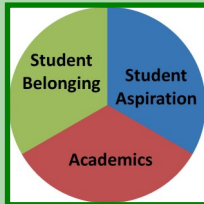




New Milford Public Schools
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776
860-355-8406
www.newmilfordps.org



New Milford High School

860-350-6647

Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal
Mr. Kevin Best, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Liz Curtis, Asst. Principal
Ms. Linda Scoralick, Asst. Principal



Schaghticoke Middle School

860-354-2204

Dr. Christopher Longo, Principal
Mrs. Catherine Calabrese, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Barbara Nanassy, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Sasha Salem, Asst. Principal



Sarah Noble Intermediate School

860-210-4020

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



Hill & Plain Elementary School

860-354-5430

Mr. Eric Williams, Principal
Mrs. Kerri Adakonis, Asst. Principal



Northville Elementary School

860-355-3713

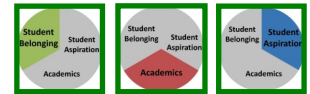
Mrs. Gwen Gallagher, Principal
Mrs. Catherine Calabrese, Asst. Principal

Spotlight on New Milford Schools

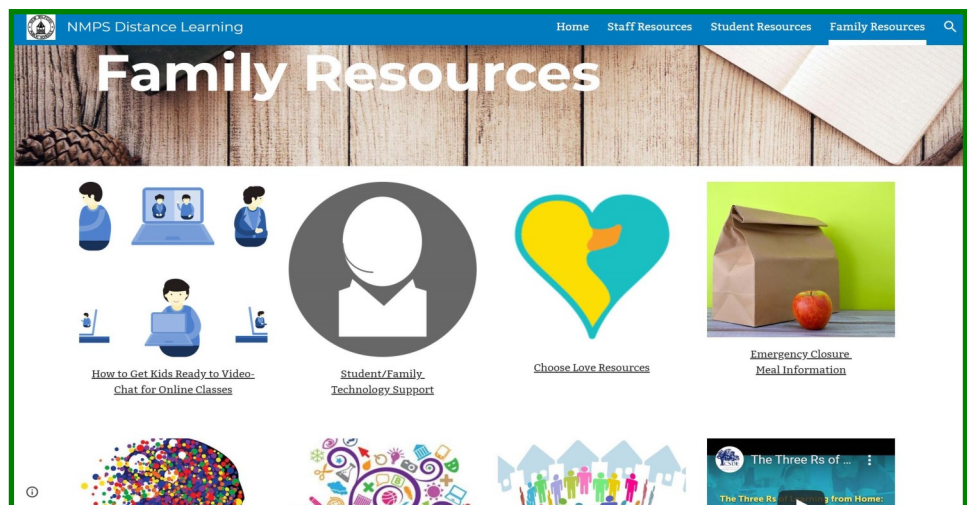
Volume 10, Issue 11

May 2020

Living in the Virtual World



This month, NMPS students and staff continued distance learning, with the addition of live interactions, google class meets, office hours and more. The district also unveiled the [Distance Learning Portal](#), a Google Site created to serve as a hub for families, students, and staff. This “one stop shop” has links to helpful information, videos, webinars, resources, technology assistance, and other items to support all of us working through distance learning.



The official end to the 2019-20 school year in New Milford is June 16, just a few weeks away. With that in mind, the district distributed the NMPS Distance Learning Grading Plan on May 8th. Developed in alignment with the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) recommendations relative to end of year grading for the 2019-20 school year, the Plan seeks to ensure all learners have the opportunity to succeed and are not penalized in any way by our current grading system. The Grading Plan has three sections: one for our elementary and intermediate schools, one for the middle school, and one for the high school.

At the K-5 elementary level, Assistant Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo says, “The focus is on a ‘do no harm’ philosophy and providing feedback on student work.” All teachers will provide one or two positive comments on year long progress and participation, not limited to

time during distance learning, in reading, writing and math. Special or Unified Arts teachers will write narratives based on participation.

The middle school and high school plans are similar to each other; there is a slight calculation difference for year long and semester classes at the two levels. At the middle and high school, there are two options: either Pass/Pass +/Fail or numerical grade. **Students who wish to take the option to receive a numerical grade for any course must indicate that choice by June 5 at the middle school and June 8 at the high school; otherwise, the default is Pass/Pass +/Fail.**

If a student has not been able to access content, teachers will issue an incomplete. Students will have through September of 2020 to complete the content. The district will work on a case by case basis to see what the obstacles to learning are and offer support. Superintendent Kerry Parker says, “The overall intent of the plan is to be fair and give credit, while not penalizing students due to the closure of schools. The focus is on supporting students and teachers.”

