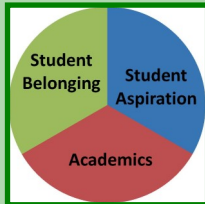




New Milford Public Schools  
 50 East Street  
 New Milford, CT 06776  
 860-355-8406  
[www.newmilfordps.org](http://www.newmilfordps.org)



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

Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal  
 Mrs. Liz Curtis, Asst. Principal  
 Ms. Linda Scoralick, Asst. Principal  
 Mr. Eric Williams, Asst. Principal



**Shaghticoke Middle School**  
 860-354-2204

Dr. Christopher Longo, Principal  
 Mrs. Kerri Adakonis, Asst. Principal  
 Mrs. Jennifer Delaney, Asst. Principal  
 Mrs. Barbara Nanassy, Asst. Principal



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

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



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

Mrs. Patricia Corvello, Interim Principal  
 Mrs. Jennifer Hankla, Asst. Principal



**Northville Elementary School**  
 860-355-3713

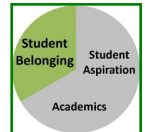
Mrs. Susan Murray, Principal  
 Mrs. Barbara Nanassy, Asst. Principal

# Spotlight on New Milford Schools

Volume 9, Issue 6

December 2018

## Students Spread Kindness Through Community Outreach



For over a decade now, second grade students at Northville Elementary School have been making casseroles for Loaves and Fishes, New Milford's community food bank. NES Grade 2 teacher Connie Williams reports that the casseroles are served to the community on Thanksgiving. "Students in each classroom lovingly mix and stir ingredients for a variety of tasty, traditional side dishes. Every classroom chooses a different casserole to make. This year, students made cranberry sauce, stuffing, Utah potato casseroles, green bean casseroles, broccoli-cheese casseroles, a corn casserole and a cauliflower casserole, and sweet potato casseroles. Students also decorated paper bags which were used to send leftovers with patrons for lunch the next day."



Each year the food is delivered to Loaves and Fishes by parent volunteers who cheerfully collect the food in classrooms and make sure the donations reach their destination. "Many parent volunteers also come into classes to help with the preparation and cooking", says Grade 2 teacher Jenna Giudice. "The students really enjoy the project and it is a great opportunity for them to practice kindness and community outreach."

NES continues their spirit of generosity this month with the "Spreading the Warmth from Head to Toe" project. Students bring in hats, scarves and mittens for donation to social services. NES staff use them to decorate



their holiday tree as a visual symbol of the students' giving. As you can see from the picture on page 1, the project was so successful that the tree is completely covered!



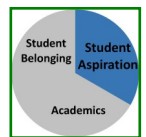
SMS students are working on community outreach as well. Students on Team 7 Blue have been running a Coat Drive since November. SMS Science teacher Tracy Nevins says, "Donated coats were displayed in the library media center case so students could measure our progress. They will be available at the New Milford Thrift Mart. Anyone interested in a free coat can stop by the Social Services department at Town Hall to receive a voucher."

Other NMPS schools have similar projects going on, everything from "Santa" funds to food collections to toy drives. Sometimes the students actually take their community outreach out into the community. Visitors to the Silo were lucky enough to hear the SNIS 3rd grade chorus singing carols in early December and SMS Leo Club members happily served and assisted at the New Milford Seniors Christmas Party, much to the delight of the attending seniors. Mrs. Williams sums up the spirit of the month when she says, "We are so proud to see students demonstrating how to be a kind, caring, and compassionate school community."



## On-Site Decision Day at NMHS

December 5th was a special day for some members of the senior class at New Milford High School as they received their official college acceptance letter during the high school's annual On-Site Decision Day. For the past several years, representatives from Western CT State University (WCSU) have offered an on-site application review and interview. Accepted students are confirmed on the spot. This year, representatives from the University of New Haven (UNH) were on hand to offer a similar service. On December 19th, Southern CT State University (SCSU) visited NMHS to do the same.



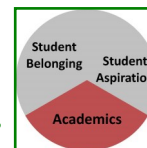
Principal Greg Shugrue says, "It is a very nice service to offer our seniors. In the future it is our goal to arrange for other state universities to come as well, as part of an *Instant Decision Week*." This year, WCSU accepted 85% of on-site applicants, UNH accepted 70% and SCSU accepted 60% on the spot. Congratulations seniors!

