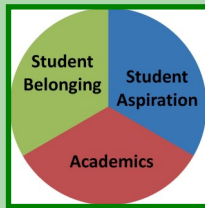




New Milford Public Schools
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New Milford, CT 06776
860-355-8406
www.newmilfordps.org



New Milford High School
860-350-6647

Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal
Mrs. Liz Curtis, Asst. Principal
Ms. Linda Scoralick, Asst. Principal
Mr. Eric Williams, Asst. Principal



Schaghticoke Middle School
860-354-2204

Dr. Christopher Longo, Principal
Mrs. Kerri Adakonis, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Delaney, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Barbara Nanassy, Asst. Principal



Sarah Noble Intermediate School
860-210-4020

Mrs. Anne Bilko, Principal
Mrs. Kerri Chmielewski, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Hankla, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Meyers, Asst. Principal



Hill & Plain Elementary School
860-354-5430

Mrs. Patricia Corvello, Interim Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Hankla, Asst. Principal



Northville Elementary School
860-355-3713

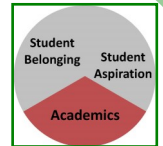
Mrs. Susan Murray, Principal
Mrs. Barbara Nanassy, Asst. Principal

Spotlight on New Milford Schools

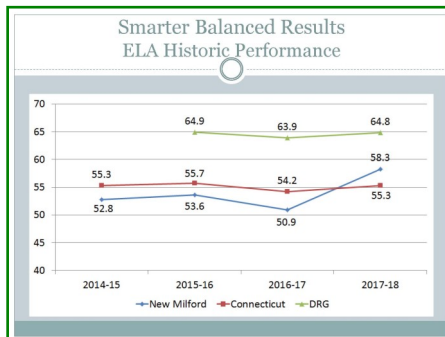
Volume 9, Issue 4

October 2018

2017-18 District Assessment Results



At a Board of Education Workshop on October 16th, Assistant Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo presented information on the 2017-18 district assessment results, which she described as the “state of the district”. Ms. DiCorpo explained that students are assessed in a variety of ways: through universal screeners such as NWEA, PSAT, and Running Records which provide a snapshot of student reading levels; through state assessments such as Smarter Balanced and the SAT; and through classroom assessments that show the students’ ability to apply learning.



The Smarter Balanced assessment for grades 3-8 looks at both ELA (English Language Arts) and Mathematics. The summary for 2017-18 in ELA shows that New Milford had a 7.4% increase in the amount of students reaching state level benchmarks. The State and DRG (District Reference Group) had less than 1% increases. New Milford

went from 23rd of 24 districts in our DRG to 20th, and was in the 72nd percentile in the state for growth as well as 4th highest in the DRG for growth. Grade 5 had the 4th highest growth rate for the state, only behind Simsbury, Westport and Chester.

In Mathematics, New Milford maintained performance with 47.1% of students reaching state level benchmarks in grades 3-8. The State and DRG had slight 1% increases. Overall more students made year’s growth (61%) in Math than compared to 2016-17 (58.7%). The district was 20th in 2016-17 in DRG and slid to 22nd (of 24) in 2017-18. Ms. DiCorpo said, “There is now a common math program across the district, so even though there is a big hill to climb, steady growth should come.”

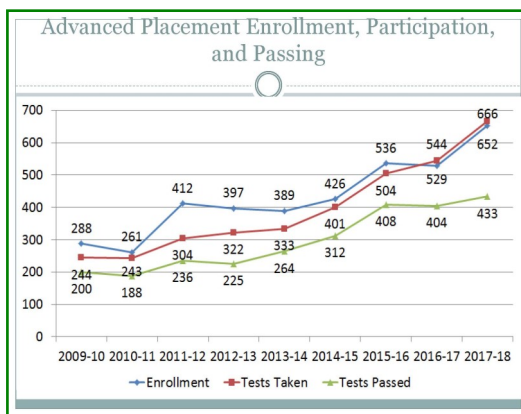
The traditional assessment of CMT/CAPT was replaced last year by the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The NGSS Science Assessment was piloted in 2018, with only participation rates counting. In 2019, both participation and scores will count.

