

**New Milford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2018
Sarah Noble Intermediate School – Library Media Center**

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NEW MILFORD, CT

Present:	Mr. David A. Lawson, Chairman Mr. Bill Dahl Mr. Brian McCauley Mrs. Tammy McInerney Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan Mr. J.T. Schemm
Absent:	Mrs. Angela C. Chastain Mr. Joseph Failla Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach

Also Present:	Mr. Joshua Smith, Superintendent of Schools Mr. Nick Caruso, CAFE Senior Staff Associate for Field Service Ms. Ellamae Baldelli, Human Resources Director (at 4:30 p.m.)
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1. A.	Call to Order Pledge of Allegiance The Board workshop special meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Mr. Lawson. The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence immediately followed the call to order.	Call to Order A. Pledge of Allegiance
2.	Public Comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was none. 	Public Comment
3. A.	Discussion CAFE Senior Staff Associate for Field Service Nick Caruso will facilitate discussion regarding measurement of Board goals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Caruso asked the Board members for input on their expectations regarding the discussion about Board goals. • Mr. Lawson said he would be interested in discussing a road map/timeline for replacing Mr. Smith, who is leaving New Milford to take another position. • Mrs. McInerney said she would like to discuss 	Discussion A. CAFE Senior Staff Associate for Field Service Nick Caruso will facilitate discussion regarding measurement of Board goals.

	<p>what the Board should focus on for accomplishments while Mr. Smith is still here and rolling on to a new superintendent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Dahl said he thought with the changing of administrators, a goal could be about building a cohesive group with administration.• Mr. McCauley said he would like to discuss the partisan fracture of the Board during budget season and work on that.• Mrs. Monaghan said she would like to focus on public relations work and how the Board can better inform the community of the good work of the district.• Mr. Schemm said he is feeling beat up after the last budget round and wonders what the Board can do to get ahead public relations wise to fix the “spirit of no” in the community.• Mr. Caruso led a Board self-evaluation to inform future plans. The Board reflected on its performance in the areas of Vision, focusing on student achievement; Community Leadership; Board Operations; Ethics; and Board/Superintendent Team.• Regarding student achievement, Mr. Smith suggested that a next step for the Board members would be to more specifically define what student achievement means for them, what indicators for success will be used, and what type of information the Board would like to see and talk about.• Mr. Dahl said that measurements are not always quantifiable in his opinion, for example in areas such as social emotional growth.• Mr. Caruso asked if the Board had a policy manual that supports Board vision.• Consensus was that the Board does, but there was some frustration with the number of policies mandated by the state.• Mr. Smith credited the Board with the fact that policies are reviewed regularly and that conversations happen frequently regarding how they can be adjusted to nurture students and promote instruction.	
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- Mr. Caruso asked if the Board promoted high quality instruction as the foundation for achievement.
- Mr. Lawson said this is expressed through administrative work.
- Mrs. Monaghan said she thinks there is great work being done but hears too much negative feedback out in public. She wants to fix that.
- Mr. Smith said the Board protected instruction in spite of large budget cuts. ReVision work, instructional coaches, administrative support, and professional development and curriculum supplies all factor into quality instruction.

- Mr. Caruso asked if the Board thought they did a good job of communicating their goals of high achievement.
- Mrs. Monaghan said she thought they communicated well to staff and students but not to the public.
- Mr. Dahl said they have workshops throughout the year that are open to the public. They are on different topics such as assessment results.
- Mrs. McInerney said the monthly district newsletter is a great snapshot of district work.
- Mr. Smith said he thought the district did a good job communicating to people who have ties to the district but the question is how to get others to view the message.
- Mrs. Monaghan suggested printing the newsletter for all town committees, realtors, and the public library.

- Regarding community leadership, sharing with the public and listening to their perspective, Mr. Schemm said he thought the community forum held during the budget process was helpful to inform measures the Board subsequently took.
- Mr. Dahl said it would be more helpful to hear from the public in January when the budget is being adopted, but so far they have not been successful in getting the public to attend.
- Mr. Smith said they tend to hear a lot from a small constituent group. The challenge is to define who the Board's total constituent group

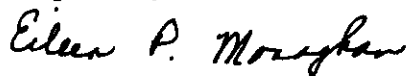
is and then determine how to engage the silent majority of that group.

- Mr. Lawson talked about the change in the mode of communication today. Often social media overrides official communication messages. He said the Board needs to go to the people but he is not sure the best way to do that. He suggested engaging various community groups as one solution.
- Mr. McCauley suggested the Board become more engaged on social media, at least in an informational capacity.
- Mr. Caruso said CAFE offers a teaching module on community engagement that the Board might find helpful.
- Mr. Caruso asked if the Board promoted the accomplishments of the district. Members agreed they did, through the monthly newsletter and student and staff recognition at monthly meetings.
- Mr. Caruso asked the Board if they promoted a fiscally responsible budget. Members were strongly in agreement.
- Mr. Dahl said there is sometimes a lack of unity within the Board that has a negative effect and makes it harder to get public buy in.
- Mr. Caruso asked if the Board supported its own and district professional development.
- Mr. Smith said the Board provides budget support for district professional development.
- Mr. Lawson said the Board has regularly scheduled workshops.
- Mr. Dahl said he likes the current set up of district professional development.
- The Board members discussed how party lines sometimes cause fractures within the Board, especially at budget time, and can strain Board relationships.

The Board recessed at 5:00 p.m. and returned to session at 5:37 p.m.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board discussed the challenges that they will face in transitioning and hiring a new superintendent. The district’s current Theories of Action were discussed in terms of future action and their place with a new superintendent. • Mr. Lawson said the Theories of Action, as presented by Mr. Smith, were approved by the Board. They are supported through many current district initiatives. • Mr. Smith said the district has a strong Central Office cabinet of administrators who are doing good work for the district and will be a valuable support going forward. • Mrs. McInerney asked Mr. Smith what his priorities are for the time that he remains in New Milford. He said they are to hire a new principal for HPS, have a smooth opening of schools, and bring a few legal issues to final resolution if possible. 	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Mrs. Monaghan moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 p.m., seconded by Mr. McCauley and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 p.m.</p>

Respectfully submitted:



Eileen P. Monaghan
Assistant Secretary
New Milford Board of Education