



New Milford Public Schools
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776
860-355-8406
www.newmilfordps.org



New Milford High School
860-350-6647

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



Schaghticoke 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. Paula Kelleher, 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 8, Issue 6

December 2017

Our NMPS Libraries: Supporting Students and Staff

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), introduced new National School Library Standards at their fall conference last month. For this issue of Spotlight, we thought it might be timely to spotlight the work our library media specialists (LMS) do to support the district's learning environment.

Each of our district schools has a full time library media specialist: Mr. Todd Miltimore at NES, Mrs. Lynn Sheeran at HPS, Ms. Mary Lavoie at SNIS, Mrs. Susan Baerny at SMS, and Mrs. Robin Stiles at NMHS. These specialists work hand in hand, and collaborate with, classroom teachers. Says Mrs. Stiles, "Like a jack of all trades, librarians may not know everything, but we are trained to help all students and teachers find everything, on any subject, all the time. Our jobs infuse into all subjects! At the same time, the search for information, discerning fact from fake, has become an even more important part of the job today. Teaching students how to evaluate the flood of information, so they can think for themselves, formulate their own decisions, rather than just teaching them the information directly, this is our major goal."

In adopting the new National School Library Standards, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) reviewed Common Beliefs from earlier AASL Standards and official AASL position statements. These documents, and feedback collected from more than 1,300 school librarians and stakeholders nationally, provided AASL with a clear expression of the qualities of well-prepared learners, effective school librarians, and dynamic school libraries. The following Common Beliefs and summary descriptions were identified as central to the profession.



1. The school library is a unique and essential part of a learning community.
2. Qualified school librarians lead effective school libraries.
3. Learners should be prepared for college, career, and life.
4. Reading is the core of personal and academic competency.
5. Intellectual freedom is every learner's right.
6. Information technologies must be appropriately integrated and equitably available.

The standards are anchored by six Shared Foundations—Inquire, Include, Collaborate, Curate, Explore, and Engage—which highlight the standards'

core educational concepts. Think of these as the big ideas that provide a compass for teaching and learning with students, teachers, and communities. We asked each of our school library media specialists to reflect on their day-to-day interactions with students and staff in light of the standards and describe how a visitor might see them in action.

From Mrs. Stiles, “At NMHS this looks like aiding classes doing research to kick it up a notch and find the best information possible, which might take finding fifteen or more articles to glean through for the best research when you are asked for two good articles, rather than going to the first two that you find that may not be the best for your assignment. It involves teaching students to evaluate their sources, finding both sides or multiple sides to an issue in order to write or present about it, understanding which sources are focused to the left, to the right, toward business, toward the individual, toward the author, toward the audience, etc. At NMHS a large focus is on reading, improving reading, improving our collection of print and ebooks, talking with students and staff about their reading selections, providing the current, up-to-date nonfiction that’s needed to back up the curriculum in all our departments, but also the pleasure fiction reading needed to increase vocabulary, background knowledge, and to help students think about their daily decision making. We are a mainstay in helping to prepare our students for the future, a future profession that may not even exist yet, but one where they need to know how to think, how to search for and evaluate information, how to communicate their findings, and make solid decisions.” Locate the NMHS LLC ([Library Learning Commons](#)) online [here](#), or on Twitter @nmhsllc.



Mrs. Baerny says, “At SMS this means expanding the repertoire of digital resources available to students as well as continued usage of printed materials to assist with research. We focus on using subscribed databases such as CultureGrams, Country Reports and Discovery Education Streaming to learn to navigate for information relevant to the topic. These tools provide a safe and factual environment for our students to explore their interests and answer their research questions. Additionally, SMS students want to read what is trending socially and ‘hot’ in the book stores. The LMC provides up to date fiction books to satisfy this desire for pleasure reading as well as keeping the nonfiction collection aligned with the changing curriculum. The SMS LMC is the first place where the students of the district have an opportunity to explore the space on their own, rather than with a teacher. Space is provided for them to leisurely read and to explore hands-on activities in the MakerSpace area. To follow the SMS LMC on Twitter use @MrsBaerny to see what is happening.

