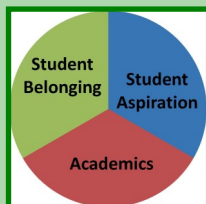




New Milford Public Schools
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776
860-355-8406
www.newmilfordps.org



New Milford High School
860-350-6647
Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal
Mr. Kevin Best, Asst. Principal
Mrs. Liz Curtis, Asst. Principal
Ms. Linda Scoralick, Asst. Principal



Schaghticoke Middle School
860-354-2204
Dr. Christopher Longo, Principal
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
860-354-5430
Mr. Eric Williams, Principal
Mrs. Kerri Adakonis, Asst. Principal



Northville Elementary School
860-355-3713
Mrs. Gwen Gallagher, Principal
Mrs. Catherine Calabrese, Asst. Principal

Spotlight on New Milford Schools

Volume 11, Issue 4

October 2020

Parent/Guardian Technology Updates

Google Suite/Classroom Parent Sessions:

Thank you to all parents & guardians who were able to attend the district's Google parent sessions. The NMPS Technology department provided three sessions for the different grade levels, along with an additional general session in Spanish. If you missed out or want a refresher, below are the recordings of each session for your reference:

[G Suite and Classroom Parent Overview for K - Grade 5](#)

[G Suite and Classroom Parent Overview for Grades 6-8](#)

[G Suite and Classroom Parent Overview for Grades 9-12](#)

[G Suite and Classroom Parent Overview in Spanish](#)



Parent & Guardian Technical Support:

If you are in need of support for your child's district distributed Chromebook, having an issue with logging in or have a general technology question, please click on [this link to submit a request](#).

Students grades 6-12 have the ability to create tickets via our internal helpdesk system by [clicking on this link](#).

Chromebook Updates:

Our Technology department is still waiting on orders of Chromebooks and Chromebook bags/cases for the district. Due to the demand COVID has caused, many school districts, including ours, are still waiting on their backordered shipments of Chromebooks.

For families who are still using their personal devices, thank you for doing this. Also, we ask that you continue using them until our Chromebook orders arrive. The estimated delivery time frame is mid-October into November. Our current inventory of Chromebooks available for handout is very limited and we are trying our best to keep a few on hand for replacement of broken devices and for families with no personal devices at all. As we begin to receive devices, we will begin reaching out to families to schedule pickups of the Chromebooks.

Families Without Connectivity:

If you are without, or know a family who is without, internet connectivity at home, please contact your school's main office.

Leadership Change

The New Milford Board of Education has announced that Dr. Paul Smotas, the Interim Superintendent of the New Milford Public Schools, will be leaving his post as of October 30, 2020 in order to return to his home in North Carolina. Per the Board's official press release, "Dr. Smotas has done an extraordinary job of managing the extremely complex task of ensuring a smooth transition back to school for our students and staff. In doing so, Dr. Smotas has successfully maintained the difficult balance between student and staff safety and the continued provision to New Milford's children of the excellent education that we as a Board and as a District have long and justifiably been proud."



At a Special Meeting on October 29th, the New Milford Board of Education named current Assistant Superintendent of Schools Ms. Alisha DiCorpo as Interim Superintendent for New Milford Public Schools. Ms. DiCorpo has served as NMPS Assistant Superintendent since June 2016.

Ms. DiCorpo came to New Milford from the Thomaston Public Schools where she had served as Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment since 2014. From 2010-2012, Ms. DiCorpo was Assistant Principal at Black Rock Elementary School in Thomaston. In 2012 she was promoted to Principal. Prior to working in Thomaston, Ms. DiCorpo was the District Professional Development Coordinator for Watertown Public Schools. She has also spent time as a fourth and fifth grade teacher.

Ms. DiCorpo's educational background includes a Bachelor of Science, E.D. Grades K-6, and a Master of Science, Educational Leadership, from Central CT State University. She holds her sixth year degree and certification in Educational Leadership from Southern CT State University. In 2016, Ms. DiCorpo acquired her 093 certification for Superintendent of Schools from the NEAG School of Education at the University of CT.

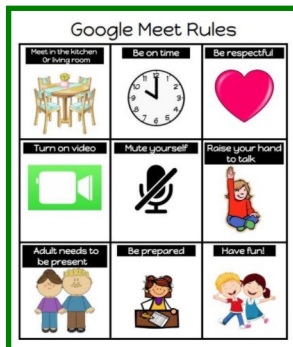
Board of Education Chairperson, Mrs. Angela Chastain, says "The Board is excited to give Ms. DiCorpo this opportunity. She has shown her dedication to the district time and again. She has been a stable force at Central Office throughout the last few years' transitions. We look forward to her leadership."

