

**New Milford Board of Education
 Committee on Learning Minutes
 February 24, 2015
 Lillis Administration Building, Room 2**

Present: Mrs. Daniele Shook, Chairperson
 Mrs. Angela C. Chastain
 Mr. Dave Littlefield
 Mr. David R. Shaffer

Also Present: Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote, Superintendent of Schools
 Mr. Joshua Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
 Mr. Joseph Neff, Teacher, New Milford High School
 Mrs. Dana Ford, Principal, Schaghticoke Middle School
 Mrs. Susan Greene, Assistant Principal, Schaghticoke Middle School

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NEW MILFORD, CT

<p>1.</p>	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mrs. Shook.</p>	<p>Call to Order</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Public Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Shaffer spoke in tribute to former NMHS teacher James Lauer who passed away yesterday. Mr. Shaffer said Mr. Lauer was one of New Milford's first Teacher of the Year recipients, a veteran and caring, dedicated teacher. 	<p>Public Comment</p>
<p>3.</p> <p>A.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>	<p>Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>Review and Approval of Curriculum:</p> <p>Architectural Drafting II</p> <p>Architectural Drafting III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Joseph Neff said these are sequential classes that follow Architectural Drafting I. All projects for Architectural Drafting II are computer based. Students in Architectural Drafting III use the computer and build a scale model of a house as a project. 	<p>Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>A. Review and Approval of Curriculum:</p> <p>Architectural Drafting II</p> <p>Architectural Drafting III</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Shaffer said he thought this was a great program but asked if the textbook published in 1985 is too old. Mr. Neff said the text is used for reference purposes only. The computer software is current as of 2015. • Mr. Smith said software updates are budgeted for. • Mr. Shaffer asked how much math is necessary. Mr. Neff said nothing advanced, just basics for square footage. • Mr. Shaffer asked if there were outside speakers brought in and Mr. Neff said yes, typically four or five a year, including architects, technical school representatives and contractors. • Mrs. Chastain asked if there were any internship options. Mr. Neff said not recently, but that he would facilitate if there was student driven interest. • Mr. Smith commended Mr. Neff on his work with this update. <p>Mr. Shaffer moved to bring the following curricula to the full Board for approval: Architectural Drafting II and Architectural Drafting III seconded by Mr. Littlefield and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the following curricula to the full Board for approval: Architectural Drafting II and Architectural Drafting III.</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>A.</p>	<p>Items for Information and Discussion</p> <p>Middle School Project Lead the Way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Smith said the middle school version of Project Lead the Way (PLTW) is called Gateway and is a hands-on introduction to design and engineering principles which segues into the high school level program. There are sixteen districts in Connecticut currently offering the program. Mr. Smith and Mrs. Greene attended a recent statewide PLTW conference where they viewed presentations by middle schools. Discussion is underway about offering the beginning of this program at SMS 	<p>Items for Information and Discussion</p> <p>A. Middle School Project Lead the Way</p>

	<p>next year. Seventh graders could receive 15 weeks of the design and modeling introductory component and eighth graders would have the same introductory program for 30 weeks. The plan would be to offer the next level, automation and robotics, to the seventh graders as eighth graders the following year. The program could be expanded to sixth grade in the future. NMHS has been commended for the level of female participation in PLTW and it is hoped that exposure to the program at the middle school would increase that level even more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Littlefield asked what the percentage is and Mr. Smith said he thought it was about 25% now.• Mr. Shaffer asked if this would replace the traditional industrial arts program.• Mrs. Shook said this was discussed during budget hearings already.• Mr. Smith said the current industrial arts teacher is retiring and the old certification has been changed so this was a good opportunity to make a change in programming if deemed appropriate.• Mr. Shaffer said he is concerned about whether this program would be effective for the more immature middle school student or the lower performing academic student.• Mr. Smith said the program is currently successful in towns with a diverse student body and that the program does not require prerequisites or higher-level math skills. It is applied learning and is very hands on and should appeal to all levels of the student body.• Mrs. Greene said one of the values to this program is that there is a lot of trial and error and collaborative group work so students gain success from each other.• Mrs. Ford said in her current observations she sees collaborative learning every day. Students are learning to appreciate the different	
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strengths each brings to the group.

- Mrs. Chastain asked if any of the districts with this program also still had a traditional industrial arts program as she sees the value in both. Mr. Smith said he did not believe so but would confirm.
- Mrs. Chastain asked about the possibility of offering an afterschool program for industrial arts.
- Mr. Littlefield agreed that he would like to see both programs offered.
- Mr. Smith said space would be an issue if both were to happen and additional staff would be required.
- Mr. Littlefield asked if an afterschool program would require the same certification and Mr. Smith said he would check.
- Dr. Paddyfote suggested exploring the idea of a middle school afterschool program at the high school as a stipend position using its wood shop.
- Mrs. Shook said she teaches this age group and loves the idea of a PLTW middle school program. She sees this as a newer, more modern version and thinks it would be more productive for students than traditional industrial arts which they can pick back up at the high school if they wish.
- Mr. Shaffer said he would encourage the district to find a way to offer both at least for the first year or so, perhaps scheduling in conjunction with the high school staff.
- Mr. Smith said scheduling both would be very difficult and that the high school position already has a full schedule.
- Mrs. Chastain asked if art and music were required courses at the middle school level or could students option out if they wished to take other offerings. Mr. Smith said he would check.
- Mr. Littlefield said he would hate to see students who do not take music stuck in study

	<p>halls because other options are not available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mrs. Greene said parents of music students might have issue with their lack of opportunity to take something new is offered that they cannot take due to scheduling.• Mrs. Chastain said that there is the same issue at the high school and choices need to be made.• Mr. Littlefield agreed that sometimes choices need to be made in real life but reiterated that he would like to see students given the choice.• Mr. Smith said the district is always interested in expanding opportunities for students but that there are cost ramifications to that. <p>B. K-5 Math Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Smith said that the new <i>Investigations</i> program is at the mid-year mark K-5. All teachers had professional development in the program in August and November; they meet monthly with math coaches and have weekly PLC's on the topic. Parents have been involved through curriculum nights and visits and in volunteer capacities. Data from fall MAP testing shows the program is moving in the right direction. Teacher feedback has also been positive.• Mr. Littlefield asked if there had been any negative feedback. Mr. Smith said pacing has been a little slow as it is the first year and teachers report that it takes longer to plan as the program is more advanced than what has been taught in the past. He said the coaches have provided invaluable support.• Mr. Shaffer expressed concern with the amount of planning required from teachers and with equity in time from school to school.• Mr. Smith said the elementary schedule had been changed to give more prep time and provide PLC's within teacher contract guidelines. He said the burden this year is in the program's newness and it should be easier	<p>B. K-5 Math Update</p>
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	<p>for teachers by next year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs. Shook said parents have told her they find the parent guidebooks very helpful. 	
5.	<p>Public Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robert Coppola said he attended one of the math workshops and appreciates the problem solving aspect of the new program. He witnessed a great variety of dialogue and enthusiasm on the part of students. 	Public Comment
6.	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Mrs. Chastain moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 p.m. seconded by Mr. Littlefield and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 p.m.</p>

Respectfully submitted:

Danielle Shook

Danielle Shook, Chairperson
 Committee on Learning