Students using the SMS MakerSpace in December were invited to work on a special project, creating necklaces for donation to the Susan B. Anthony Project which supports victims of domestic violence.





“At SNIS”, Ms. Lavoie says, “We build on key concepts and skills: digital research and informational reading, evaluating websites, and protecting online identity. We also focus on keyboarding skills to reduce time spent producing the actual work. Using a variety of databases that are available through the State Library, students can research topics in safe online environments. It is during the Digital Citizenship lessons that students learn how

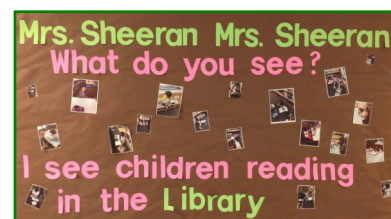
to independently evaluate a website for legitimacy, accuracy and bias. We look at a variety of websites’ sources and decide if it is safe and reliable. When possible, library lessons support classroom instruction. For example, a new feature that supports curriculum (*Lightbox*) was introduced to students during Library class. Students were shown how to access this program through the online catalog and then had the opportunity to try it out and explore. By working with the classroom teacher on such matters, students are able to participate in learning the content from day one. Although technology plays a huge part in 21st Century Learning, we also create opportunities for students to collaborate, create, and discuss their final product.



Mr. Miltimore says, “At NES this looks like teaching second graders how to use the LMC computers to look up and locate library resources independently so they can pursue their interests for information as well as pleasure reading. There is also a new “gamified” reading incentive program to encourage the second graders to explore all different parts of the library collection. The goal of the game is to increase the students’ exposure to many different types of books and genres of literature. Kindergarteners

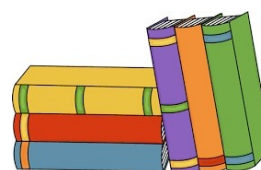
are visiting and first graders are enjoying increased access as they begin to explore and enjoy new parts of the collection.”

“At HPS”, Mrs. Sheeran says, “This looks like adding technology to lessons, visiting the computer lab, using the chromebooks, and completing research projects, even in first grade. Lessons in the library overlap with what the students are learning in their classrooms and/or the grade level standards. In library lessons this year,



second graders complete a project based on nouns and a research project about animal habitats, first graders study nonfiction and incorporate technology to complete a research project, and kindergarteners are being exposed to great books and authors and will visit favorite author’s websites. You can follow what is happening in our library on Twitter @HPSLMC and see the antics of the library’s pigeon mascot by following @HPSPigeon (who can be seen reminding students to always use a shelf marker when looking for a book in the picture to the left).”

To read more about the new AASL Standards, [follow this link](#).



NMHS Student Magazine Launches Online Companion



The NMHS *Piper* staff is excited to announce the launch of a new online companion to the school's award-winning literary magazine.

Every year, NMHS students submit original artwork, photography, poetry, short stories, and a variety of media to the *Piper* magazine for its annual publication. Out of over 300 submissions, fewer than 50 were selected, as space is limited in the print edition. Students on the *Piper* staff wanted to create a website - one where space is unlimited - so that we could have the opportunity to showcase even more work and artistry from our talented and diverse student population.

Senior Sydney Burns took the reins as the first Online Editor-in-Chief of the *Piper* Magazine. She envisioned a web experience where every month students could engage with content by, for, and about the creative NMHS student body. She rounded-up a staff, created the concept for the site, started an Instagram account (with a growing following) for the site's publicity, and wrote and developed much of the content for the site's first edition in November.

"What I really sought to establish with *The Piper Online* was a digital space that could elevate student voices in a way that felt honest. The passions, the individualities, the creative endeavors of our student body - that was at the heart of this from the very beginning. There's such a richness and willingness to create that I see every day in my peers and in my friends, and the tone and aesthetic direction of the *Piper* magazine inspired me to integrate my vision to help expand its platform," Burns said.

The website will be updated every month and features art, poetry, photography, creative journalism and more. This year's Editor-in-Chief of the print edition Lizzy Meskill is excited about the fresh content and this new forum for expression. "My goal for this year is to work with my fellow students to create a space for people to freely share who they are. I want everyone to feel like they have control over their lives and how people view them. From what I've seen so far, this is not as out of reach as one might think," Meskill said.

