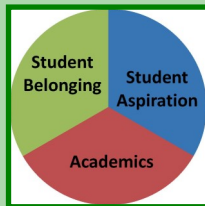




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Ms. Linda Scoralick, Asst. Principal



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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
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Spotlight on New Milford Schools

Volume 10, Issue 5

November 2019

Spotlight on Social Emotional Learning



Social Emotional Learning is a key component in helping children grow to understand their feelings and how to work through and control their emotions. Additionally, understanding our feelings helps us to better understand the feelings of others and exhibit compassion and empathy for those around us. Assistant Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo says, "As a district, we sought out programming that would support and engage children in this important work while establishing a connection to our parent community." This year, our K-8 students are participating in the *Jesse Lewis Choose Love Program*. At the high school level, the *Wingman Program* was introduced to students and parents this month.

Jesse Lewis Choose Love Program

District and school leaders believe the *Jesse Lewis Choose Love Program* will play an important role in promoting our K-8 students' social and emotional wellbeing, academic and personal success, and a greater sense of belonging. The program seeks to enhance the classroom and school climate, making our schools places where students are safe, compassionate, connected and able to thrive.

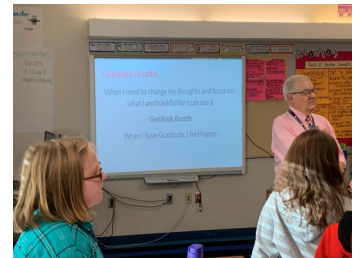
Available as a free resource for teaching social emotional skills and concepts, the program was developed by Scarlett Lewis, mother of Jesse who died in the Sandy Hook tragedy. Following that incident, Scarlett chose to dedicate her life to helping young children learn the importance of "choosing love" over hate. The program draws upon thirty years of research about the importance and effectiveness of social emotional learning. The *Jesse Lewis Choose Love Program* teaches four character values and social emotional learning skills that help to cultivate compassion, connection, optimism, personal responsibility and resiliency. Students learn the *Choose Love Formula*, which is *Courage + Gratitude + Forgiveness + Compassion in Action = Choosing Love*.





Students are learning what it means to have *courage* in any situation. They are developing greater confidence in themselves that will help them strongly face adversity and do the right thing even when it is hard. Students are learning what it means to be *grateful* for all of the good in their lives. They are discovering the many people and things they are grateful for and learning how to express *gratitude* for those things. Students are learning what it means to *forgive* someone who has hurt them. They are learning that forgiving does not mean forgetting or accepting the hurtful actions as okay. But instead, students learn why forgiving is important because it will free them from bad feelings and help them to have a positive mindset that will help them in school and life. Finally, students learn that *compassion* is LOVE in action. They learn what it means to have empathy and be sensitive to the feelings of others. As the year moves on, they realize the importance of being in service to those who need help or support as well as showing self-compassion.

In the elementary schools and middle school, lessons are developed by the school counselors as part of Developmental Guidance. Dr. Len Tomasello, in collaboration with the school counselors, teaches lessons at Sarah Noble Intermediate School. At Schaghticoke Middle School, teachers assist as well. Students develop competencies like self-management, self and social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making. Students have a lot of fun as they put learning into action through interactive activities, discussions, videos, songs, and written reflection. Dr. Tomasello says that one of the most important messages students are hearing is “While you cannot always choose what happens to you, you CAN always choose how to respond, and that makes a positive difference for them and their community!”



Wingman Program

The *Wingman Program* builds on the foundation of skills introduced and explored in grades K-8 through the *Choose Love Program*. It too has its roots in the Sandy Hook tragedy. The program's founders, Nicole and Ian Hockley, established Dylan's Wings of Change Foundation in memory of their son Dylan.



Wingman is a unique youth leadership program that develops social and emotional skills through team bonding and trust building activities. *Wingman* inspires children to be more empathetic, courageous and inclusive young leaders. The program's Executive Director, Ian Hockley, says “A wingman is someone who is prepared to go above and beyond for other people. That's the type of caring community the program seeks to create.”

