New Milford Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes February 23, 2021

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Present:	Mr. Joseph Failla	9 de 1º
	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach	A FE
	Mr. Pete Helmus (via Zoom)	E C
	Mr. Brian McCauley	25
	Mrs. Tammy McInerney	EB -
	Mrs. Eileen P. Monaghan (at 7:26 p.m.)	
	Mrs. Cynthia Nabozny	2021
	Mrs. Olga I. Rella (via Zoom)	

Also Present:	Ms. Alisha DiCorpo, Superintendent of Schools	
	Mrs. Catherine Calabrese, Interim Assistant Superintendent	
	Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Operations and Fiscal Services	
	Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services	
	Mr. Kevin Munrett, Director of Facilities	
	Mr. Brandon Rush, Director of Technology	
	Mrs. Catherine Gabianelli, Director of Human Resources	
	Mr. Kevin Munrett, Facilities Director	
	Mr. Nestor Aparicio, Assistant Facilities Director	

1.	Call to Order	Call to Order
A.	Pledge of Allegiance	A. Pledge of Allegiance
	 Prior to the Call to Order, Mrs. Faulenbach reviewed protocols for the meeting. Regular meetings have a 7:00 p.m. start. Anyone who is unable to speak during public comment may email the Board at the address provided on the agenda. Closed captioning is available via Zoom. The regular meeting of the New Milford Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mrs. Faulenbach. The Pledge of Allegiance immediately followed. 	
2.	Recognition	Recognition
A.	NMPS Stars: Carol Couch, Stacey Haleks, Donna Molinaro, Daisy Norlander, Adam Radday, Candice Schiesel, Stephanie Wilson	A. NMPS Stars: Carol Couch, Stacey Haleks, Donna Molinaro, Daisy Norlander, Adam Radday, Candice Schiesel, Stephanie Wilson

	Ms. DiCorpo congratulated the monthly "Stars" and read the comments submitted by the person who nominated them.	
3.	 Megan Byrd said she has concerns about in person return to school without meeting the 6 foot minimum for social distancing. She thinks the focus should first be on helping full remote students return to partial learning. She also hopes the district has plans to help return anxious students. Carolyn Hyde, parent of three SNIS students, said she has done research and she feels that ventilation is key. She is concerned with having 130 students in the cafeteria at one time. She does not feel that the reopening plan has been parent friendly this time from administration. She appreciates the teachers and building administrators but wishes there was more parent input. Julie Sterling said she is happy to see K-5 students return and asked when that will happen for middle and high school students. 	Public Comment
4.	 Mrs. Mandi MacDonald said the K-8 PTOs are getting ready to open up book fairs this coming month. The K-5 schools are also running readathons through February and into the first week of March to help foster a love of reading. Hill & Plain and Northville are eagerly awaiting reopening! They cannot wait to celebrate character day next Friday as the first spirit day all together since last school year. Sarah Noble is also eager to start doing more, like flowergrams, once the building reopens! The K-8 PTOs are working hard to get photos from teachers and parents, in school and remote for this years' yearbooks. The HS PTO is gearing up for class wars with All Aboard Pizzeria every two weeks through March and April. 	PTO Report

	 The New Milford Spiritwear store is open for six more days! There are all of last fall's favorites and a few new ones including many bright colorful options for spring. All proceeds go to the PTO scholarship fund. PTO also still has some discount cards available. They are good through the end of August. There are many great local businesses that have offered great discounts! All proceeds go to the scholarship fund. Mrs. Faulenbach thanked the PTO for all they do to support our schools. 	
5.	Approval of Minutes	Approval of Minutes
Α.	Approval of the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes:	A. Approval of the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes:
	1. Budget Hearing and Adoption Minutes January 19, 20, 26, 27, 2021	1. Budget Hearing and Adoption Minutes January 19, 20, 26, 27, 2021
	Mrs. Nabozny moved to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: BOE Budget Hearing and Adoption Minutes January 19, 20, 26, 27, 2021, seconded by Mr. McCauley.	Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: BOE Budget Hearing and Adoption Minutes
	The motion passed unanimously.	January 19, 20, 26, 27, 2021.
	2. Special Meeting Minutes February 10, 2021	2. Special Meeting Minutes February 10, 2021
	Mr. McCauley moved to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: Special Meeting Minutes February 10, 2021, seconded by Mrs. McInerney.	Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the following Board of Education Meeting Minutes: Special Meeting Minutes February 10, 2021.
	The motion passed unanimously.	
6.	Superintendent's Report	Superintendent's Report
	Ms. DiCorpo said the district is proud to play a role in New Milford's participation in Sustainable CT, a town-wide sustainability certification initiative that recognizes	

municipalities for their economic, environmental, and equity-based actions, programs, and processes. Last Thursday, Stephen Gass, a town resident who is co-managing the Sustainable CT project for New Milford, Sunday Fisher, a volunteer and project strategist, Cathy Calabrese, and Jason O'Connor, along with nine of our NMHS students worked on a plan for the project theme, guidelines, logistics and, importantly, ways in which youth can help to promote the project to encourage participation. Cathy will be meeting with the district's art teachers tomorrow to share this information with them.