"I am honored to have been chosen by the New Milford Board of Education to lead the district as Interim Superintendent of Schools during this time of transition", says Ms. DiCorpo. "I have worked within the district for five years as the Assistant Superintendent, and throughout my tenure in New Milford, I have been in awe, and am humbled daily, by the dedicated work of our Board of Education members, district administrators, teachers, staff and students. I am also humbled by the parent and community support for our schools and the active volunteer efforts that allow experiences and support for children and families to continue, especially during this time of crisis. I appreciate the opportunity to build upon and lead in such a wonderful community during such a difficult time."

News from Our Schools

Northville Elementary School

Northville students have transitioned well back to school and have shown so much excitement when meeting their teachers, whether remote or in-person. Staff made it a priority to take the necessary time to acclimate each student back to school before diving into learning and live teaching. We are happy to report that everyone is safe, happy, and learning.



To kick off October, Northville students were treated to a virtual C.A.R.E.S. Assembly reviewing *Google Meets Etiquettes* incorporating NES's character traits that everyone strives to show daily.

C=I will cooperate.

A=I will act responsibly.

R=I will be respectful.

E=I will encourage others.

S=I will be safe.

The students earned C.A.R.E.S. coins so they were treated to a whole school reward. It was fun to see everyone enjoy an Outdoor Dance Party on Tuesday October 6th (Cohort A) and October 8th (Cohort B).



In other news, our students were challenged over the summer to read and do math each and every day! If they did, Mrs. Gallagher and Mrs. Calabrese would kiss a cow. With over 1,500 books read and math completion ... **THEY KISSED A COW!!** Thank you to the Harvey Family and Storm Haven Farm in New Milford for allowing us to visit their farm and kiss a cow. Watch our video here: <https://video.link/w/qRBnb>



Be sure to tune in daily to see Mrs. Gallagher and Mrs. Calabrese, along with the secretaries (sometimes) as they record and broadcast morning announcements live on Twitter! Extra special fun is had on Math Mondays, Wacky Wednesdays, and Funny Fridays.

Hill and Plain Elementary School

Hill and Plain Elementary School staff and students continue to work at making our hybrid model successful. Teachers are busy creating and implementing lesson plans for students in the classroom and at home or daycare.

We hope you were able to join us for the first Caregivers Night held on Monday, October 26th. If you were unable to make it, make sure to go to the Hill and Plain website to [view a recording of this night](#) to learn more about your child's literacy and math program being implemented while in our hybrid model. Hopefully the information shared during the evening provided some support to better help your child with their assignments.

Hill and Plain students were also able to have a little fun this month. The HPS PTO has done a great job of incorporating fun family events into the school year. Recently, students were invited to decorate pumpkins for a PTO sponsored event. Students and their families did an amazing job creating extremely unique, colorful and school spirited pumpkins.



Hill and Plain also held its annual Book Character Day this month. While we couldn't hold the parade portion of the event as usual, students and staff had a blast dressing up as their favorite book character for the school day. Take a look at some of our students' (and staff's) favorite book characters!



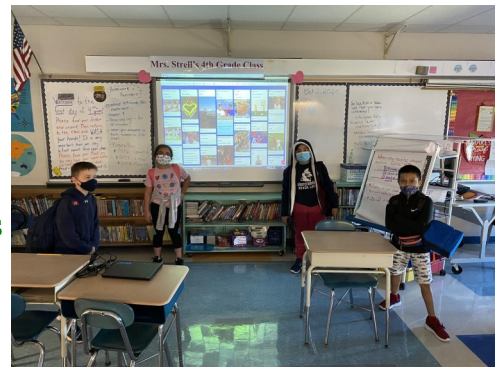
Sarah Noble Intermediate School

Sarah Noble Intermediate School staff and students have done a beautiful job adapting to the hybrid model of school. We have focused our google meets on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and as a school we have prioritized relationships in these early weeks, getting to know our students and allowing them time and opportunity to know us. We know that students who feel connected to their teachers and peers will be more successful in all that they do each day. Most importantly, we know that our days are not perfect in hybrid but we are committed to making each day a better experience for all of our students.



Third graders have been able to transition rather smoothly to not only a hybrid learning situation but also to a brand new school with new faces. This isn't an easy task in a normal year, let alone this year! The teachers have been so proud of how well they have been following new safety protocols with wearing masks and socially distancing. Students have adapted well to using a new remote platform, Google Classroom, and learning all the functions that go with it. We have been able to use mask breaks for dual purposes: taking a break from masks and taking our ELA lessons outside. Students are currently learning how to start a Google Doc, use Padlet and Flipgrid, and how to insert pictures.

