

**New Milford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes
Board Staff Liaison Ad Hoc Meeting
June 14, 2007
Lillis Administration Building--Boardroom**

Present:	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Board Chairperson
	Mr. Thomas McSherry
	Mrs. Dian Traisci-Marandola
	Mr. Joseph Failla
	Dr. Lawrence Stillman
	Mrs. Julie Turk

Also Present:	Dr. JeanAnn C. Paddyfote, Superintendent of Schools
	Mr. Thomas Mulvihill, Assistant Superintendent
	Mr. Denis Dolan, Assistant Principal Schaghticoke
	Ms. Ellamae Baldelli, Principal Sarah Noble Intermediate School
	Mrs. Dana Ford, Principal Schaghticoke Middle School
	Mrs. Marcy Autuori, Assistant Principal Sarah Noble Intermediate School
	Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal, New Milford High School
	Mr. John Lee, Assistant Principal, New Milford High School
	Ms. Lisa Mosey, President, New Milford Education Association
	Mrs. Sarah Herring, Teacher, Sarah Noble Intermediate School
	Mrs. Maureen Dunkerton, Teacher, Hill & Plain School
	Mrs. Monique Gil-Rogers, Teacher, Sarah Noble Intermediate School
	Mr. Michael Abraham, Teacher, New Milford High School
	Mr. Brock Putnam, Teacher, New Milford High School
	Mr. Dave Schaffer, Department Chair-Math, New Milford High School

1.	The Ad Hoc Board-Staff Liaison meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was Called to Order at 6:30 p.m.	Call to Order
2.	There was no public comment.	Public Comment
3.	Items for Discussion Mrs. Faulenbach opened the meeting and stated the purpose of the meeting is to collect information; to take the constructive thoughts offered this evening and use them to move the system forward.	
3.A.	Teacher Evaluation Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mr. Failla commented that the Board will use information from this meeting to know if there is a common thrust to enforce policies. ➤ Ms. Mosey views the teacher evaluation document as a professional development tool. Teachers take evaluation heart and are always trying to become educators. 	Teacher Evaluation Process

