

**New Milford Board of Education  
 Budget Hearings & Adoption Minutes  
 January 19, 20, 26 & 27, 2021  
 Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

**Budget Hearing Minutes  
 January 19, 2021  
 Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

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NEW MILFORD, CT

<b>Present:</b>	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson Mr. Joseph Failla Mr. Pete Helmus Mr. Brian McCauley Mrs. Tammy McInerney Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny Mrs. Olga I. Rella (via Zoom)
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<b>Also Present:</b>	Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Interim Superintendent of Schools Mrs. Catherine Calabrese, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Mr. Kevin Munrett, Facilities Director Mr. Brandon Rush, Technology Director Mayor Pete Bass, Town of New Milford
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Call to Order</b> <b>A. Pledge of Allegiance</b> The budget hearing meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Mrs. Faulenbach, Chairperson. The Pledge of Allegiance immediately followed the call to order.	<b>Call to Order</b> <b>Pledge of Allegiance</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Presentation of the Superintendent's Proposed 2021-2022 School Budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach provided a procedural overview for the community members on the call. She said public participation would be offered each night. Tonight it would be at the end, tomorrow and next Tuesday at both the beginning and end, and next Wednesday at the beginning of the meeting. She welcomed all speakers, but asked that they keep to a three minute limit so all would have an opportunity to</li> </ul>	<b>Presentation of the Superintendent's Proposed 2021-2022 School Budget</b>

	<p>participate. The meeting will be recessed each evening until the final night.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said central office administrators and building level leadership have been meeting since November to develop this budget, which she is presenting on their behalf. The budget is based on district strategic goals, maintains programs, class sizes, supports transitions post-COVID, and continues support for intervention, advancement and student enrichment.</li><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said the mission statement is at the forefront of all the district does.</li><li>• Enrollment data was shared at a workshop last month. This budget uses March 2020 actuals to inform projections, since they are pre-COVID and provide more accurate numbers in supporting a model with all schools open for in person instruction. In addition, a new enrollment study is in the works to bring a more accurate projection going forward, since the last study was done in 2014.</li><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said 4 out of 5 schools qualify as Title I schools based on Free and Reduced Lunch numbers. That percentage is 34.73%, which is up slightly from last year. This program provides federal funding to states. The total allocated for all schools over two years is \$345,659. That funding is allocated to school wide programming, where it will have the most impact.</li><li>• Regarding comparisons of 2019-20 Net Current Expenditure per Pupil (NCEP) averages, New Milford ranks #152 of the #166 districts in the State, at \$15,457. This data is the most recent available and is not reflective of the low 0.66% budget increase approved last year. New Milford's number is very close to that of Bridgeport. Many of the other schools below us are also city schools which receive significant state and federal funding for which New Milford is not eligible.</li></ul>	
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- Since 2010, the average national annual inflation rate is 1.72%. The average Final approved budget in New Milford during that time is 1.17%.
- This year's budget increase request is 2.53%; last year's request was 2.82%. Of the \$1,631,248 increase, \$1,027,000 is for placeholders for public and private tuition for special education students, along with associated transportation costs. The 8.41% increase in professional services is primarily for technology, special education, pupil services and new summer programs.
- There is an increase to the general busing contract in the amount of \$120,000. There may be offsets to that based on possible savings this year, but that will have to be negotiated and it is too early for that in the year.
- Additional changes to the budget include a request for 44 additional days for technology support; DCF placement revenue; athletic uniform cycle update; Chromebook refresh cycle update; 0.5 Guidance Counselor for SNIS (offset from DOI) and a stipend for National Honor Society for Science at NMHS.
- Ms. DiCorpo spoke to items requested that did not make it into the proposed budget. These include items cut from last year's request as well as over \$240,000 in requests made this year.
- Overall, district-wide staffing changes result in a 0.50 decrease. There are no changes to programming per se, just reallocation of resources.
- Regarding the 5 Year Capital Plans for Facilities and Technology, projects listed for consideration are subject to change. Funding for these projects can be initiated on a project by project basis by the Board of Education through the proper approving bodies at any time during the year. There are zero (\$0) dollars being requested to be withdrawn from the Board of Education's Capital Reserve account to fund these projects through this budget request. The

	<p>current balance in the Board of Education’s Capital Reserve is \$550,467 as of January 1, 2021. Other funding sources may be available for several of these projects. Ms. DiCorpo said the current energy audit, along with ongoing conversations with the Town, provide promising opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. DiCorpo said the Capital budget is not part of the operating budget. This is true of the COVID budget as well. The COVID budget is presented in anticipation of continued needs for next year. Some items may be ordered this year as needed, so the overall number of \$752,088 may be reduced.</li> <li>• Social emotional supports K-12 include the ESS half-time program at the middle school, Restorative Practices-Districtwide, Choose Love K-8, Wingman at NMHS, Coaching Boys Into Men and Girls as Leaders (Athletics), Guidance support/counseling district-wide and social workers’ student support and outreach to families.</li> <li>• Ms. DiCorpo said the goals for this year and going forward are to continue to support children socially and emotionally as they transition from online learning to in person learning and to continue to provide academic support and enrichment opportunities.</li> <li>• For transparency purposes, Ms. DiCorpo said she wanted to make the Board aware that CARES Act II funding has been approved at the federal level. It will be tied to Title I and amounts are not known at this time. The funds cannot be used to replace budgeted items but will be used to support student transition needs through 2023.</li> <li>• Mayor Bass thanked the team for the workshops offered pre-budget and said they were very helpful to budget discussions.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Discussion of the Superintendent’s Proposed 2021-2022 Budget including, but not limited to, PK – Grade 5</b></p>	<p><b>Discussion of the Superintendent’s Proposed</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. DiCorpo began the PK-5 budget discussion. She said program descriptions are provided for each area. She commended staff on the tremendous lift required in all areas this year working in the virtual world. She said the goal is to keep class sizes under 20 PK-2, and below 23 through grade 5.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney noted the equitable nature of classroom sizes at NES and HPS but asked if the higher enrollment at NES puts a strain on specialists who teach a greater number of students than their counterparts at HPS. Ms. DiCorpo said scheduling ties into this and she will research the answer.</li><li>• Mrs. Rella asked if the district will be rebalancing the PK-2 schools before adding staff to NES. Ms. DiCorpo said no, any redistricting needs to wait until after the full enrollment study is complete and that will take 8-12 months. It cannot be used to factor into this year's budget.</li><li>• Mrs. Calabrese gave the overview for the Talented and Gifted, Science Enrichment, Bilingual and EL programs K-5.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney asked for clarification regarding Talented and Gifted through grade 12. Mrs. Calabrese said the requirement is for identification only. No services are offered at the high school level.</li><li>• Regarding the Bilingual services, Mrs. Calabrese reminded the Board that a bilingual teacher is required by law for any school that has 20 or more students who speak the same language. All schools are either very close or over that mark.</li><li>• Mrs. Olson gave an overview of the EXCEL program and Specialized Instruction and Related Services. She commended the PK staff for rising to the occasion of the remote model. She said she is cautious about the enrollment number and she thinks it will continue to grow as we move out of the COVID environment. She said co-taught classrooms continue to grow, leading to</li></ul>	<p><b>2021-2022 Budget including, but not limited to, PK – Grade 5</b></p>
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	<p>even more inclusion. She said she is recommending no changes in general staffing, since student numbers have been fairly constant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said the interventionists and coaches have been extremely valuable during COVID, supporting pacing changes and supporting staff. Library Media Specialists continue to support students in all environments as do the instructional tutors. There are about two tutors in each school.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney asked if there was any intent to bring the library clerks who were cut last year back. Ms. DiCorpo said not at this time. She said they will maintain the split clerk for now and see how that goes when students come back full in.</li><li>• Mrs. Nabozny asked if the high school clerk position, open due to retirement, will be filled. Ms. DiCorpo said the position is posted.</li><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said there are very few school counselors at the elementary level. She is recommending an additional 0.5 counselor for SNIS.</li><li>• Ms. DiCorpo detailed the numerous tasks of administrators, including teacher evaluation. She said at the PK-2 level, administrators average 96-132 meetings over 180 days for evaluations alone. That doesn't include any student, parent, or staff support meetings. She asked the Board to keep administrative levels intact.</li><li>• Regarding the individual school budgets, Ms. DiCorpo said the increase in HPS' certified line is due to staff realignment. The savings in Other Services is due to not printing student handbooks. Supplies are increasing as a result of a realignment of funds based on need. Mr. Williams is requesting additional resources.</li><li>• Mrs. Rella said she is concerned with the Kindergarten class sizes of 20 and the fact that parents may have held children out this year. Ms. DiCorpo said they reviewed historical numbers and have also already started kindergarten registration this year. They are</li></ul>	
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keeping an eye on numbers for now, as they are at the PK level, but are using the data they have currently. She said if new data comes in that recommends changes, she will inform the Board.