Fourth grade students have been working on redefining what reading, writing, and math workshops look like and sound like. Students are using both traditional tools and new digital tools. With these tools and Google Meets, classes are also working on connecting both the in-class and at-home students. Online platforms such as Padlet allow for all students to post their thinking while also allowing for students to react and respond to each other and are being used across all subject areas.



Fifth grade students in math have been reviewing fundamental skills that they will need to be successful with the 5th grade math standards. Students work on interactive lessons as well as incorporating math games to help them review and learn math skills. In ELA, students continue to learn and understand routines, expectations, and strategies to help them be successful. Much of the work to start the year has been focused on reviewing concepts and habits of mind that will help students grow and be successful. Students have also been working on building stamina in both reading and writing.

SNIS Unified Arts and Library

Art: We have seen all of the classes, and have figured out how to store all 36 classes of work separately! We have begun the creating process with all students. Our percentage of participation in our Google classrooms is up from last spring. We are also figuring out PearDeck together.

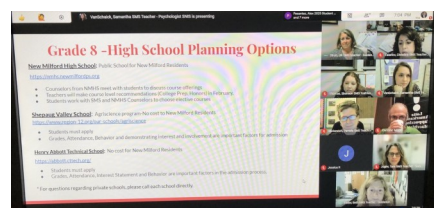
Music: General Music is a real challenge this year. Singing and recorders are off limits, so we are being very creative with our lessons. All students are learning about American folk music and how it is woven into the fabric of our Nation's history. We are also reviewing all elements of music theory and doing a lot of work on the smart board putting it all together!!

PE: Students are still staying active even while social distancing. We are using squares to keep the students apart. We are still working on new routines with masks and lining up. Most of the students are doing great with the new procedures.

Library: A huge thank you to the PTO for their contribution to the library! Students may check out up to five books each time they come to the LMC and many take advantage of that. The daily average for books checked out is 140! Mrs. LaVoie is facilitating book check out for remote students as well.

Schaghticoke Middle School

SMS held its virtual Open House this month, which started with a welcome Zoom by Dr. Longo, and then parents following their child's schedule via virtual Google Meets. Counselors met with parents by grade level during the lunch period times on student schedules.



Dr. Longo continues to reach out to students and parents. During "Breakfast with the Principal", Dr. Longo meets with remote learners prior to the start of the school day; one meeting per grade level to connect and chat. There has also been a monthly "Chat with the Principal" where Dr. Longo zooms with parents to listen to feedback and answer questions on various topics.

Special recognition was given to Summer Reading Challenge Award Winners, who received prizes courtesy of the PTO. SMS also recognizes "Tireless Staff" members each month. Staff and students are invited to commend staff for their tireless work and out of all the nominations made, one is chosen. In September, the award went to English/Language Arts teacher Ms. Jessica Lionetti and for October, Paraeducator Erin DeCapua. This month is also home to the first Unity Day of the year. Students and staff unite to promote Kindness, Acceptance and Inclusion by wearing orange in support of National Bullying Prevention Month.



New Milford High School

NMHS Principal Greg Shugrue says, "I'm happy to report that the new school year is off to a great start. Students and staff have acclimated well to the many changes of our Hybrid and Remote Learning plans, and seem to have gotten back to the routine of school despite the new and ever-changing landscape of the global pandemic."

October featured several virtual events for students and families including a Virtual Open House, Senior Planning Night and Financial Aid Night.

College exploration and planning has entered the virtual world too with the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) hosting over 600 colleges and universities at college fairs on October 12, 18 and (still to come) November 8. Seniors and juniors can also "visit" individual colleges virtually between 2 and 6 PM on Monday through Friday. The Career Center has that schedule. The annual Instant Decision Week for seniors will take place November 30-December 4.



Most fall athletic teams are in competition, and while in-person spectators are limited to family members, others may watch a livestream for a small fee or wait three days and watch recorded games for free. Contact the NMHS Athletic department for more information.

NMHS LLC Offering Take Out and Curbside Pickup

NMHS students wishing to access Library Learning Commons (LLC) resources can reserve print books for take out or, in the case of remote learners, curbside pickup! Students search for books on the school website under the LLC page and checkout right on the page. Library staff pull the books and leave them for pick up in the LLC lobby or arrange for curbside pickup as convenient.

The LLC also has a great new source for digital books - Axis 360 - thanks to our partnership with New Milford Public Library.



FREE!!

Reminder: FREE Breakfast and Lunch for ALL New Milford Students

Thanks to funding from the USDA, any child who is 18 years or younger is eligible for FREE breakfast and lunch through December 31 of this year.