NMHS Principal Greg Shugrue says, “The program is year round and will include the entire school community. It allows us to utilize our students as leaders in the school and larger community, while examining and working collectively to improve

school climate and culture. We want to ensure that our school is a welcoming place for everyone.”

On November 14, Mr. Hockley gave an overview of the program to all high school students at assemblies during the day, and offered a community workshop at night. Student leaders will be trained in December with the goal to roll out the program to the student body in January 2020. What a great way to welcome the new year!

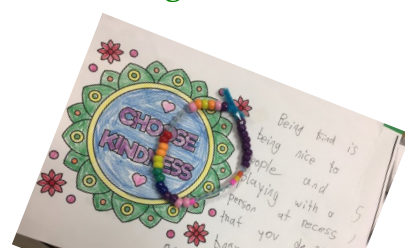
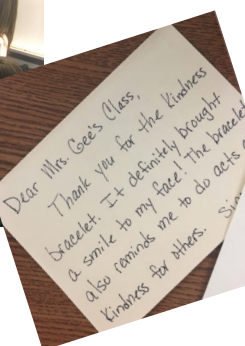
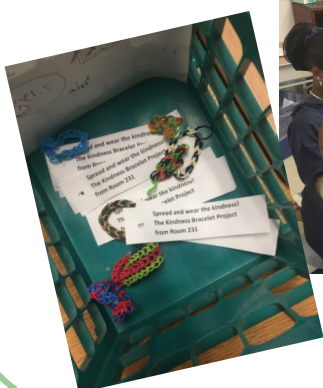
As the district continues to emphasize social emotional learning throughout the year, Assistant Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo speaks to its community impact, “It is important to us that the language that is used in both the *Choose Love Program* K-8 and the peer to peer program *Wingman* at the high school encourages dialogue at home with parents and caregivers. It is our hope and our goal to create a community of learners through the lessons we teach our children. By working together to encourage children to choose love and be there for one another, we will strengthen friendships and create an avenue for students to impact the culture of their schools and their community.”

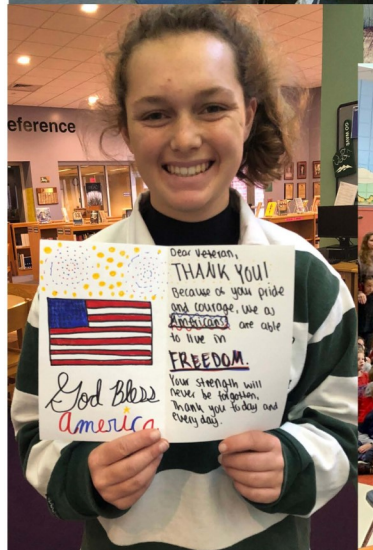
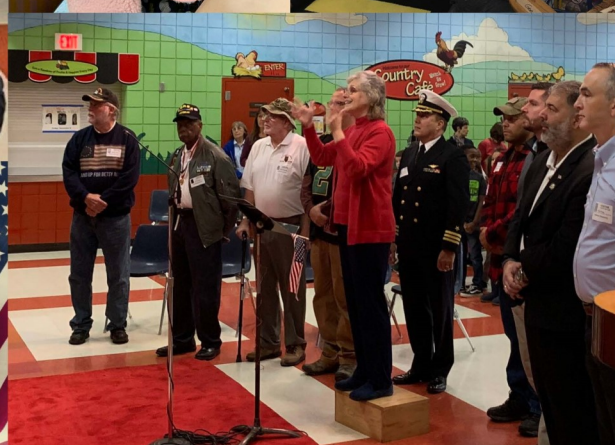
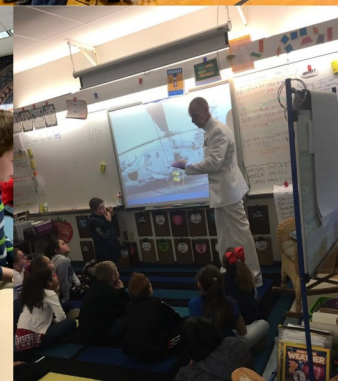
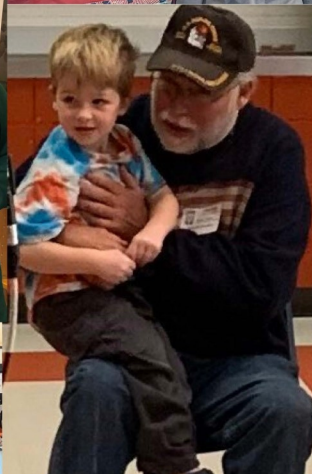
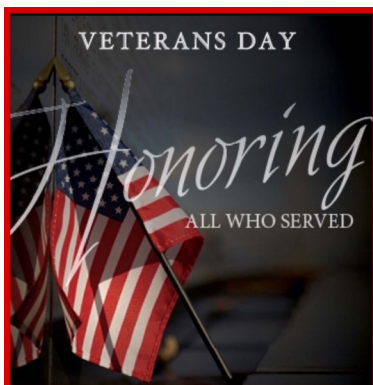
SNIS Students Spread Kindness