Pictured at left with Career Center secretary Maryann Shaffer is NMHS senior Emily Dawson, a WCSU accepted student.



## SMS TAG Students Create Cookbook

In 2017, the Connecticut legislation passed Senate Bill No. 911 that focused on students identified as talented and gifted in Connecticut. This bill provided for the hiring of a state level talented and gifted coordinator and recognized the need to support the intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students in schools.



For the students of New Milford Public Schools, Dr. Yvonne de St. Croix weaves support for the social and emotional growth of students identified as talented and gifted into the programming she provides. Using data to inform the programming, she designs rigorous and relevant cross-curricular activities.



This fall, students identified as talented and gifted at Schaghticoke Middle School designed, created, and published a cookbook entitled, *A Taste of TAG: 2018-2019 Schaghticoke Middle School Talented and Gifted Enrichment Cookbook*. Sounds like a straightforward project, right? Well, it may not be as uncomplicated as you might think. As with anything TAG related, there were multiple layers.

Dr. de St. Croix says, “Students were invited to contribute a family recipe based on their culture, heritage, and community. Each aspect of this publication required students to use creative and critical thinking skills as they researched their proposed recipe submission.” Additionally, Dr. de St. Croix integrated curriculum from history, math, science, writing, healthful living, and practical arts over the span of the publication’s process. As well, students used technology for various elements of this project including templet design, title surveys, item pricing, and nutritional index label production.



To kick off the project, Dr. de St. Croix provided the background, framework, and objectives of the cookbook publication. Students then read and discussed the French version of the story, “Stone Soup,” in which three 19<sup>th</sup> century French soldiers are seeking a fulfilling meal in a small village in a time of food scarcity for war-torn Europe. The story resolves with the villagers and soldiers producing a delicious soup based on stones. Their recipe can be found in *A Taste of TAG*. The reading of this story led to a discussion of food scarcity issues locally and nationally, and ways in which food scarcity awareness could be shared across New Milford.

From this discussion, students next completed a “recipe for success” in which they considered homemade food items they shared with their families during various times in their lives. Students considered criteria such as the food’s category, when they typically enjoyed this dish, who they could ask to help make this dish, the affordability of the ingredients, potential food allergies, and the ambiance surrounding the dish. Initially, students selected three dishes and narrowed the recipe contribution to the most viable for the cookbook based on those criteria.

Then students participated in a brief Google survey to suggest cookbook titles. Titles suggested were narrowed over the course of three surveys total and alternative titles are listed on the first page of the cookbook, along with the recipes' categorization and contributors' names.

As the project progressed, students participated in various aspects of kitchen nutrition and ingredient measurement mathematics. First, the students took a brief quiz on vegetables and their traits to acquire a common vocabulary to explain qualities of vegetables, the difference between healthy foods and more processed foods, and how the color of vegetables represent the micronutrients each contains. Once they had a common vocabulary and an understanding of "eating a rainbow" of vegetables, students evaluated a list of vegetables by color and selected a vegetable that most represented them metaphorically. Using felt, students crafted their vegetable metaphor and wrote briefly on how their vegetable connected to their personality. By the cookbook's presentation date, Dr. de St. Croix made each student's felt vegetable into a magnet to be distributed along with the cookbook copies.

Research and collaboration were necessary for the ingredient measurement mathematics. Students listed their recipe's ingredients and quantity necessary before estimating the cost of each ingredient and its quantity. Next, students mingled with one another to acquire two other classmates' ingredient estimate. Once each student charted their estimates, they averaged the mean cost of each ingredient and then used grocery store websites to search each ingredient for its actual cost. A goal realized by this activity was the allowance of students to authentically determine the per serving cost of each recipe and contrast the cost of healthier food choices with those of processed foods.

Next came the determination of layout. Students toured about the room gallery-walking recipe templets from various publications to determine the layout that would suit each of their recipes best. Students discussed elements they liked for layouts such as images or maps associated with their recipe's place of origin. Student primarily used Google forms or Google slides to design their templet, although some students opted for handwriting their recipe to support the historical and cultural context of their recipe.

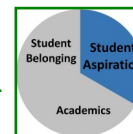
Students were also required to construct a nutritional index label for their recipe based on the ingredient list. For the label's generation, students used the nutrition analyzer from [Verywell Fit](#) and practiced label generation on a sample recipe. Next, students input their recipe's ingredients, making modifications for measurements and number of servings as necessary. Once their ingredient list was input, students analyzed their recipe using the web-based platform and generated a nutrition fact label. Many recipes found in *A Taste of TAG* include this label, along with recipe coding (vegan, gluten-free, etc.) and dietary restrictions.

