

NEW MILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
New Milford Public Schools
50 East Street
New Milford, Connecticut 06776

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE**

DATE: May 31, 2017
TIME: 6:30 P.M.
PLACE: Lillis Administration Building Board Room

BOARD WORKSHOP AGENDA

New Milford Public Schools Mission Statement

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.

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

An individual may address the Board concerning any item on the agenda for the meeting subject to the following provisions:

- A. A three-minute time limit may be allocated to each speaker with a maximum of twenty minutes being set aside per meeting. The Board may, by a majority vote, cancel or adjust these time limits.
- B. If a member of the public comments about the performance of an employee or a Board member, whether positive, negative, or neutral, and whether named or not, the Board shall not respond to such comments unless the topic is an explicit item on the agenda and the employee or the Board member has been provided with the requisite notice and due process required by law. Similarly, in accordance with federal law pertaining to student confidentiality, the Board shall not respond to or otherwise discuss any comments that might be made pertaining to students.

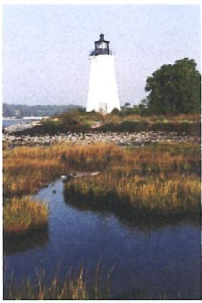
3. DISCUSSION

A. CABE Senior Staff Associate for Field Service Nick Caruso will facilitate discussion regarding Board roles, responsibilities and goal setting.

4. ADJOURN

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CONNECTICUT LIGHTHOUSE

The Role of the Board for Improving Student Learning

1. Set clear expectations

- a. Get clear about the greatest student learning needs – the most important content area to improve first
- b. Believe more is possible and communicate high expectations
- c. Establish a clear and narrow focus for improvement – clarify improvement goals and specific targets
- d. Focus on student learning and teaching (Improving teaching as the key strategy for improving learning)
- e. Ensure that your policy manual reflects your expectations

2. Create conditions for success

- a. Demonstrate commitment to the improvement focus through board actions and decisions
- b. Support quality professional development
- c. Stay the course
- d. Support & connect with districtwide leadership
- e. Develop and nurture the board/superintendent team leadership
- f. Ensure all parts of the system are aligned around the learning needs of students (curriculum, instruction, assessment; goals, actions, resource allocation; etc.).
- g. Align your district policy manual to support these conditions

3. Hold the system accountable to the expectations

- a. Use data extensively
- b. Determine what you will accept as evidence of progress/success
- c. Monitor progress regularly
- d. Apply pressure for accountability
- e. Ensure that policies articulate expectations of the board and district

4. Build public will

- a. Create awareness of the need
- b. Create urgency around the moral purpose of improvement
- c. Instill hope that it's possible to change
- d. Connect with the community
- e. Ensure that the board has policies related to communications and community involvement

5. Learn together as a board team

- a. Establish board learning time
- b. Learn together
- c. Talk to each other – extensive board conversations
- d. Develop a willingness and readiness to lead and allow others to lead
- e. Build commitment to the improvement focus through shared information and discussion
- f. Establish board policies that encourage board development
- g. Engage in deliberative policy development – lead through your policies



Sample Board Questions for Progress Reports or Presentations at Board Meetings

Purpose of this Tool

These questions are intended as samples that boards may wish to consider as a “frame” for administrator/staff progress reports. The board/superintendent team can use these questions “as is” or modify them to fit the district and current circumstances. These “board centric” questions were developed through ongoing work with multiple board teams over the course of a 2-3 year time period. Participating board/superintendent teams have said these kinds of questions have helped build board understanding in ways that can impact the work of boards within their areas of responsibility (provide support, advocate for improvement work, as a means to enhance accountability, etc.).

Typically, after board/superintendent discussion and refinement (or deciding to use them “as is”), the superintendent and administrative team will share these questions with administrative and teacher leadership well in advance of reporting progress. Then administrators and teachers use the questions as a “frame” for planning and reporting progress on key initiatives, professional development, and/or goals during the year.

Sample Board Questions for Progress Reports or Presentations at Board Meetings

Initial ideas for a Template

_____ Board Session

The intent of these questions (which may be revised and adopted by the board and superintendent) is to guide the format of presentations and progress reports shared by staff and community.

1. **What is this action/initiative intended to improve?**
(describe the desired result, outcome or purpose as succinctly as possible)
2. **Which goal is this action/initiative aligned with?**
(describe the link between this action/initiative and a goal or priority it is intended to address)
3. **What does it take to do or implement this well?**
(please focus on the big picture or balcony view essential elements or supports it takes to “make this work”. For example: time, training, resources, leadership, financial elements, etc.)
4. **What is the impact of this action/initiative? How do we know its impact (data/information)?**
(What is the anticipated impact of this action/initiative? How will we know its impact?)
5. **What are the key roadblocks or challenges to doing this well?**
(What are the likely ways to work around these roadblocks or challenges?)
6. **What are some of the key implications of this presentation/progress report for the board (and superintendent)?**
(implications might include areas such as: board learning, board leadership/advocacy, sharing common messages with the public/staff, “staying the course”, providing time/resources/financial support, etc.)
7. **What other options were considered and why was this option recommended over others? What potential negatives are there?**
(The board needs to know *all* reasons for the recommendation including those that challenge it; so as to be sure they make the best decision possible.)



