



New Milford
Public Schools
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776



New Milford High School
Greg Shugrue, Principal

Assistant Principals
Marc Balanda
Liz Curtis
Christopher Longo



Schaghticoke Middle School
Dana Ford, Principal

Assistant Principal
Suzi Greene



Sarah Noble Intermediate School
Len Tomasello, Principal

Assistant Principals
Anne Bilko
Don Naiman



Hill & Plain Elementary
Maryann Ness, Principal

Assistant Principal
Susan Ruddock



John Pettibone Elementary
Paula Kelleher, Principal

Assistant Principal
Joan Kick



Northville Elementary
Susan Murray, Principal

Assistant Principal
Joan Kick

Spotlight on New Milford Schools

Volume 3, Issue 5

May 2013

School Security



This month will mark the five month anniversary of the tragedy at Newtown. Since December 14th, school security has been on the forefront of every parent and school administrator's mind. New Milford is no different. School officials have been working diligently and with experts, including the New Milford Police Department, to assess and upgrade the safety of each school.

There are several security features that you may have already noticed, and many more under consideration. Guidepost Solutions, LLC, a security consulting firm, has assessed all district facilities and will be making recommendations to the school administrators later this spring.

One of the security improvements currently underway is the implementation of the Raptorware visitor management system. Below and following on page two are answers to some frequently asked questions about the system.

What is the Raptor or V-Soft System?

Raptor/V-Soft is a visitor registration system that enhances school security by reading visitor driver's licenses, comparing information to publicly available databases, alerting building administrators if a match is found, then (assuming no match was made) printing a visitor badge that includes a photo.

How does it work?

Visitors to our buildings present a valid driver's license or government issued photo identification when entering the building. The ID is scanned into the Raptor/V-Soft System and is cross-referenced with the databases maintained by Raptor Technologies. Only the visitor's name, date of birth and photo are used from the ID for comparison. If the visitor is found in the database building administrators and law enforcement personnel are immediately notified.

Do I have to present a photo ID each time I enter a school?

A visitor will need to present a photo ID on the initial visit at each school. With subsequent visits, the operator will simply enter your name; other pertinent information will be displayed from the system's memory. It is important to note that even though a visitor does not have to provide the photo ID with each subsequent visit to that school the Raptor/V-Soft System will check that name against its databases each time.

Raptorware FAQs Continued

Why is NMPS using this system?

The safety of our students is our highest priority. Raptor/V-Soft will provide a consistent system to track visitors and volunteers while keeping away people who present a danger to students and staff members. The system quickly prints visitor badges that include a photo, the name of the visitor, time and date.

What other information is the school taking from driver's licenses?

Raptor/V-Soft is only scanning the visitor's name, date of birth and photo for comparison with publicly available databases. Additional visitor data will not be gathered and no data will be shared with any outside company or organization.

What about my privacy?

This is not a background search, therefore, no other criminal information is accessed such as traffic tickets, warrants etc.



Common Core

If your family has changed school districts during your child's education, you know not all schools are created equally.

Whether you move from another state or simply another district or sometimes even from different schools within the same district, you'll find student learning varies widely. In an effort to align all schools across the United States, there is a new initiative from the National Governor's Association and the Chief State School Officers that you've probably heard about... Common Core State Standards.

Common Core Standards are designed to create a common core of knowledge that all citizens should have to be successful. This includes the development of core standards in both math and language arts.

Additionally, the goal of common core is to raise educational standards, graduation requirements, improve assessments and strengthen accountability in all 50 states⁽¹⁾.

Assistant Superintendent Joshua Smith says, "Common Core will change the scope of education in the country from a curriculum standpoint. This will be the first time in history that all 50 states have agreed upon a set of standards to be taught."

Common Core Standards by grade level can be found [here](#).

For some commonly asked questions about Common Core, please see page 3.

1. "About Achieve." (2011) Achieve, Inc.
<http://www.achieve.org/about-achieve>

Common Core FAQs

What are educational standards?

Educational standards help teachers ensure their students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful by providing clear goals for student learning.

Why do we need educational standards?

