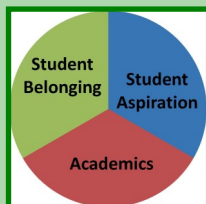




New Milford Public Schools
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776
860-355-8406
www.newmilfordps.org



New Milford High School

860-350-6647

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

Mr. Eric Williams, 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 9, Issue 11

May 2019

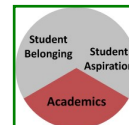
NMHS Team Wins CodeQuest Competition



On April 27, 2019, over 2000 students at various Lockheed Martin locations across the world competed in the CodeQuest computer programming competition. Students worked in groups to solve a set of programming problems in a limited amount of time. A total of twenty-eight teams from the New England area entered the Stratford, CT competition, including many private schools. First, second and third place prizes were awarded at each location in both the novice and advanced categories.

This is the third year New Milford High School teams have competed in this event. This year, NMHS computer teacher Shana Bergonzelli-Graham is proud to report that New Milford High School students Isabella Bianchi, Chris Caraluzzi and Malin Zucca took first place in the novice division of the competition. Well done!

HPS Research Project Featured at Tech Expo



A research project with HPS first graders designed by Library Media Specialist Lynn Sheeran was chosen to be presented to legislators at the capitol building in Hartford at the CECA (CT Educators Computer Association) Tech Expo on May 1st. Teachers and students were invited to showcase standards-based technology projects created by students. Projects considered for the Tech Expo were required to show "rich content infused with technology and learning experience within the classroom". The HPS project was initiated last year.

Per Mrs. Sheeran:

First, each student chose a 'bug' (insect, spider, worm). Then, using nonfiction text features in books on their reading level, they located facts about their bug. They were encouraged to find facts that were exciting; facts that make you say "wow".

The next piece was to write a paragraph using their facts, turning the wording to first person, as if they were the bug. Next, they typed it into their Google Doc account.

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HPS Research Project Featured at Tech Expo *continued*

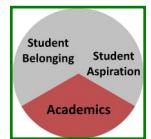
Then they drew a realistic picture of their bug. The last step was to use the Chatterpix Kids app on the iPad to record their bug 'talking'. They used the picture they drew, along with the paragraph they wrote, to record their voices."



Completed videos were shared with the class and sent home to their parents. Click on the following links, if you'd like to hear samples from a [cicada](#), [dragonfly](#), and [bark scorpion](#). The project continues this year with first graders researching sea animals.

Welcoming Spring with Baby Chicks at NES

Spring has finally arrived and so has the NES first grade's collection of baby chicks! The Grade 1 classrooms at Northville Elementary School were given about a dozen eggs per classroom. The eggs were kept in incubators that were set at a toasty 99 degrees for 21 days before the hatching began.



While the eager students awaited the arrival of the baby chicks, they spent some time studying the life cycle of chickens. They learned new terms like hatchlings and pipping. Pipping is when the baby begins to peck her way through the inside of the egg. Once the baby pips its way out of the egg, it is then called a hatchling. Students also learned catchy songs that when sang to the eggs supposedly helped them pip their way out. Twenty-one days later and a lot of singing, the first graders are proud parents of baby chicks! Now students have the chore of feeding the chicks and keeping them company until they are old enough to be brought back to the farm.

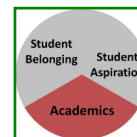


In Mrs. Gray's class, students named each chick after a favorite book character they read this year. "We read *Romeow and Drooliet*, the dog and cat version of the classic story the same day our first two chicks hatched," says Mrs. Gray. "So we decided to name them Romeo and Juliette. Another name was Arnie from *Arnie the Doughnut*, my students' all-time favorite picture book. Other names were Ivan from the *One and Only Ivan* and Pax from the self-titled book *Pax*."

Even though their time with the baby chicks is coming to an end, students are fortunate to be awaiting the arrival of baby ducks and turkeys in a couple of weeks. So stay tuned as these first graders will be domestic fowl experts before the end of the school year!

Student Gardeners Digging In

One sure sign of spring is the opening of school gardens. Both NES and SNIS have vibrant garden patches that students are more than happy to tend.



At NES, the “Plant Patch” is well established. In 2018, despite weather and rodent problems, the Patch had a hearty crop of produce, and all classes were able to taste and make some amazing recipes from their harvest. In the fall, everyone had the chance to taste carrots (purple and orange), tomatoes, peppers and string beans of a variety of colors. Kindergarteners took home herb sachets, first graders made tomatillo salsa and second graders made harvest soups and mashed potatoes. Last fall was the first time the second grade classes helped put the garden to bed for the winter, which basically means tearing out all the dead plants and putting them in the compost, removing cages, stakes and strings, and all other garden clean up. It was a success and the students loved helping and experiencing the work necessary to get the garden ready for spring.