- Mrs. McInerney said in the past there has sometimes been a placeholder in the budget for these circumstances. She asked where the money will come from if additions are needed.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said there have been times in the past that additions have been made due to new data. Those additions must be found within the Operating budget.
- Mrs. McInerney said she thinks it is important that the public is aware of the risk.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said the Board often has another opportunity in June to make changes at budget adoption.
- Mr. Helmus asked if “delayed” students held out to an older age are easier in the classroom. Ms. DiCorpo said not necessarily, it depends on the emotional development of the student as well as exposure to standards.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked if there are other instructional supports that might be offered. Ms. DiCorpo said perhaps through the anticipated COVID funding.
- Ms. DiCorpo said HPS is requesting supplies for Teachers College and EL, as well as for testing needs for the school psychologist. They are also requesting the restoration of the library books cut last year.
- Mrs. McInerney asked about the capital request at NES. Ms. DiCorpo said that is for a cafeteria table. SNIS also has a capital request for age appropriate furniture for the library.
- Mrs. Faulenbach invited Board members to ask questions as part of a line item review by page.
- Mrs. Monaghan asked about the two Health salaries at HPS. Ms. DiCorpo said they are for the Health teacher and the Nurse.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said the appendices at the back of the book break down codes and staffing for review and are very helpful.</li> <li>• Mr. Failla noted the increase in supplies of \$9,755 but asked what percentage that is of HPS' overall budget. Mr. Giovannone said it represents a 0.26% increase. Mr. Failla noted that it is insignificant really in the overall scheme of things, but very significant to HPS.</li> <li>• Mrs. McInerney noted that the Library code on page 4 had been zero'd out last year and that all schools are asking for it back, but that HPS' request is bigger. Ms. DiCorpo said it was a larger decrease there last year and it also includes a request for materials for non-native speakers.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach noted that most questions for NES were already answered in the presentation.</li> <li>• Mrs. McInerney asked about the principal's office supplies on page 11. Ms. DiCorpo said that is for a new laminator.</li> <li>• Mrs. Monaghan asked how many teachers are covered under Remedial Reading for SNIS on page 15. Mr. Giovannone said that represents two Remedial Reading teachers and one Interventionist.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach asked if there is any change to grant funded positions. Mr. Giovannone said no. Mrs. Faulenbach said it is helpful that those positions are highlighted in grey and tied in with appendices at the end.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach encouraged Board members to reach out to Ms. DiCorpo if they think of any additional questions.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were no comments made.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b></p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Recessed to Wednesday, January 20, 2021</b></p>	<p><b>Recessed to Wednesday, January 20, 2021</b></p>



	Mrs. Faulenbach recessed the meeting at 9:26 p.m. until January 20, 2021.	The meeting recessed at 9:26 p.m.
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**Budget Hearing Minutes  
 January 20, 2021  
 Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

<b>Present:</b>	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson Mr. Joseph Failla Mr. Pete Helmus Mr. Brian McCauley Mrs. Tammy McInerney Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny Mrs. Olga I. Rella (via Zoom)
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<b>Also Present:</b>	Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Interim Superintendent of Schools Mrs. Catherine Calabrese, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Mr. Kevin Munrett, Facilities Director Mr. Brandon Rush, Technology Director Mayor Pete Bass, Town of New Milford Mr. Keith Lipinsky, New Milford High School Athletic Director
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<b>1.</b> <b>A.</b>	<b>Call to Order</b> <b>Pledge of Allegiance</b> The budget hearing meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was reconvened at 7:00 p.m. by Mrs. Faulenbach, Chairperson. The Pledge of Allegiance immediately followed the call to order.	<b>Call to Order</b> <b>Pledge of Allegiance</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joe Quaranta said he thought last night's presentation was easy to follow and that the budget is well constructed.</li> </ul>	<b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b>