The district is offering the PSAT to all grade 9 students now. Students also take it in grade 10 and some in grade 11. New Milford exceeds state benchmarks in this area.

The SAT is the State mandated assessment for 11th graders. It is taken during the school day. New Milford's overall score was 1060 in 2018, well over the State score of 1019. Ms. DiCorpo said, "The SAT has become more and more challenging over time in its questions. The primary issues the district is showing systemically are in the areas of communication and problem solving, so that is where the emphasis will be going forward."

Regarding Physical Fitness scores, New Milford has always been in the 35-41% passing range. Last year, we were at 35.3%. To pass, students must pass all four sections of the assessment. For New Milford, the weaknesses are in the mile run and push-ups. The K-12 PE curriculum was rewritten last year to include practice in all four areas.

For the NWEA assessment, Ms. DiCorpo says, "The correlation is that a 60% passing rate will lead to a 3 or 4 on the Smarter Balanced assessment, which is a passing score for that State assessment. New Milford is at 59.4% now so we are close in both Math and Reading."



In 2018, the percentage of New Milford students earning a 3 or higher on Advanced Placement tests was 67. That compares to the state percentage of 71 and global percentage of 61. At the same time, enrollment in AP courses for New Milford was at an all time high with 666 tests taken, and 433 passed. The increase in AP enrollment is also a factor in determining a more positive outcome to a district's College Readiness Score which is widely reported nationally. New Milford's score was 18.7 in 2014, well below many in our DRG. In 2018, it is now at

40.8. This speaks to the access to AP classes, the number offered, and the greater success students will have in college as a result.

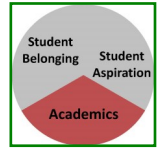
Ms. DiCorpo said the assessment results support our known areas for growth and the changes being instituted in the district. "Moving forward, we are working on initiatives for improvement K-12. These include teams developed to review vertical alignment of curriculum and to identify areas of strength and weakness in order to craft a plan for improvement and continuity. The district will continue to review curriculum and programs, as well as teacher supports."

College Readiness Score: US News
(Based upon 2015-16 data)

School District	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
New Milford	18.7	25	25.2	26.1	40.8
Bethel (DRG)	33.5	34.7	37.8	36.6	40.4
Southington (DRG)	28.2	32.7	30.1	37.5	35.5
Danbury (GEO)	29.7	31.6	33.6	33.9	33.5
New Fairfield (GEO)	43.9	44.6	41.9	42.6	45.5
Newington (DRG)	26.8	27.8	32.5	30	27.4
Norwalk	26.5	29.8	24.9	28.1	30.2

[Click here to watch the full presentation to the Board of Education.](#)

Student Choice is Key to Reading Development



Do you have a favorite book or author? Do you gravitate towards a particular genre? What section would you head to if given an unexpected free hour in the library? These are some of the questions NMPS teachers might have asked their students as they returned to school this fall. Whether students are loading book boxes, creating book stacks of what to read next, or sampling books through quick “book tastings”, teachers use a variety of strategies to encourage reading choice at all levels. We reached out to several teachers regarding the power of providing student choice in their daily reading, and what is happening in their classrooms in this area as students start to settle back in to class.

“Student choice is one of the most powerful acts in a classroom,” says SNIS grade 4 teacher Cindy Bonnell. “Our Reading Workshop time allows for students to be able to pick books that interest them and spend 30-40 minutes reading independently each day. Choice empowers kids and increases motivation so students are more likely to enjoy reading inside and outside of school. Students truly appreciate choice, saying, ‘I’m more interested in my learning when I have choice.’ and ‘I can pick books I actually like.’ The end goal is to build independent lifelong readers.”

