

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

NEW MILFORD, CT
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TOWN CLERK

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

Also Present: Mr. Joshua Smith, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Eugenia Slone, Acting Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services
Mr. William Knipple, NMHS Math Department Head Teacher
Mr. Greg Holmes, NMHS Social Studies Department Chair
Mrs. Kathleen DelMonico, NMHS English Department Chair
Mr. Jeff Bronn, NMHS English Teacher
Mr. Alessandro Amenta, NMHS English Teacher

1.	Call to Order The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mr. Dahl.	Call to Order
2.	Public Comment • There was none.	Public Comment
3.	Discussion and Possible Action	Discussion and Possible Action
A.	Review and Approval of Curriculum • Mr. Dahl thanked the presenters for coming and said he would consider all the curricula together for a motion following the presentations.	A. Review and Approval of Curriculum
1.	Algebra I • Mr. Knipple said this curriculum was rewritten last summer by several math teachers working together. It follows the state Algebra I curriculum and used that high quality document as a template for the guide. The course covers eight to nine different topics; includes calculator and non-calculator activities; requires at least four performance tasks, one per marking period; models real life	1. Algebra I

	<p>situations with learning; ties to the SAT and ACT tests where appropriate; and includes data analysis and statistics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Littlefield asked if this is the same course as the one offered at SMS. Dr. Slone said not exactly, though they are moving in that direction. • Mr. Smith said this revised curriculum will be used at SMS going forward so that next year it is expected this will be the same course. 	
2.	<p>Development of Western Civilization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Holmes said this is a full year freshman course in European History offered at both the honors and college preparatory level. It is very content heavy so the pacing guide is very important. • Mr. Dahl said he thought the teaching strategies included in the document were excellent. • Dr. Slone said the course also stresses use of technology. • Mr. Holmes said there was significant use of supplementary novels as well. 	<p>2. Development of Western Civilization</p>
3.	<p>Modern America 1945 to 1990</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Holmes said this is a junior/senior one semester elective. Page 3 gives a history of the course. The course targets current events as well, tying them into events from previous years in America. Students passing this class fulfill their Civics graduation requirement. 	<p>3. Modern America 1945 to 1990</p>
4.	<p>Sociology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Holmes said this is a junior/senior one semester elective which is a little different from the others presented tonight in that it is not straight history. The table of contents referenced is very flexible; no particular order is required. It is also very current 	<p>4. Sociology</p>

	<p>event driven.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. McCauley asked if it was difficult to teach and Mr. Holmes said no that it was very enjoyable as the students find the content very easy to relate to. • Mr. Dahl noted that “identifying desired results” was the same for each unit here versus the different standards referenced in other guides. Mr. Holmes said core standards can be addressed constantly through all units of this course. 	
5. AP Literature & Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. DelMonico said this revision aligned with core standards and serves as a guide for new teachers. The guide includes class activities and preparation for the AP test. There is a great deal of directed analysis of literature as well as group work. It is a very challenging course. • Mrs. McInerney said she sees this as very much a college preparatory course. • Mr. Dahl asked what takes place in class after the AP test and Mrs. DelMonico said each student chooses a book and prepares a complete project where the student teaches the book to the class. 	5. AP Literature & Composition
6. Public Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. DelMonico said this is a very popular performance based elective course to which seniors are given preference. It focuses on communication theory; students read and watch historic presentations. They study how a speech is constructed and the different types of speeches and then create from there. Students are required to present different types of speeches including persuasive and commemorative, in different venues such as the lecture hall and theatre, sometimes with a microphone, sometimes not. They receive feedback from the teacher and their peers. 	6. Public Speaking