This applies to ALL students who attend New Milford Public Schools, regardless of current paid, or free and reduced lunch status, both in person and through the Curbside Meals program.



November Update

FREE Homework Club for 3rd to 8th graders is held every Wednesday at the Youth Agency from 3 to 5 PM.

A FREE Mentoring Program for SMS students will be held on Monday, November 9th and Monday, November 23rd from 5:30-7:00 PM at the Maxx Teen Center located at 88 Railroad Street. High School mentors will offer social support under adult supervision. Bring your favorite board game, cards, or multiplayer device to share!

The next High School Student Advisory Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 12th from 5:30 to 6:30 PM at the Maxx. All high school students are welcomed to attend as we will prepare for the upcoming Youth Forum with the Mayor, Chief of Police, and Youth Agency Director.

High School students can create their own vision board on Thursday, November 19th from 5:00-6:00 PM at the Youth Agency. This FREE program is a meaningful craft for setting goals.

For more information, contact the Youth Agency at (860) 210-2030 or email Natalie Rodriguez, Youth Advocate, at NRodriguez@NewMilford.org. To find out more about the Youth Agency's services, visit their website at Youthagency.org.

Transition Coordinator Named



New Milford Public Schools is pleased to announce that Mrs. Ashley Albanese has accepted the position of Transition Coordinator for students with disabilities who require support and services beyond their high school years.

Ashley is very excited about her new role of Transition Coordinator for the district. She believes that this position will allow her to establish networks of support for families and students. She looks forward to being able to guide them through the processes of applying for outside services and supports from outside agencies including the Bureau of Rehabilitation-Level Up/Adult Vocational Rehab, Department of Developmental Services and more.

Mrs. Albanese completed her undergraduate degree at the University of New Hampshire and graduated from Southern Connecticut State University with a MA in Special Education, focusing on Autism Spectrum Disorders and other Developmental Disabilities. She joined the New Milford Public Schools in August of 2013 as a Special Education teacher for the Behavior Intervention Program at Hill and Plain Elementary School. In January 2016, she made the move to the Litchfield Hills Transition Center, currently co-run with Special Education teacher Roxanne Kraft.

The Transition Coordinator role also includes being a member of the Regional Transition Network and keeping up to date on the latest legislation that relates to secondary transition. Over the summer new legislation was passed regarding IDEA and extending eligibility to age 22 for students receiving transition services. Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Mrs. Laura Olson says, "Students, families, and staff will directly benefit from the support, resources, and knowledge Ashley will bring to this new position. New Milford Public Schools is fortunate to have her leadership."

Parent Partnership Initiative: Caregiver Mondays



On select Mondays October through February, our Elementary and Middle School Instructional Coaches will be providing opportunities for caregivers to learn about specific elements of instruction. Each meeting will run for approximately twenty minutes per grade level on select Mondays for grades K-8. Topics will focus on information that is timely and relevant to the learning taking place in your child's classroom, whether he or she is in person or participating in learning remotely. Watch your email for the schedule.



New Milford Public Schools

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Dr. Paul Smotas
Interim Superintendent

Ms. Alisha DiCorpo
Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Kevin Munrett
Facilities Director

Mr. Anthony Giovannone
Fiscal Services & Operations
Director

Mrs. Laura Olson
Pupil Personnel &
Special Services Director

Mr. Brandon Rush
Technology Director

Mrs. Sandra Sullivan
Food Services Director

Board of Education

Mrs. Angela C. Chastain
Chairperson

Mr. Joseph Failla
Vice Chairperson

Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach
Secretary

Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan
Assistant Secretary

Mr. Pete Helmus

Mr. Brian McCauley

Mrs. Tammy McInerney

Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny

Mrs. Olga I. Rella

November 1st is Extra Mile Day

Sponsored by Extra Mile America, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, [Extra Mile Day](#) celebrates the capacity we each have to create positive change in ourselves, our families, our organizations and our communities when we "go the extra mile".

It is a day to celebrate those individuals and organizations who are "going the extra mile" in volunteerism and service in order to make a positive difference in their communities and world.

What does it mean to go the extra mile?

Going the extra mile is doing more than the normal, more than expected. It is how change is created in ourselves, our organizations and in our communities. Going the extra mile is extending ourselves in our service, attitude and efforts. Going the extra mile is getting back up after we've been knocked down despite whatever has happened.

Do you know someone who goes the extra mile in service to your family and/or community?

November 1st is a perfect day to show appreciation to those who do a little bit more to make life better for others. Reach out (even if it's virtually) to say thank you, I appreciate you.

Then, take a moment to ask yourself —

*"What can I do differently?
What can I do to make a difference?
What can I do to go the extra mile?"*



Go
ing
the
Extra
Mile

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.