<p>3.</p>	<p><b>Discussion of the Superintendent's Proposed 2021-2022 Budget including, but not limited to, Grades 6 - 12</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said enrollment projections for middle and high school are based on March 2020 numbers. At the middle school, there is a projected decrease of 38 students, which is resulting in a reduction in staffing at that school.</li><li>• Program descriptions are provided for each area. It is at this level that course exploration begins for students in areas such as World Languages, PLTW and Computer Education and Science.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney said she was aware that PLTW was put on hold for a while when the teacher left and she asked if it was back running. Ms. DiCorpo said it is and they expect that to continue next year.</li><li>• The proposed staffing reductions are in the areas of Mathematics and World Languages and Music. They will not affect programming offered, but class sizes will increase slightly in some circumstances. Actual numbers will be dependent on scheduling.</li><li>• Mrs. Calabrese presented regarding Gifted and Talented and EL. She said SMS has a half time Gifted and Talented teacher who services 39 students. The Bilingual teacher works with 35 EL students, of whom 24 are Spanish speakers.</li><li>• Mrs. Olson said the district continues to provide comprehensive services to students at the middle school in the least restrictive environment, customized by the IEP and needs of the individual students under the IDEA umbrella. Supports include a half time ESS program, with a capacity to service nine students; one BIP program; two social workers; 34 sections of co-taught instruction; an Individualized Learning Center; speech/language pathologists; 1.4 school psychologists; support from the high school based Substance Abuse Counselor; and a half time BCBA for middle and high school</li></ul>	<p><b>Discussion of the Superintendent's Proposed 2021-2022 Budget including, but not limited to, Grades 6 - 12</b></p>
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	<p>combined. Mrs. Olson said she is requesting that the BCBA position be made full time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said the middle school has two interventionists, one for math and one for literacy. There are two instructional coaches, with one salary covered under Title I. The data coach provides district-wide data support as well as support for math and science at the middle school. The Humanities coach provides support in the areas of reading, writing, and Social Studies. One Library Media Specialist works closely with content area teachers. Two instructional tutors help with intervention and support. Four counselors provide services which at this level include career planning and beginning Naviance work. Head teachers and team leaders provide instructional leadership and organizational support. She said the district is very lean overall on the supports for general education students.</li><li>• Ms. DiCorpo highlighted administrative responsibilities which at this level include additional night activities. Regarding teacher evaluations, administrators average 78 meetings over 180 days on top of all their other responsibilities. She reiterated that she thinks it is critical to maintain administrative levels.</li><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach asked about the support that the Board had approved this year for evaluations. Ms. DiCorpo said that is to evaluate building principals only, so has no impact to building administrator evaluations.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney said she is concerned with the enrollment projections since SMS had an unexpected bump last year. Ms. DiCorpo said they look at a variety of factors, including the November/December enrollment, to try and ensure that the data is on track. She said the ranges at SMS still afford opportunity for growth before class sizes become problematic. They can also move among teams if necessary.</li><li>• Mr. Lipinsky gave an overview of middle school athletics which include both 10</li></ul>	
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	<p>interscholastic and 13 intramural teams and service approximately 550 student athletes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mrs. Nabozny asked if SMS is having winter athletics. Mr. Lipinsky said they are and will start next week with COVID protocols in place.</li><li>• Regarding the MOCs, Ms. DiCorpo highlighted the reductions due to staffing cuts and realignments. The reduction in Other Services is a result of moving the student handbooks to online and not printing.</li><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach asked if the student/parent sign off acknowledging receipt will still be done. Ms. DiCorpo said yes, the Technology Department is working on a digital sign off and there will be a paper back up if needed.</li><li>• Regarding high school enrollment projections, Ms. DiCorpo said she and Mr. Giovannone take into account historical numbers, as well as early graduates, students who do not have enough credits to move up a grade, moves to Adult Education and other factors that affect particularly grades 11 and 12.</li><li>• Program descriptions are provided here as well. At this level, you see both core academics as well as a variety of elective courses. Emphasis is placed on student pathways for post-secondary interest.</li><li>• Mrs. Calabrese said the EL teacher services 44 students of whom 23 speak Spanish.</li><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said one staff reduction is recommended in Business. She said they will maintain current programming but class sizes may increase slightly depending on student elective choice.</li><li>• Regarding special education, Mrs. Olson said the high school set up is similar to previous models. The goal is for students to become as independent/autonomous as possible before they leave. There is one BIP program this year, 37 co-taught sections, and one ILC. There is one</li></ul>	
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	<p>psychologist, two full time social workers, a full time substance abuse counselor, a full time Special Education Department Chair and a 0.6 Supervisor. She said they are always watching student numbers. They are expected to be higher next year at the high school level so she is recommending an additional special education teacher there for next year through a realignment of staff, so it is cost neutral.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said there are limited interventions offered at the high school level and credit recovery is an issue. Right now, students need to go to Brookfield for summer school because it is not offered in New Milford. The DOI budget will include a limited proposal for summer credit recovery.</li><li>• The high school has department chairs who have limited release time to provide instructional leadership and perform administrative duties. There are no coaches at this level.</li><li>• There is one Library Media Specialist and one full time clerk.</li><li>• Six counselors assist students and give guidance for career and college readiness.</li><li>• Regarding evaluations, administrators at this level average 140 meetings over 180 days, just including regular education teachers. This year, an assistant principal was moved to accommodate the Interim Assistant Superintendent position. Ms. DiCorpo said she recognizes that this has had an impact at the high school and she appreciates the teamwork. This is only possible due to the current COVID environment.</li><li>• Mr. Lipinsky gave an overview of high school athletics. Over 600 athletes compete, some in multiple sports. He highlighted the positive impact of athletic participation, illustrated by higher GPAs and slightly higher SAT scores. Athletic transportation was cut \$32,000 based on COVID restrictions. Next year's budget includes a request for \$28,000 for athletic</li></ul>	
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	<p>transportation, since we are hoping for a more normal school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. Lipinsky expressed gratitude to the Town for its assistance in uniform purchasing. He expects to use the \$81,000 to complete purchases this month.</li><li>• Mrs. Monaghan asked if this includes SMS too. Mr. Lipinsky said no, it is just the high school.</li><li>• For the next replacement round, Mr. Lipinsky said he is looking to stagger replacement with heavily used uniforms replaced at year 3, then less wear and tear ones in years 4-6, so as to have minimal impact on the operating budget.</li><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said this had been part of the conversation with the Town when they received the current funding, so she is glad to see the planning for the future to lessen impact.</li><li>• Mr. Lipinsky detailed protective equipment used. He said some equipment is supplied by families, primarily in hockey and lacrosse where the majority of athletes play on travel and club teams and come with their own equipment. The district helps to supplement if needed.</li><li>• Mr. Failla said he has been a vocal proponent over the years of how important athletics are to the entire educational program. The slides regarding GPA and SAT scores bear that out. Eliminating sports and other programs like band has a negative effect; graphs will go in the wrong direction.</li><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach asked if there might be any cost savings available in collaboration with other communities in the area of purchased services such as officials. Mr. Lipinsky said it is a fixed rate by sport and they already split home and away. He said they have shared buses with other towns to events when possible.</li><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said it would be helpful to separate athletic equipment from supplies in the budget. In her opinion, they are not the same. Equipment is more expensive and has different requirements.</li></ul>	
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- Regarding the MOCs, Ms. DiCorpo highlighted Professional Services which includes AP online practice, AP test support and Securitas; Other Services which include the request for athletic transportation; and Supplies which are down due to COVID and/or reallocation to other lines.
- On page 29, Mr. Failla noted that if you backed out salaries, the high school is left with a total of \$648,000 to spend.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said the presentations have been very helpful and she opened up the discussion for Board member questions.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked about the 51115 line on page 22 and the zero'ing out of the amount. Mr. Giovannone said actuals hit here in 2019-20 due to a coding error. It shouldn't have been coded there, but it was captured in the audit so cannot be adjusted this year. It is being corrected for next year, then will drop off from there.
- Mrs. Faulenbach brought up the 0.5 interventionists at the high school. She said intervention is near and dear, especially now when we need to capture as early as we can all that students have lost over the last year or so. We will need to work through needs to see what instructional supports are needed. She said she knows adding to the budget is difficult but this area is so important. She would like to see it higher. It needs to be part of larger conversations to come.
- Ms. DiCorpo said it is a real challenge to balance the needs of the general education and special education populations, along with previous cuts, within the proposed budget. It is difficult to add more supports on top of that.
- Mr. Failla asked about parking fees on the revenue page.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said the Board has waived them this year through the first semester and they will address the second semester through a revised agenda next week.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Giovannone noted that the charge was back in next year's budget.</li> <li>• Mr. Failla said it is atrocious to charge for parking. He views the fee concept as a taxation on students.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said if Mr. Failla does not wish the fee to be included he will need to make a request to increase the budget by that amount at next week's adoption hearing.</li> <li>• Mrs. McInerney asked about the removal of \$2,000 for science field trips. Ms. DiCorpo said that Mr. Shugrue reports it has been realigned to the student activity line.</li> <li>• Mrs. McInerney said she wanted to dovetail on Mr. Failla's comments about the importance of athletics. She said that it is the engagement students find in all activities: athletics, band, theatre, yearbook etc. that leads to academic success. She thinks activities should continue to be offered at all levels, in conjunction with adult mentors.</li> <li>• Mrs. Monaghan noted the \$18,000 budgeted for Music field trips this year and next. She asked if they are happening this year.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said this year's budget will begin to be proved out towards the end of the year.</li> <li>• Ms. DiCorpo asked if field trips are part of the bus contract. Mr. Giovannone said they are separate.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Megan Byrd agrees that the budget should be left intact as presented, and actually favors increasing it slightly. She said the administrative support is very clearly not top heavy. She thinks the bottom is light as well, with the district stripped to the bare minimum in positions. She asked what the cost is for the summer courses in Brookfield. She wants to follow up on Mrs. Faulenbach's suggestion of collaboration in the</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b></p>