We need standards to ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. Common standards will help ensure that students are receiving a high quality education consistently, from school to school and state to state. Common standards will provide a greater opportunity to share experiences and best practices within and across states that will improve our ability to best serve the needs of students.

How are educational standards determined now?

Today, each state has its own process for developing, adopting, and implementing standards. As a result, what students are expected to learn can vary widely from state to state.

Who is leading the Common Core State Standards Initiative?

Parents, teachers, school administrators and experts from across the country together with state leaders, through their membership in the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) are leading the effort to develop a common core of state standards. In addition, CCSSO and the NGA Center have provided public comment periods for everyone to submit feedback on the draft standards documents. Those comments will be incorporated into the final standards. Please visit corestandards.org to see a list of endorsing partners and statements of support for the initiative.

Were teachers involved in the creation of the standards?

Yes. Teachers have been a critical voice in the development of the standards. The National Education Association (NEA), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), and National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), among other organizations, have been instrumental in bringing together teachers to provide specific, constructive feedback on the standards.

Will more standards mean more tests?

No. For states that choose to adopt these common standards, having one set of standards will make it easier for states to pool information and resources to develop a shared set of high-quality tests to better

evaluate student progress. The goal is not to have more tests, but to have smarter and better tests that help students, parents, and teachers.

What grade levels will be included in the common core state standards?

The English-language arts and math standards are for grades K-12.

What will these common core state standards mean for students?

The standards will provide more clarity about and consistency in what is expected of student learning across the country. Currently, every state has its own set of academic standards, meaning public education students at the same grade level in each state may be expected to achieve to different levels. This initiative will allow states to share information effectively and help provide all students with an equal opportunity for an education that will prepare them to go to college or enter the workforce, regardless of where they live. Common standards will not prevent different levels of achievement among students, but they will ensure more consistent exposure to materials and learning experiences through curriculum, instruction, and teacher preparation among other supports for student learning. In a global economy, students must be prepared to compete with not only their American peers in the next state, but with students from around the world. These standards will help prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and careers.

How will these standards impact teachers?

The standards will provide important goals for teachers to ensure they are preparing students for success in college and the workforce. They will help teachers develop and implement effective strategies for their students by providing benchmarks for skills and knowledge that their students should have by the end of the year. The common core state standards will help colleges and professional development programs better prepare teachers; provide the opportunity for teachers to be involved in the development of assessments linked to these top-quality standards; allow states to develop and provide better assessments that more accurately measure whether or not students have learned what was taught; and guide educators toward curricula and teaching strategies that will give students a deep understanding of the subject and the skills they need to apply their knowledge.

*FAQs are copied from
<http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CoreFAQ.pdf>

N M H S



Just a few of the many NMHS
Award Winners!

(top left) NMHS Scholar
athletes—Jayden and Krista

(top right) Senior Prom King and
Queen—Jayden and Ciana

(above) NMHS Bowling Team
wins with 1,358 pins!

(right) Dylan receives Academic
All State honors for basketball





Learning doesn't always take place in "traditional" classrooms.

(top photo) Students "skype" with a class in Saudi Arabia.

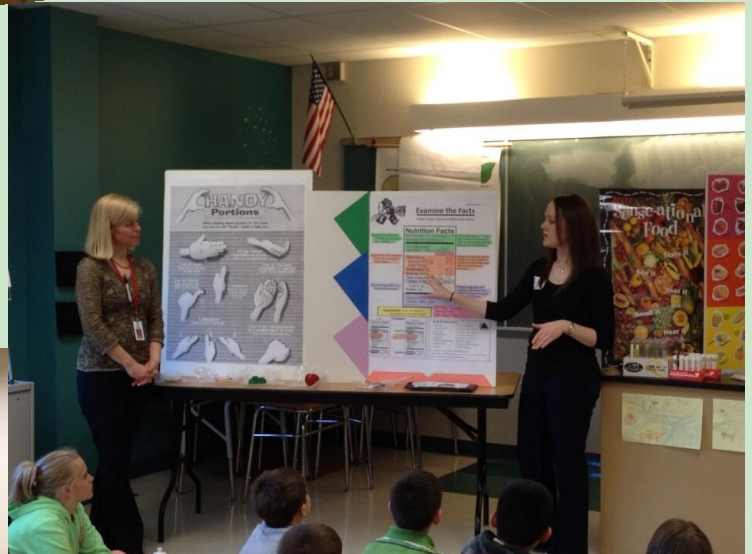
(above) Students learn about forestry.

