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**New Milford High School**  
 860-350-6647

Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal  
 Mrs. Liz Curtis, Ass't. Principal  
 Ms. Linda Scoralick, Ass't. Principal  
 Mr. Eric Williams, Ass't. Principal



**Schaghticoke Middle School**  
 860-354-2204

Dr. Len Tomasello, Principal  
 Mrs. Kerri Adakonis, Ass't. Principal  
 Mrs. Jennifer Chmielewski, Ass't. Principal  
 Dr. Christopher Longo, Ass't. Principal  
 Mrs. Barbara Nanassy, Ass't. Principal



**Sarah Noble Intermediate School**  
 860-210-4020

Mrs. Anne Bilko, Principal  
 Mrs. Emily Gervasio, Ass't. Principal  
 Mrs. Jennifer Hankla, Ass't. Principal  
 Mrs. Jennifer Meyers, Ass't. Principal



**Hill & Plain Elementary School**  
 860-354-5430

Mrs. Paula Kelleher, Principal  
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**Northville Elementary School**  
 860-354-3713

Mrs. Susan Murray, Principal  
 Mrs. Barbara Nanassy, Ass't. Principal

# Spotlight on New Milford Schools

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## Trout in the Classroom

Fifth graders at Sarah Noble Intermediate School have been involved in a year long project designed to bring students' studies of the natural world to life by raising trout from eggs in a classroom aquarium. The program, Trout In the Classroom (TIC), started at Sarah Noble during the 2008-2009 school



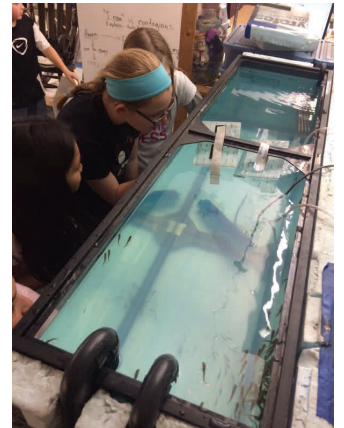
year, and was piloted by two fifth grade teachers. It has progressively grown to incorporate the entire fifth grade. TIC is an environmental education program in which students in grades K-12: raise trout from eggs to fry; monitor tank water quality; engage in stream habitat study; learn to appreciate water resources; and begin to foster a conservation ethic and grow to understand ecosystems.

At Sarah Noble, fifth grade teacher Mrs. Leclair says "We have designed seven lessons that incorporate the lesson points through many forms of media, including literature, documentaries, videos, real life data, and online research."



In November, Sarah Noble fifth graders welcomed 400 eggs and placed them in breeding baskets for each of four tanks. Fifth grade teacher Mrs. Herring says "In about a month's time, the eggs hatched into the alevin stage, where they continued to develop and feed

off of their yolk sacs. When the yolk sacs are depleted, they begin the fry stage, when they feed and become stronger to prepare for release into the 55-gallon tank. Students began caring for the fish right away, and were in charge of caring for the trout and daily water testing for ammonia, nitrite, nitrate, and pH levels." A quick video of students releasing the trout into the tank can be viewed [here](#).





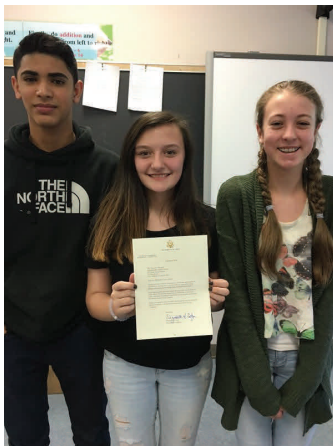
This year, the tanks developed a problem with nitrates being out of control so students brainstormed and tested ideas on how to solve the problem and keep their trout healthy. Through research, experimentation, and trial and error, students found a workable solution.

While the immediate goal of TIC is to increase student knowledge of water quality and cold water conservation, its long-term goal is to reconnect an increasingly urbanized population of youth to the system of streams, rivers, and watersheds that sustain them. To further expand participation in the SNIS program, third grade classes visited the classrooms of fifth grade “buddies” who were proud to show off the tanks and share their knowledge.

Mrs. Leclair says “By late May, the trout are strong enough to be released. Most programs end the year by releasing their trout in a state approved stream near the school or within a nearby watershed. Our event takes place as part of the 5th grade field trip for Pioneer-Trout Release Day at the Pratt Center, where one of the stations is set up for students to release the trout into the Aspetuck River and watch them begin their life in their natural habitat.”