Reaching Out Virtually



Distance learning is not the only thing on the minds of families and staff alike. Everyone is missing the social aspect of school and the spring happenings that occur this time of year. In recognition, several events happened virtually in May. We hope you were able to enjoy them from a safe distance. We also have a sneak peek at some events coming up in June.



Districtwide Spirit Week – May 18 through 22

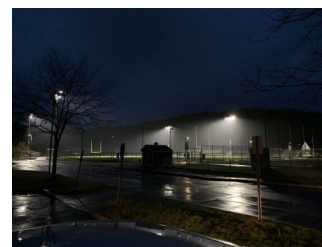
Students and staff were encouraged to share their spirit virtually on Twitter at #NMPSdistancespirit. The week started with Sports Day and ended with School Spirit Day colors, with Tie Die, Superhero and Favorite Snack days in between. Interesting how many pets snuck in the pictures.



Reaching Out Virtually

"Lighting the Lights" for the Class of 2020

The Lights on Joe Wiser Stadium are being turned on every Friday night through Friday, June 19th at 20:20 (8:20 PM) and remain on for 20 minutes and 20 seconds as a symbol of appreciation for the Class of 2020.



Senior Scholarship and Junior Awards Ceremony

This will be a virtual awards ceremony. NMHS will send out a viewing link to all families for this June event.

Appreciating Senior Music Students

On May 20th, NMHS Band Director David Syzdek, with help from the NMHS Band Parent Organization Board, delivered 41 signs of recognition to the seniors in the band, orchestra and guard programs.



Mindfulness Seminars

Copper Beech Institute presented three mindfulness sessions in May, with one still to come on June 2nd, on Resilience in Uncertainty. The sessions are designed to help you reduce stress, stay focused and move through challenges, and respond instead of react a bit more often. If you missed a session, don't worry, each session was recorded and can be viewed at any time on our website.

Live Webinar

On May 27th, the district offered "Parenting Youth when COVID Uncertainty and Stress Feels Overwhelming". Dr. Ames-Sikora, a clinical postdoctoral fellow at the Columbia University Clinic for Anxiety and Related Disorders (CUCARD) Westchester, discussed how to manage both parents and children's uncertainty, the rationale for being a "good enough" parent, building resilience and routines during the pandemic, and how to model bravery and positive coping.



Reaching Out Virtually

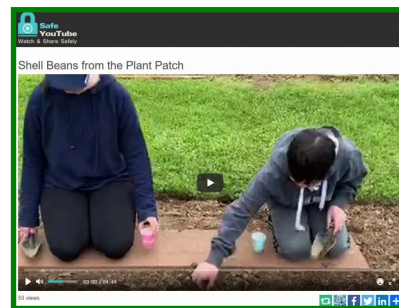
Plant Patch Videos

Volunteers for the NES Plant Patch are posting planting videos on YouTube. Ever wondered how to plant [popcorn](#), [potatoes](#), [carrots](#), [shell beans](#)? Now is your chance to find out.



Poppies Art Project

Students helped decorate Town Hall with homemade poppies for Memorial Day as part of their distance learning in Unified Arts. With the annual parade canceled, the Roger Sherman Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and Children of the American Revolution (CAR), which serves greater New Milford, spearheaded the project in remembrance of the sacrifices of our servicemen and women.



SNIS Walking Project



The 14th annual SNIS 5th Grade Walking Project began Monday, May 18th. Students received a package in the mail with their pedometer and watched an [Opening Ceremony video](#) before entering the Walking Project Google Classroom. There, students received daily activities, projects and challenges to complete. Each day focused on one of the “4 E’s” - Exercise, Eating Well, Environment, and Emotional Health. Families are encouraged to take part as well.

SNIS Legacy Art Project

The annual SNIS 5th grade Legacy Art Project will take place as part of distance learning this year. SNIS secretaries Mrs. Biondi and Mrs. Lewis compiled and mailed home supplies, pamphlets and self addressed stamped envelopes for students to send back their art. This year’s project combines the Walking Project with the Legacy Project. Students will illustrate one of the “4E’s” using the drawing style of artist Keith Haring. The drawing needs to be based on one or more of the 4E’s of the Walking Project. Mrs. Amodeo, SNIS Art teacher, says “We are looking forward to a great response, and a beautiful mural revolving around SNIS' Walking Project 4E's. Moreover, capturing a glimpse of what online distance learning really looks like.”



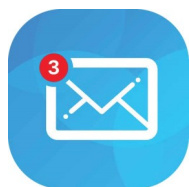
Reaching Out Virtually

SNIS Talent Show



As the old saying goes, “The show must go on!” SNIS students have many talents, and students received an invitation to share those talents with everyone through digital media. SNIS teachers Mrs. Tuz and Ms. McGuire will be creating a google slide presentation of student talent videos that will be shared via email in June.