The website can be accessed at nmhspiperonline.wixsite.com/mysite. You can follow the Piper Lit Mag on Twitter @NMHSPiperLitMag and on Instagram @thepipermagazine. We hope students, parents, teachers and the New Milford Community will share the site with friends and family to inspire students in our town and beyond to express their creativity and share their individuality. NMHS students can submit artwork or literature to the *Piper* staff via email to thepiperlitmagazine@gmail.com.



SNIS Creative Writers Focus on the Graphic Novel



The topic of this fall's Middle School TAG creative writing course is a study of the Graphic Novel as a genre of writing. Ms. Samantha Gati-Tisi, SMS 6th grade Language Arts teacher, is guiding the course which includes a mix of students, some of whom are in the TAG program.

Ms. Gati-Tisi says, "The class meets every Wednesday after school from mid-October to late December at SMS. Participants are learning about the origin of graphic storytelling, the importance of strategic paneling, and the different ways to use text bubbles. Another focus of the group is to learn the art of creating action packed, dialogue rich stories, as well as the art of crafting or selecting art to accompany their work. Some participants choose to work in collaborative partnerships where the writing and drawing work is done in tandem as a team. We are having a great time so far!"



To see more about the course, and other happenings, follow Ms. Gati-Tisi on Twitter and Instagram @writingheroes. A poetry offering is anticipated for Spring 2018.

'Tis the Season of Giving

Our New Milford Public Schools staff, students (and parents) are generous in spirit and deed throughout the year, but especially so during the holiday season. Thank you for your support for all the district initiatives, just a few of which are pictured below.



Hour of Code Returns to SMS

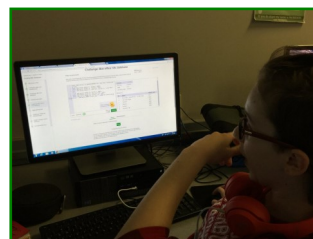
The [Hour of Code](#) started as a one-hour introduction to computer science, designed to demystify "code", to show that anybody can learn the basics, and to broaden participation in the field of computer science. It has since become a worldwide effort to celebrate computer science, starting with 1-hour coding activities but expanding to all sorts of community efforts. The Hour of Code takes place each year during Computer Science Education Week, this year from December 4-10, but participants are encouraged to try an Hour of Code anytime all year round.



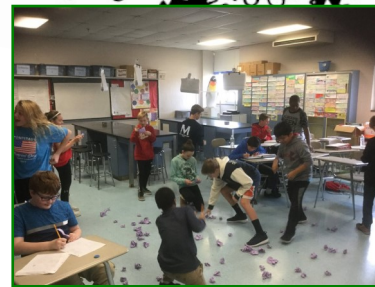
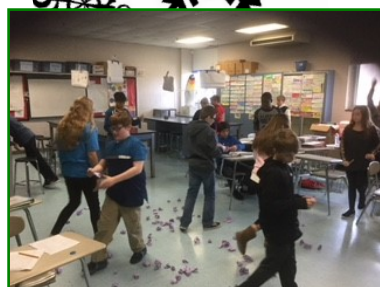
The Hour of Code has become an annual event for students at SMS. Computer Technology teacher Mrs. Jennifer Morrison is planning activities for her Technology classes from December 13 – 20. She is also urging individual classroom teachers to give it a try within their classrooms. "Coding encourages computational thinking and is especially helpful for

math and science but has applications to all areas. There are even many activities that do not require any computer."

To learn more about the activity or try a bit of coding yourself, two good sources are the [Hour of Code website](#) or [Khan Academy's Hour of Code](#).



Class Review Takes the Form of a "Snowball Fight"



Winter came early to Mrs. Zimmitti's grade 7 Science classes where students reviewed content for an upcoming assessment by having a "snowball fight". Mrs. Zimmitti said "I wanted students to have a thorough review of the materials, but wanted it to be fun as well.