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Mr. Atticks shared that there are two processes with respect to teacher evaluation—the formal and informal processes.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The informal process happens everyday in conversations with teachers.▪ The written evaluation is the formal process.➤ Ms. Baldelli noted that there is one set of procedures for non-tenured teachers, and another set for tenured teachers.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ There are three tiers to the evaluation process for tenured teachers—formal observation—with an administrative write-up; self-evaluation; peer evaluation.▪ She added that Strategy # 6 of the Strategic Plan addresses recruiting, training, retaining and rewarding a highly qualified staff.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A specific result of that strategy is to review all of the evaluation documents, and that includes the teacher evaluation document.➤ Mrs. Marandola asked if there is a job description for teachers and if that is part of the evaluation document.➤ Each board member had a copy of the teacher evaluation document, and the job description is included in the document.➤ Mr. Mulvihill noted that the teacher evaluation document is tied into the Connecticut Competencies for Teachers and when the document was written in 2000, it was sent to the State Department of Education to be reviewed.➤ Mr. Shaffer explained that the peer evaluation process references that a teacher works with a peer, and it does not mean that a peer evaluates that teacher. He also discussed his concern that the evaluation dates are too close—the time between Nov. 21st and Feb. 1st does not provide enough time for department chairs or administrators to work with teachers and report changes. The window is too narrow—primarily because of the holidays—Thanksgiving and winter break. In addition, there are mid-terms in January.➤ Mr. Dolan noted that administrators have gone into administration to help teachers. As an assistant principal, he would like to spend more time on teacher evaluation—especially with those teachers who may need additional help. The process is labor intensive and for those tenured teachers who are performing well, it would be nice to spend less time with them, and focus more time on non-tenured teachers who need assistance or guidance.➤ A question was raised about the process to evaluate teachers—does it require someone with an administrative certificate. Yes, teachers have to be evaluated by someone	
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	<p>with an 092 endorsement—administrative certification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Department Chairs have the 092 certification; they are in the New Milford Education Association bargaining unit (Teachers’ Union).➤ Mr. Shaffer took the board through the evaluation process for non-tenured teachers.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ He completes a classroom observation on each non-tenured teacher before the Nov. 21st evaluation and the Feb. 1st evaluation.▪ The write-up for the evaluation takes about 2 hours per teacher. He has 13 math teachers in his department—two are non-tenured. The write-up cannot be done at school because of the many interruptions; they are done at home. The high school department chair for English has several non-tenured teachers and she spends a tremendous amount of time at home writing the evaluations.➤ Mr. Abraham stated that he has been in the social studies department a long time and he has found the process to be effective overall.➤ Mrs. Gil-Rogers noted that once something is put in writing, it takes on another meaning.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Evaluation can be very subjective.▪ Trust is a huge factor in the evaluation process.➤ Ms. Mosey added that she occasionally receives calls from non-tenured teachers who are upset about their evaluations. Teachers can write a rebuttal; they take the evaluations to heart.➤ Mr. Shaffer stated that when the superintendent met with Mr. Mulvihill and the department chairs recently, there was a lengthy discussion about a different format for evaluations—a checklist, an additional column designated as “needs improvement”, and providing a space for the reviewer to comment.➤ Mrs. Turk raised the issue of a 360 evaluation process which is commonly used in the business world.➤ Mr. Putnam added that there are two purposes of evaluation—accountability and coaching.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ He found the Hunter Program helpful when he first came to the school district from a private school.▪ He feels it is important to bring new teachers along.➤ There was a discussion about tenure.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Tenure is granted in the 40th consecutive month of employment in a school district.▪ Once tenure is received in CT and a teacher goes to another school district it takes 20 months to earn tenure as long as the teacher has not been out of teaching for five years between assignments.	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mr. Abraham explained that he feels the teacher evaluation process is a top down process. He noted that teachers who have many years of experience and who perform well continue to be evaluated annually. ➤ There was a discussion about the number of evaluations that administrators must complete. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At the elementary level the principal is responsible for approximately 30 evaluations and the assistant principal is responsible for approximately 8. ▪ At Sarah Noble, the principal is responsible for approximately 20 evaluations, and the assistants are responsible for 20 plus evaluations. ▪ At SMS the principal and assistant principal are responsible for approximately 40 evaluations each. ▪ At NMHS the department chairs do the observations and the principal is the final reviewer of the evaluations. The assistant principals and the principal are responsible for evaluations in those departments that do not have department chairs— e.g. art, music, industrial arts, guidance, etc. ➤ Dr. Paddyfote met with the department chairs, Mr. Mulvihill and the high school administrators to discuss the teacher evaluation document and there was agreement that the document should be revised by a committee of teachers, administrators, and Board members. In addition, the superintendent met with each department chair individually prior to recommending the department chairs to the Board for approval. Each department chair was in agreement with the superintendent’s recommendation to have the principal sign-off on the top section of the document—Roman numerals I, II, & III of page 15 in the Teacher evaluation document. 	
<p>3.B.</p>	<p>Student Conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There was a discussion about electronic devices and the need to create a climate of respect in our schools. ➤ The example of the dress code was given as an example where the policy was written for 98% of the students who abide by the dress code, and not the 2% who do disregard the policy. ➤ Policies are guidelines and incidents have to be assessed on an individual basis. ➤ Mr. Abraham feels it is a daunting responsibility to deal with some student discipline issues. He stated that sometimes he gets frustrated by the behavior of students and he has to step back from the situation when that occurs. ➤ Ms. Mosey feels that teachers need to know the policy and what is expected of them. 	<p>Student Conduct</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mrs. Ford added that students and parents today have a different mind set than the way most of the people in the room were raised. She noted that teachers should be provided with ongoing training on how to handle student disciplinary issues. ➤ Dr. Stillman stated that re-training is key. ➤ Mr. Dolan believes that cell phones will be in the schools and that students need to be trained not to use them during the instructional day. ➤ The consensus of the committee is that communication is an essential link to all aspects of the school operation. ➤ The parent-community connection is important in building a model of respect for our students and staff. 	
4.	Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.	Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Dian Traisci-Marandola,
 Board Secretary