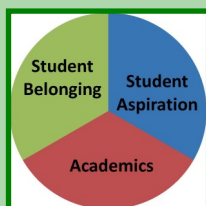




New Milford Public Schools
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New Milford High School
860-350-6647
Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal
Mrs. Liz Curtis, Asst. Principal
Ms. Linda Scoralick, Asst. Principal



Schaghticoke Middle School
860-354-2204
Dr. Christopher Longo, Principal
Mr. Kevin Best, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Barbara Nanassy, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Sasha Salem, Asst. Principal



Sarah Noble Intermediate School
860-210-4020
Mrs. Anne Bilko, Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Chmielewski, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Meyers, Asst. Principal



Hill & Plain Elementary School
860-354-5430
Mr. Eric Williams, Principal
Mrs. Kerri Adakonis, Asst. Principal



Northville Elementary School
860-355-3713
Mrs. Gwen Gallagher, Principal
Mr. Kevin Best, Asst. Principal

Spotlight on New Milford Schools

Volume 11, Issue 9

March 2021

Reopening NMPS to In Person Learning

March has been a momentous month for New Milford Public Schools as we have welcomed students back to (almost) full In Person learning. Wednesday remains an early dismissal day, to allow time for planning, as well as afford our Facilities department the opportunity for deep cleaning.



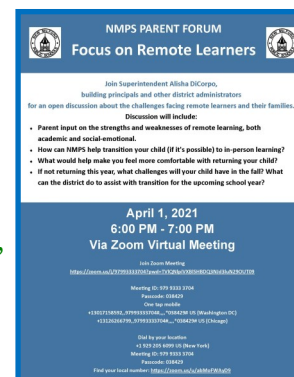
HPS and NES welcomed PK-2 students back on March 1st and SNIS students followed on March 15th. Students and teachers both were thrilled to be meeting as one unified group again. As one principal said, "It was like the first day of school all over again!" Superintendent DiCorpo visited each of the schools on their "reopening day" and reported, "It was wonderful to see the children back in the building laughing and talking to their friends, as well as meeting new friends from the opposite cohort. The energy and enthusiasm is just what we had hoped to see and it was heartwarming to experience."



All schools will enjoy spring break from April 12-16, followed by Remote Learning from April 19-23 to mitigate any issues resulting from traveling and socializing during the April break.

In addition to the PK-5 schools reopening, middle school and high school schedules changed on March 17th to include an additional half day of in person learning by cohort on Wednesdays. On April 26th, both SMS and NMHS will join the lower grades and return to full In Person learning. A Grades 6-12 In Person Learning Parent Night will be held on April 22nd via Zoom so that families can get an overview of the student day, a virtual tour and ask questions.

The district has not forgotten those families who have chosen to stay with the Remote Learning model. A Parent Night just for those families will be offered via Zoom on April 1st. Superintendent DiCorpo, building principals and other district administrators will host an open discussion about the challenges facing remote learners and their families. “We really want parent input on the strengths and weaknesses of remote learning, both academic and social-emotional,” says Ms. DiCorpo. “We want to hear how we can help transition students back to in person learning if it’s possible. Our ultimate goal is to have all students back in person with their teachers.”

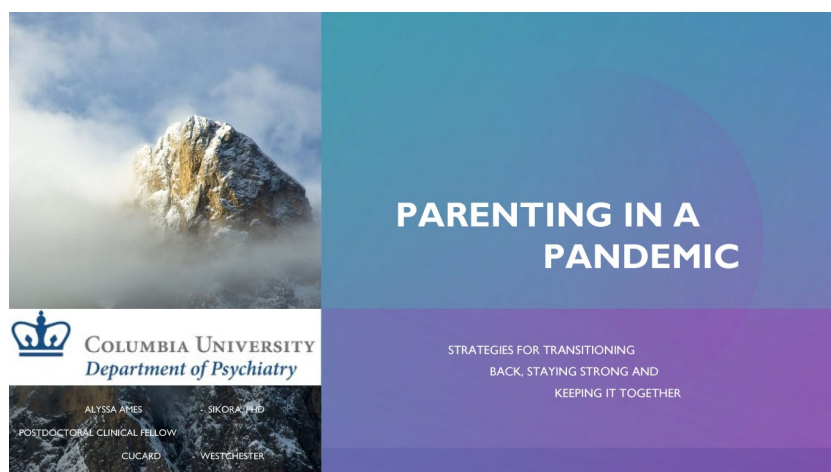


Parents as Partners

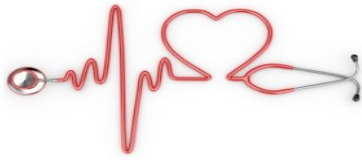
On February 22nd, Dr. Ames-Sikora from Columbia University presented “Parenting in a Pandemic: Strategies for Transitioning Back, Staying Strong, and Keeping It Together”. More than 50 parents tuned in live to hear the presentation.