The final sessions focused on layout design and modification, actual publication of the cookbook and its presentation to parents, staff, and administrators, complete with samples.

To read more about the TAG program, visit their website at [www.nmpstag.com](http://www.nmpstag.com).



## Reaching the Stars at the John J. McCarthy Observatory



New Milford Public Schools is proud to continue its partnership with the volunteers at the John J. McCarthy Observatory (JJMO). This gem which sits on the grounds of New Milford High School has been in operation since September of 2000, and provides programs to the students of NMPS and to the community at large.

JJMO Board member Bob Lambert says, “For the third year in a row, we hosted all of the incoming NMHS freshmen. We provided a lecture on stars, and demonstrations of the telescope systems. Overall, about 1200 students have now had an orientation to the fine observatory on their campus. The teachers have been very supportive of this program, and we jointly plan to continue it, working with them on new ideas.”



One of the Observatory’s proudest moments occurred this year on November 26 when NASA’s InSight probe landed flawlessly on Mars. In the control room, with headset on, was New Milford Public Schools 2010 graduate Kyle Cloutier (on right in the picture at left) who is a mission engineer on the team. Kyle, the daughter of JJMO Board Chairman Bill Cloutier, is one of several New Milford High School students to intern at the Observatory. She is a frequent speaker, via remote connection from the Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena, for the Observatory’s monthly “star” parties.

Observatory volunteers are currently focused on several new research initiatives which include an integrated set of activities regarding capturing precise locations of potentially hazardous asteroids, detecting bright meteors falling to earth in our region, and acquiring and teaching from a world-class meteorite collection.

“We have passed the 2,000 number of accepted submissions of potentially hazardous objects to the IAU Minor Planet Center,” Mr. Lambert reports. “Our object location accuracy remains among the highest of all observatories that participate in this worldwide network. Many students have been involved in this activity, a great learning exercise on how to use the observatory science equipment.”

JJMO volunteers have invented two new “AllSky” rooftop cameras for meteor detection. They are developing plans for initiating a regional network of such cameras to be able to track meteors of significance and report them to NASA, as well as calculating precise landing places of meteorites. The Observatory is also part of the “SkySentinel” tracking network, a good starting point for learning the science of meteor study, and is communicating with other potential regional partners that could deploy cameras of their design.

The Observatory is very pleased to have recently acquired a collection of 231 meteorite samples, to bring their total collection to 240. The collection comes from all over the world and almost every kind of meteorite, including specimens from Mars and the moon. Danbury Hospital has donated a teaching microscope, so students can study the fine details of objects that formed 4.55 billion years ago as our solar system was forming.

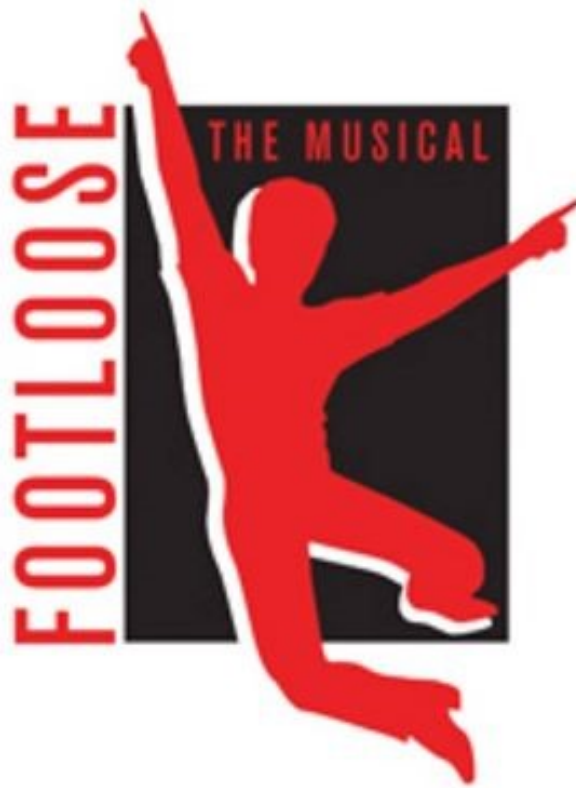
In addition, the Observatory received a donation of two very fine telescopes. “The larger one is a superb 14.5 inch Newtonian instrument that we have been adding features to,” says Mr. Lambert. “It is perhaps our finest instrument for visual use, and is used by the public at our star parties.”