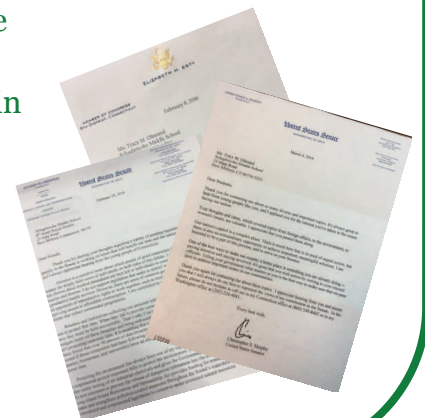


## Legislators respond to SMS student letters



The February issue of *Spotlight on New Milford Schools* reported on a writing project undertaken by Ms. Olmsted’s 8<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies classes. Following a unit of study on the U.S. constitution, students researched legislation currently before the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress using digital resources, including Congress’s own website. After researching their bill of choice, students wrote individual letters to Representative Elizabeth Esty, Senator Chris Murphy or Senator Richard Blumenthal to support or oppose the bill. We are happy to report that responses were received from all three legislators.

Legislators applauded students for the interest they showed in the issues facing our nation and encouraged them to speak out about matters important to them. To quote one response, “One of the best ways to make our country a better place is something you are already doing – paying attention and staying involved. Telling your government what matters to you is the best way to make sure that we pass laws to address important issues in our communities.”





## Secret Lives of SMS Staff

Schaghticoke Middle School students are getting to know their teachers a little better thanks to a project titled “Secret Lives of SMS Staff”. The brainchild of SMS Technology Education teacher Jennifer Morrison, the project is guaranteed to get students thinking of their teachers in a new light. Mrs. Morrison says, “I remember when I taught in an elementary school, students who encountered me at the grocery store – or anywhere not school - seemed surprised and sometimes even a bit fearful. Seeing teachers ‘in the wild’ out of our native habitat of school, catches some students off guard. Then a couple weeks ago I heard a teacher mention a student’s outside school sports involvement and it occurred to me that our students have ‘secret lives’ too, wonderful things they do away from school that we may not know about, and the project was born.”



Mrs. Morrison decided to start with the secret lives of staff to give the students a model, then expand the display to get information from students to include their interests as well. Staff members have revealed hidden talents such as weaving, guitar playing, and gardening. They have had careers as a paralegal, personal chef, aerospace machinist and dental assistant. Hobbies include everything from rock climbing to amateur radio to home remodeling. We don't want to forget to mention the athletes on staff who hike or kayak or play sports such as rugby and tennis. Some even compete in marathons and triathlons!



Students and staff can check out the display in the SMS lobby. The rest of us can follow Assistant Principal Chris Longo on twitter @DrChrisLongo where he has been spotlighting the secret lives on a daily basis.

## Picturing What School Climate Should Be

The NMHS School Climate Committee is a group of stakeholders which includes students, parents, and staff who meet throughout the school year to develop creative ways to address areas of growth at the high school.

Three overarching goals of the committee are:

- To utilize student leadership as a means to create awareness, foster relationships, and create ownership for a positive school culture;
- To promote school spirit by organizing events and developing strategies for the fostering of empathy toward others;
- To promote a sense of community and school morale through the development of shared ownership, the cultivation of responsiveness, and an awareness of digital citizenship.

The Committee meets at least every other month during the school year in the afternoon and evening. Information about the committee as well as a schedule of meetings can be found here: [NMHS Climate Committee](#). All students, staff, and parents are welcome to attend any and/or all meetings.

New Milford High School's Climate Committee recently launched a poster contest to be completed in student advisory groups. Mrs. Sue Andrews, an NMHS Social Studies teacher and member of the Committee, says "The purpose of the contest was to get students to think about the climate of our school, and what they envisioned for our school. Students collaborated with each other and submitted posters to the committee. Pictures of the finalists were taken and a presentation was sent out so each advisory could vote for their favorite. The posters were also displayed in the Library Learning Commons." Entries can be viewed [here](#). The winner of this contest, pictured below with their prized entry, was Mrs. Reiner's advisory.





## The SNIS Garden is growing!

The Spring *Spotlight* reported that the SNIS Garden Committee had been working with the community to incorporate gardening into the school. Assistant Principal Emily Gervasio is pleased to report that the garden has made great strides in just under a month!