Students in Mrs. Gee’s grade 4 class at SNIS are creating visible symbols of kindness to share with others. Mrs. Gee says, “As a way to foster a sense of community in our classroom, students started to do random acts of kindness for each other, positive post-it notes and compliments. This helped cultivate a culture of kindness in our room. A group of students started to spread the kindness by making bracelets for their classmates and then had the idea of spreading the kindness through all of SNIS.”

Students developed the idea of building positive relationships with other students and staff members by having people “Wear the Kindness” in the form of a bracelet. The idea spread like wildfire and now the whole class is creating, managing and delivering kindness bracelets to people they think may need some. “The students are motivated to help people smile and it is now our classroom goal”, says Mrs. Gee. “We are hoping that the ‘Wear the Kindness’ bracelet project spreads to other schools and the whole town.”





Dozen NMHS Athletes Honored as Hall of Famers



Twelve athletes ranging from the late Sam Blackman, Class of 1956, to Emma Crowcroft, Class of 2009, have been honored as the New Milford High School Athletic Hall of Fame's 2019 class of inductees. The NMHS AHOF's third class of inductees was feted November 2nd at Fairview Farm Golf Course in Harwinton.



The Class of 2019

Sam Blackman, Class of 1956, was among the most versatile of Green Wave athletes, earning 13 varsity letters from five different sports. He helped the Green Wave win league titles in cross country and track & field and averaged more than 20 points per game in his senior basketball season. He passed away in May 2019 at the age of 81.



John Bucinsley, Class of 1967, was a dominant runner for championship Green Wave cross country and track & field teams, along the way setting five straight course records as a harrier and earning two state open and two state class gold medals on the track.

Elizabeth Carter, Class of 1967, was a uniquely gifted athlete who proved her considerable talents in field hockey, basketball, volleyball and softball. She was described as a “fantastic” athlete by legendary coach Fran Zaloski, who served as her mentor in all four sports.



Laurie Center, Class of 1975, used smarts, competitive spirit and strong athletic ability to claim 10 varsity letters in field hockey, basketball and softball. Termed the “backbone” of her field hockey team, she was Green Wave basketball's top scorer and rebounder and pitched and batted her diamond team to a WCC title and state tournament semifinals.

Donna Maruszak Roberts, Class of 1981, displayed all-WCC volleyball talents as team MVP and was the fastest sprinter in Green Wave girls' track history. She won 11 gold medals and 4 silvers in her four WCC track meets, inspiring two team championships while establishing times in the 200 and 400 meters that long remained school standards.



Eric Muttillainen, Class of 1983, contributed to a strong Green Wave basketball team and etched a Green Wave baseball pitching career unparalleled during the several decades before or since. As the mainstay of a strong mound staff, he sparked NMHS to its first league title since the early 1960s.

Margo Maytham Muttillainen, Class of 1983, lent superior athletic ability, leadership and fierce competitive will to three straight WCC championships for Green Wave girls' track and an historic WCC title earned by the NMHS girls' basketball quintet. Her school record 5'9 ¾" high jump still stands as the state standard.