	<p>sports budget. She wondered if required safety gear might be purchased regionally. She supports all activities for engagement. She asked if SMS is considering increasing the ESS program or other similar supports in response to anticipated student need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach noted the difficulties with Zoom commentary and said Mrs. Byrd's concerns will be discussed during deliberations.</li> <li>• Joe Quaranta suggested the additional special education teacher be combined with one who has psychotherapy experience. She said he agrees with the comments made about sports and other activities and suggested the district look into including Junior ROTC. He asked about the \$846,731 increase in lines 55610 and 55630 for special education outplacements. He asked why this is necessary and different from other years.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said the last two questions will be addressed at the next hearing.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Recessed to Tuesday, January 26, 2021</b></p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach recessed the meeting at 9:35 p.m. until January 26, 2021.</p>	<p><b>Recessed to Tuesday, January 26, 2021</b></p> <p>The meeting recessed at 9:35 p.m.</p>

**Budget Hearing Minutes  
 January 26, 2021  
 Via Zoom Virtual Meeting**

<p>Present:</p>	<p>Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson          Mr. Joseph Failla          Mr. Pete Helmus          Mr. Brian McCauley          Mrs. Tammy McInerney          Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan          Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny          Mrs. Olga I. Rella</p>
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<b>Also Present:</b>	Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Interim Superintendent of Schools Mrs. Catherine Calabrese, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools Mrs. Catherine Gabianelli, Human Resources Director Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Mr. Kevin Munrett, Facilities Director Mr. Brandon Rush, Technology Director
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<b>1.</b>  <b>A.</b>	<b>Call to Order</b> <b>Pledge of Allegiance</b> The budget hearing meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was reconvened at 7:02 p.m. by Mrs. Faulenbach, Chairperson, via Zoom. The Pledge of Allegiance immediately followed the call to order. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said that the absence of accommodation for the hearing impaired was worked on today by the Technology Director. Live captioning is not available when using both Zoom and YouTube Live together. Since the meeting agenda was posted for both, live captioning is not available this evening. In the future, meetings will be posted as Zoom only and live captioning made available. Tonight's recording, once complete on YouTube, will have live captions added automatically there.</li> </ul>	<b>Call to Order</b> <b>A. Pledge of Allegiance</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Megan Byrd said she wanted to clarify her comments at the end of the last meeting regarding the correlation between sports and academics. She said it was not meant to be an indicator that she does not support athletics. She thinks sports, along with all extracurricular activities, are important for student growth and connection to community. She asked that the Board make no cuts to the proposed budget when adopting it.</li> <li>• Joe Quaranta thanked the Board for its recognition of the hearing impaired.</li> </ul>	<b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b>

<p>3.</p> <p>A.</p>	<p><b>Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Superintendent's Proposed 2021-2022 Budget including, but not limited to, District-wide</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said tonight's presentations will focus on district level departments. All presentations will follow a similar format: organizational chart, the work of the department, and the operating budget.</li><li>• Ms. DiCorpo started with a reminder of the overall increase proposed by major object code. She provided a percentage breakdown of the entire budget. Salary is the biggest piece at 60.41%, followed by Benefits at 16.73%. Regular Busing is 6.27%, ODP Tuition and Transportation is 6.10%, and Utilities are 2.40%. The other 8.09% consists of Professional Services, Supplies, Property Services, Legal Services, Dues and Fees, and Other Services.</li><li>• Mrs. Olson presented on the departments of Pupil Personnel, which services all students, and Special Education. Programming flows from the six major principles of IDEA: free appropriate public education, appropriate evaluation, individualized education plan, least restrictive environment, parent participation, and procedural safeguards. She shared organizational charts for both departments. Mrs. Olson gave special recognition to the work of the nurse coordinators and nurses during this pandemic year. She said other coordinators are vital as well in providing support and structure.</li><li>• The number of PPTs this year have been impacted by the March 2020 closing of schools. Mrs. Olson estimates they will hold over 3,000 PPTs by the end of the school year, a much higher number than usual. This has a huge impact on school personnel time. Mrs. Olson said the special education enrollment continues to rise over time, in spite of declining enrollment in general. October 1 enrollment shows an increase of 14 over last year, with an additional 21 active referrals and 13 declassifications. Demographics are projecting an increase in</li></ul>	<p><b>Discussion</b></p> <p><b>A. Superintendent's Proposed 2021-2022 Budget including, but not limited to, District-wide</b></p>
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	<p>numbers at NMHS. The proposed budget recommends realigning a position to the high school from SNIS. The district's percentage overall in 2019-20 was at 14.9% versus the state's 15.6%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Litchfield Hills Transition Center program (LHTC), which provides mandated services to students until age 22, is in its fourteenth year. It provides cost avoidance in keeping our students in district. There is one tuition student this year. Enrollment is predicted to increase. Mrs. Olson said they are working with the Town on a capital improvement plan for the MAXX, where this program is usually housed.</li><li>• The proposed budget includes an increase of \$24,650 for additional BCBA contracted services. There is a full time BCBA for K-5, and a half time one for 6-12 and LHTC. This would bring that position to full time.</li><li>• Professional services increase \$74,808 as a result of increased insurance and administrative fees for the contracted student care workers; for additional services for paused evaluations; and for the ASPIRE program of specialized therapy and consultation for students with Autism.</li><li>• Mrs. Olson said she spoke about Out of District Placements at the Board workshop last month. She is anticipating increases next year and is looking to secure money through seven placeholders should students move in to district or as a result of mediation. She said this budget amount is compounded by the fact that several cuts were made to this line last year during budget season. This current year, five students moved into New Milford who already had placements that must be honored. The account balance as of December 31, 2020 is at \$38,381. This does not include excess cost reimbursement. Transportation costs are separate.</li><li>• Mrs. Olson talked about the mental health crisis facing our young people. Studies show that quarantine has significantly increased rates of</li></ul>	
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anxiety and depression among children. Since the pandemic, emergency visits for mental health issues increased 24% for 5-11 year olds, and 31% for 12-17 year-olds. There will be challenges in re-integrating students into the social structures of school and dealing with the anxiety and stress of making up for lost academic progress.

