

**New Milford Board of Education
Committee on Learning Minutes
April 25, 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.	Presentation A. Initial Phases of Alternative Education Program • Ms. DiCorpo presented information to begin the discussion regarding what form an alternative education program in New Milford might take should the Board decide to move forward with the concept. She began her presentation by stating the definition of alternative education as defined by the CT State Department of Education. Ms. DiCorpo noted that this definition specifically excludes vocational programs. In determining any plan, initial steps to be considered would include location, logistics, program philosophy for implementation, administration, assessment and curriculum, and resources. Ms. DiCorpo provided examples of some current alternative education program models currently in place in CT. • Mr. Dahl said he would like any discussion of an alternative education program to look past social	Presentation A. Initial Phases of Alternative Education Program

	and behavioral needs and include the needs of non-traditional learners. He asked what age group is being considered and Mr. Smith said that would be part of the conversation going forward. • Mrs. McInerney asked where students go now for alternative programs. Mr. Smith said current choices are Nonnewaug and Abbott Tech as choice programs and other special education driven programs. The ESS program at the high school has been helpful in addressing socially and emotionally fragile students. • Ms. DiCorpo said she is also working to identify what program supports are available including online programming. • Mr. Schemm said it appears that an alternative education program will require a large outlay of personnel to support a small group and wondered if the benefits would lead to savings in other areas. • Mr. Dahl talked about the financial commitment that will be required, saying it would be important to make sure this is something the community wants and will support. • Ms. DiCorpo asked the committee to give her input as to where they would like the conversation to go from here.	
4.	Discussion	Discussion
A.	Graduation Requirements • Ms. DiCorpo distributed handouts for review. She said this has been the topic of previous conversations and had resurfaced during budget deliberations. She is looking for direction as to what direction the Board wants to go and why. • Mrs. McInerney asked what credits are currently required. Ms. DiCorpo said the state requires 20 credits now but there is a bill moving forward currently to change it to 25 for the class of 2023. New Milford is currently at 26. • Ms. DiCorpo said any discussion of graduation credits should take into account the Next Generation Accountability Model that the state is	A. Graduation Requirements

	using as a measurement tool. This includes factors such as attendance and graduation rates, fitness and arts access. All these areas would need to be factored into the discussion, since elective courses all factor into the indicators in various ways. • Ms. DiCorpo said the questions to be considered if decreasing graduation credits is what area(s) and why. • Mr. Dahl said he was thinking of the student who struggles to attain the required credits. Mr. Smith said in that case it would be more important to look at the underlying reasons and how they can be fixed. • Mr. Dahl said he was in favor of leaving the standard at 26 credits, especially as the capstone discussion continues at the state level. Perhaps that could become the 26th credit if needed. • Mr. Schemm said the capstone piece is a large project that will require significant staff resources and would in all likelihood be more “expensive” than one credit. • Ms. DiCorpo said she could bring information to the committee regarding an AP capstone project, which would allow the district to start the process on a smaller scale. • Mr. Schemm said he could see reducing the credit requirement to the state level knowing that students could still exceed it if they wish. He said he would like to see a historical breakdown of the number of students graduating per number of credits. He would also like to see the number of may not/will not letters over time at the different levels. • Mr. Smith mentioned that transfer credits can become an issue occasionally when students transfer in from a district that has required fewer credits to graduate.	
5.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment

6.	Adjourn Mr. Schemm moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. seconded by Mrs. McInerney and passed unanimously.	Adjourn Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m.
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Respectfully submitted:



Tammy McInerney, Chairperson
Committee on Learning