Jack Lavalette, Class of 1987, is well remembered as a game-breaking defensive force and wide receiver whose clutch performances keyed Green Wave football to unprecedented success. His 12 pass interceptions as a junior were just a sample of his versatile gridiron skills. Come springtime, he won individual WCC sprint laurels while captaining Green Wave boys' track to a WCC championship.



Tom Ferrell, Class of 2006, best known as an elite wrestler, also proved a state-class offensive and defensive lineman for Green Wave football and was an SWC contender in the shot put for Green Wave boys' track. On the mat, he won three SWC heavyweight titles, state class and state open gold medals and narrowly missed claiming a NE title while posting a career 116-15 record.



Devon Dobson, Class of 2007, delivered a record-shattering 235 goals and 108 assists and displayed peerless faceoff skills while spearheading Green Wave boys' lacrosse to the heights of the SWC and into the state's upper echelon. En route to the Green Wave's four-year, 56-22 record, he was three times each the team MVP and all-SWC first-team, and earned all-state honors as a junior and senior.



Danielle Gasser, Class of 2008, utilized remarkable court sense, eye-hand coordination and leadership to spark Green Wave volleyball to SWC and state prominence. Athletic versatility also brought her recognition in tennis and girls' track & field. As catalyst for an ambitious volleyball side, she was MVP all four seasons, all-SWC three times, all-state twice and, as a senior, state player of the year.



Emma Crowcroft, Class of 2009, climaxed her Green Wave career by winning the SWC, state class and state open javelin throw titles and challenged for New England laurels. She also played a key role as Green Wave volleyball advanced to the state class title match and was a stalwart for the girls' basketball team throughout her high school years.



Those wishing to join the Athletic Hall of Fame Club should visit nmhsahof.org. Full bios and multiple photos of the 2019 inductees are also posted there. The next induction banquet is scheduled for Oct. 17, 2020 at Fairview. The 2020 inductees will be announced in the spring.

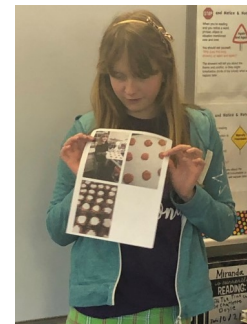


SNIS Students Trade Homework for “Home Work”

With Thanksgiving around the corner, thoughts are turning to family and food! SNIS students in Dianne Johnson’s grade 5 classroom have been getting into the spirit through their participation in the Homework Pass Challenge. Sponsored by the Uncle Ben’s brand, the program combines cooking with critical skills such as math, science, creativity and comprehension while encouraging family togetherness. Mrs. Johnson explains below:

Homework is not the way most fifth graders would choose to spend their evenings, so when given permission to trade homework for cooking, the overwhelming response has been yes! *The Homework Pass Challenge* lets families use time typically spent on homework to cook dinner together. When looking for inspiration to strengthen communication between school and home, this challenge seemed to be a perfect fit, as many of us will agree that some of life’s most important lessons are learned in the kitchen.

Five challenges reinforce standards across the curriculum. The first challenge our class participated in was *Social Study Skewers*. In addition to a recipe, the challenge included geography and food culture activities to correlate with our study of maps and early explorers. Students and their families may cook the suggested recipe, or make their own family’s favorite dish.



Student Nedim Trako enjoyed making Tarhana Soup, a traditional recipe from Bosnia. Mrs. Trako agreed, saying, “Cooking together as we worked on the *Homework Pass Challenge* allowed us to reconnect with our Bosnian roots. We talked about what it meant for us to be born in another country and how our history helps us to be better Americans. It was a learning experience for our fifth-grader and a great opportunity to spend time as a family, away from the screens, and other life distractions. We ended up with a delicious meal and a wonderful memory. “

Christi King participated in the challenge with her daughter Miranda. Mrs. King shared, “Our family enjoyed the challenge because it gave us a reason to slow down and share some family history while we spent family time together in the kitchen. We researched the history of the recipe’s ingredients and where they came from. We even discussed the math we did -- from measuring and fractions to doubling the amounts!”