(right) Band students kick-off the Alzheimer Walk at Harrybrooke Park.

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SNIS

SNIS students prepare for upcoming spring musicals. See the calendar on page 10 for details.



The 5th Grade Walking Project kicks off another year! Can they beat last year's steps?



First grade students participate in Community Circle. Community Circle is a community/character building initiative that was brought to Hill and Plain by Assistant Principal Susan Ruddock. Students and staff meet every other month in the cafeteria to talk about the character traits for that time period. Sitting in U-shaped rows designed to foster a community feeling, students actively participate in a variety of activities designed to foster the featured character trait. Some activities include watching/performing skits, singing songs, listening to a book or video clip, etc.



J P S



John Pettibone students have been focusing on science.

(above) Students work to prepare the school garden.

(below) Students assist with experiments during a High Tech, High Touch presentation.





Students focus on literature at Northville Elementary.

(left) Folksinger Adam Miller leads students in traditional songs.

(below) Students dress up for literature day.

(bottom) Superintendent Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote serves as a guest reader.



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May

- 13—NMHS Freshman/Sophomore Awards Night
SNIS 6th Grade Concert—7:00 p.m.
- 14—Referendum Vote
- 14-15—BOE Meeting—SNIS Library—7:30 p.m.
H&P Earth Dome
NES 3rd Grade Arts Night—7:00 p.m.
- 15—Early Dismissal
SMS PTO Meeting—9:00 a.m.
- 16—NMHS Band Concert
SNIS Science Fair—6:00 p.m.
H&P Coffee with the Principal—1:30 p.m.
NES Kindergarten Pet Show—1:30 p.m.
- 17—NMHS Coffee & Conversation for incoming 9th grade students
SMS Great East Festival/6 Flags Trip
H&P Spring into Good Health Assembly—2:00 p.m.
JPS Family Fun Night 5:30 p.m.
- 18—JPS Excel End of the Year Performance—2:00 p.m.
- 20—SNIS Orchestra/Jazz Concert—7:00 p.m.
SMS Awards & Recognition Night—7:00 p.m.
- 21—BOE Policy Committee Mtg., Lillis Bldg, Rm. 2—6:45 p.m.
BOE Comm. On Learning, Lillis Bldg, Rm. 2—7:30 p.m.
SNIS Walking Project Family Fun Night—5:00 p.m.
- 21—Coffee with the Superintendent—10:30 a.m.
- 22—NMHS Junior/Senior Awards Night
- 23—NMHS Concert—6-11:00 p.m.
- 24—NMHS Coffee & Conversation for parents of current 10th graders
- 27—No School
- 28—NMHS German Honor Society Induction
- 29—NMHS Senior Scholarship Night
H&P Grade 3 Spring Chorus Concert—10:00 a.m.
- 30—NMHS Senior Banquet—6:00 p.m.
NMHS Art Fest 2012
SMS Choruses & Orchestra Concert—7:00 p.m.
- 31—NMHS Senior Trip
JPS Field Day
SNIS Walking Project Closing Ceremony—9:15 a.m.

June

- 1—SNIS Talent Show
- 3—SNIS/SMS/NMHS Big Band Bash—7:00 p.m.
- 4—BOE Facilities Cmt. Lillis Bldg, Rm. 2—6:45 p.m.
BOE Operations Cmt, Lillis Bldg., Rm. 2—7:30 p.m.
NMHS French Honor Society Induction
- 6—SNIS PTO Meeting
NES PTO Meeting—9:00 a.m.
- 7—NES Kindergarten Program—2:00 p.m.
SMS 8th Grade Dinner Dance—6:30 p.m.
- 14—NES 3rd Grade Recorder Concert—10:00 a.m.
- 21—Last Day of School—Early Dismissal
- 22—NMHS Graduation—4:00 p.m.