Now that spring has finally arrived, the plan is to grow crops of carrots, potatoes, green onions, flowers, herbs, snap peas, tomatoes, beans, peppers, lettuces, tomatillos and more. Students are experimenting with a new kind of popcorn, six varieties of cherry tomatoes, and are trying quinoa and a cucumber called a cucamelon.

In early May, Eagle Scout Matt Marano built a 2-bin composter outside the Patch, one that will make it easier to store the garden refuse. Our Facilities department will help keep it stirred with their machines throughout the summer—which makes it healthier and more usable.



At SNIS, classes use a shared Google Doc to partner with another class for work in the garden. Donations from the PTO help provide the seeds, which are chosen in conjunction with the Pratt Center. The Center provides a diagram and seeds that will harvest quickly so that each student has the opportunity to taste what the classes grow. Because one of the seed choices this year was peas, the grade 5 classes of Mrs. LeClair and Mrs. Herring combined to build a trellis for the climbing plant. Students collected sticks of all sizes from around the playground, made a design, and built the trellis with twine.



SNIS students continue to check on the progress of the garden periodically. Mrs. Leclair says, “Because there has been so much rain this spring, the students have not needed to water the garden, but they will soon be discovering the pleasures of weeding.”



SNIS Students Participate in Musical “Re-Inventions” Program

At SNIS, Grade 3 Music Enrichment students applied their knowledge of sound production to create percussion walls in the Sound “Re-inventions” program. This is an 8-session program that allows students to flex their musicality and inventiveness. Students work with recycled items, creating new, musical uses for items that would otherwise be discarded. Participants problem solve how to attach items to a pallet, and then get to compose original music using these percussion walls. This original music must be notated, rehearsed, and performed.

Students then make a connection to the broader problem of garbage and our planet. They begin by watching the trailer for the documentary *Landfill Harmonic*. SNIS Music teacher Allison Parke says, “The trailer offers a new perspective to students. They get to see the impact of garbage on our planet and on people. The documentary highlights a community in Cateura, Paraguay, which has a youth orchestra. These students play on instruments made of recycled materials that have been scavenged from the landfill on which their village is built. The children from Paraguay have little else to elevate them from their destitute situation. Ingenuity, grit, perseverance, and music offer a pathway to more opportunity.”



During the final session of the Sound “Re-inventions” program, parents were invited to listen to students’ creativity at work. The students led the parents through what they had learned, how they created their percussion walls, and what form that expression takes. To see and hear the students in action, visit Mrs. Parke’s twitter account @mrsparkemusic.

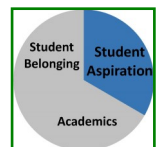
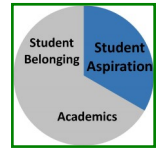
Space-age SNIS TAG

The design process, student collaboration, 3D printing for authentic purpose

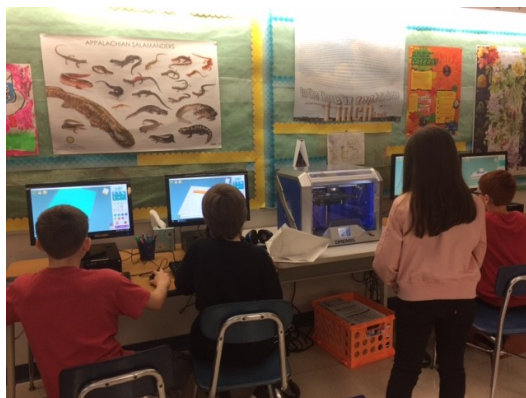
Over the past few months, Sarah Noble Intermediate School’s Talented and Gifted students have been using the [City X Project](#) educational workshop design process to draft and produce 3D models in various mediums. Student Scott S., grade 5, shares that the Project allows him “to take the engineering design process to the next level” in answering the following question: *Given the opportunity to create without limits, what kind of world would students create?* To answer, students were asked to take an idea and make it a reality.

An initial step has students considering who and what social problem their creation could help. Areas of energy collection and food shortages are just a couple examples of student concerns as they considered what their focus should be. Grade 4 student Miranda K. says while working on the project she “learned that I like helping people and thinking about situations to overcome issues.”

Imagination plays a key role to the progression of the project, as Cole T., grade 4, shares, “I am learning that you can use your imagination to do a lot.” By following prototype solutions



through blueprints, sketches, clay sculpting, and 3D design, students tested their prototypes at multiple stages along the design process to determine which ones worked best. To make this a reality, students had the opportunity to modify their prototypes based on collaboration and feedback with other TAG students.