JJMO continues to flourish with the addition of enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers who would love to have you visit. Their Second Saturday Stars programs are free and open to the public on the second Saturday of every month. Each month a new presentation is given on an astronomy related topic. If weather permits, a variety of telescopes are available for public viewing of seasonal celestial objects. The next program is scheduled for January 12; the topic is Multi-Messenger Astronomy. For more information, [go to the JJMO website](#).



*Coming Soon to a Theatre Near You:*

*the 2019 NJMHS All School Musical*



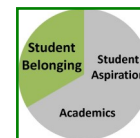
**Performances:**

- March 29, 2019 7:00 p.m.
- March 30, 2019 7:00 p.m.
- March 31, 2019 3:00 p.m.
- April 5, 2019 7:00 p.m.
- April 6, 2019 2:00 p.m.  
& 7:00 p.m.

*Mark your calendars and stay tuned for details...*

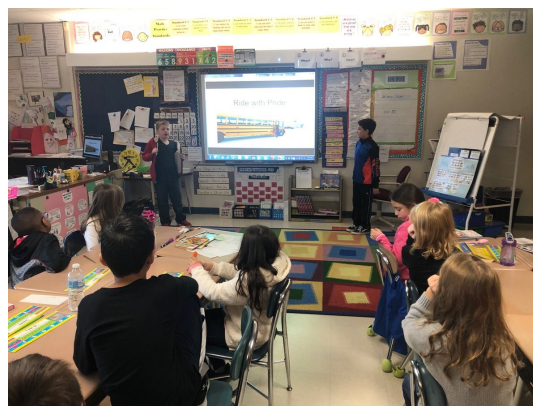


## SNIS Students *Ride with Pride*



In an effort to promote a positive climate on school buses and ensure that students have a positive experience from door to door, not just bell to bell at school, Sarah Noble Intermediate School is embarking on a new program called *Ride with Pride*. SNIS Principal Anne Bilko says, “At Sarah Noble, we start each day with our school pledge. We pledge to be respectful, responsible, honest, safe, and kind. We use these character traits when we speak with students about our expectations and their behaviors. It is an important part of who we are as a school community. *Ride with Pride* brings our high expectations for student behavior to our buses in order to improve the ride for all students.”

Students will be working together to provide a safe and respectful ride to and from school. Individual buses in which students are demonstrating good behavior will be recognized. A bulletin board showing a winding path and containing each bus number has been posted at the school. The goal is for students to have their bus follow the road to success to the finish line each month. At the end of the month, the buses that cross the finish line will be announced and their photos will be taken and displayed. The goal is to provide students with the incentives to make good choices on the bus each month.



The *Ride with Pride* program will complement the school’s ongoing *Adopt a Bus* program, which started in 2014. In the *Adopt a Bus* program, staff volunteers adopt a bus and serve

as the bus’s cheerleader, taking a few minutes once or twice a week to check in with their assigned bus to see how things are going. They use that time to remind students of the school pledge and bus expectations as well as to promote positive bus behaviors.

“We are excited to begin *Ride with Pride*”, says Mrs. Bilko. “Our hope is that this initiative, combined with our *Adopt a Bus* program, will create a very positive experience for our students’ bus ride, both to and from school.”

As participants in the *Ride with Pride* program, students agree to the following pledge:

**I agree to show RESPECT.**

- I will keep bus litter free.
- I will listen to my bus driver and follow the rules.
- I will use positive behavior.

**I agree to show RESPONSIBILITY.**

- I will keep food and drink in backpack.
- I will keep hands and feet to myself.
- I will stay seated.

**I agree to show HONESTY.**

- I will return lost belongings.
- I will report problems to adults.

**I agree to ride the bus SAFELY.**

- I will respect personal space.
- I will be quiet when on train tracks or asked by the driver.
- I will talk in a soft quiet voice.

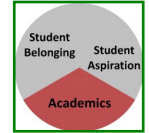
**I agree to show KINDNESS.**

- I will use kind words.
- I will share seats when needed.

