfortable for right or left hand students and to improve the comfort of the seat and back support. • Students Devin Collentine and Codie Holick are designing a car coin sorter which will use a digital display and dispenser and hopefully cut down on distracted driving. • Students Cesar Gavilano and Kurt Jonke call their project a Tail Pipe Turbine. They are seeking to capture the excess energy not used by cars, and more specifically motorcycles, to power a plug in device to be used for device charging. They visited BMW and Harley Davidson in Danbury the previous week and were told that there would be a big market for their product if they are successful with its creation. • Mr. Jones thanked the committee for hearing the presentations as they are a course requirement. He said students will also present in March at the CT Science and Engineering Fair and in May at an as yet to be determined venue.	
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4.	Discussion and Possible Action	Discussion and Possible Action
A.	Request for New Program or Course 1. AP Human Geography 2. AP Environmental Science • Ms. DiCorpo said these two courses were discussed last month. At that time questions were asked about AP course enrollment. She said last year there were 526 students enrolled and 504 tests taken for a 94% participation rate. Ms. DiCorpo said currently the district pays half of the assessment cost. • Mr. Littlefield said he had heard that students who did not take the test this year would only receive Honors level credit. • Mr. Shugrue said that will go into effect next year; students and parents will be required to sign an acknowledgment. • Mr. Dahl asked about the case of students taking multiple AP classes who can't handle taking all the tests. Mr. Shugrue said in his experience, that is rare, as students who take these courses can usually handle the test taking piece as well. He said that the courses can be helpful in learning lessons in time management and stress management as well. • Mr. Dahl asked if Mr. Shugrue thought there was value to the class without the exam. Mr. Shugrue said he thought they went part and parcel. He said the district makes a financial commitment with these classes and they try to guard against students just taking the class to pad their transcript. • Mr. Shugrue said they reviewed other district practices to see if there was a trend. He said most require the AP test for AP credit and some require payment at the beginning of the year. • Ms. DiCorpo distributed a handout on college readiness which showed the value to students of taking an AP course. She said test scores also provide data for the district to see if what we are doing for instruction is working or if adjustments need to be made. • Ms. DiCorpo also showed a chart of enrollment in	A. Request for New Program or Course 1. AP Human Geography 2. AP Environmental Science

new courses added over the last seven years.

- Mr. Dahl asked if there is a committee at the high school that looks at what AP courses to add and if students should take tests etc. Mr. Shugrue said that is discussed at Leadership Team meetings with department chairs. They also look at other high schools to see what courses show high interest. That is where the push for AP Human Geography and AP Environmental Science came from.
- Mr. Shugrue said they are encouraging students to try at least one AP class to experience the academic rigor and pace. This gives students a chance to practice such skills as time management before college when they may have fewer supports. Mr. Shugrue said the high schools around us offer more AP classes and have high enrollment in those classes. He said this is having a negative effect on New Milford's college readiness score. He said NMHS has great students and teachers and deserves recognition as well but outsiders use the college readiness score frequently for comparison.
- Mr. Dahl said the committee approves policy but the high school sets the practice and that everyone needs to be on the same page regarding changes. It is not good to hear after the fact. Mr. Shugrue said he agreed and would work to improve communication on expectations for future clarity.
- Mrs. McInerney asked if there might be more enrollment if there was less of a financial obligation. Mr. Shugrue said he thinks the choice of offerings is much more of a factor.
- Mr. Smith said there are many other schools with higher enrollment percentages that do not pay anything towards the test. He said New Milford already provides funding in cases of financial need.
- Mr. Littlefield asked if a letter would go home to parents about the change in practice for next year and Mr. Shugrue said it would in conjunction with course selection. Mr. Littlefield asked if there was any score requirement for AP credit and Mr. Shugrue said no, just that students take the test.

