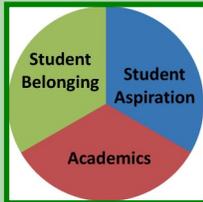




New Milford Public Schools  
50 East Street  
New Milford, CT 06776  
860-355-8406  
[www.newmilfordps.org](http://www.newmilfordps.org)



**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 10, Issue 7

January 2020

## NES Students Sponsor Pilot Program



Northville Elementary School students are piloting the use of sporks in their cafeteria from January 21 to February 14. Currently, our schools provide students with single use plasticware that includes both spoons and forks. During the recent grade 2 opinion writing unit, students from Ms. Koval's class recognized an opportunity for change. Ms. Koval describes how the idea started, "Here's the *scoop*, let's get to the *point!* My students believe that switching to sporks will be better for the environment, cost less, and be easier for students and staff to use."



In December, students expressed their opinions and plea for change in letters they wrote to cafeteria staff. Mrs. Gallagher, Principal of Northville School, took it a step further and arranged a face-to-face meeting for the students with Sandra Sullivan, Director of Food and Nutrition Services. "All nineteen

students wanted to take part!" says Ms. Koval. "They collaborated on an illustrated book which organized their individual reasons and details for their collective opinion. They presented their book of ideas first to Mrs. Sullivan and then to Superintendent Kerry Parker who joined my Koval's Pals in class for an updated digital slideshow presentation of their book."



Based on the presentations, Mrs. Sullivan and Dr. Parker agreed to bring a pilot program to Northville. The sporks are in action now. The pilot program runs until Valentine's Day when they'll survey students to see if they "love" their sporks. Ms. Koval's class will then bring the data to the decision makers and hope for change!

To hear some of the students making their pitch for sporks, [click here](#).

## Creating with Code at SMS



SMS students in the Grade 7 Technology Education class recently turned their talents to Coding. Students were challenged to code out a scene on the [PencilCode website](#). The assignment specified the creation of a scene that had to include a house with the following pieces: a door, a free-standing window not connected to anything else, a chimney, and a few other customizations of their choice. The scene also had to include a boat, using a fill command for either the sail or the boat, and extra customizations using the code they learned.

Ms. Santovasi, the SMS Tech Ed teacher says, “Learning how to write code builds problem solving skills, close reading skills, deductive reasoning skills, perseverance, and creativity just to name a few. The 7th graders did a great job with the assignment!” Check out some examples of their work below.



*"Whether you want to uncover the secrets of the universe, or you just want to pursue a career in the 21st century, basic computer programming is an essential skill to learn."*

~Stephen Hawking



## SMS Named National Unified Champion School

Schaghticoke Middle School brought home a unique banner this year in recognition of its designation as a National Unified Champion School. This school recognition is sponsored by the Special Olympics.



A Special Olympics Unified Champion School has an inclusive school climate and exudes a sense of collaboration, engagement and respect for all members of the student body and staff. A Unified Champion School receiving national banner recognition is one that has demonstrated commitment to inclusion by meeting ten national standards of excellence. These standards were developed by a national panel of leaders from Special Olympics and the education community.

The primary activities within these standards include: Special Olympics Unified Sports (where students with and without disabilities train and compete as teammates), Inclusive Youth Leadership and Whole-School Engagement. Banner Unified Champion Schools should also be able to demonstrate they are self-sustainable or have a plan in place to sustain these activities into the future.

The Unified Sports program has been in existence at SMS since 2017. SNIS and NMHS also sponsor teams. Students participate in events throughout the school year, in conjunction with teams from surrounding districts. The Unified team has traveled to various schools to play basketball games, participate in track and field events, and even visited to our local bowling alley for friendly competition against other area middle schools.



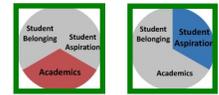
This month, the SMS team attended the Annual Unified Sports Youth Leadership Summit, as they have the last three years. Participating middle schools sent Unified teammates (athletes and partners) along with their coaches to this conference, which featured nationally known keynote speakers, hands-on breakout sessions, and inspiration to continue the great work being done at schools across the state.



After the event, SMS Unified Sports coach Eileen Holden tweeted: “So proud of these students for making today a great day. We got recognized as a National Unified Champion School!! So proud of every single student that has helped build this program over the last 4 years!”