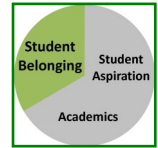


HPS grade 2 teacher Donna Nash agrees. “When students select books for independent reading, it gives them control of their own learning. The children demonstrate enthusiasm about their responsibility and decision making. Book selection also fosters a sense of community. My second graders discuss what they are reading with their peers and then make recommendations to them about future book choices. At this level, many children enjoy reading books that are part of a series. In my classroom, students can often be heard having discussions about a particular book series, what titles in that series they have read, and what they plan on reading next.”



Students Start With Hello

Students at both Sarah Noble Intermediate School and Schaghticoke Middle School celebrated “Start With Hello” Week during the last week of September. This is the third year that the schools have participated in this national initiative sponsored by Sandy Hook Promise. The program is designed to help students gain awareness of the problem of social isolation, get to know each other better, and find ways to become more connected to one another. Each day has a theme which was spotlighted through signage, announcements and classroom discussions.



At Sarah Noble, students and staff started the week with introductions and “Hey Day” with everyone wearing name tags and encouraged to say hello to someone they don’t know. Thursday, was Wear Green Day in a visual representation to

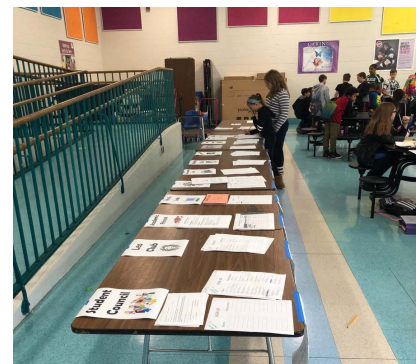
promote kindness and Friday featured free seating in the cafeteria so students could find a new friend at lunch.



SMS followed a similar pattern with “Say Hey Day” and Positivity Tuesday, featuring large post-its throughout the school with encouraging messages. Worldly Wednesday focused on respect for other cultures and backgrounds. Thursday was SMS Mingles day with optional seating. The week ended with Forget Me Not Friday where students were encouraged to write short reflections on how they can personally reach out to other students throughout the year and students and staff wore green, the color of Sandy Hook Promise.

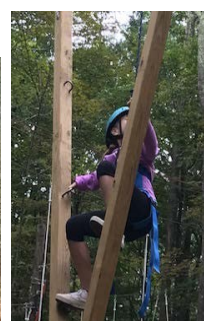
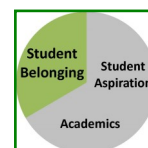


Friday also featured a Club Fair in the cafeteria where students could look over descriptions of the extracurricular clubs and activities available to them, yet another way to encourage belonging. The wide variety should provide something of interest to all students. They include an art club, chess/board games club, writing club, drama group, robotics club, math lab, invention convention, jazz band, chorus, world language exploration and more. A Late Bus is provided every Monday and Wednesday which leaves SMS at 3:55 p.m., making participation easier.



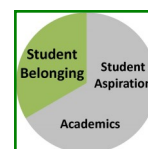
Team Building with Field Trips

One of the ways that SMS is encouraging student belonging is through team building field trips. The sixth grade teams went to Eagle Rock Day Camp in New Preston this fall. There, students were encouraged to collaborate with their classmates as they challenged themselves in a safe environment where all students could feel comfortable participating. Activities included a zip line, ropes course, boating, archery, and cooperative games. Seventh grade teams went to Mountain Workshop at Silver Lake Conference Center in Sharon. Activities there included a high ropes course, a low ropes course, and several build-it activities. Field trips were subsidized by New Milford PTO grants. Thank you NMPTO! Eighth graders will be focusing their energy on end of the year activities around promotion.