“It has been a true community effort. NES garden volunteer Mrs. Claire Runyan and her family constructed six beds to start us off. Grade 4 teacher Mr. Justin Mack worked with other community partners (special thanks to New Milford Farms, Home Depot, and Dr. D’Isidori) to help develop our new garden. Students planted seeds the end of April and are now excited to see radishes, peas, and salad greens growing!”



Students in Ms. Clarke’s Grade 3 class and Mrs. Holland’s Grade 5 class have enjoyed honing their gardening skills. Some students have even been utilizing their garden to engage in the practical application of math skills. For example, Mrs. Gray’s fifth grade students were tasked to divide the bed into 28 square foot plots. Students were then assigned designated sections to look after. Mr. McKay’s fourth grade class designed some fencing for their bed. Additionally, students in Mrs. Arcano’s third grade class have even enjoyed

some Garden Yoga!

Mrs. Gervasio says, “Overall, this is an engaging and enriching experience for our students. We are eager to expand the garden in the future so even more classes can join in.”



## Curriculum Work Guides Teaching and Learning

The development and revision of curriculum is important professional work, as it guides the future direction of the teaching and learning in our district. New Milford Public Schools personnel, in conjunction with the Board of Education's Committee on Learning, continually examine existing coursework at all levels to ensure that our students are engaged with learning via a rigorous, meaningful, challenging curriculum to meet their eventual college and work/career goals.

A recent Committee on Learning meeting served as a good example of this process at the high school level. Several department heads were on hand to present revised curriculum and make suggestions for new and revised courses.

Mr. Bill Knipple, NMHS Math Department head teacher, presented a revised Algebra I curriculum. Mr. Knipple said the course had been rewritten last summer by several math teachers to follow the state Algebra I curriculum. The revised curriculum ties to the SAT and ACT tests where appropriate and includes data analysis and statistics.

Mr. Greg Holmes, Social Studies Department Chair, outlined revisions to three courses: Development of Western Civilization, Modern America 1945 to 1990, and Sociology. Mr. Holmes said the course guides were revised to reflect core standards and use of current technology. He said the courses feature a significant use of supplementary novels as well. Mr. Holmes also presented a new course for approval: Middle East Studies. He 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.

Mrs. Kathleen DelMonico, English Department Chair, summarized revisions to three courses. AP Literature & Composition, a highly challenging course which prepares students for the AP test in that area, has been aligned with current core and College Board standards. Public Speaking, in which students study different types of speeches and then are required to make presentations to an audience, is a very popular course which teaches a truly valuable skill for post-secondary college and career. Another popular course presented with revisions was Modern & Contemporary Poetry. Mrs. DelMonico says students in this class are very open to performing and the school's Poetry SLAM has gotten so popular that it is now held in the theatre to a packed house. This year a national competition piece was added in conjunction with the Poetry Out Loud program and an NMHS student was a state finalist.

In addition, Literature & Media Study was requested as a new course. Mrs. DelMonico said with the social media and technological evolution of today the very definition of what reading means has changed for students. This course will include student "reading" of text and film to analyze how text is adapted and interpreted for film. The course will culminate with students producing their own film.

In a similar vein, the high school's current Video Productions class is being revised into separate introduction and advanced courses. This new structure will allow for increased student enrollment. The introductory course will teach the fundamentals of camera and software usage and begin the process of artistic creation through writing, sound and lights. Students can then move right into higher level production in the advanced course, including work with Green Wave TV and independent video projects. Mrs. DelMonico said "Many colleges are now looking for a portfolio of work from students seeking to enroll in video related majors and programs and this new format will enable interested students to create that body of work."

Revisions and requests for new courses such as these that are approved by the Committee on Learning go before the full Board of Education for final approval before being integrated into student learning.

### **Curriculum Council**

Curriculum revision is an ongoing process at all levels. New Milford Public Schools has created a Curriculum Council to guide these projects. The Council is a standing committee of teachers and administrators who meet regularly to support curriculum development, and to ensure that curriculum is current, relevant, coherent, and aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards. Council committee members work to remain current regarding educational practices and make decisions based on research and data. The Council serves an advisory role to the Assistant Superintendent who oversees curriculum for the district.