## NMHS Celebrates *Poetry Out Loud*

On January 16, 2020, the English Department at New Milford High School hosted the 5th annual school-wide *Poetry Out Loud* competition in the NMHS Theatre.



*Poetry Out Loud* is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry. Students select, memorize, and perform a poem from among a list of thousands, and are judged by criteria such as physical movement, voice and articulation, along with accuracy. This program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life through poetry. Created by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation in 2005, *Poetry Out Loud* has grown to reach nearly 3.5 million students and 50,000 teachers from 10,000 schools across the country.

Competitions at NMHS began in November in over 20 different English classes and involved over 450 students from all grade levels. Twenty-three finalists emerged from those competitions to compete in the school-wide event that was hosted by NMHS student Savannah Hancock and last year's winner, Sabella Volansky. Using the official scoring rubric that includes accuracy, four faculty members served as judges to evaluate each individual performance.

After each student performed, all 23 students gathered on stage to hear the winners announced. Sophomore Teagan Piskura was the runner-up with her performance of "Very Large Moth" and the overall winner was Junior Joshua Abel for his performance of "I Am Learning to Abandon the World." Joshua will now represent New Milford High School as he competes at the state level in March.



## ***SMS Music - And All That Jazz!***



As part of the SMS general music curriculum, seventh grade students have been exploring the history of jazz music and its origin. Jazz is an important genre of music to delve into as it is one of the only types of music that is truly American born. Inspired by work songs and spirituals, jazz music was created by Black Americans as a way to express their life experiences.

As taught in Ms. Rosen's music classes, seventh graders have been embracing an expressive form of music known as the 'blues'. They have listened to artists including Bessie Smith and T - Bone Walker and discussed the meaning found within the words and melodies. Using their critical reading skills from English Language Arts (ELA), students recognized similarities between several different songs and noted that they were comprised of three line stanzas in AAB form with the last word of each A line rhyming with the last word of the B line. Diving deeper into the lyrics themselves, students discovered that these songs are often about everyday pain such as heartbreak and loneliness.



After analyzing the provided examples, students were then asked to consider what they had learned and to use that knowledge to compose their own lyrics. Getting to work, students brainstormed ideas of what their own songs could be about. Their ideas ranged from a variety of topics from dealing with difficult friendships to managing busy schedules and even how to handle their homework. They were then invited to the class' version of a "local coffee shop" where they performed their works at open mic night! Says

Ms. Rosen, "The creativity in their work and their willingness to be vulnerable in front of their peers was an awesome display of the Schaghticoke SURGE!"

I am always so kind to you, all the time  
I am always so kind to you, all the time  
But all you do is take advantage of my every dime.  
~Angeline C.

My sports take up all my time,  
My sports take up all my time,  
And sometimes the refs can be blind.  
~Kelsey H. and McKayla L.



Waking up at 6 AM, why must it be so hard.  
Waking up at 6 AM, why must it be so hard.  
I get dragged out of bed, why can't I have a guard.

I feel an aching in my head.  
I feel an aching in my head.  
Why can't I just go back to bed.

~Connor W.

## Child Development Class Welcomes Guest Speaker



The Child Development class at NMHS is offered to students who want to learn about the development of children and/or who may want to work with children in a future career. The course content includes information about children's growth and development from prenatal to age three. This is often followed by the Early Childhood class that is designed for students interested in becoming professionals in such fields as nursing, teaching, psychology or child care. Students are introduced to the basic philosophies concerning child development including language, motor, social, cognitive and perceptual skills. In addition, students have hands-on teaching experience in the twelve-week *Tiny Tides* preschool program offered at the high school. They observe and interact with their pre-school students and prepare and present lessons.

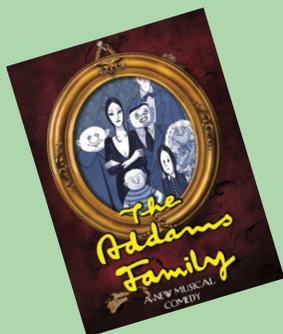
Course instructor Elizabeth Schlicher says, "The class offers students many interactive opportunities through field trips, guest speakers (all of whom work with children in some way) and finally the exciting chance to teach preschool aged students in the spring." Mrs. Schlicher recently invited Superintendent Kerry Parker to visit the class and speak with students about her educational journey.