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs. McNerney asked if students were required to complete a large project at the end of the course and Mrs. DelMonico said every senior English elective requires a research project. Mr. Dahl said he would like to see this be a required course. 	
7.	Modern and Contemporary Poetry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs. DelMonico said this is also a senior elective course. This year a new teacher has added a national competition piece with the Poetry Out Loud program and one of our students is a state finalist. Students in this course read, discuss, analyze and appreciate poetry that they hear, write and perform. Mr. Littlefield asked how open students are to performing and Mrs. DelMonico said as this is an elective course students are very open to embracing that challenge. The school's Poetry SLAM has gotten so popular that it is now held in the theatre in front of a packed house every year. <p>Mrs. McNerney moved to bring the following curricula to the full Board for approval: Algebra I, Development of Western Civilization, Modern America 1945 to 1990, Sociology, AP Literature & Composition, Public Speaking, and Modern and Contemporary Poetry, seconded by Mr. McCauley and passed unanimously.</p>	7. Modern and Contemporary Poetry
B.	Request for New Program or Course	Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the following curricula to the full Board for approval: Algebra I, Development of Western Civilization, Modern America 1945 to 1990, Sociology, AP Literature & Composition, Public Speaking, and Modern and Contemporary Poetry.
1.	Middle East Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Holmes said this junior/senior elective course will be similar to Russian Studies and Chinese Studies which are already in place. It will combine history with a study of culture, literature and language. 	1. Middle East Studies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. McNerney said she was very happy to see the addition of this course at this time. • Mr. McCauley said he would like to see this course required and asked how much history would be covered. Mr. Holmes said students have some background already from Global Studies but this class goes more in depth. • Mr. Littlefield asked if the course would be fluid regarding resources and Mr. Holmes said the teacher instructs this course at the college level as well and is very aware of what is out there to use; much of the instruction is done through the use of novels versus a text. • Mr. Smith said the funding provided for this course goes to the general Social Studies budget for next year and then may be moved within the department as needed. • Mr. Dahl said he can envision students choosing this course over another and asked what happens to the other courses if numbers drop. Mr. Holmes said it would not run. The department could explore offering courses every other year or semester if needed for variety and student option. 	
2. Literature and Media Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. DelMonico said she is very excited to be offering this course which represents a paradigm shift in the definition of reading for our students. The course will include student “reading” of text and film to analyze how text is adapted and interpreted for film. Technology will be part of the course base. • Mrs. McNerney asked if teachers were trained in the software and Mrs. DelMonico said there will be some learning as we go aspect but that the Technology department has been very helpful with this part. • Mrs. DelMonico said the course will culminate with students producing their own film. 	2. Literature and Media Study

<p>C.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>	<p>Mr. McCauley moved to bring the request for new program or course: Middle East Studies and Literature and Media Study to the full Board for approval, seconded by Mrs. McInerney and passed unanimously.</p> <p>Request for Course Revision</p> <p>Introduction to Video Production</p> <p>Advanced Video Production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Bronn said the current course is year-long and requires two blocks; students earn two credits. The revision separates the program into two pieces: a semester long Introduction and another separate year-long one block, one credit Advanced course. Currently only 15 students can take the course. The new structure would allow for 45 total. The introductory piece would teach the fundamentals of camera and software usage and begin the process of artistic creation through writing, sound and lights. Students could then move right into higher level production in the advanced course including work with Green Wave TV and independent video projects. Mr. Amenta said the new format will allow students to work on portfolio creation for college acceptance in this career path. Mr. Littlefield asked what prohibits the class from growing beyond 15 students and Mr. Amenta said video lab space primarily but there are also some equipment constraints. Mr. Smith said the current two block set-up causes conflicts in many students' schedules so they are hoping splitting the course will alleviate some of that problem as well. Multiple sections will allow more students to enroll. <p>Mrs. McInerney moved to bring the request for course revision: Introduction to Video Production and Advanced Video Production to the full Board for</p>	<p>Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the request for new program or course: Middle East Studies and Literature and Media Study to the full Board for approval.</p> <p>C. Request for Course Revision</p> <p>1. Introduction to Video Production</p> <p>2. Advanced Video Production</p> <p>Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the request for course revision: Introduction to Video Production and</p>
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	approval, seconded by Mr. Littlefield and passed unanimously.	Advanced Video Production to the full Board for approval.
4.	Items of Information	Items of Information
A.	<p>The need for a program to support at risk high school students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Olson said they have been looking at programs for two years now to address the mental health and emotional/social needs of our at risk high school students and are getting closer to bringing a proposal to the Board for consideration. She believes the programs under review would allow the district to bring back some of our out of district students to the community which would benefit the students and help to fund the program. She is hoping to bring more information to the Board at the next Operations and COL meetings. • Mr. Dahl asked if Mrs. Olson was exploring programs at the middle school level as well where he sees a like need. Mrs. Olson said they are starting with the high school due to the need for graduation credits; if the pilot program is successful they will look to expand it further. • Mr. Dahl said he thought this was a very important program and hoped that Mrs. Olson would not limit herself to exploring only those which are cost neutral. • Mr. Smith said the district is locked in to next year's budget at this time so the program will need to be covered under those constraints. • Mr. McCauley asked how many students would be in the program and Mr. Smith estimated under 20 in the pilot year. • Mr. McCauley asked if the program would take place at the high school and Mrs. Olson said yes. • Mr. Smith said the intention is to try to integrate these students as much as possible back into a full educational high school 	<p>A. The need for a program to support at risk high school students</p>