- Mrs. Olson said the ESS program at SMS provides services for up to 10 of our most at risk students. It is a unique program and provides good services. Therapeutic engagement is taking place remotely this year.
- Mrs. Olson said she is proud of staff in all areas and highlighted just a few accomplishments: four consecutive years of increased “Time With Non-Disabled Peers”; EXCEL: 12+ years of meeting and exceeding all standards; 250+ special education students have been offered four days of in-person instruction; in-person Wednesdays for therapies for high need students through the ASPIRE Program; and outreach to parents and the community through a variety of virtual workshops aimed at remote learning challenges.
- Mrs. Monaghan asked if ASPIRE is a contracted service. Mrs. Olson said it is.
- Mrs. Monaghan asked if the five ODP students who moved in are expected to stay in their programs next year. Mrs. Olson said they are.
- Mrs. Rella asked if the increase in PPTs this year is due to making up for those missed during the shutdown. Mrs. Olson said that is a good part of it, but some are due to parent anxiety.
- Mrs. Rella asked why the BCBA is contracted and not hired as a staff member. Mrs. Olson said that is a possibility if it makes sense at the time of hire.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked for confirmation that the \$846,000 in placeholders is in Other Services. Mrs. Olson said that is correct.

- Mrs. Faulenbach asked if they had ever gone over in the tuition line and Mrs. Olson said no.
- Mr. Helmus noted that the transportation line is in good shape for now. He asked if money could be transferred to cover tuition if needed. Mrs. Olson said yes.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said transfers between lines may be done within the same fiscal year as needed with Board approval.
- Mr. Giovannone said approval is not needed if transfers are within the same major object codes but the Board is always informed in reporting as they are done.
- Mrs. McNerney asked about the impact of the cut to the ESS program at the high school and whether any of the 18 students who had been serviced are now outplaced. She asked what the plan is to address these students and others who have need.
- Mrs. Olson said there are two freshmen who would have been candidates for the program who are outplaced. She said they are working on re-entry plans for students now in conjunction with counselors, social workers and the substance abuse counselor. She said New Milford is not unique from other districts who do not have the ESS program. There are supports at the high school.
- Mrs. McNerney asked if there are any additions to staff to address these students. Mrs. Olson said they are proposing adding a special education teacher at the high school as well as an additional 0.5 BCBA.
- Mrs. McNerney asked what will happen with students who may be extremely anxious about returning to school when remote learning is no longer an option. Mrs. Olson said there are layers: parent education and support, support staff making house visits as needed, increased contracted services etc.

- Mr. Helmus said we are all concerned about providing services. He asked if the placeholder funding limits the use of money for other needs.
- Mrs. Olson said she feels the placeholder money will be needed for that purpose and she would be remiss not to include the request.
- Ms. DiCorpo said to be clear that when ESS was cut, the Director of Special Education was asked to create a program for these students in conjunction with high school staff. These are supports for students at the Tier 3 level, which is the most intensive. It is hoped that Tier 1 and 2 supports will be provided prior so most students do not get to this level of need.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked what supports the 0.5 BCBA provides. Ms. DiCorpo said the position evaluates students and makes an individualized plan based on what they see for support staff action.
- Mr. McCauley said he works in the Tier 3 world and is concerned that there is less of a safety net with what was lost.
- Mrs. Olson said it is a concern, and they had lengthy conversations about ESS but they are trying to be fiscally responsible overall. The district does have other interventionists at all schools.
- Mrs. Nabozny asked how many students are in ESS at SMS currently. Mrs. Olson said 7, with two additional in the referral process. She said she thinks the remote learning aspect is affecting the program somewhat.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said there are a lot of unknowns for next year at this point.
- Ms. DiCorpo said she would assist with the Department of Instruction (DOI) presentation since Mrs. Calabrese has only been in the Interim Assistant Superintendent position for about a month.
- Mrs. Calabrese said the organizational chart for this department is extremely lean with only one secretary to support the position. There are

	<p>many, many responsibilities. These include instruction and assessment, curriculum vetting, evaluations, Adult Education, Title IX, 504, Summer School, district attendance and engagement, state reporting, ELL, district administration of testing, grant writing, NEST internships at NMHS, TAG and Science enrichment, district wide professional development, restorative practices, social emotional learning and many monthly meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said in many ways “all roads lead here”. The only addition to staffing in this area in the past five years is a 0.5 coordinator for EL.</li><li>• Mrs. Calabrese said curriculum vetting alone is very time consuming. This year, there are 21 curricula to vet, slightly higher as a result of moving some from the spring closing, and each takes over three hours just to review.</li><li>• A snapshot of administrative staffing comparisons to other districts was provided showing more administrative supports for the Department of Instruction in other districts, including Directors of Teaching and Learning, Coordinators, Directors of Curriculum and Instruction and others.</li><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said DOI is responsible for Tier 1, 2, and 3 supports. Tier 1 support is core classroom instruction and applies to 80-85% of students. Tier 2 support is targeted small group instruction; between 10-15% of students need this. Tier 3, intensive individual intervention, applies to only 1-5% of our total students. Ms. DiCorpo said there is a desperate need for supports for Tier 1 and 2. The more emphasis placed there, the less support students will need at the higher levels for future behavior and instruction. There are only a few interventionists in each building, two on average with two half time at the high school.</li><li>• There are currently 322 students with 504 plans.</li><li>• Ms. DiCorpo said the proposed budget includes a request to add summer school courses at SMS and NMHS at a cost of \$25,000 total. Currently</li></ul>	
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students must pay \$350 per course to attend summer school in Brookfield, with no transportation. The courses will be used for credit recovery at the high school and to keep students on track at SMS. Funding is being reallocated from Curriculum and Purchased Services lines.