"Dr. Parker's visit was a hit!" Says Mrs. Schlicher. "The students absolutely loved her cheerful and energetic personality and her willingness to share her personal life experiences, starting with her dream of being on the stage, then becoming the educator that she was always meant to be. They hope she can come back and spend a half an hour with us when the preschoolers get here, to see all our students, young and old, in action."



*Tiny Tides* preschool starts February 11th with an Open House for accepted students.

Tickets are on sale now at <https://nmhsct.booktix.com/> for:



### The Addams Family

#### Performances Dates:

Friday, March 20 at 7:00 PM  
 Saturday, March 21 at 7:00 PM  
 Sunday, March 22 at 3:00 PM  
 Friday, March 27 at 7:00 PM  
 Saturday, March 28 at 2:00 PM  
 Saturday, March 28 at 7:00 PM

All seating is reserved and all tickets purchased in Advance are \$10 each. In an effort to reduce large crowds at the box office on a show date, tickets purchased at the door on the day of the performance will cost \$15 each. Credit cards incur an additional \$1.50 fee per ticket. For more information, call the box office at 860-350-6647 ext. 1552.

And... SMS students join the fun in the Spring when they present *Seussical, Jr.* with performances on April 30 @ 4:00 PM and May 1 @ 7:00 PM. \$7.00 a ticket, \$15.00 a family of four. Stay tuned...



## Career Bound Instead of College Bound



Students graduating from high school can follow many paths to become self-sufficient, and these paths don't necessarily have to involve college. The School Counseling Department has developed the NMHS Career Exploration Bulletin to provide information about upcoming events/offerings for students interested in career training, rather than the traditional college education.

NMHS Career Center secretary Maryanne Shaffer says, "The Bulletin is an online resource that serves as one stop shopping for students to see all of the upcoming events in one location – without the barrage of college information mixed in. Doing it digitally also makes it accessible to district parents as well, since parents of high school students don't visit the interior of the high school as frequently as they did when their children were in elementary school." The high school also spotlights the information on hallway bulletin boards as events get closer, complete with a QR code for ease of access to more detail. The January NMHS News Blast listed several interesting career events for students including:

- **Practical Nursing Information Session at NMHS on 1/15:** Stuart Rosenthal, Career Program Specialist from Porter and Chester Institute presented a 30-minute LPN (Licensed Practical Nursing) Info Session where students learned the benefits of bridging from an LPN program into an RN program and how to get licensed.
- **Manufacturing Alliance Training Center Field Trip 2/26:** Students visit the Manufacturing Alliance Service Corporation's Training Center in Waterbury, CT, which specializes in manufacturing skills training including CNC Machining.
- **Naugatuck Valley Community College Field Trip 3/10:** NVCC offers an extensive list of workforce training programs in addition to traditional college courses. This field trip tour of NVCC's Danbury & Waterbury campuses lets interested students find out more about their career-focused programs which include agriculture, automotive, bookkeeping, computer technology, medical technician training, event planning, real estate, and welding to name a few.
- **Lincoln Technical Institute Shelton Campus Field Trip 3/18:** Students can explore career training in culinary arts, practical nursing, electrical, and more by visiting the Lincoln Tech campus in Shelton.
- **Lincoln Technical Institute East Windsor Campus Field Trip 3/19:** Students visiting the Lincoln Tech campus in East Windsor can explore career training in automotive and diesel technology, CNC machining, electrical, HVAC, welding, and related areas.
- **Universal Technical Institute Automotive Field Trip 4/7:** Universal Technical Institute sponsors the Automotive & Diesel Career Field Trip to the Penske Autogroup Service Center (Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, and Audi in Fairfield, CT) to explore career opportunities and training as an Automotive Technician.
- **Porter & Chester Institute Field Trip 4/8:** Students visiting Porter & Chester Institute's Waterbury campus will explore career training in fields such as automotive technology, computer-aided drafting and design, electrical, plumbing and HVAC, dental or medical assisting, medical billing and practical nursing.
- **Career Construction Days Field Trip 5/6:** Sponsored by Associated Builders & Contractors of Connecticut, the Construction Pro Rodeo is a hands-on student expo that introduces students to a multitude of post-high school career options in the construction trades. Students will have an opportunity to speak with industry professionals, see demonstrations, attend safety seminars, participate in hands-on activities, and more.