Basically students were given recycled paper with questions written on them that were crumpled into 'snowballs'. They each selected one snowball to answer and threw it back when done. The activity continued until each student answered all questions on the snowballs. Students were learning, but they were moving and having a bit of fun, too."



NMHS Dramatics Club Performs *Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon*



The NMHS Dramatics Club just closed the curtain on one of their best productions yet, *Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon*. This hilarious production told the history of the Brothers Grimm and their 209 Fairy Tales, in just 90 minutes. Club advisor and NMHS English teacher Ms. Andrea Norem says, "This is the seventh production the Club has done in the fall and there were record crowds both nights. These are not your Disney fairy tales and audience participation added to the fun."

In 2009 when Dramatics got its start as the Drama Club, there were six to ten student performers. Nine years later, there are over eighty students participating and membership is still growing. Under Ms. Norem's direction, the Club has also hosted productions of *Murder Mysteries*, *M*A*S*H*, and *The Wizard of Oz* in addition to this year's production. With the help of NMHS teachers Mr. Alessandro Amenta and Mr. Steve Donahue, the students have learned the production portion of a show, such as set building and the directing of productions.

The Dramatics Club has a community service piece as well. The Club has supported and donated money to such organizations as Wounded Warriors, Animal Welfare, and Loaves and Fishes, as well as contributed to several holiday charities. In addition, the students have helped with the local events "Pumpkins in the Dark," and at "Haunted House", where they served as interactive characters. This year, they were Disney princes and princesses at the Northville "Spooktakular". Dramatics has also performed at the Senior Center.



"We are much more than a club" says Ms. Norem. "The students think of us as a family, supporting each other in many different aspects of theatre or just school itself. As the Advisor for the past eight years, I have been truly blessed to work with so many talented students. A few years ago, they started to call themselves the Island of Misfit Toys; here differences don't matter. Many alumni come back every year to celebrate and support our growing numbers; always remembering the saying, *There's no place like home.*"

NMHS Band Goes to Hollywood



The New Milford High School Marching Band and Color Guard traveled to California over Thanksgiving break to perform in the Hollywood Christmas Parade. Presented and produced by Associated Television International, the live parade, taped for network television, took place on Hollywood Boulevard on Sunday, November 26 at 5:00 p.m. The parade's telecast was hosted by Erik Estrada, Laura McKenzie, Dean Cain and Montel Williams, with special co-hosts Elizabeth Stanton and Garrett Clayton.

A true Hollywood yearly tradition, the parade attracts more than one million in attendance each year, with larger than life inflatable character balloons and celebrity filled cars making the much heralded trek down the over three mile parade route. The event included live musical performances on two stages, benefiting The Marines' Toys For Tots Foundation.



This year's 86th Annual Hollywood Christmas Parade premiered as a two-hour special on the CW Network on December 15 at 8:00 p.m. ET, and will repeat on the Hallmark Channel on December 22 at 3:00 p.m. The parade will also air to more than one million American servicemen and women worldwide on American Forces Network. For those of you who want a quick sneak peek, and a view from the crowd no less, [check out this clip on YouTube](#).



NMHS Band Director Mr. David Syzdek says, "It was an amazing experience for our students to perform on a national stage and I was extremely proud of how they represented our school and community not only during their performance but throughout the entire trip."



Follow the band on Twitter @NewMilfordBands

Healthy Snacks and Drinks

With the holiday season upon us, it can be difficult to keep the family on a healthy diet. The district's Food and Nutrition Services Department has healthy snacks and drinks available to students in grades 1 – 12 for purchase during the lunch service. Snacks can include: muffins, a whole grain cookie, fruit, yogurt, baked chips, popcorn and frozen desserts. All snacks are required to meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS).

The Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) are based on current nutrition science and national health recommendations from the 2015 – 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and national health organizations such as the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine. The following is a summary of the CNS.

All foods must meet one of the following three criteria:

1. The food item is a grain product that contains 50 percent whole grains by weight or has whole grains as its first ingredient.
2. The food item has one of the following food groups as its first ingredient: fruits, vegetables, dairy or protein foods.
3. The food item is a combination food that contains at least $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of fruit and/or vegetable.