- Ms. DiCorpo gave an overview of internships, saying there has been a lot of questions over the last few years about this program. In the Fall of 2019 we were notified that in order to run the program we had to be part of the Unpaid Experiential Learning Program through CSDE. This program required an application, annual safety trainings, and another look at the agreements and permission forms used in the internship program. That work is complete. We have been working to establish local business partnerships and with Karen Pollard, the head of the Economic Development Commission, to advance opportunities. The pandemic has complicated efforts. In addition, New Milford has joined the CTE Pathways System Institute and is working with CSDE and the National Center for College & Career Transitions (NC3T) to learn about how pathways can help us create “road maps” that will help guide students to specific sequences of courses, both academic and elective, that focus on a career theme. These road maps also help students see alignment to potential careers and post-secondary programs of study.
- Ms. DiCorpo spoke to the Agriscience enrollment which is capped at 20 seats total, as well as other school choice opportunities New Milford students have to pursue areas of interest not usually available in New Milford schools.
- Mrs. Rella asked about the increase to the Adult Education supply line. Ms. DiCorpo said this is a realignment from the printing line. Handbooks will be electronic. Additional supplies are needed to replace those distributed during remote instruction.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mrs. McInerney said the amount of work done by the DOI without additional staff is amazing and that the Board needs to think about additions down the road.</li><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said the presentation is extremely helpful to break down the components so we can see clearly what the district is doing and why.</li><li>• Mr. Rush presented the Technology Department. The Department offers services in the areas of: Technical Support, Systems Administration and Student Information Systems (SIS) Administration.</li><li>• COVID has introduced a number of new challenges which have changed the dynamic of the department: Deployment and management of a 1:1; Providing extended support for students and their families; Introduction of Technology Integration Specialists and the Introduction of a temporary Technology Support Specialist. Overall, the demand for technology support and assistance has grown significantly. As the number of independent devices have grown amongst staff and students, the need for additional support will follow that growth.</li><li>• Increases are requested for the CEN network, and for Go Guardian and Antivirus protections. Requested additions are for Year 2 of 2 for Powerschool, 44 additional days of technology support, Adobe Sign, Peardeck, Hotspot subscriptions, Google Enterprise and a Helpdesk.</li><li>• Mr. Rush said the 5 year capital plan is fluid based on enrollment and encompasses the Chromebook refresh cycle, teacher devices and infrastructure upgrades. The COVID budget is focused on Google Voice and teacher technology pieces. Mr. Rush said the February Operations meeting will include a request for teacher laptops.</li><li>• PowerSchool is at the execution stage now.</li></ul>	
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- Mrs. Faulenbach asked what the dollar amount is for the 44 days. Mr. Rush said he would check and provide it.
- Mr. Giovannone presented on the Department of General Administration which covers the BOE, Superintendent's Office, Benefits, Fiscal Services and General Transportation. There is a decrease to Health Insurance in the budget. That number is provided by Segal who manages this item for the Board and Town.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said there have been conversations with the Town about possible offsets. The Internal Service Fund has been used for that purpose in years past. She will be making a recommendation to take \$250,000 from the fund to defer next year's budget amount. This is endorsed by Town Finance and the Mayor's Office and the Town will be doing the same thing on their side. The caveat is that we need to make sure we will be in the positive this year.
- Mr. Giovannone said this line is expected to end positive for 2020-21.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said this will be a Board decision and she will make the motion tomorrow night during adoption. She mentions it tonight for transparency.
- Mrs. Gabianelli presented for the Human Resources Department. She said the budget is mostly flat with a few small increases, mostly contractual.
- Mr. Munrett presented the Facilities budget. The organizational chart for the department shows that 58% of the custodians work after hours. He said the night shift can't be understated in the work they do to support the district under the direction of the Assistant Facilities Director. He said having in house staff is helpful to control costs. Regarding capital, there are no withdrawals requested. They will request as needed on a case by case basis. Mr. Munrett said COVID supplies rival the operating budget. He

	<p>said they are thankful for the many donations received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Monaghan complimented the Facilities department on their work with the Town on many joint projects.</li> <li>• Mr. Giovannone addressed the revenue lines. He said excess costs is based on placeholders being filled and budgeted at a rate of 62%. The DCF Tuition is new. The district has not charged for these recently, but it is what other districts are doing. The parking permit fees, which are waived this year, are back in for next year's budget.</li> <li>• Mr. Helmus asked why placeholders are not calculated at a reduced rate that includes excess cost. Mr. Giovannone said the expected revenue is an estimate.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were no comments.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunity for the Public to be heard</b></p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Discussion of Non-Bargaining Unit employment and salary (executive session anticipated)</b></p> <p><b>Mr. McCauley moved that the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss the employment and salary of the Technology Director, Substance Abuse Counselor, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources Director, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations, Food Services Director, Systems Analyst, Account Data Specialist, Network Administrator, Accounting Manager, Facilities Director, Assistant Facilities Director, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Adult Education Facilitator, and Board Certified Behavior Analyst; and to invite into the session Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Mr. Anthony Giovannone, and Mrs. Catherine Gabianelli.</b></p> <p><b>Seconded by Mrs. Nabozny.</b></p>	<p><b>Discussion of Non-Bargaining Unit employment and salary (executive session anticipated)</b></p> <p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously that the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss the employment and salary of the Technology Director, Substance Abuse Counselor, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources Director, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations, Food Services Director, Systems Analyst, Account Data Specialist, Network Administrator, Accounting Manager, Facilities Director, Assistant Facilities Director, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Adult Education Facilitator, and Board Certified</b></p>

	<p><b>The motion passed unanimously.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mrs. Faulenbach said there will not be any action taken when the Board returns to public session. The meeting will recess at that time until tomorrow night.</li> </ul> <p>The Board entered executive session at 10:12 p.m.</p> <p>The Board returned to public session at 10:31 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Behavior Analyst; and to invite into the session Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Mr. Anthony Giovannone, and Mrs. Catherine Gabianelli.</b></p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Recessed to Wednesday, January 27, 2021</b></p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach recessed the meeting at 10:31 p.m. until January 27, 2021.</p>	<p><b>Recessed to Wednesday, January 27, 2021</b></p> <p>The meeting recessed at 10:31 p.m.</p>

**Budget Hearing Minutes  
 January 27, 2021  
 Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center**

<b>Present:</b>	<p>Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson          Mr. Joseph Failla          Mr. Pete Helmus          Mr. Brian McCauley          Mrs. Tammy McInerney          Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan (via Zoom)          Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny          Mrs. Olga I. Rella</p>
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<b>Also Present:</b>	<p>Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Interim Superintendent of Schools          Mrs. Catherine Calabrese, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools          Mrs. Catherine Gabianelli, Human Resources Director          Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations          Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services          Mr. Nestor Aparicio, Assistant Facilities Director          Mr. Brandon Rush, Technology Director          Mayor Pete Bass, Town of New Milford</p>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Call to Order</b>	<b>Call to Order</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>Pledge of Allegiance</b>	<b>A. Pledge of Allegiance</b>