### NMHS Students Offer Naviance Video Tutorials

As early as grade 6, NMPS students begin an initial exploration of Naviance, a college and career readiness program that students will use until, and sometimes after, they graduate. The career planning and assessment tools in Naviance allow students to recognize their strengths, goals, skills, knowledge, values, constraints, and interests to help them make better academic decisions. This helps students gain a better understanding of the academic preparation required to pursue careers that are likely to be fulfilling for them.

Once students reach the high school level, school counselors use the tools in Naviance to work with students in exploring career interests, assist them in developing their selection of courses, and for post-secondary planning. Annual course selection is underway now.

By the time students become upperclassmen, they are fully focused on career and/or college planning. When students are ready, they use Naviance to compile their academic or career resume including: honors and awards, extracurricular activities, community activities, and job experiences. If it fits their post-secondary plans, students can use Naviance to fill out college applications and apply for scholarships.



To help with these endeavors, NMHS Career Center secretary Maryanne Shaffer asked students to help her produce a series of short how-to videos. “For most people, if you show them how to do something once, they’re able to do it themselves. Naviance has some video tutorials, but they tend to be long. Students often learn better from their peers - so, I asked our students to do some shorter videos. The current videos are aimed at juniors and seniors but we have several more planned.” Current videos include “How to search for colleges in Naviance” and “How to sign up for college visits”. To see these, and others, [click here](#).



On January 23, 8th grade Band students performed in a combined concert with their high school counterparts in the NMHS Theatre. NMHS Band Director David Syzdek speaks for all when he says, “Truly a special night when we all come together to make music.”



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



**Daniella Brooks**



**Darryl Gregory**



**Linda Hurley**



**Eileen McDougal**



**Christine Santorella**



**Susan Sullivan**

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](#).

### Math Wish "Granted"

SNIS Grade 4 teacher Cindy Bonnell has been awarded a \$500 grant from the Associated Teachers of Mathematics in Connecticut (ATOMIC). The Steve Leinwand Teaching Grant is designed to provide funds directly to teachers for projects that promote excellence in mathematics education. Grants are awarded for proposals that focus on design of new curricula, exploring assessment possibilities, enhancing the learning environment, or in any way promoting the acquisition of mathematical power by students.

Mrs. Bonnell wrote her grant request to purchase hands-on, engaging math materials to use in her classroom's daily Math Workshop. "Math Workshop allows students to participate in a variety of choice activities at their differentiated level", says Mrs. Bonnell. "During Math Workshop, students are engaged in math discourse and are able to facilitate their own learning. This shift in teaching math is new this year and I was ready to jump right in! The grant materials will include a variety of math games, as well as manipulatives, to support concrete modeling. I'm so pleased to be purchasing these additions for my classroom." Pictured to the right, students play *Proof*, a math game the class borrowed from the math coach previously and a game they will soon own thanks to the grant.



## **SAVE THE DATE!**



**April 30, 2020  
5:00 PM – 7:30 PM  
New Milford High School**

The upcoming Parent University will provide parents, guardians and community members an opportunity to access skills and resources available throughout the community. Through the combined efforts of New Milford Public Schools and the Town of New Milford, community members are invited to a two and a half hour event on Thursday, April 30 with a keynote speaker, breakout sessions and debriefing. NMPS Assistant Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo and New Milford Youth Agency Youth Intervention Manager Stacey Kabasakalian, co-chairs of the event, are excited to bring school and town agencies, as well as non-profits, together to support and educate our community on important matters affecting families today.

The keynote address will be “Delay Your Gray: A Fun and Informative Program for Parents” presented by Liz Driscoll Jorgensen. Liz is a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor and has presented professional workshops nationally, including programs at Harvard University and Dartmouth College, as well as hundreds of parenting programs.

During the breakout sessions, different organizations will come together to present relevant information to the community. Organizations such as the Youth Agency, Social Services, New Milford Police Department, New Milford Public Schools, and many more will lead all attendees down informative sessions based on their own interest. Participants will be able to choose what workshops they would like to attend and have a deep discussion around those topics. During these conversations, facilitators will empower parents and guardians to better understand each area of interest.