Besides meeting one of the above criteria, the item must meet all of the following standards.

1. No more than 200 calories.
2. Total fat must be no more than 35 percent of the calories.
3. Saturated fat must be less than 10 percent of the calories.
4. The item must be trans-fat free.
5. There must be no more than 35 percent of total sugars by weight and 15 grams of total sugars.
6. No more than 200 milligrams of sodium.
7. There can be no caffeine.

There is also a Connecticut State Statute that governs the beverages sold to students in public schools. Schools may only sell the following beverages with these requirements:

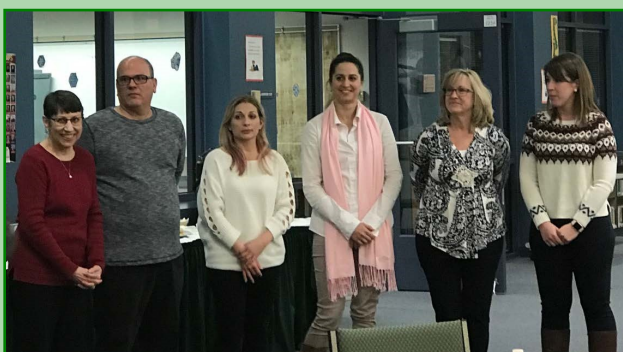
1. Milk must be low-fat unflavored and nonfat flavored and unflavored with no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce and no artificial sweeteners.
2. Nondairy milk substitutes must meet USDA nutrition standards.
3. Juice must be 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice or a combination, containing no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners.
4. Beverages can contain water and juice with no added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners.
5. Water can be plain or carbonated and flavored but contain no added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners or caffeine.

Mrs. Sandra Sullivan, Food and Nutrition Services Director says, "We're pleased to offer a variety of snacks and drinks in all of the New Milford Public Schools which meet these requirements. Hopefully students and parents are happy with the choices. Parents can always contact me with questions regarding the program by calling the department at 860-354-3712."

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



**Karla Buffington
Lee Dovale
Allyson Drahota
Jennifer Okoski
Kathleen Taylor
Ashley Vinhateiro**



Special congratulations to Jennifer Okoski who will drive the Ingersoll Auto of Danbury NMPS courtesy car.

Don't forget to visit the district website to [submit your staff nomination](#).

Board of Education Holds Annual Meeting



The Board of Education held its Annual Meeting on Tuesday, December 19, 2017 where they welcomed newly elected members Mr. Joseph Failla and Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan. The Board also elected officers for the year. Mr. David Lawson, was reelected Board Chairperson, Mrs. Tammy McInerney will serve as Vice Chairperson, Mrs. Angela Chastain was elected Secretary, and Mrs. Eileen Monaghan will serve as Assistant Secretary. This meeting and all Board of Education meetings are streamed live and videotaped. [Click on this link](#) for more information regarding both formats.



New Milford Public Schools

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

Mr. Joshua Smith
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

Ms. Roberta Pratt
Technology Director

Mrs. Sandra Sullivan
Food Services Director

Board of Education
Mr. David A. Lawson
Chairperson

Mrs. Tammy McInerney
Vice Chairperson

Mrs. Angela C. Chastain
Secretary

Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan
Assistant Secretary

Mr. Bill Dahl

Mr. Joseph Failla

Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach

Mr. Brian McCauley

Mr. J.T. Schemm



Thoughts for the New Year

I hope that in this year to come,
you make mistakes.

Because if you are making mistakes,
then you are making new things,
trying new things,
learning, living, pushing yourself,
changing yourself, changing your world.
You're doing things you've never done before,
and more importantly, you're doing something.

So that's my wish for you, and all of us,
and my wish for myself. Make new mistakes.

Make glorious, amazing mistakes.
Make mistakes nobody's ever made before.

Don't freeze, don't stop,
don't worry that it isn't good enough,
or it isn't perfect,
whatever it is: art, or love,
or work or family or life.

Whatever it is you're scared of doing, do it.
Make your mistakes, next year and forever.

~ Author Neil Gaiman

to set another goal
or to dream a new dream
- C. S. Lewis

December Birthdays

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.