Connecting with Parents and Students

Keeping parents and students informed of school happenings is important to all our schools, but no more so than at the high school where there is such a wide variety of events happening on a daily basis. This year, in an effort to continue and improve that communication with students and families, NMHS has started the New Milford High School News Blast. It is a “one stop shop” for general high school news and more specific counseling information. The first issue may be viewed [here](#).



SPIRIT WEEK OCTOBER 9TH-12TH				
MONDAY 10/9	TUESDAY 10/10	WEDNESDAY 10/11	THURSDAY 10/12	FRIDAY 10/13
CAREER DAY/ DRESS FOR SUCCESS DAY	SPORTS JERSEY DAY	RED, WHITE & BLUE/ AMERICA DAY	GREEN & WHITE DAY	
NO SCHOOL COLUMBUS DAY				

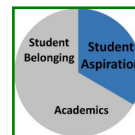
Saturday, October 13th, 7:10pm: Homecoming Dance

The issue also included a schedule for Spirit Week theme days, held October 9–12. Here is just a taste of the spirit on display.



Fit for Fall

With the end to summer heat, Fall can be the perfect time to work in some fitness fun. Annually, SNIS offers its students the opportunity to participate in Fall Fitness Intramurals. The program was offered this month at SNIS, before school, to all 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students.

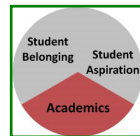


“Its focus,” says SNIS Physical Education teacher David Mumma, “was on introducing, improving, and testing cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility all while having some fun. The students that joined learned the differences between dynamic and static stretching techniques, worked on maintaining various running paces based on distance traveled, and set personal goals for distance and speed.” The students also competed in a baton relay where they were able to demonstrate teamwork and perseverance. Student interest has remained strong over the years and this year was no exception. Over 100 students chose to start their day on the right foot with some exercise.

Fall is also the season for the Maureen Haas PK-5 Cross Country Meet, held this year on October 20th. This is the sixth consecutive year for this voluntary event, named in honor of a longtime paraeducator at HPS who encouraged exercise and good health in all our students. Many district staff, student volunteers and the NMPTO contribute to ensure this is a fun event for all student participants.



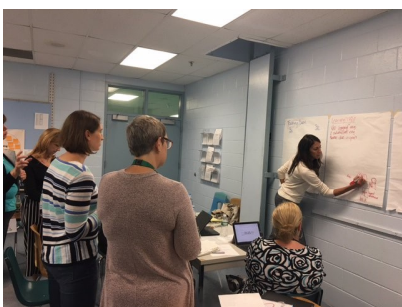
ReVision Learning: Supporting Teachers to Lead Student Learning



Over the last two years, the NMPS administrative team has been working with ReVision Learning Partnership, and facilitators Amy Tepper and Patrick Flynn, to enhance student achievement through a reflection of their own practice. ReVision trains education professionals to deliver high quality feedback to classroom teachers so that their evaluations will lead to improved instruction. The goal is to ensure that all evaluators are using common evidence collection of learning objectives, lesson progression and assessment of student learning. Assistant Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo says, “This will help each administrator communicate effective, targeted feedback to support teachers and provide continuity from school to school within the district.”

The initial focus for ReVision was to work with our principals and assistant principals, the district’s primary evaluators. NMHS Principal Greg Shugrue says, “The district’s partnership with ReVision has aided the administrators in calibrating their observation techniques and aligns perfectly with district and school goals to increase everyone’s understanding of the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT) and thus have a greater impact on teaching and learning in the district.”

This year, Ms. Tepper and Mr. Flynn spoke to the entire NMPS staff during convocation about helping students understand their learning goal and supporting student learning over the course of the lesson. Since then, Ms. DiCorpo has continued to work closely with district administrators at crafting professional learning plans for their respective schools. “The focus,” says Ms. DiCorpo, “is on helping teachers understand how to write clear measurable objectives that support students knowing what is expected of them. Ultimately, this will help students measure their level of understanding and plan their next steps for learning with the teacher.”