Topics included:

- ◆ Developmental milestones and red flag behaviors, what is normal and not normal during the pandemic;
- ◆ Strategies for responding to difficult behaviors using proactive parenting;
- ◆ Approaches to support anxious kids and how to ease children back into school gradually.



If you weren't able to attend the presentation live, a recording and slides are available on the district website [homepage](#).



Notes from the School Nurses

Contact tracing¹ is a key part of the mitigation strategies that schools are using to prevent disease transmission. You may have received a phone call from a school administrator notifying you that your child has been a close contact due to an exposure to COVID-19 at school. While we understand that this is often frightening, frustrating and may create additional challenges for families, contact tracing remains a key strategy for infection control and in keeping our school community as safe as possible.

To assist us in these efforts,

- ◆ Contact your child's school nurse as soon as you are aware if someone in your household member tests positive
- ◆ All children in the household are considered close contacts and should remain home from school for 10 days from last contact with a positive individual.
- ◆ Provide documentation of COVID-19 test results for your child. If your child has tested positive in the past, he/she may not have to quarantine depending on when the positive test was done.

Continue to use precautions:

- * Keep your children home if they are not feeling well.
- * WEAR A MASK
- * Social distancing (6 feet apart)
- * Frequent hand washing

Those 16 and up will be eligible to receive their COVID-19 Vaccine on April 1. At the present time, only Pfizer has been approved for ages 16 years and up.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your child's school nurse.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/contact-tracing.html>

¹ Contact tracing is the process of notifying people (contacts) of their potential exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, provide information about the virus, and discuss their symptom history and other relevant health information. In addition, instructions for self-quarantine and monitoring for symptoms, and support and referrals to testing, clinical services, and other essential support services are provided, as indicated.



Congratulations to the New Milford Public Schools “Stars” for the month of March 2021!



Cindy Cotter, SNIS Grade 3 Teacher

“Mrs. Cotter has endless patience when explaining a new topic or lesson. She has such an amazing attitude, so in turn school is never a chore for my student and she is eager to participate in class daily. Mrs. Cotter is extremely supportive and individually checks on each child frequently. She really goes above and beyond. I couldn’t be happier as a parent.”

Todd Miltimore, NES Library Media Specialist

“Todd is an amazing member of the NES community. He’s an enthusiastic educator. All of our students always looks forward to their time in Library. Todd’s love of reading is contagious and he’s always able to match readers with the perfect book..”



Jennifer Morrison, SMS Technology Ed. Teacher

“Jen Morrison is always available to fellow staff members with tech questions. She goes above and beyond the call of duty, by keeping the staff apprised of new apps or websites that could be useful in the classroom. Right now, during the pandemic, she is wearing even more hats; teaching and serving as the SMS Technology Integration Specialist.”

Nicole Orletski, HPS Grade 1 Teacher

“Nicole goes above and beyond by providing her class with a fun approach to learning. Her special events planned each month are greatly appreciated and give the students something fun to look forward too! She takes the time to assess each child's learning style and how they will grow from what is being taught in the classroom. We have been so fortunate to have her this year!”



Giles Vaughan, NMHS Paraeducator and Coach

“Mr. Vaughan is an incredible influence on any student he comes across. He really cares about his students and the athletes that he coaches and makes lasting connections with all of them. Mr. Vaughan shows everyone how to remain upbeat and happy no matter what!”

[Complete a short online form](#) to nominate a New Milford Public Schools staff member for future recognition.

News from Our Schools

Hill and Plain Elementary School

This month has been a busy one as Hill and Plain is officially “all in”. Students and staff have acclimated well to the changes and it is so nice to see classrooms full of children again. Students are doing a great job wearing their masks and have shown the ability to adapt quickly to desk shields and other mitigation strategies put into place.

Thank you to all of our parents who participated in our parent conferences earlier this month. Our staff is happy to be able to communicate the great work our students are doing in school and at home.

Hill and Plain wants to say a big thank you to our PTO. Even under different circumstances this year they pulled off a successful Book Fair. Families were able to purchase books online as well as in person outside the school. Our PTO volunteers and our parents braved the cold one Saturday morning so we could offer a safe in person option. Thank you again PTO for everything you do for our school.



Northville Elementary School

On March 1st our doors opened up to all our students! We are so happy to have them back in person. Prior to full in, we planned for the opening by reviewing safety protocols with the town’s health director, Mrs. Lisa Morrissey. We held a parent event to discuss what Northville will be doing for our students as we shift from hybrid to the full in model of learning. At this time, we have 88% of our students back full in.