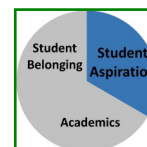
Various forms of prototypes found in clay, drawings, blueprints, and 3D models can be found in the SNIS TAG classroom. Student-drafted solutions included solar sails, specialized glasses, HVAC systems, automatic pet sitting services, boat portages, and space security systems. “The design process encourages problem-solving, as students co-create with their peers”, says TAG teacher Dr. Yvonne de st. Croix, “and using the 3D technology allows students to bridge a gap between digital and physical worlds.”

The digital copies students created will be shared with [Made in Space](#), which looks at international space station needs. Students Emmie R., grade 3, and Miranda K., grade 4, shared they would like to modify their projects more and make life-size models. Fifth grader Himaani P. was excited to “solve other people’s problems with the design process.” Fourth grader Heather B. summarized the purpose of this industrial skills-based project, which was to “build some things together, creating, while having fun.”

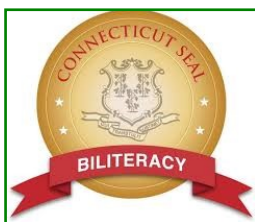


Celebrating National Decision Day

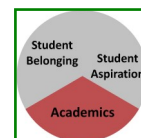
May 1 is National College Decision Day, the deadline for students to confirm their admission and choose which college to attend if they plan to pursue higher education. It's also a day when high school seniors “announce” their decision publicly by donning spirit wear from their selected college. NMHS seniors were happy to join the celebration.



NMHS Students Earn Seal of Biliteracy

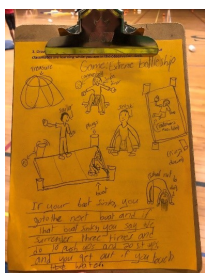


On June 6, 2017, Governor Malloy signed into law Public Act 17-29 establishing the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy to recognize public high school graduates meeting rigorous standards and demonstrating bilingualism and biliteracy in English (by completing all English Language Arts requirements for graduation) and one or more other languages. Proficiency in the second language is measured by success on a state-approved assessment such as the Advanced Placement (AP) World Language and Culture exam or the Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) measure. New Milford High School is very proud to announce that 27 graduating students have achieved this outstanding accomplishment.

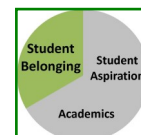


NMHS World Languages Department Chair Jessica Ward says, “These students have taken their language learning above the expectations of the classroom and school. They have achieved a second - and sometimes third - language level of proficiency and cultural knowledge that go beyond casual everyday conversations. They have also acquired skills in reading and writing in the target language that allow them to employ critical thinking when interacting with others. The Seal of Biliteracy makes this high achievement evident and puts these talented students ahead of other high school graduates.” Students will be recognized for their achievement at a Board of Education reception on June 18.

SNIS PE Students Play Extreme Battleship



SNIS students took the familiar board game *Battleship* to a fun new level in their PE classes this spring. In case you are not familiar with the game, players search for opponents' battleships, tracking hits and misses with pegs on an ocean grid game board. As part of their cooperative games unit, SNIS students formed teams to play a game in a more extreme form.



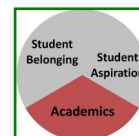
In their version of the game, SNIS PE teachers added some modifications from the regular game of *Battleship* to develop a live action version and increase student activity. The students focused on developing strategies that would make their teams successful and they were able to demonstrate teamwork by performing cooperative jobs. During the activity, student



“sailors” were put in charge of protecting the battleship “plugs” and trying to knock down other team’s plugs, the student “diver” was in charge of collecting cannon balls to deliver back to the sailors, and the “jet skier” was in charge of protecting the team’s treasure chest in the form of a hula hut. Students enjoyed the exercise, and the good natured competition.



Graduation Requirements Finalized



The March issue of *Spotlight* talked about changes to graduation requirements starting with the Class of 2023, our current 8th graders, brought about by the enactment of Public Act 17-42. At its May 21, 2019 meeting, the New Milford Board of Education finalized the form those changes will take for New Milford High School graduates.

Students graduating in 2019-22 have no changes to the current 26 credit requirement or their makeup. Students graduating in 2023 and beyond will need to complete 25 total credits (1 less than required presently) in a variety of clusters including: 9 credits in the humanities including civics and the arts; 9 credits in science, technology and mathematics; 1 credit in physical education and wellness; 1 credit in health and safety education; 1 credit in world languages; 3 credits in an elective cluster including practical or fine arts and personal finance; and 1 credit of “mastery-based diploma assessment”

After a lengthy discussion over several meetings, the Board voted to allow students to earn a possible 2 credits from successful completion (grade of B-/80) of middle school Geometry and/or both Part A and Part B of the same World Language course in grades 7 and 8. These courses are vertically aligned with their counterparts at the high school, meaning they are in fact the same course that students would take there.