Ella Smith’s family added a *Master Chef* competition to the challenge. Ella most enjoyed spending time with her family and learned that “teamwork always pays off.” Mrs. Smith

added, "Cooking as a family is a sure way to laugh together. Making it a friendly competition, with mom the usual cook as a judge, makes it even more fun!"

Mrs. Barreto, who participated in the challenge with her son Sam stated, "I loved how the activities include parents, and in a world where everything is fast-paced, it is so nice to enjoy more meaningful time with our kids."

Since the first challenge has been a great success, we are looking forward to the remaining four. Tired of homework? Not sure what to have for dinner? Visit the [Homework Pass Challenge webpage](#) for ideas for your family.

NMHS Music News and Happenings



New Milford High School Marching Band and Color Guard are New England State Champions!



On October 26th, the New Milford High School Marching Band and Color Guard won the US Bands New England State Championship in their class for the second year in a row! The theme for this year's very successful show was The Twilight Zone.

Congratulations to all the students in band and guard on an outstanding championship season!

(Photos courtesy of Kris Stewart)



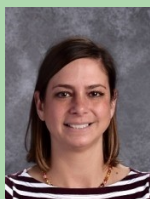
Upcoming Winter Concerts



The Jazz Band, Orchestra, Concert Band and Wind Ensemble will perform on Thursday, December 12th at 7:00 p.m. The Chorus and Advanced Chorus will perform on Thursday, December 19th at 7:00 p.m. Both concerts are open to the public, will be held in the NMHS Theater, and admission is FREE. All are invited and welcome to attend.



Congratulations to the New Milford Public School "Stars" for the month of November!



Randi Gray



Susan Harris



Michelle Klee



Amy Marsan



Antionette Montague



Diane Taylor

Thanks to **Ingersoll Auto of Danbury** for their donation of the NMPS courtesy car.
Don't forget to visit the district website to [submit your staff nomination](#).

In Appreciation for your service and dedication...

At the November 19, 2019 Board of Education meeting, outgoing Board members **Bill Dahl**, **David Lawson** and **J.T. Schemm** were recognized for their service and dedication. Mr. Dahl and Mr. Schemm were completing their four year terms. Mr. Lawson had served on the Board since December 2003! Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kerry Parker spoke for all in thanking the Board members for their service to the community, students and staff of New Milford.



*"Never underestimate the valuable and important difference you make in every life you touch
for the impact you make today has a powerful rippling effect on every tomorrow."*



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Assistant Superintendent

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Mr. Kevin Munrett
Facilities Director

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Director

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Holiday Mental Health Tips

The holidays can be a happy time of year for many people, as they gather with family and friends, exchange gifts and celebrate traditions. But the changes in family routines and extra demands on time can also cause some stress, especially for children. The American Academy of Pediatrics offers some tips to help your family enjoy the best of the holiday season:



- During the busy holiday time, try to keep household routines the same. Stick to your child's usual sleep and mealtime schedules when you can, which may reduce stress and help your family enjoy the holidays.
- Take care of yourself, both mentally and physically. Children and adolescents are affected by the emotional well-being of their parents and caregivers.
- Make a plan to focus on one thing at a time. Try a few ideas to balance the hustle and bustle of things like shopping, cooking, and family get-togethers during the holidays.
- Give to others by making it an annual holiday tradition to share your time and talents with people who have less than you do. For example, if your child is old enough, encourage him or her to join you in volunteering to serve a holiday meal at your local food bank or shelter, or sing at a local nursing home. Help your child write a letter to members of the armed forces stationed abroad who can't be home with their own family during the holidays.
- Remember that many children and adults experience a sense of loss, sadness or isolation during the holidays. It is important to be sensitive to these feelings and ask for help for you, your children, family members or friends if needed.
- Don't feel pressured to over-spend on gifts. Consider making one or two gifts. Help your child make a gift for a parent, grandparent, or other important adults and friends. Chances are, those gifts will be the most treasured ones and will teach your child many important lessons.

Most important of all, enjoy the holidays for what they are -- time to enjoy with your family. So, be a family, do things together like sledding or playing board games, and spend time visiting with relatives, neighbors and friends.

© 2018 - American Academy of Pediatrics

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.

November 2018