PTO held a Readathon in February. We would like to congratulate Mrs. Fanas, Mrs. Banko, Mrs. Knowlen, and Ms. Gail classes for having the highest number of minutes of reading. The classes won a pajama day and Mrs. Gallagher and Mr. Best read the class a book. The staff celebrated Read Across America Day on March 2nd. A special thank you to our PTO for creating a Flipgrid of community readers for our students to enjoy guest readers, even during this challenging year!

Please remember Kindergarten registration is ongoing. If you know of a family with a child who will turn 5 by December 31, 2021 please ask them to visit the district website for registration information.

Sarah Noble Intermediate School

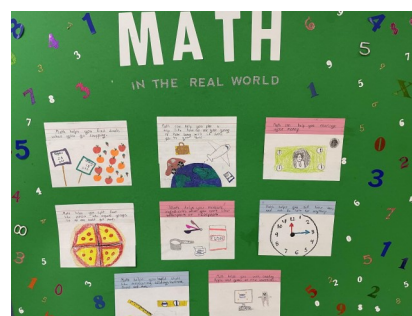
On March 15th, SNIS staff welcomed ‘all’ of our students back to school. The halls and classrooms were filled with the smiling eyes and the positive, infectious energy of our students. Throughout the past year our students have been very resilient and have risen to every occasion. ‘All in’ was no exception, they did a wonderful job.



This year Sarah Noble Intermediate School held its first Annual Math Week, March 15th-19th. Mrs. Strell, Grade 4 teacher, and Mrs. Muir, Math Coach, designed this week of special math activities. Each morning SNIS Principal Bilko started the day announcing a famous mathematician and a math joke. The teachers and students embraced the week and extra math problems. Additionally, real life math challenges were posted for each grade (3-5) on Padlets each day. Students were eager to participate and read each other's work. Students solved sidewalk chalk math problems outside of the school. As students walked the halls of the

school, math problems were posted to get everyone thinking about math in their everyday lives. Each grade had a special math read aloud and enrichment; this led to meaningful math talk.

Some students participated in an optional School Wide Math Poster/Slide-Show Contest. These slide shows and posters were amazing and showed how we use Math in our World! Finally, Sarah Noble Intermediate School ended Math Week wearing math inspired T-shirts. We look forward to continuing this tradition and adding to this annual Math Week in order to inspire our mathematicians in New Milford Public Schools.



Schaghticoke Middle School

In early March, SMS welcomed Interim Principal Mike Rafferty. Mr. Rafferty has fit into SMS like a perfect puzzle piece! We are happy to have him here.

The SMS Kindness Challenge, sponsored by the Counseling Department, continued this month. Acts of kindness were everywhere – most notably compliments. It's amazing what a simple kind word can do to elevate someone's day! Some members of Team 7 White made a "kindness chain" that is colorfully on display near the front office.

On March 10, the PTO sponsored a virtual visit from author Jarrett Krosoczka. All students were able to access the visit. Jarrett has 40 published books to his credit including the popular *Lunch Lady* graphic novels, the *Platypus Police Squad* middle-grade novels, and the acclaimed graphic memoir, *Hey, Kiddo*. Thanks to the PTO for sponsoring!



Grade 7 General Music has been exploring expressing themselves through musical/digital means by creating rap songs and podcasts. Students are discovering why expression is so important in their lives and cultures by researching different mediums, and constructing lyrics/transcripts. They will record themselves with music and sound effects culminating in a final product they can be proud of.

Drama Club has begun at SMS! Students are engaging in virtual theatre games, practicing their talents and skills at home before submitting recordings to be entered into our Virtual Talent Show.

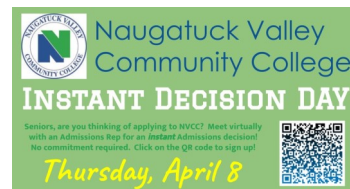
Leo Club sponsored "Welcome Back Wednesday" as we welcomed back our first students on Wednesdays in over a year!

Mrs. Heller and Mrs. Baerny have begun the 2021 Remote Learners Book Club to make our remote learners feel connected. The current read is *The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle*.

Spring sports are about to begin at SMS! Students should be on the lookout for notices in PE for sign-ups. Sports will begin when we are all in with – Baseball, Softball and Track.

New Milford High School

Instant Decision Days have begun. Admissions reps from Mercy College hosted interested seniors virtually on March 10 and Naugatuck Valley Community College reps will do the same on April 8. NMHS holds this event to bring the Admissions reps together with the prospective student to answer questions about the college's programs, credits, course requirements, financial aid, and more. Students receive an instant answer regarding admission with no commitment required. Additional colleges still to come!