The overall structure of the requirements is designed to provide different pathways and more choice as students work towards graduation. It is less prescriptive to students than the current graduation requirements are. Assistant Superintendent Alisha DiCorpo says, “This represents a paradigm shift towards student individualism and choice. It is less about rigid restrictions in credit attainment and more about multiple, flexible pathways to learning.”

The Board and district administration are well aware that these are significant changes for our students and parents, and will be working hard over the next several months to communicate them fully. [Click here to view the complete Board Policy 6146 Graduation Requirements.](#)

Sip and See: All About Phonics

On Friday, May 17th teachers at Northville Elementary School participated in a *Sip and See* event to get a sneak peek into the new phonics program that is to be implemented next school year in each K-2 building. At the event, teachers sipped tea and coffee while they enjoyed a snack and got a firsthand look at the posters, charts, units, and materials included in the K-1 Teachers College Units of Study in Phonics.

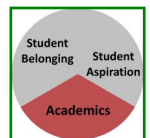
This year several teachers at NES and HPS piloted two different phonics programs with the hope of finding the program that better aligned with the current reading and writing curriculum. It was also important that the program proved to be engaging, rigorous, and teacher friendly. After the pilot, which lasted from September to March, the Teachers College (TC) Units of Study in Phonics was chosen as the recommended program.

“I held this event so that all teachers could have a first-hand look at the materials, units, and additional resources provided within the TC phonics units of study,” said Kate DeBarber, the K-2 literacy coach who hosted the event. She went on to say, “I wanted all teachers to have an opportunity to see what they would be using next year so they could envision how they might begin to prepare for instruction and arrange their room. I also wanted to build some excitement around the units of study which I am very passionate about myself.”

The event was attended by much of the staff at NES who were happy to have had an opportunity to check out the materials before the next school year. Another *Sip and See* was held Friday, May 24th at HPS so all teachers there could have the same opportunity as their NES colleagues to learn about the Teachers College Units of Study in Phonics prior to its implementation next year.

SMS LMC Displays Pique Student Interest

SMS Library Media Specialist Susan Baerny is always looking for ways to draw student eyes (and interest) to the library. The hall display window is prime space for just that purpose as a few recent examples show.



This spring, students walking by saw a ceremonial dress, awards, newspapers and sheet music on display and were asked to identify which were primary and secondary sources. “Since 7th and 8th grade students focus on primary sources for their research projects I thought this would be a fun way to test their knowledge while having an interactive display,” says Mrs. Baerny. “The window was created with a collection of items that I have gathered throughout the years, including a WWII Ration Book and a Battle of Normandy map that a teacher friend in France had given me. As a bonus, once I put up this display, I got offers of great items from colleagues to include.”

The newest LMC window display is a collection of books and promotional photos of upcoming author events. The flowers in the cheerful display were made by students of Mrs. Mosey. Mrs. Baerny says, “Their talent makes this display very eye catching. I think the best displays are those that students assist with. This display is no exception.”

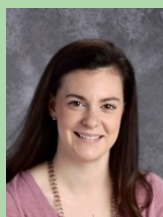


The SMS PTO has generously sponsored the two authors featured and Mrs. Baerny used the display to create interest and buzz. Author Lisa Greenwald will present to 6th grade students this month, as will author Nora Raleigh Baskin. Ms. Baskin’s book Nine, Ten was featured in this year’s annual SMS Battle of the Books. Speaking of, the Battle of the Books final competition was held on May 24. One team per grade was crowned champion. Congratulations to Team 6 White “The Bookworms”, Team 7 Blue “The Team That Already Won”, and Team 8 Blue “The Soviets”.

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



Gail Burger



Kate DeBarber



Sarah Divine



Kim Foss



Mary Lavoie



Nancy Mowrey

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](#).

Gwen Gallagher Named New Principal at Northville Elementary School



On May 21, 2019, the New Milford Board of Education appointed Mrs. Gwen Gallagher as the next principal of Northville Elementary School, affirming Interim Superintendent Stephen Tracy's recommendation.

Mrs. Gallagher served as a classroom teacher for the Danbury Public Schools for sixteen years before being named as an assistant principal at the King Street Campus, where she has been a leader for the past five years. She earned her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Plymouth State College and her master's degree in Early Childhood Education from Central CT State University.