	experience.	
B.	<p>November Professional Development: results of staff survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Smith distributed the results of a staff survey taken after the full day November professional development which was the first time the EdCamp model was used in this fashion. In general teachers reported that technology that day met their needs and Mr. Smith attributed that to the recent investment in technology approved by the Board. Most teachers said they liked the EdCamp model. Mr. Smith explained the PadLet software used for program sign ups comparing it to a big electronic sticky note board where teachers could post and see offerings. This same format will be available before teachers leave for the summer for next year's offerings. • Mr. Dahl said he would like to see the same survey done next year so that results could be compared from year to year. • Mr. Littlefield asked if there were any statistics as to who went to what session and Mr. Smith said only room sign-ins which were voluntary. • Mr. McCauley asked if expert staff were expected to present in an area. Mr. Smith said they did do some recruitment of staff for this first time but made sure to allow them a free session or two to attend other sessions. • Dr. Slone said some of our teachers now attend Regional EdCamp meetings as well. The Professional Development Committee has taken over the planning of next year's EdCamp with Dr. Slone facilitating. • Mr. Dahl found this model very exciting and appreciated the use of our exceptional teachers. 	<p>B. November Professional Development: results of staff survey</p>
C.	<p>Curriculum Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Slone said this is a new model for New Milford but one that many other districts already do systemically. She said this model 	<p>C. Curriculum Council</p>

	<p>looks to find the teacher voice in the development of curriculum. The Council as proposed will consist of representatives from each grade through Grade 8 working in a collaborative process. There will be an application process to show interest. Dr. Slone said the Council will provide a great opportunity to foster and nurture teacher leadership for the future as well. Future administrators should be instructional leaders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Smith said this is long overdue. He said the Council in no way usurps Board authority for approval of curriculum; it will just broaden the scope, vetting curriculum by a group before coming to the Board to clarify and standardize, and will serve teachers and the community.• Mr. Dahl asked what will happen if a volunteer does not come forward from a particular grade. Mr. Smith said there is no representation now so any is an improvement and that he thinks people will sign up. He said they might do some gentle recruiting as well regarding professional expectations.	
D.	Summer School Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Slone said this proposal had been fleshed out since the budget process. Teacher and assessment input will be used to select candidates for this three week, four day per week, program. They looked at who would benefit most from this program that is separate from the special education summer school program and focused on the student who is 20 – 40% at mastery. They will use MAP test scores from March to invite approximately 125 students to participate in both literacy and math instruction. A ½ hour recess will be included allowing students a break and prep time for teachers. Every parent of a participating student will get a basic progress report at the end.• Mr. McCauley said he was concerned that the program was only offered from 9 to noon each day and said that could be a hardship for	D. Summer School Proposal

	<p>working parents. He suggested the Youth Agency or NMHS preschool program be contacted for possible before and after program care. Dr. Slone said she would follow up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Dahl said he thought the plan as presented incorporated well the concerns expressed during the budget meetings. 	
E.	<p>Schaghticoke Middle School: Daily schedule revisions for 2016-2017 – a preliminary look</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Slone said that SMS is looking at revising its daily schedule as a result of feedback from staff and administrators as they have worked with their reconfiguration. Details will be brought to the May COL meeting but she wanted to let the committee know it was coming. They are looking at more opportunities for Unified Arts, fewer study halls, less pullout for special education, and an increase in World Language opportunities. 	<p>E. Schaghticoke Middle School: Daily schedule revisions for 2016-2017 – a preliminary look</p>
F.	<p>Revisions of Math Curriculum for 7th grade pre-algebra and 8th grade algebra: a pilot for 2016-2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Slone said they are restructuring the middle school math program to bring it up to the rigor of upper level classes and to align it with standards. 	<p>F. Revisions of Math Curriculum for 7th grade pre-algebra and 8th grade algebra: a pilot for 2016-2017</p>
G.	<p>Revisions for 6th grade Health for 2016-2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Slone said the plan is to increase Health hours for Grade 6 to 30 hours in the new schedule proposed. 	<p>G. Revisions for 6th grade Health for 2016-2017</p>
5.	<p>Public Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was none. 	<p>Public Comment</p>
6.	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Mrs. McInerney moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:26</p>	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Motion made and passed unanimously</p>

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	p.m. seconded by Mr. Littlefield and passed unanimously.	to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m.
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Respectfully submitted:



William R. Dahl, Chairperson
Committee on Learning