**I will *Ride with Pride*.**

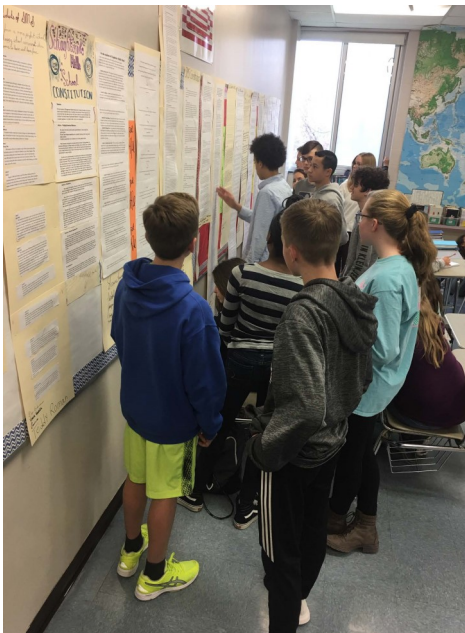


## Creating School Constitutions at SMS



In late November, SMS students in Ms. Tracy Olmsted's 8th grade Social Studies classes created school constitutions in conjunction with their unit on America's Constitution. After instruction on the supreme law of the land, students were divided into small collaborative groups and assigned the task of creating constitutions to govern a middle school. Requirements included a Preamble to outline the goals of governance, and separate Articles to determine function and purpose. The assignment was originally planned for two days, but at the students' request, was extended a third day to permit for their engaged extension of ideas and writing. "I wanted my students to experience what it must have been like for our founding fathers to write a new constitution after the failures of the Articles of Confederation; it was no easy task," said Ms. Olmsted.

Students began by brainstorming ideas which would be essential to running a school efficiently for maximum learning. For example, topics included academics, administration, safety, daily schedules, snow day work, discipline, student leadership and the necessity for 1:1 laptop computers, among others. Each student was then tasked with crafting two Articles which fully described an aspect of school governance using the framework of the US Constitution as their primary source. "We have a voice that needs to be heard," said Jemima B., as she relayed the sentiments of her group. Many of the constitutions stated that students want to be a part of the administrative leadership team to make sure that their concerns were part of major school decisions. "Ms. Olmsted's classes were able to discover their own voices and make meaningful connections to their current learning of government. When students are vested in their learning, everyone wins!" said Literacy Coach Betsy Stewart.



"The engagement of the students was extraordinary in the way that they had to debate, compromise, and sign their final documents", says Ms. Olmsted. "This learning activity mirrored events of the Constitutional Convention in the summer of 1787 and required many diplomatic discussions." SMS Principal Dr. Longo commented, "I am amazed by our students' use of critical thinking to voice their beliefs in a unique way." Student Aidan S. was so eager to put his ideas to paper that he expressed his group was indeed taking a big risk in offering a new constitution as rules of their school had long been in place without their input.

On the last day of the assignment, students completed and signed their constitutions, and mounted them onto long posters, one of which was more than seven feet tall! They were highly personalized in ways that the students felt their school could be improved through its environment, field trips, and course selections, and many more. Student Kara M. summed up the objectives perfectly, "For once, we had the power, and in that alone we learned a lesson." It was enriching to see democracy in action and to see students apply their civic knowledge in such a meaningful way.

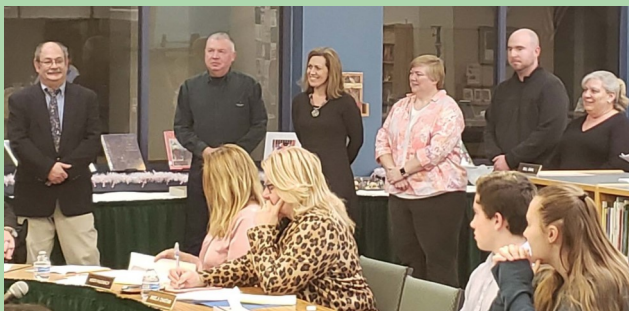




## Congratulations to the New Milford Public School “Stars” for the month of December!

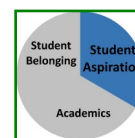


**Lori Cerra**  
**Stewart Day**  
**Virginia Landgrebe**  
**Heather Morin**  
**Kevin Tolman**  
**Angela Tufts**  
(not pictured)



Special congratulations to Virginia Landgrebe who will drive the  
Ingersoll Auto of Danbury NMPS courtesy car.  
Don't forget to visit the district website to [submit your staff nomination](#).