End of Year News to Note



Building Cleanouts in June

Principals have emailed schedules and details, check your email to make sure you don't miss out!

End of Year Celebrations and Activities

All schools will host end of year celebrations and activities. Details for our PreK-2 schools are being finalized now. Both HPS and NES will hold a Parade on June 12th and a virtual Field Day on June 15th. NES will have their final C.A.R.E. assembly on Monday, June 8th.

At SNIS, Principal Anne Bilko says they have scheduled some fun, if virtual, days for the end of this year.

June 10th, 11th, and 12th: Unified Arts Virtual Field Days

June 15th: Classroom Celebrations

June 16th: Bubble Parade

Mrs. Bilko says, “A Farewell Bubble Goodbye has been a long standing tradition at SNIS. This year we will do a reverse parade for students as SNIS staff give them a bubble farewell. Staff will be at the school from 10 AM -12 PM on June 16th lining the driveway at a safe distance and we hope that families will drive through to wave a goodbye to them.”

SMS Grade 8 Promotion Parade June 15

Families of Grade 8 students are invited to parade onto school grounds in self decorated cars to receive their promotion certificate and be greeted by appropriately distanced well wishers.



NMHS Graduation of the Class of 2020

Graduation Processional June 20



An untraditional graduation ceremony for the Class of 2020 is right around the corner, with a graduation processional planned for June 20th. Caps & gowns will be picked up at school in a week or so during building clean out. In addition to the cap and gown, each student will receive a “goodie bag” at that time donated by the PTO to help with the decorating of their car for the processional. On June 20th cars will process down Route 7 to NMHS from SNIS, accompanied by a police escort. Students will have the option to view a YouTube Channel with the speeches of their classmates and to follow along with the graduation ceremony.

Once on the school property, each car will have the option of tuning to an FM station on their car radio to listen to the names of the Class of 2020 being called. While in line on school grounds, the Grad Party Committee will provide four opportunities for the students to get out of their cars and to take individual photos along the processional route. Once the student’s car reaches the front of the line, they will be instructed by staff to exit the car and to come to receive their diploma. After receiving their diploma they will walk to the temporary stage, turn their tassel from right to left, pose for a picture at the designated spot with a backdrop provided, exit the stage, and return to their vehicle and then exit the school parking lot. From there graduates are free to return home to take additional pictures with their families of them in their cap and gown and diploma.

As NMHS Principal Greg Shugrue states, “This is a very different ceremony from the one we all envisioned at the start of the 2019-20 school year. But these are unprecedented times and we hope this ceremony will provide a unique celebration and a memorable experience that will be shared as a positive memory in the years to come.”



Parents as Partners

New Milford Public Schools is pleased to be offering digital resources for families as we all cope with the changes brought about by COVID-19. This is a continuation of the work done while our schools were still open. Back in February, the NMPS Office of Student Affairs presented a workshop for families entitled **Anxiety ~ How Can We Help Our Kids** as part of a series of Parents As Partners workshops. Our families provided feedback last year regarding topics of interest and the topic of anxiety was foremost.

NMPS Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Laura Olson says, "We were fortunate to have Dr. Anna Allmann as our presenter and over 90 people were in attendance at the SNIS Library Media Center. Dr. Allmann is an Assistant Professor in the Psychiatry Department and a licensed clinical psychologist at Columbia University's Clinic for Anxiety and Related Disorders in Tarrytown, NY."



Dr. Allmann shared pointers for parents on identifying and managing worrying in youth. She explained what anxiety is and how to recognize when anxiety becomes a disorder. One important fact that she shared is that anxiety is the most common psychiatric disorder, impacting at least 30% of the population. Dr. Allmann reviewed risk factors for anxiety, which are brain biochemistry, genes, early life experiences/stressors, physical health, learned behavior, parenting, and temperament. She shared what to look for to identify anxiety in children.

Most importantly, Dr. Allmann provided strategies to help children cope with anxiety. She shared that parents can alleviate anxiety in their children. Her recommendation was to aim for authoritative parenting: Be warm to your children, appropriately scaffold them to reach developmental goals, allow for failure, be compassionate, understanding, and kind without becoming permissive. Try to be understanding of anxiety while maintaining appropriate expectations. Discourage procrastination or escape/avoidance behaviors. She also recommended validating children's feelings. She emphasized that it is beneficial to manage stress in the home by modeling relaxing activities - mindfulness, meditation, yoga, family game night, reading before bed, time to just talk with parents, and modeling how to manage your own stress adaptively.

Dr. Allman says parents can serve as coping models for their children. She suggested demonstrating that we all experience anxiety and sometimes struggle to manage it effectively, sharing stories with children of times you experienced anxiety or failure, and normalizing and validating those feelings and experiences. She stressed to encourage bravery based behaviors - doing something hard even though you're scared. Mrs. Olson says, "Dr. Allmann's presentation and Q and A session was well-received by the parents and staff who attended and we hope to continue to collaborate with her team at Columbia University for future presentations."