At the end of the event, parents and guardians will come together to debrief and raffle prizes will be drawn. Please consider joining us on April 30, 2020 from 5:00-7:30 p.m. at New Milford High School for this fun and informative event. More details will follow as the event draws near.

# TRANSITION RESOURCE FAIR

## WHEN

**March 18, 2020**  
**6:00-8:00 PM**

INCLEMENT WEATHER DATE 3/19/2020

## WHERE

**Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library**  
**25 Sunny Valley Rd, New Milford**

## FEATURING PRESENTATIONS FOR FAMILIES ON:

**D.D.S. - Dept. of Developmental Services**  
**B.R.S. - Bureau of Rehabilitative Services**  
**S.S.D.I. - Social Security Disability Income**  
**Guardianship/Conservatorship**  
**Special Needs Trusts**  
**Ability Beyond- ATLAS program**  
**Friends of New Milford**  
**Marrakech**  
**CPAC- Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center**

**THE  
TRANSITION  
RESOURCE  
FAIR IS FOR  
FAMILIES  
WITH YOUNG  
ADULTS WHO  
HAVE  
DISABILITIES  
AGES 14-21:  
PREPARING  
FOR THEIR  
FUTURE**

## FREE

**Refreshments  
will be served**

## SPONSORED BY:

  
**NEW MILFORD  
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Hills  
Transition  
Center**

## BOE Adopts 2020-21 Education Budget



New Milford Public Schools Superintendent Kerry Parker and administrative team members presented the proposed 2020-21 education budget to the New Milford Board of Education for consideration on the evenings of January 21, 22, 28 and 29 in public session. The 2020-21 Superintendent's Budget, as proposed, was \$65,843,593 which is an increase of \$1,802,901 or 2.82% over the current year's budget.

**The Board of Education's Adopted budget, as approved on January 29, 2020, was finalized at \$65,464,776, which represents a 2.22% increase over the current year's budget.**

Dr. Parker states, "Our proposed budget is strategically focused on supporting the programmatic needs and resources of the District. It supports the growing needs in bilingual and special education programming. It also continues the District's focus on instructional improvement, upgrading the Student Information System, providing for strategic planning, and continued school safety. As always, the District has worked hard to prioritize initiatives, find efficiencies, and reallocate resources in order to continue improving the education we provide to students, while maintaining a fiscally conservative and responsible budget proposal."

Over the course of several nights, the Board heard detailed presentations regarding each of our five schools, and from the departments of Instruction, Pupil Personnel/Special Education, Facilities and Technology. Public comment was offered each evening.

Budget documents from the four evenings of deliberation can be found under the Budget tab on the district website [here](#). The evening presentations as well as the budget adoption night were all live streamed. The video recordings may be viewed on YouTube [here](#) or on Vimeo [here](#).

Board of Education Chairperson Angela C. Chastain says, "Budget season is difficult; no one wants to reduce the budget when we know the requested items are valid needs within the district. The entire Board is committed to serving our district – students, staff, and community members. The Board worked hard to retain direct student instruction and programming, but hard choices had to be made. We look forward to continuing this process as the budget moves through the Town Council and Board of Finance and hope they'll support the budget as it is presented."

The BOE Approved Budget now goes before the Town Council and Board of Finance in February/March for review and approval before being voted on at referendum in May.



**New Milford Public Schools**

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

- Dr. Kerry Parker**  
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
- 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**

**HALFWAY DAY!**

Believe it or not, we are already halfway through the 2019-20 school year! Northville Elementary School's grade 2 celebrates the occasion annually with "Halfway Hawaiian Day". We think the pictures speak for themselves...



So far the district has had two snow days affect our schedule. That brings our current last day of school to June 16. An updated calendar is added to the website after each snow day and can be found [here](#).

The quickest way to hear about any changes to the school schedule is to watch your email, the district website, text alerts, and to follow us on twitter (@nmpps\_supt). Make sure to keep your contact information up to date with your child's school so you are aware of important alerts and receive all school information.

For those of you yearning for Spring, it arrives Thursday, March 19, 2020.

January 2020

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.