

**New Milford Board of Education  
Committee on Learning Minutes  
May 20, 2014  
Lillis Administration Building, Room 2**

Present: Mr. David A. Lawson, Chairperson  
Mrs. Angela C. Chastain  
Mrs. Daniele Shook  
Mr. John W. Spatola

Also Present: Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote, Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Joshua Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Schools  
Mrs. Paula Marian, Teacher, New Milford High School  
Mr. Justin Ongley, Teacher, New Milford High School  
Mrs. Shana Bergonzelli-Graham, Teacher, New Milford High School  
Mrs. Kristie O'Neill, Teacher, New Milford High School  
Mrs. Corby Kennison, Math Coach  
Mrs. Stephanie Zappone, Math Coach  
Cindy Bonnell, Teacher, Northville Elementary School  
Susan Brofford, Teacher, Northville Elementary School  
Patricia Thalassinis, Teacher, Northville Elementary School  
Lisa Montemurro, Teacher, Sarah Noble Intermediate School

RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK

2014 MAY 22 P 3:43

NEW MILFORD, CT

1.	<b>Call to Order</b> The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mr. Lawson.	<b>Call to Order</b>
2.	<b>Public Comment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Bob Coppola asked if he could get a copy of the scope and sequence, specifically for the Math program, and if the Board of Education would vote on it.</li> </ul>	<b>Public Comment</b>
3.	<b>Discussion and Possible Action</b>	<b>Discussion and Possible Action</b>
A.	<b>Review and Approval of Curriculum:</b>	<b>Review and Approval of Curriculum:</b>
1.	<b>Cut, Paste &amp; Copy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mrs. Marian said she has taught this course since it began over 25 years ago when a group was formed to create courses that would make high school work applicable to the real world. The class is an academic subject combined with a vocational strand. Mrs. Marian said it is run like a real world business.</li> </ul>	<b>Cut, Paste &amp; Copy</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Chastain said that Mrs. Marian should be very proud of the course. She has used their services through the PTO and finds that the class teaches important life skills. She feels it is one of the few classes offered that educates the whole child.</li> <li>• Mrs. Marian said that community advisory board members are a big part of the class. She said she wanted also to recognize Director of Technology Roberta Pratt for her help with technology tools and software updates. The students now have laptops loaned to them so that they can meet with clients in a real world setting. Ms. Pratt has truly helped them in working as a real business would.</li> <li>• Mr. Smith noted that students receive two credits for this class.</li> </ul>	
2.	<b>Humanities I</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Ongley said he has taught this class in the past and is proud of the challenging questions it asks of students. The course is primarily a senior elective.</li> <li>• Mrs. Shook said she found the curriculum very well written.</li> </ul>	<b>Humanities I</b>
3.	<b>Introduction to Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. O'Neill said this is a non-leveled course for all grades and is designed to give students a taste of what each of the other business classes has to offer and to get them thinking about possible careers in the business world.</li> <li>• Mrs. Bergonzelli-Graham said the class provides practical experiences and extensive team work which the students would be utilizing in the business world.</li> <li>• Mrs. Shook said she particularly liked the life skills and budgeting piece of the class.</li> <li>• Mrs. Chastain agreed saying this was a class that students would continue to refer back to over time.</li> <li>• Mr. Smith pointed out that this class and the Cut, Paste and Copy class provide career</li> </ul>	<b>Introduction to Business</b>

	<p>readiness and community ties to the outside workforce for students.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Grade 2 Math</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Lawson said discussion of this curriculum would be followed by a general update of the Grades K-5 program.</li> <li>• Mr. Smith said this curriculum is part of a restructuring of the K-5 math instruction. Since that cannot realistically be done en masse, Grade 2 was picked as a model.</li> <li>• Mrs. Shook said the copy she received has pages missing. Mr. Smith provided all committee members with a corrected copy. Mrs. Shook asked if this curriculum was aligned with common core. Mr. Smith said the curriculum incorporates the standards but it is our own scope and sequence and pacing guide. Assessments are not fully finalized yet but will evolve.</li> <li>• Mr. Lawson asked if this curriculum is a rewrite or if it starts from scratch and Mr. Smith said it starts from scratch as the last curriculum from 2006-07 was heavily based on older programs used. This curriculum is not tied to a particular program but to a scope and sequence of instructionally appropriate learning.</li> <li>• Mr. Spatola said he was pleased to see that basic skills and memorization was still included.</li> <li>• Mr. Smith said the new math teaching works to find a balance between facts and skills so that students can explain the concept of what they are learning not just memorize it. He added that this isn't really "new" math, just a focus on mathematical thinking and applied math skills.</li> <li>• Mr. Lawson said the development of cognitive skills is as important as the foundation.</li> <li>• Mrs. Chastain said she would find a general scope and sequence beneficial and asked how the various grades give input to the program. There is a pacing guide at the beginning of each unit that can be collated into a master</li> </ul>	<p><b>Grade 2 Math</b></p>

scope and sequence for the district. Mr. Smith said it varies by grade. Some of the input is driven by the classes offered at the higher level and the work students need to do to be ready for them. The new program is designed to cut down on the amount of review required from year to year. The goal is mastery each year.