Additionally this year, the program is expanding to encompass training for teachers who support teachers. This includes teacher mentors who help support beginning teachers and student teachers during their first two years in the profession, instructional coaches and department chairs. NES Grade 2 teacher Connie Williams works with ReVision in her capacity as a teacher mentor. “As a mentor to a new teacher, I attended the workshops prepared to find meaningful ways to support a beginning teacher. As we dug deeper into the CCT continuum, studied the progressions, observed educators and reflected together, I realized that the work I was doing was not only going to influence my mentee in a significant and positive way, but it was *influencing and impacting* my own practice. The ReVision workshops were a reminder that as professionals, we are always reflecting on our own practices and looking for ways to improve instruction in order to maximize student learning.”

NMHS Science Department Chair Sara Del Mastro agrees with Mrs. Williams, “I think it’s valuable work for Department Chairs because we want to be able to give evidence based quality feedback to our colleagues, but it’s also valuable as a teacher. It’s important to have

a clear understanding of the evaluation rubrics because they are based on the CCT, and the CCT is based on sound educational research. It represents good teaching plain and simple and that's important for all of us to better understand."

During the second and third weeks of September, the groups visited several classrooms across district to learn how to collect evidence of student learning, thanks to the help of teachers who were willing to allow teams into their classrooms to practice observing. Each group then debriefed with the help of the ReVision facilitators, making connections to the evidence they collected in classrooms, and how it could be used to provide teachers with actionable feedback to support their learning and that of their students. Instructional Coach Betsy Stewart says, "Being able to collaborate with my colleagues has been so powerful. We all have a shared goal of student achievement and working with Amy has been instrumental in how I observe and deliver teacher feedback."

ReVision's Amy Tepper and Patrick Flynn have co-authored the book, *Feedback to Feedforward: 31 Strategies to Lead Learning* which focuses on the craft of observing which leads to timely, actionable feedback meant to support teachers. In recognition of the significant collaborative work that NMPS is doing in this area, Ms. Tepper and Mr. Flynn have invited Assistant Superintendent DiCorpo to join them in presenting at the national Learning Forward Conference in Dallas in December. "I am thrilled to be provided the opportunity to share the work that is happening in New Milford with schools across the nation," says Ms. DiCorpo. "I am proud of the collective work of the administrators and teachers and am honored not only to work with them but to be able to share their learning."

Congratulations to October 2018 New Milford Public School "Stars"!



Michael Abraham (not pictured)
Nicole DuVerger
Meredith Jaskolka
Christy Martin
Cortni Muir
Christine Talarico

Special congratulations to Nicole DuVerger who will drive the Ingersoll Auto of Danbury NMPS courtesy car.



New Milford Public Schools

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Dr. Stephen Tracy
Interim Superintendent

Ms. Alisha DiCorpo
Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Ellamae Baldelli
Human Resources Director

Mr. Kevin Munrett
Facilities Director

Mr. Anthony Giovannone
Fiscal Services & Operations
Director

Mrs. Laura Olson
Pupil Personnel &
Special Services Director

Mrs. Sandra Sullivan
Food Services Director

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Assistant Secretary

Mr. Bill Dahl

Mr. Joseph Failla

Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach

Mr. Brian McCauley

Mr. J.T. Schemm

FALL AT ITS FINEST!

Winter is an etching,
spring a watercolor,
summer an oil painting
and autumn
a mosaic of them all.
~ Stanley Horowitz

Every November, the searches for Stanley Horowitz on *Google* gain momentum. Horowitz, a poet, published a tranquil 18 word poem in the November 1983 issue of *Reader's Digest* magazine, page 109. Some years later the poem was posted on a list of Fall quotations on the Internet, sandwiched between poetry giants like John Keats and Robert Frost, and it has been a favorite ever since.

Here's a few links to fall activity ideas:

[Real Simple's checklist for 50 fun fall activities](#)

[CT Office of Tourism with ideas specific to CT](#)

October is

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.