***Congratulations to
NMPS Food Services Director
Sandra Sullivan
Named SNACT Director of the Year!!***

The School Nutrition Association of Connecticut (SNACT) has chosen NMPS Food Services Director Sandra Sullivan as SNACT's Director of the Year for 2019-20!! An affiliate of the National School Nutrition Association, SNACT is dedicated to ensuring the health and wellness of Connecticut's school children through their participation in the school nutrition program. Per SNACT, award winners, who are nominated and evaluated by their peers in school nutrition, exemplify the best of child nutrition programs through their professionalism and program innovations.

Mrs. Sullivan has been Food Services Director in New Milford for the past twelve years. "Feeding and meeting the nutrition needs of children has been the focus of my career as a Registered Dietitian for 37 years," says Mrs. Sullivan. "Prior to coming to New Milford, I worked in School Nutrition, the CT Birth to Three system and the Woman's Infants and Children's Program (WIC). I truly believe that healthy eating habits form healthy bodies which start during the childhood years and follow you to adulthood."

Of her time in New Milford, Mrs. Sullivan says "I am very thankful to have been given the opportunity to work here and feed the children of this wonderful community. I am so proud and grateful to receive this honor, but this award is not only for me but also for the entire food services staff and my administrative assistant, Charlene Kirkwood. Their hard work, dedication and support are what contributes to the success of the School Nutrition Program."

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**"Envisioning the 20-21 School Year" Group Formed**

**As we wind down the 19-20 school year, we are already focused on next year and the challenges we may face. Dr. Parker has established a group representing all stakeholders in the district, including students.**

**Subgroups based on facilities, instruction, operations, technology and wellness will be reviewing and discussing best practices in these areas in order for the district leadership team to be able to move forward quickly once the state releases the guidelines for the next school year.**

**Stay tuned for updates over the summer months.**





## New Milford Public Schools

50 East Street  
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860-355-8406

**Dr. Kerry Parker**  
Superintendent

**Ms. Alisha DiCorpo**  
Assistant Superintendent

**Ms. Ellamae Baldelli**  
Human Resources Director

**Mr. Kevin Munrett**  
Facilities Director

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

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

**Mr. Brandon Rush**  
Technology Director

**Mrs. Sandra Sullivan**  
Food Services Director

## Board of Education

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Chairperson

**Mr. Joseph Failla**  
Vice Chairperson

**Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach**  
Secretary

**Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan**  
Assistant Secretary

**Mr. Pete Helmus**

**Mr. Brian McCauley**

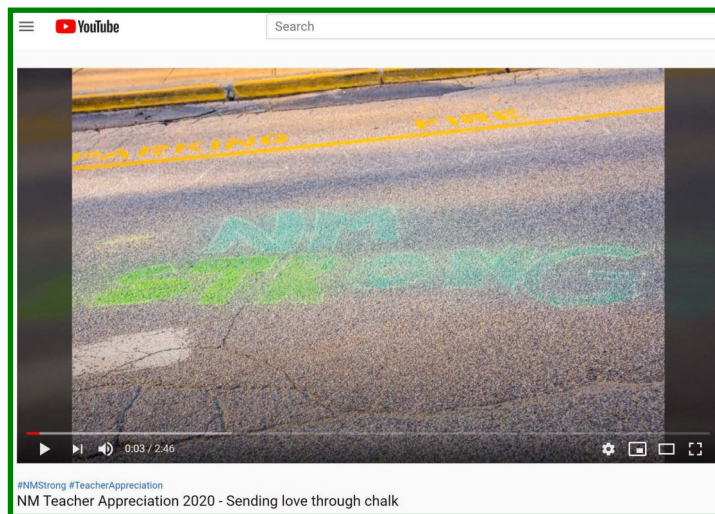
**Mrs. Tammy McInerney**

**Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny**

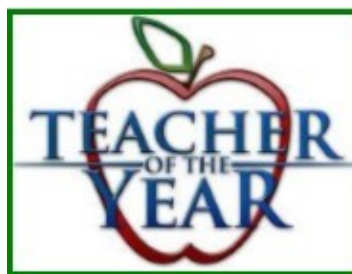
**Mrs. Olga I. Rella**

## Teacher Appreciation

Our Town-wide PTO (who we also appreciate!) made sure that closed schools didn't get in the way of this year's teacher appreciation.



Check out their wonderful video [here](#).



**And remember, it's not too late to show your appreciation for a special teacher.**

Nominations for New Milford's Teacher of the Year close June 16th. Make yours today by [completing the nomination form found here](#).

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.

May  
bring