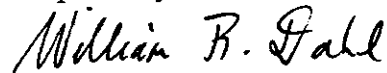
	Mrs. McInerney moved to bring the request for new program or course: AP Human Geography and AP Environmental Science to the full Board for approval, seconded by Mr. Littlefield and passed unanimously. B. Review and Approval of Curriculum 1. Sixth Grade Digital Citizenship 2. Seventh Grade Introduction to Computer Applications 3. Eighth Grade Intermediate Computer Applications - Mrs. Morrison said 6th graders have this class once every six days for the year. They begin with a study of copyright and social media usage with the theme of digital citizenship. The second semester focuses on keyboarding skills. In 7th grade, students have the class twice every six days for the year. It features an introduction to word processing and an introduction to spreadsheets. A class newspaper is the final project for this unit. Second semester focuses on coding applications. Mrs. Morrison said there is a lot of different options offered due to individual student background and experience with coding. The end goal is to use coding for creation of a project. In 8th grade, the focus is on publications. Students are exposed to Publisher and Google tools and must create a brochure of some kind based on interest. Second semester will include a unit on data including what data is collected and what businesses do with it. Students do an independent study as a final project which could involve such things as photo editing or virtual reality for example. They must make a tutorial as part of the project to teach others what they have learned. - Mr. Dahl asked if the class was only offered once in six days due to the schedule and if a block might help student retention. Mr. Smith said the class is treated like a special. He said previously courses	Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the request for new program or course: AP Human Geography and AP Environmental Science to the full Board for approval. B. Review and Approval of Curriculum 1. Sixth Grade Digital Citizenship 2. Seventh Grade Introduction to Computer Applications 3. Eighth Grade Intermediate Computer Applications
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	were semester based, but they felt current practice leads to more consistency over the full year. • Mrs. Morrison said she keeps all her lessons online for student access as needed. 4. Introduction to Computer Programming 5. AP Computer Science • Mrs. Bergonzelli-Graham said these classes build on the middle school foundation. The Introductory course offers a gentle introduction to programming which is meant to engage student interest in further study in AP Computer Science. She said the committee has already heard the great benefits of AP classes. She did want to stress how important she thinks it is to foster student interest in this field as there are so many opportunities for future growth. 6. English I: CP and Honors • Ms. DelMonico said this course has been redesigned, separating units by genre for organization. Students start with the short story and focus on reading and presentation. • Mr. Williams said the course offers a choice of texts using common assessments. • Mrs. McInerney asked if this freshman class offered CP and Honors placement. Ms. DelMonico said it does and there is a lot of flexibility between the levels at the start of the year. 7. English II: CP and Honors • Mr. Bronn said this sophomore curriculum has been revised to include more challenge and diversity in its four major units. Teachers have a choice of several texts for each unit, allowing for individual interest and differentiation. • Mr. Dahl asked if current events are ever brought into the study and Mrs. LaCava said they are. She said there is also quite a bit of non-fiction study included. She said she is particularly proud of the assessments included in the course.	4. Introduction to Computer Programming 5. AP Computer Science 6. English I: CP and Honors 7. English II: CP and Honors
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8. English III: CP and Honors • Ms. Rose said this junior curriculum which focuses on America literature has been revised to include more diversity and a digital literacy piece. • Ms. DelMonico said there is a strong use of primary documents as well. 9. Literature & Media Studies • Ms. DelMonico said this is a brand new senior level course that was approved last year. She said it is a very meaty course which she feels would be a worthy candidate for college credit. • Mr. Littlefield asked if it was an elective and Ms. DelMonico said all senior level English courses are electives. 10. Architectural Drafting I • Mr. Williams said this is a revision of a full year course. The first semester is focused on hand drawing of plans. The second semester moves on to computer assisted AUTO CAD. • Mrs. DiCorpo said the current text is quite old so she had asked the teacher to review it for possible update. Mr. Williams said much of the work uses online resources, but they are looking into it. • Mr. Dahl thanked all the presenters and said he was very impressed by the quality of the work. Mrs. McInerney moved to bring the following curricula: 1. Sixth Grade Digital Citizenship 2. Seventh Grade Introduction to Computer Applications 3. Eighth Grade Intermediate Computer Applications 4. Introduction to Computer Programming 5. AP Computer Science 6. English I: CP and Honors 7. English II: CP and Honors 8. English III: CP and Honors 9. Literature & Media Studies 10. Architectural Drafting I	8. English III: CP and Honors 9. Literature & Media Studies 10. Architectural Drafting I Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the following curriculum to the full Board for approval: 1. Sixth Grade Digital Citizenship 2. Seventh Grade Introduction to Computer Applications 3. Eighth Grade Intermediate Computer Applications 4. Introduction to Computer Programming
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	to the full Board for approval, seconded by Mr. Littlefield and passed unanimously.	5. AP Computer Science 6. English I: CP and Honors 7. English II: CP and Honors 8. English III: CP and Honors 9. Literature & Media Studies 10. Architectural Drafting I
5.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
6.	Adjourn Mrs. McInerney moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. seconded by Mr. Littlefield and passed unanimously.	Adjourn Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



William R. Dahl, Chairperson
Committee on Learning