### Joining the “100 Club”



SNIS PE Teachers Daniella Brooks and David Mumma are starting a new initiative this school year, the “100 Club”. The goal of this exercise club is to increase student physical activity outside of school. Students are assigned a different type of exercise to focus on for the entire month. They are challenged to complete “100” of the exercises per day/week for the entire month. Parents and guardians will monitor progress and at the end of the month they will fill out a google form, submit it, and the students earn the bracelet for that month.

“All students at Sarah Noble will have an opportunity to participate”, says Mrs. Brooks. “We wrapped up the Flexibility portion for the month of November. Students were challenged to complete 100 seconds of hamstring stretches outside of school each day for the month of November. We have heard lots of positive feedback; one student reported their whole family is doing it together!”

Pictured at left with Mrs. Brooks are the first two members of the 100 Club. Great job!

The next chance to earn a bracelet will be at the end of January, and the focus is on push-ups, 100 per week. March will focus on curl-ups, 100 per week, and April will focus on running, 100 minutes per week. At this rate, students will be in tiptop shape for summer fun.



## SMS Educators Recognized for Creativity and Innovation

The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), in conjunction with the CT State Department of Education (CSDE), has established the Center for Leadership and Innovation. The Center's focus is on professional learning that encompasses the latest developments in education, as well as best practices associated with leadership success.

As described by CAS: The Center is governed by an advisory Board that is made up of experienced principals, representatives of graduate and undergraduate educational leadership and other educational programs, educational consultants, an associate commissioner of education who represents the CSDE, and other professional support personnel.

Center programs are organized around four strands. Each strand has its own focus. Strand 1 for Future School Leaders is dedicated to implementing quality programs to attract and develop future school leaders. Strand 2 for Career Principals provides quality research based leadership development programs for beginning and experienced principals. Strand 3 focuses on Critical Issues and works to ensure that school leaders have a "voice at the table" when issues of importance for school life are being considered. Strand 4 focuses on Recognition of exemplary achievements and best practices.

The Center recently solicited nominations for recognition in the areas of creativity and innovation, and SMS Principal Chris Longo was happy to oblige. "There are so many wonderful educators here at SMS that deserve recognition", said Dr. Longo. "This time around, I selected five to represent our school. While this is a great start, I look forward to future nominations as well." The award honors teachers who provide experiences that allow students to create unique ideas and products through the application of critical thinking, research methods, communication tools, and collaborative processes.

Honored this fall were the following SMS teachers:

- ◆ ELA teacher Samantha Gati-Tisi for her work with students in the areas of reading and creative writing;
- ◆ PE Teacher Eileen Holden for her work with the Unified Sports program and the differentiated learning strategies involved;
- ◆ Science teacher Tracy Nevins for her use of technology and real-world applications;
- ◆ Music teacher Paul Shim for his technological assistance with school climate initiatives; and
- ◆ Talented and Gifted teacher Yvonne de St. Croix for her emphasis on originality, creativity, and innovation.





**New Milford Public Schools**

50 East Street  
 New Milford, CT 06776  
 860-355-8406

**Dr. Stephen Tracy**  
 Interim 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

**Mrs. Sandra Sullivan**  
 Food Services Director

**Board of Education**

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 Assistant Secretary

**Mr. Bill Dahl**

**Mr. Joseph Failla**

**Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach**

**Mr. Brian McCauley**

**Mr. J.T. Schemm**

**Winter Weather is Coming!**



While winter weather has been generally cooperative so far, we New Englanders know it is only a matter of time before snow and ice are upon us, bringing changes to our regular school schedules. To read Dr. Tracy's back to school letter about procedures for closing schools due to inclement weather, [click here](#).

The quickest way to hear about any needed delays and cancellations is to keep your phone handy, watch your email, text alerts, and follow us on twitter (@nmps\_supt). New Milford Public Schools also posts information about schedule changes on the district website and through the local television channels.

**Most importantly, make sure to keep your contact information up to date with your child's school.**

So far, the district has had only one snow day this school year. That brings our current last day of school to June 17. An updated calendar is added to the website after each snow day and can be found [here](#).



For you non-snow lovers, remember, Spring arrives Wednesday, March 20, 2019.

**Remember names**

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.