	<p>The budget hearing meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was reconvened at 7:02 p.m. by Mrs. Faulenbach, Chairperson. The Pledge of Allegiance immediately followed the call to order.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mrs. Faulenbach said there would be one opportunity for public comment this evening, at the beginning of the meeting. She thanked the community for their engagement and said it is valued.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>Public Comment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amy Photopoulos thanked Ms. DiCorpo and the administrative team for the presentations, saying they provide valuable insight. She said she hopes community leaders review them as well. She said the budget is smart, sensible and sustainable as it stands and she hopes the Board sends it on to Town Council as it stands.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public Comment</b></p>
<p><b>3.</b> <b>A.</b></p>	<p><b>Approval of Minutes</b>  <b>Approval of the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes:</b></p> <p><b>1. Special Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020</b></p> <p><b>Mrs. McInerney moved to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: Special Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020, seconded by Mr. McCauley and passed unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>2. Annual Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020</b></p> <p><b>Mrs. Rella moved to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: Annual Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020, seconded by Mrs. Nabozny and passed unanimously.</b></p>	<p><b>Approval of Minutes</b>  <b>A. Approval of the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes:</b></p> <p><b>1. Special Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020</b></p> <p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: Special Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020.</b></p> <p><b>2. Annual Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020</b></p> <p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: Annual Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020.</b></p>

	<p><b>3. Regular Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020</b></p> <p><b>Mrs. Rella moved to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020, seconded by Mr. McCauley and passed unanimously.</b></p>	<p><b>3. Regular Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020</b></p> <p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes December 15, 2020.</b></p>
4.	<p><b>Superintendent's Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. DiCorpo thanked the administrative team and Cabinet for their support and work in preparing the budget this year, as well as the Board and community for taking the time to listen to our proposal. Ms. DiCorpo said she will be meeting with faculties at each school to discuss and prepare for a possible in person reopening PK-5 in early spring. Those meetings have been scheduled to solicit input and feedback from staff. Winter sports practices have begun following CDC guidelines. Our attendance in remote and hybrid learning is very strong, at least 90% at all grade levels, which is a testament to the hard work of all working together.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Superintendent's Report</b></p>
5.	<p><b>Board Chairman's Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mrs. Faulenbach said subcommittee assignments have been distributed. The normal schedule begins on February 2. With the adoption of the Board budget tonight, she said it will be the job of the Board to promote and present it to the community stakeholders for review. She welcomes Board members to contact her with any ideas and thoughts regarding presentations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Board Chairman's Report</b></p>
6.	<p><b>Discussion and Possible Action</b></p> <p><b>A. Exhibit A: Personnel – Certified, Non-Certified, Appointments, Resignations and Leaves of Absence dated January 27, 2021</b></p>	<p><b>Discussion and Possible Action</b></p> <p><b>A. Exhibit A: Personnel – Certified, Non-Certified, Appointments,</b></p>