The charge of Curriculum Council includes:

- Supporting the curriculum initiatives in the district's five-year curriculum plan and strategic plan;
- Developing and implementing annual curriculum goals for the district and reviewing grade-level/dept. annual goals;
- Fostering the integration of 21st Century skills into teaching and learning;
- Sharing information regarding curriculum and programs with their departments or grade levels;
- Prioritizing, developing, publicizing, and monitoring curriculum/program review cycle;
- Regularly updating the district's Curriculum Handbook and five-year curriculum plan;
- Publicizing curriculum information on the district's website for students, parents and community members;
- Sharing information on best practices both inside and outside the district; and
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction of the district by examining assessment data on an annual basis.

Members include teachers, coaches, department chairs and administrators representing all schools and grade levels. In addition to the tasks listed above, the Council is exploring initiatives for 2016-17 in the areas of fostering a student centered classroom, digital learning opportunities, communication and collaboration, and nontraditional learning environments to ensure that all New Milford students are "college and career" ready.



## Update on Administrative Appointments

This school year was a year of administrative change for the district as a result of retirements and reconfiguration. Changes are still taking place this spring as we set the stage for next year.

A new Director of Fiscal Services and Operations came on board in March as Mr. Anthony Giovannone joined the Central Office administrative staff. Mr. Giovannone comes to New Milford from Greenwich, CT where he has served as Finance Supervisor for the Greenwich Board of Education since 2011. Prior to that time, Mr. Giovannone worked as a Financial Analyst for the Town of Greenwich Finance Department. He is a graduate of Western CT State University.



At a Special Board of Education Meeting on Tuesday, April 12, 2016, Dr. Christopher Longo was named Principal of Schaghticoke Middle School commencing with the 2016-17 school year. In September of this year, Dr. Longo was assigned to Schaghticoke Middle School as an Assistant Principal for the 2015-16 school year with primary responsibilities for Grade 6. Prior to that assignment, Dr. Longo had worked as an assistant principal at New Milford High School since 2012.



Dr. Longo came to New Milford from Bethel where he was a twelve year veteran of the Bethel Public Schools. He served as a Bethel Middle School Science teacher and Curriculum Leader from 2000 to 2010. In 2010, Dr. Longo was named Science Department Chair at Bethel High School. Dr. Longo received Teacher of the Year honors in 2009.

Dr. Longo obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Iona College; his Master of Science degree in Biology from the University of New England and Southern CT State University, his Sixth Year Professional Certificate from Southern CT State University, and his Doctorate of Instructional Leadership from Western CT State University. His doctoral research focused on science instruction and its effect on achievement, creativity, and critical thinking.

The Interim tag has been removed from Mrs. Kerri Adakonis' title as Assistant Principal at Schaghticoke Middle School and she will continue her administrative assignment there in the 2016-17 school year. Prior to joining the SMS staff, Mrs. Adakonis worked as an Administrative Intern at Sarah Noble Intermediate School where she was involved in student placement and scheduling, discipline, special education, and planning of special school events.





Prior to coming to New Milford, Mrs. Adakonis worked in the Fairfield Public Schools as a fourth and fifth grade teacher and most recently as the district's Instructional Improvement teacher. She also served two years as the district's Principal of Elementary Summer School.

Mrs. Adakonis' educational background includes a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from the University of CT, and a Master of Arts and Teaching and Certificate of Advanced Studies in Administration from Sacred Heart University. She holds certifications as a Professional Educator PreK-8 and Intermediate Administrator Supervisor from the State of Connecticut.



Ms. Linda Scoralick will continue in her role as an Assistant Principal at New Milford High School where she had been filling in as a result of Dr. Longo's move to SMS. Ms. Scoralick had been a Mathematics teacher at NMHS since 2007 and had served as the Mathematics Department Chair since 2013. Recently, Ms. Scoralick played a key role as Co-Chair for the school's NEASC reaccreditation visit.

Ms. Scoralick's educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and Computer Science from SUNY Purchase; completion of the Teacher Certification Program at WCSU; and a Master of Science in Teacher Leadership and 6<sup>th</sup> year degree in Education Leadership from Quinnipiac University.

*And last but certainly not least...*

At a special meeting on April 26, 2016, the New Milford Board of Education elected Joshua Smith as the new Superintendent of New Milford Public Schools effective July 1, 2016. Mr. Smith, who has been serving as Interim Superintendent this year, will be Superintendent Elect for the district until that time.



"The Board of Education elected whom it considers to be the best candidate for the position," stated David Lawson, Chairperson. "We are looking forward to a long and successful relationship as we work together to provide New Milford students with the best education possible."