DECA Success. Ten NMHS students participated in the DECA (Distributive Education Club of America) State Conference which was held virtually on March 11th. Congratulations go to the following students who placed in the competition: Ian Lee who earned second place for Sports and Entertainment Marketing Series; Jack Cossari who earned second place for Entrepreneurship Series; Emma Padros who earned third place for Food Marketing Series; and Ayden O'Neill and Annalee Holcomb who earned fifth place for Buying and Merchandising Team Series.

Athletic Updates. The Winter Season came to an end on March 26th and it has been a success for New Milford. The Boys and Girls Basketball teams, Boys and Girls Indoor Track teams, Swim team, and Gymnastic team were all able to participate in the SWC Tournaments. A big congratulations to our Gymnastics team for winning the 2021 SWC Championship!! Additionally, our Cheerleading and Dance teams are submitting their routines for virtual competitions this week. Our Dance team is competing in the Fairfield Warde Virtual Dance Competition, and our Cheerleaders are competing in the Danbury Hatters Cheerleading Virtual Competition.



Spring Sports started on Saturday, March 27th for Baseball, Softball, Boys Lacrosse, Girls Lacrosse, and Boys and Girls

Track and Field. Boys Tennis, Girls Tennis, and Golf will all be starting on March 29th. All Spring teams will be preparing over the next two weeks for their first competitions which will begin for some sports as early as April 10th. We wish all Spring Sports teams the best of luck in the start of the season and we are looking forward to watching our student-athletes compete this Spring!



**New Milford Public Schools
Recognizes**

Autism Awareness Day

Monday, April 5, 2021

Wear Blue to Show Support!

March is Board of Education Appreciation Month



Thank you to
 Joseph Failla
 Wendy Faulenbach
 Pete Helmus
 Brian McCauley
 Tammy McInerney
 Eileen Monaghan
 Cynthia Nabozny
 Olga Rella

Your dedication to the children of New Milford Public Schools is sincerely appreciated!

Grab & Go Wednesdays



Parents & Guardians: save yourself time and money and have your student take a **FREE** bagged lunch home from the cafeteria **every** Wednesday. All New Milford Public Schools K-12 are offering a free lunch upon dismissal. The nutritious lunch contains a sandwich, fresh fruit, vegetable juice, fresh vegetable and milk. Please be sure the lunch is either refrigerated or eaten upon arrival at home. For further infor-



New Milford Public Schools

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Ms. Alisha DiCorpo
Superintendent

Mrs. Catherine Calabrese
Interim Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Kevin Munrett
Facilities Director

Mr. Anthony Giovannone
Fiscal Services & Operations
Director

Mrs. Sandra Sullivan
Food Services Director

Mrs. Catherine Gabianelli
Human Resources Director

Mrs. Laura Olson
Pupil Personnel &
Special Services Director

Mr. Brandon Rush
Technology Director

Board of Education

Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach
Chairperson

Mr. Joseph Failla
Vice Chairperson

Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny
Secretary

Mrs. Tammy McInerney
Assistant Secretary

Mr. Pete Helmus

Mr. Brian McCauley

Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan

Mrs. Olga I. Rella

April is National Humor Month

Perfect for the month that starts with April Fools Day! Founded in 1976 by humorist Larry Wilde, the original idea was to heighten public awareness of the therapeutic and restorative values of joy and laughter.

- * **Laughter Reduces Stress:** When stressed, we produce a hormone called cortisol. Laughter can significantly reduce cortisol levels.
- * **Laughter Can Reduce Pain:** Laughter causes us to produce endorphins, which are natural, pain-killing hormones.
- * **Laughter Strengthens the Immune System:** A hearty laugh decreases stress hormones and increases production of T-cells, immune proteins and infection-fighting antibodies.
- * **Laughter Helps the Heart:** When we laugh we increase blood flow and the function of blood vessels, which can help prevent cardiovascular problems.
- * **Laughter Relaxes the Whole Body:** One good belly laugh can relieve physical tension and relax your muscles for up to 45 minutes.
- * **Laughter Helps You Recharge:** By reducing stress levels and increasing your energy, laughter can help you focus and achieve more.

Not only is laughter a lot of fun, it's good for you! And like yawning, laughter can also be contagious. So by opening yourself up to more humor in your daily life, you may also have a positive effect on those around you.

So, gather the family and read a funny book aloud, watch a funny movie, tell some jokes, and smile!

*Shared from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/national-humor-month-laug_n_1441488

Smile!

The mission of the New Milford Public Schools, a collaborative partnership of students, educators, family and community, is to prepare each and every student to compete and excel in an ever-changing world, embrace challenges with vigor, respect and appreciate the worth of every human being, and contribute to society by providing effective instruction and dynamic curriculum, offering a wide range of valuable experiences, and inspiring students to pursue their dreams and aspirations.