"We are fortunate to be able to welcome a leader of Mrs. Gallagher's caliber into our New Milford school family," noted Dr. Tracy. "Her colleagues in Danbury had nothing but high praise for her skill as a teacher and the quality of her leadership at the King Street School."

"I would like to thank the New Milford Board of Education for this exciting opportunity," said Mrs. Gallagher. "I feel my twenty-one years of experience in the classroom and in leadership have given me a solid foundation to support teaching and learning at Northville Elementary School. I look forward to working alongside the staff and getting to know the students and their families."

Mrs. Gallagher was selected from among twenty-nine applicants following a series of interviews with teachers, administrators and members of the Board of Education. She is expected to begin her new duties on July 2 of this year.

Superintendent Search Update - Board of Education Selects Dr. Kerry Parker



At its regular meeting on May 21, 2019, the New Milford Board of Education unanimously voted to authorize Board Chair David A. Lawson and the Board counsel to enter into negotiations with Dr. Kerry Parker regarding a proposed contract as Superintendent of New Milford Public Schools, subject to final Board approval. It is anticipated that the Board will be voting to appoint the Superintendent officially at or by the next regular Board meeting of June 18, 2019.

Dr. Parker was selected from a pool of 26 applicants nationwide, including within the state of Connecticut. Throughout the process, the Board of Education relied heavily on the feedback gathered in the Leadership Profile Report for the district, which was developed through focus group input and online survey research earlier this year in conjunction with consultants from the executive search firm Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates.

Dr. Parker is a seasoned educator, with over 35 years' experience in public education – 21 years as an administrator and 14 years as a teacher. She spent the early years of her educational career in Texas and New Mexico as a teacher of theater and English. She moved to Colorado in 1991 where she continued her teaching career before moving into administrative positions.

In 2005, Dr. Parker relocated to Connecticut where she served first as an assistant principal at Ella T. Grasso Technical High School, then as Principal at Grasso Technical and Vinal Technical High School until 2011. During that time, Dr. Parker was named a Connecticut State Board of Education Administrator of the Year for the Technical High School System and she received a Connecticut State Board of Education Achievement Award. In 2011, Dr. Parker moved to New Mexico where she was named Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for the Clovis Municipal School District.

Dr. Parker holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Communication and Theatre and has earned a MaEd and EdD in Educational Leadership. Her dissertation was titled *An Investigation of Southwestern Area Principals and the Enactment of Crisis Management Plans in High Schools*.

"It is an honor to have been selected to serve as Superintendent of New Milford Public Schools", says Dr. Parker. "I look forward to meeting everyone and becoming an active member of the community as we partner to ensure our students acquire the necessary skills to be successful in the 21st century."

Welcome to New Milford Dr. Parker!



New Milford Public Schools

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

Dr. Stephen Tracy
Interim 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

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

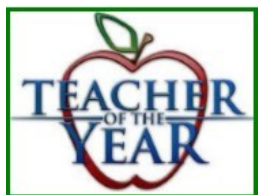
Mr. Brian McCauley

Mr. J.T. Schemm

Teacher Appreciation Month

The New Milford community doesn't wait until May for teacher appreciation. Parents and other community members nominate staff throughout the year for monthly recognition by the New Milford BOE. From those nominated, one member from each school is randomly chosen and recognized as a district "Star". This month, we thought we'd share just a few of the quotes from those making the nominations.

- ◆ This teacher goes to great lengths to ensure that his students get a great experience in his classes. Students thrive in the challenging student-centered environment that he provides.
- ◆ This teacher is enthusiastic and works tireless hours, including many many after school, working with students who need that extra push. She is a veteran teacher who loves what she does and it shows every day in her classroom.
- ◆ This teacher has helped my daughter in ways no one has before. She uses practical, hands-on work that incorporates the topics and she gives real world examples as well.
- ◆ This teacher is passionate about teaching each one of her students. She goes out of her way to motivate and help them all.
- ◆ This teacher is caring towards all his students and makes them feel happy. He is always smiling right when you walk in the door and the smile never leaves his face.
- ◆ This teacher is extremely dedicated and cares deeply about her students, as well as being very accessible and supportive to parents. It means a lot to know that my child is being taken care of and that she is learning and progressing.
- ◆ This teacher goes above and beyond every single day to accommodate all of her students. There just aren't enough words to thank her for all that she has done and continues to do.



It's not too late to show your appreciation for all our teachers do. Nominations for New Milford's Teacher of the Year close soon. Make yours today by [completing the nomination form found here.](#)

May brings

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.