Athletic Schedule

Mon., 5/13	FR Baseball Brookfield	3:45 p.m.
Mon., 5/13	V Girls Lacrosse Notre Dame-Fairfield	5:30 p.m.
Mon., 5/13	V Girls Tennis Immaculate	3:45 p.m.
Tue., 5/14	JV Baseball Brookfield	3:45 p.m.
Tue., 5/14	V Boys Lacrosse Stratford	7:00 p.m.
Tue., 5/14	JV Boys Lacrosse Stratford	5:00 p.m.
Tue., 5/14	JV Softball Brookfield	3:45 p.m.
Tue., 5/14	V Girls Tennis Shepaug Valley	3:45 p.m.
Wed., 5/15	V Baseball Stratford	4:15 p.m.
Wed., 5/15	V Boys Golf Weston	3:00 p.m.
Wed., 5/15	V Softball Stratford	4:15 p.m.
Wed., 5/15	FR Softball Holy Cross	3:45 p.m.
Wed., 5/15	V Girls Tennis Stratford	4:00 p.m.
Thu., 5/16	V Baseball Immaculate	3:45 p.m.
Thu., 5/16	FR Baseball Bethel	3:45 p.m.
Tue., 5/21	V Boys Golf Masuk	3:00 p.m.
Tue., 5/21	JV Softball Joel Barlow	4:00 p.m.





Planning Ahead?

Drafts of the New Milford Public Schools Calendars are available through the 2015-2016 school year. Calendars may be viewed and accessed by following the links below:

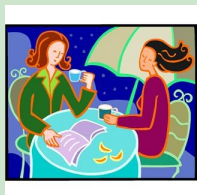
[2013-2014 District School Calendar](#)

[2014-2015 Draft District School Calendar](#)

[2015-2016 Draft District School Calendar](#)



Town & School Referendum
Tuesday, May 14th



Coffee with the Superintendent

Tuesday, May 21

10:30 a.m.

New Milford Railroad Station

10 Railroad Street

Volunteer Spotlight

Leah Rodriguez



For the past 12 years, Leah Rodriguez has spent many hours as a volunteer at Sarah Noble Intermediate School.

Leah's youngest child is a current 5th grade student, but Leah got involved when her older three children were in school to get to know their teachers. "It helps keep you in the loop and you can see firsthand what's going on in the classroom and in the school in general," says Leah. "I also felt I didn't have a say in what was going on unless I was in the school and lending a helping hand."

Leah wears many hats as a SNIS volunteer – she manages the School Store and Token program, serves as coordinator of the Box Tops and Campbell's programs, leads the Planet Green recycling program and assists with both the Stop & Shop and Big Y reward programs.

Leah has worked tirelessly to increase awareness in the Box Tops and Campbell's programs. Sarah Noble currently ranks second in the area and third in the state in the Box Tops for Education program. "These programs are so important because they raise money for the school without adding any financial burden on the parents. Just by alerting parents, family and friends to save these little pieces of paper that usually go in the garbage, we have gained a large financial benefit," reports Leah.

During Leah's tenure as Box Tops Coordinator, Sarah Noble's earnings have nearly doubled – from \$2,430 in 2009/10 to nearly \$4,500 so far this year. Leah's goal is to win the Big G's Sweetest School in America Contest. \$25,000 is awarded to the school that increased their Box Top submissions the most. "That would be wonderful," she says!

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

Dr. JeanAnn C. Paddyfote
Superintendent

Mr. Joshua Smith
Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Ellamae Baldelli
Director, Human Resources

Mr. John Calhoun
Facilities Manager

Mr. Dan DiVito
Director, Technology

Mrs. Laura Olson
Director, Pupil Personnel and
Special Services

Mr. Gregg Miller
Director, Fiscal Services

Mrs. Sandra Sullivan
Director, Food Services

Nominate New Milford's Teacher of the Year

Each year New Milford Public Schools recognizes its "Teacher of the Year" at the annual Opening Day Ceremony. Nominees can be from any school or grade level but must have taught at NMPS for five years.



NMPS 2012-2013 Teacher of the Year Michael Fitzgerald pictured with SNIS principal Dr. Len Tomasello.

To nominate a staff member, click the link on the front page of the NMPS website—www.newmilfordps.org.

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.

DISPATCH