"I am honored to have earned the opportunity to lead this school district as we continue our commitment to provide excellent educational opportunities for the students of New Milford," stated Mr. Smith upon learning he had been appointed Superintendent of New Milford Public Schools. "I look forward to strengthening my collaborative relationship with the Board of Education, educators and support staff, and the community as we prepare our students to be successful, active participants in our global society."

## Nominate New Milford's Teacher of the Year for 2016-2017



**Mrs. Jennifer Singer**  
New Milford's  
2015-2016  
Teacher of the Year

New Milford will be participating in Connecticut's "Teacher of the Year" program again in 2016-2017, with our local nominee to be announced this August. The nominee should be a teacher from the faculty of the New Milford Public Schools, have taught in this district for five or more years, and have demonstrated continued excellence of performance during his/her tenure. The Selection Committee has developed the following guidelines, which relate to the criteria established by the State Department of Education, for considering nominations for Teacher of the Year:

- Demonstrated ability to inspire enthusiasm and motivation for learning in students.
- Demonstrated use of effective teaching techniques, flexibility of style, innovation, and creativity.
- Caring relationships with students.
- Demonstrated commitment to continuing professional growth and development.
- Respect and admiration of students, colleagues, parents, and administration.
- Personal philosophy and goals.
- Ability to articulate ideas clearly.
- Community involvement.

You are invited to nominate teachers from our faculty for this honor by completing the nomination form found [here](#) and returning the signed form to the Superintendent's office or any school no later than June 9, 2016. The completed form can also be sent electronically if you prefer to [suptoffice@newmilfordps.org](mailto:suptoffice@newmilfordps.org). Only signed nominations will be accepted. Thank you for your participation.



**New Milford Public Schools**

50 East Street  
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**Mr. Joshua Smith**  
Superintendent Elect

**Dr. Eugenia Slone**  
Acting Assistant Superintendent

**Ms. Ellamae Baldelli**  
Human Resources Director

**Mr. Kevin Munrett**  
Facilities Manager

**Mr. Anthony Giovannone**  
Fiscal Services & Operations  
Director

**Mrs. Laura Olson**  
Pupil Personnel & Special Services  
Director

**Ms. Roberta Pratt**  
Technology Director

**Mrs. Sandra Sullivan**  
Food Services Director

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**Mrs. Tammy McInerney**  
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**Mrs. Angela C. Chastain**

**Mr. Robert Coppola**

**Mr. Dave Littlefield**

**Mr. Brian McCauley**

**Mr. J.T. Schemm**

**Teacher Appreciation**

May is traditionally the month for Teacher Appreciation. When checking for this year's date (May 3rd), we came across this handy chart for 2015-2016.

While many of the dates have come and gone, it shows just how many people, including volunteers, help make each school year a success.



**2015-2016**  
**School Employee Appreciation Dates**

October 2, 2015 .....	National Custodial Appreciation Day
October 12-16, 2015 .....	National School Lunch Week
November 16-20, 2015 .....	Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week
November 16-20, 2015 .....	American Education Week
November 18, 2015 .....	National Educational Support Professional Day*
December 7-11, 2015 .....	Maintenance Employee Appreciation Week
January 1-31, 2016 .....	National Mentoring Month
January 15, 2016 .....	Thank Your Mentor Day
February 1-5, 2016 .....	National School Counselor Week
February 8-12, 2016 .....	Bus Driver Appreciation Week
March 1-7, 2016 .....	School Social Worker Week
April 18-22, 2016 .....	Public School Volunteer Week
April 24-30, 2016 .....	Administrative Professional Week
April 21, 2016 .....	Media Specialist Day
April 27, 2016 .....	Administrative Professional Day
May 2, 2016 .....	School Principal Day
May 2-6, 2016 .....	Teacher & Teacher Assistant Appreciation Week
May 2-6 2016 .....	National Child Nutrition Employee Appreciation Week
May 3, 2016 .....	National Teacher Day
May 11, 2016 .....	National School Nurse Day
May 13, 2016 .....	Teacher Assistant Appreciation Day
May 15-21, 2016 .....	National Educational Boss Week

\*Includes Speech Therapists, School Psychologists, Program Specialists, Occupational Therapists and Assistants, Physical Therapists and Assistants, Educational Interpreters, and any other employees not recognized elsewhere.

We hope you will join us in saying thanks since...

***Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.***

~ William Arthur Ward

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