	<p><b>Mrs. Rella moved to approve Exhibit A: Personnel – Certified, Non-Certified Appointments, Resignations and Leaves of Absence as of January 27, 2021, seconded by Mrs. McInerney.</b></p> <p><b>The motion passed unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>B. Monthly Reports</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Budget Position dated 12/31/20</b></li> <li><b>2. Purchase Resolution: D-742</b></li> <li><b>3. Request for Budget Transfers</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Mrs. Nabozny moved to approve monthly reports - Budget Position dated 12/31/20, Purchase Resolution: D-742, and Request for Budget Transfers, seconded by Mrs. Rella.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said regular monthly reporting will resume at the February 9 Operations subcommittee, where we will begin looking towards end of year.</li> </ul> <p><b>The motion passed unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>C. NMHS Student Parking Fee</b></p> <p><b>Mrs. Nabozny moved to suspend the NMHS Student Parking Fee for the second semester of the 2020-21 school year, seconded by Mr. Failla.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Failla said he has been vocal on this in the past. Any time we can waive a tax on students, which is what this is in his opinion, is a good thing. He said we shouldn't have it in any form.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said this picks up on a previous motion of the Board for first semester waiver. This year provides an opportunity for the waiver and she supports it.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Resignations and Leaves of Absence dated January 27, 2021</b></p> <p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to approve Exhibit A: Personnel – Certified, Non-Certified Appointments, Resignations and Leaves of Absence as of January 27, 2021.</b></p> <p><b>B. Monthly Reports</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Budget Position dated 12/31/20</b></li> <li><b>2. Purchase Resolution: D-742</b></li> <li><b>3. Request for Budget Transfers</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to approve monthly reports - Budget Position dated 12/31/20, Purchase Resolution: D-742, and Request for Budget Transfers.</b></p> <p><b>C. NMHS Student Parking Fee</b></p> <p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to suspend the NMHS Student Parking Fee for the second semester of the 2020-21 school year.</b></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mrs. Nabozny said with the high school still in hybrid, it makes sense at this time.</li><li>• Mrs. Rella agreed.</li></ul> <p>The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p><b>D. COVID-19 Related Materials Request</b></p> <p><b>Mrs. McInerney moved to approve the COVID-19 Related Materials Request in the amount of \$119,896.60, seconded by Mrs. Rella.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said the provided memo speaks to the details of this request. She asked Mr. Giovannone what has been expended so far from the account. Mr. Giovannone said about \$742,000 has been spent, with \$217,000 still unencumbered. This does not include any grant funding through CRF or CARES.</li><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said it was agreed when the account was created that the Board would vote on all COVID expenditures so that they can be tracked publicly.</li><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said this does not take into account the year end balance. Mr. Giovannone said that is correct; it does not take into account any unexpended funds that we might have at the end of this year.</li><li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said, in conversations with the Town, it was agreed that the Board can request that any unspent COVID funds go to the capital reserve account.</li><li>• Mrs. Rella asked for clarification that these are purchases for this year. Ms. DiCorpo said that is correct. The district is planning for in person return of PK-5 in early spring. The request is for staff and student desk shields and air scrubbers for the cafeteria.</li><li>• Mrs. Monaghan asked if these purchases will come out of the remaining \$217,000 and Mr. Giovannone said yes.</li></ul>	<p><b>D. COVID-19 Related Materials Request</b></p> <p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the COVID-19 Related Materials Request in the amount of \$119,896.60.</b></p>
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<p><b>The motion passed unanimously.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said the Board will now turn to adoption of the 2021-2022 Board of Education Budget. The Superintendent’s Proposal will be put on the table before any amendments are entertained. She will allow an opportunity for follow up to questions before beginning the process.</li> </ul> <p><b>E. Adoption of the 2021-2022 Board of Education Budget</b></p> <p><b>Mrs. Nabozny moved to approve the Superintendent’s proposed 2021-2022 budget in the amount of \$66,096,024, seconded by Mr. Failla.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said she asked last night about the cost of adding 44 tech days. Mr. Giovannone said it is \$8,600.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach opened up for amendments and said she had one to suggest be put on the table. She recommended decreasing the proposal by \$250,000 for the purpose of decreasing the line item for health insurance by taking relief from the Internal Service Fund.</li> <li>• Mrs. McInerney asked what the funding is and why it is available.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said the Internal Service Fund is used for health insurance revenue and expenses and when funds are available they have been used as offsets in previous years, provided a positive balance for the year is confident.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mrs. McInerney made a motion to amend the Superintendent’s Proposed 2021-2022 budget by decreasing it by \$250,000 for the purpose of decreasing the line item for health insurance by taking relief from the Internal Service Fund, seconded by Mrs. Rella.</b></p>	<p><b>E. Adoption of the 2021-2022 Board of Education Budget</b></p> <p><b>Motion made to approve the Superintendent’s proposed 2021-2022 budget in the amount of \$66,096,024.</b></p> <p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to amend the Superintendent’s Proposed 2021-2022 budget by decreasing it by \$250,000 for the purpose of decreasing the line item for health</b></p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. Failla said in doing this we reduce the budget and leave every request intact. The benefit is incredible. It provides a financial service to the community too.</li><li>• Mr. Helmus said this is prudent financially. It doesn't make a big impact to the medical reserve and has no effect on educational recommendations.</li><li>• Mr. Giovannone said the new budget total is \$65,846,024 with an increase of 2.14%.</li></ul> <p><b>The amendment passed unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>Mrs. Monaghan made a motion to amend the Superintendent's Proposed 2021-2022 budget by increasing it by \$236,900 for the purpose of reinstating ESS at NMHS with two clinicians, seconded by Mrs. McInerney for discussion.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mrs. Monaghan said that last night's presentation shows the dedication of all to the district. Consensus was that more emotional support will be needed next year when students return. ESS is an established program with positive results that provides cost avoidance as well. She feels the plan we have now to handle these students is somewhat disjointed. The district's mission statement says we will prepare each and every student. This is a reasonable budget amount for these priority students.</li><li>• Mr. Failla said he completely disagrees with reinstatement and that the return to school plan is not disjointed. The district does support all students and this is an incredible amount of money serving just a few. He said after this year's presentations, he feels that this is the first time that he really understands Tier 1, 2, and 3. Tier 1 covers 80-85% of students, Tier 2 covers 10-15% of students and Tier 3 covers 1-5% of students. The more support we give to the majority in Tier 1, the better we are. That's not where this money will go. The district has an amazing special education program. ESS is in</li></ul>	<p><b>insurance by taking relief from the Internal Service Fund.</b></p> <p><b>Motion made and failed to amend the Superintendent's Proposed 2021-2022 budget by increasing it by \$236,900 for the purpose of reinstating ESS at NMHS with two clinicians.</b></p>
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	<p>very limited use in the state. Mr. Failla asked how the rest of the districts are handling this level and what New Milford did before we had the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. McCauley said he has been vocal about his support for ESS and he was upset that it was cut last year. He has spent his career teaching this tier students. There is cost avoidance in programs like this. He said it is rare to see this program in other districts. New Milford had 18 students in the program which speaks to the need. He will support the motion.</li><li>• Mrs. McInerney said she will support the motion as well. She was very disappointed with the cut last year. Yes, the students are a small population, but they are very vulnerable. She said it is no reflection on administration but she is concerned with the state of the schools when we reopen, both for students and staff. The district is adding more to an already overworked support staff. She said she supports the budget wholeheartedly and will not support any amendments to cut it. She said we are responsible for these children and must support them in some way which could end up costing more than this program.</li><li>• Mrs. Rella said she understands the points made and she does feel that all students will be suffering from stress and anxiety coming back. If she was going to support additional funding, it would be for all, which would be more for Tier 1 and 2. She said there is no guarantee that ESS will prevent ODPs either. She said she has been impressed with the presentations and planning of the district and has full trust. She will not support the motion.</li><li>• Mrs. Nabozny said she grappled with this last year too. She understands where the comments are coming from but will not support the motion. Any money put back in should go to focus on Tier 1 and 2. She feels a lot of times that the majority get left in the dust in a lot of areas, not just emotional support.</li></ul>	
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- Mr. Helmus said he finds the conversation awkward. For perspective, the special education operating budget, on page 53 in the budget book, grew 20%. He said he views Mrs. Olson and Ms. DiCorpo as consummate professionals. They explained and recommended a budget within the careful fiscal nature of the Town. He trusts that the staff is doing the right things to support students and he will not support the motion.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said she will not support the motion either. She said all Board members struggle throughout the budget process. There are many things that members would like to see added throughout that can't be done. She said the recommendation was not in the budget. She asked Ms. DiCorpo if it had made it in originally and been added to the "cutting room floor". Ms. DiCorpo said no.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said she is also concerned with adding a recurring expenditure every year going forward if it's put back in. Budgets are difficult every year.
- Mr. McCauley said he wants to make sure the Board keeps an eye on this area. The district wants more social workers as it is and one Tier 3 student can monopolize resources. He is very worried, but trusts administration to watch closely these students who often have no support otherwise.
- Mrs. Monaghan said she thinks it is logical to add the program back in. They will handle Tier 3 students, opening up staff to service other students. She said it is only a 0.3% increase to the budget. When you consider the funding given to areas like athletics, this is not fair and equitable to Tier 3 students.

**The amendment failed 3-5.**

**Aye: Mrs. Monaghan, Mr. McCauley,  
Mrs. McInerney**

**No: Mr. Failla, Mrs. Faulenbach, Mr. Helmus,  
Mrs. Nabozny, Mrs. Rella**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Failla said he had planned to make a motion to eliminate the parking fee at the high school but has decided not to with the hope that we can move forward with the budget we have to Town Council. He said he would like to make a comment to Town Council. New Milford’s per pupil expenditure is what Bridgeport, a major city, spends. The BOE budget gets cut year after year. It is time to support the number that is put in front of the Town Council. This is what we need. Yes, it will cause a tax increase, but at some point we need to step up as a community.</li> <li>• Mr. McCauley said he appreciates Mr. Failla’s comments and echoes what he said. He said Bridgeport also receives a lot of state and federal aid that New Milford is not eligible for. He said he hopes in the future to try for more programming not just an inflationary increase.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said she pulled last year’s minutes where the Board worked until 1:30 a.m. to make reductions. There are no reductions to offer this year. She would love to have a time when they get to actually add something instead.</li> <li>• Mrs. Faulenbach said she wanted to recognize Mayor Bass for sitting in on all budget meetings. The budget is a team effort and she appreciates his engagement and thanks him on behalf of the entire Board.</li> <li>• Mayor Bass thanked Mrs. Faulenbach for the invitation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mrs. Rella made a motion to adopt the 2021-2022 Board of Education Budget by approving the Superintendent’s Proposed 2021-2022 budget as amended in the amount of \$65,846,024; seconded by Mr. Failla.</b></p> <p><b>The motion passed unanimously.</b></p>	<p><b>Motion made and passed unanimously to adopt the 2021-2022 Board of Education Budget by approving the Superintendent’s Proposed 2021-2022 budget as amended in the amount of \$65,846,024.</b></p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Adjourn</b></p>	<p><b>Adjourn</b></p>

	<b>Mrs. Nabozny moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Rella and passed unanimously.</b>	<b>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m.</b>
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Respectfully submitted:



Cynthia Nabozny  
Secretary  
New Milford Board of Education