ROLE OF THE BOARD - THE FOCUS FRAMEWORK

A Discussion Tool for Establishing Board Direction in Key Areas

Area Being Discussed: _____

Set Clear Expectations What are our greatest hopes for the district in this area?	Create Conditions For Success What are we willing to support to ensure the expectations can be met?	Hold The System Accountable What will we accept as evidence of progress toward expected outcomes?	Build Public Will What will we need to do to gain community support for this work?	Learn Together as a Board Team What information does the board need to ensure the right decisions are made?



Check the most appropriate rating box on a scale of 5-1 (5 representing the highest rating, 1 the lowest) for each question. A "NA" rating is also provided if you are unable to rate an item for any reason. A space for comments is also provided on Page 3.

Vision		5	4	3	2	1	Not Sure
1.	The Board has a vision/mission for the school district with a primary focus on student achievement.						
2.	The vision/mission and goals are developed collaboratively with staff and the community.						
3.	The Board institutes a process for long-range and strategic planning that aligns with the vision/mission for the district.						
4.	The Board uses the district policy manual to create a culture that supports the vision and goals of the district.						
5.	The Board expresses in the vision/mission the belief that high quality instruction in every classroom is the foundation for high achievement for all students.						
6.	expectations for the district, staff, and students with an emphasis on high achievement for all students in the district.	1	4				
7.	The Board develops goals that align with the vision/mission for the district, foster continuous improvement and remain the highest priorities.						
Total - Vision							
Community Leadership		5	4	3	2	1	Not Sure
8	district's vision/mission to the public and listens, and incorporates appropriate community perspectives into board action.						
9.	The Board works to promote the accomplishments of the district within the district and community at large.						
10.	The Board advocates at the national, state and local levels for students and the school district and promotes the benefits of public education.						
11.	The Board collaborates with other school boards, superintendents, agencies, and other bodies to inform federal, state and local policy makers of concerns and issues related to education.						
12.	The Board provides community leadership on educational issues by creating strong linkages with appropriate organizations, agencies, and other groups to provide for healthy development and high achievement for all students.	1	4				
Total - Community Leadership							

Check the most appropriate rating box on a scale of 5-1 (5 representing the highest rating, 1 the lowest) for each question. A "NA" rating is also provided if you are unable to rate an item for any reason. A space for comments is also provided on Page 3.

	Board Operations	5	4	3	2	1	Not Sure
13.	The Board ensures the District policy manual manual is up-to-date and comprehensive.						
14.	The Board conducts meetings that are efficient, effective and focus primarily on student achievement and other district priorities.						
15.	The Board makes decisions based on analysis of relevant research and data.						
16.	The Board adopts a fiscally responsible budget based on the district's priorities and regularly monitors the fiscal health of the district .						
17.	The Board collectively executes its legal responsibilities and ensures the district adheres to all federal and state laws and board policies.						
18.	The Board provides appropriate support (including quality professional development) for programs and initiatives consistent with the vision/mission of the district.						
19.	The Board conducts a comprehensive orientation to familiarize new board members with their role on the team.						
20.	The Board conducts an effective annual self-evaluation.						
21.	The Board participates in professional development specifically regarding its roles and responsibilities and on relevant content areas.						
22.	The Board belongs to, actively supports and participates in professional organizations.						
	Total - Board Operations						
	Board Ethics	5	4	3	2	1	Not Sure
23.	The Board establishes a <i>Code of Ethics</i> and conducts business in accordance with the code.						
24.	The Board members maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive communications.						
25.	The Board members honor board decisions even when the vote is not unanimous.						
26.	business.						
27.	The Board deals with both internal and external conflicts openly, honestly and respectfully.						
	Total - Board Ethics						

Check the most appropriate rating box on a scale of 5-1 (5 representing the highest rating, 1 the lowest) for each question. A "NA" rating is also provided if you are unable to rate an item for any reason. A space for comments is also provided on Page 3.

	Board Superintendent Team	5	4	3	2	1	Not Sure
28.	The Board works effectively with the superintendent as a collaborative leadership team to focus priorities around high achievement for all students in the district.						
29.	The Board sets aside time, at least semi-annually, to discuss board/superintendent relations.						
30.	The Board demonstrates support and respect for the superintendent's role as the chief executive officer of the district.						
31.	The Board provides direction to the superintendent as a whole, not from individual board members.						
32.	The Board follows the chain of command as identified by board policy.						
	Total - Board Superintendent Team						

Grand Total	2	0	0	0	0	0
AVG.	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Please add any additional comments here (comments will be shared with participants):

Vision: _____

Community Leadership: _____

Board Operations: _____

Board Ethics: _____

Board/Superintendent Relations: _____

General Comments: _____

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