- Mr. Spatola said he was glad to see the emphasis on forward movement and away from review and said he would like to see a summer program to continue this.
- Mrs. Chastain asked how the program is being communicated to all grades. Mr. Smith said a K-12 vertical math team was started last year where that conversation takes place. Math coaches also facilitate discussion. All teachers have been through an overview of the program with another scheduled. There have also been exploratory meetings and sample materials for teachers to view.
- Mrs. Brofford, a grade 1 teacher at NES, said the coaches provide continuity between schools to make sure all schools are on the same page.
- Mrs. Bonnell, a grade 2 teacher at NES, said she finds the curriculum very student centered. There is weekly collaboration with grade levels and coaches for assistance and the program was presented to parents at Curriculum Night.
- Mrs. Kennison said they are in the planning stages for parent involvement next year and know they need more in this area. They are discussing family math nights and attendance at PTO meetings as well as adding resources to the district website.
- Mrs. Zappone said the family math nights are designed to immerse the parents and students in math games etc. in order to experience the program, not as lectures.
- Mr. Spatola said he finds teacher emails very helpful.
- Mrs. Shook gave kudos to the curriculum.

**Mrs. Shook moved to bring the following curriculum to the full Board for approval: Cut, Paste & Copy; Humanities I; Introduction to**

**Motion made and passed unanimously to bring the following curriculum to the full Board for approval: Cut, Paste &**

	Business and Grade 2 Math seconded by Mrs. Chastain and passed unanimously.	Copy; Humanities I; Introduction to Business and Grade 2 Math.
4.	Items for Information and Discussion	Items for Information and Discussion
A.	<p>Math Update – Grades K-5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Smith handed out a curriculum history/timeline so the committee could see how the program selection process evolved over time and what was done to get to this point. Parent involvement was part of that. He said the program, <i>Investigations</i>, has a strong parent component and resources which includes built in parent letters to ensure consistency across schools and grades. Coaches participate in an active regional user's group for feedback and ideas. He said from 2007 the district's math scores have been in the 20's out of 24 DRG members so there is an urgency to get things moving in the right direction. <i>Investigations</i> was also presented at the March Committee on Learning meeting when it emerged as the most likely choice.</li> <li>Mrs. Chastain asked what parental input had been solicited since parental comfort can make or break a program. Mr. Smith said he had gone to each school's PTO meetings to share materials with parents but said that this type of math teaching is a big shift and the selection process focused mainly on research, evidence from successful districts, elementary math experts, and classroom teachers. He said other curriculums don't ask for parental input and that trust should be given to educators who have the knowledge and expertise in the field. With that said, Mr. Smith said he was open to suggestions and ideas on how to make the process more inclusive.</li> <li>Mrs. Chastain said she was confident that district staff would do well with any program as long as they had supports and asked what was being done in that area.</li> <li>Mr. Smith said he did think the particular program mattered; some are more successful</li> </ul>	<p>Math Update – Grades K-5</p>

than others in their content. He agreed supports are crucial. Teachers currently have access to all on-line resources and he expects to have materials in hand in July for their use. Budget funds cannot be expended before July 1<sup>st</sup>. Professional development is happening already this year. Next year's professional development is front loaded for the fall so that additional training can occur early in the year but continued support will be provided. Resources are being inventoried so that all teachers will have the materials they need in one place.

- Mrs. Thalassinis, a kindergarten teacher at NES, said she thinks having a strong math program is a gift to the teacher as well as the student. The new program has proven very successful in other districts so we know it is working.
- Mrs. Bonnell said she observed the program in New Canaan and was very impressed with the level of student learning taking place in heterogeneous classrooms.
- Mrs. Shook asked when the teachers would have the materials for the whole program. Mr. Smith said they have on-line access available to them now and can see other grades as well. Mrs. Shook asked if the parent book would be included as a resource and Mr. Smith said it would be.
- Mrs. Chastain asked if the parent book was on-line too and Mr. Smith said it is. He said the coaches have information for parents on their websites as well.
- Mrs. Chastain asked how parents know the websites exist. Mrs. Zappone said they had shared that information with all teachers and had hoped they would share it with their students' parents. Mrs. Chastain suggested additional work might need to be done in this area.
- Mrs. Zappone and Mr. Smith agreed and said they would make sure the sites were promoted.

5.	<b>Adjourn</b>  Mrs. Shook moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. seconded by Mrs. Chastain and passed unanimously.	<b>Adjourn</b>  Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.
----	--	--

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Lawson".

David Lawson, Chairperson  
Committee on Learning