- In gearing up for Read Across America on March 1, Mrs. Calabrese and I read a story virtually and uploaded it to be read to students on this special day to honor Dr. Seuss.
- We are one of the last districts in the area to open in full PK-5. We are working in conjunction with the New Milford Health Director and will be conducting walkthroughs this week. Ms. DiCorpo thanked district and building leadership for the tremendous amount of careful planning put into the reopen. About 85% of families plan to return students to in person learning. All partitions have been installed PK-2. Additional tables with partitions have been purchased for the cafeterias to allow seating every other seat. There will be a virtual Parent Night this Thursday regarding the reopening and another one on March 10 for SNIS. We will be holding a parent evening in early April with regards to remote instruction and plans to transition students back to in person learning. A survey will go out on Friday to high school and middle school families to start planning for the possibility of their return in April.
- The Governor has announced vaccination sign ups for 55 and older and teaching staff beginning on March 1. The New Milford Health Department has our rosters, and will sort as needed. They are working to set up clinics for our staff.

7. Board Chairman's Report

Board Chairman's Report

- Mrs. Faulenbach said she wanted to officially congratulate Ms. DiCorpo on being named Superintendent.
- She reminded Board members and the public of the new 7:00 p.m. start to regular Board meetings.
- She said the Board does not approve subcommittee minutes but she noted a typo in last month's Operations minutes for the record. During a discussion of the calendar at Operations, a comment about Columbus Day was made by Mrs. Monaghan, not Mrs. Nabozny.
- The 2021-22 budget was unanimously adopted by the Board after public presentations. It will be presented to the Town Council and Board of Finance this Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said she hopes to bring forward a Board calendar through this June outlining projects, including a Board workshop on goals.

8. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Exhibit A: Personnel – Certified, Non-Certified Appointments, Resignations and Leaves of Absence dated February 23, 2021

Mrs. McInerney moved to approve Exhibit A: Personnel – Certified, Non-Certified Appointments, Resignations and Leaves of Absence as of February 23, 2021, seconded by Mr. McCauley.

• There were no questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. | Monthly Reports

- 1. Budget Position dated January 31, 2021
- 2. Purchase Resolution: D-743
- 3. Request for Budget Transfers

Mrs. Nabozny moved to approve monthly reports: Budget Position dated January 31, 2021; Purchase

Discussion and Possible Action

A. Exhibit A: Personnel – Certified, Non-Certified Appointments, Resignations and Leaves of Absence dated February 23, 2021

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve Exhibit A: Personnel – Certified, Non-Certified Appointments, Resignations and Leaves of Absence as of February 23, 2021.

- **B.** Monthly Reports
 - 1. Budget Position dated January 31, 2021
 - 2. Purchase Resolution: D-743
 - 3. Request for Budget Transfers

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve monthly reports: Budget Position dated

Resolution D-743; and Request for Budget Transfers, seconded by Mr. McCauley.

 Mrs. Faulenbach said these were also reviewed at Operations. COVID expenditures will be discussed later on this evening.

The motion passed unanimously.

C. | Gifts & Donations

- 1. New Milford PTO Exhibit B
- 2. Scholastic Books
- 3. Anonymous Donor

Mr. McCauley moved to approve the New Milford PTO – Exhibit B donation in the amount of \$4,799.95; seconded by Mrs. Nabozny.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Monaghan moved to approve the Scholastic Books donation in the amount of \$4,900.00; seconded by Mr. McCauley.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. McInerney moved to approve the Anonymous Donor donation in the amount of \$1,000.00; seconded by Mr. McCauley.

The motion passed unanimously.

 On behalf of the Board, Mrs. Faulenbach thanked the donors and said the Board is very grateful for the support of the community.

D. Policy for Approval

1. 4118.112/4218.112 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

Mrs. Nabozny moved to approve Policy 4118.112/4218.112 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment, seconded by Mr. McCauley.

 Mrs. Faulenbach said this revision was discussed at Policy. January 31, 2021; Purchase Resolution: D-743; and Request for Budget Transfers.

C. Gifts & Donations

- 1. New Milford PTO-Exhibit B
- 2. Scholastic Books
- 3. Anonymous Donor

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the New Milford PTO – Exhibit B donation in the amount of \$4,799.95.

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the Scholastic Books donation in the amount of \$4,900.00.

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the Anonymous Donor donation in the amount of \$1,000.00.

D. Policy for Approval

1. 4118.112/4218.112 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve Policy 4118.112/4218.112 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment.

The motion passed unanimously.

E. | Approval of the Following Curricula

- 1. English III CP & Honors
- 2. Journalism I CP
- 3. Journalism II CP
- 4. Grade 6 Social Studies
- 5. Grade 7 Social Studies
- 6. Grade 8 Social Studies
- 7. Spanish III CP & Honors
- 8. French III CP & Honors

Mrs. McInerney moved to approve the following curricula:

- 1. English III CP & Honors
- 2. Journalism I CP
- 3. Journalism II CP
- 4. Grade 6 Social Studies
- 5. Grade 7 Social Studies
- 6. Grade 8 Social Studies
- 7. Spanish III CP & Honors
- 8. French III CP & Honors

Seconded by Mrs. Nabozny.

There was no discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

F. | Staff Laptop COVID-19 Equipment Request

Mr. McCauley moved to approve the Staff Laptop COVID-19 Equipment Request in the amount of \$225,186.00; seconded by Mr. Failla.

- Mrs. Faulenbach said all COVID expenditures are approved publicly by the Board for transparency.
- Mr. Giovannone said the amount requested is the difference between the total cost and the Chromebooks previously requested which will not be purchased.
- Mr. Rush said the Chromebook total was \$178,564.

E. Approval of the Following Curricula

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- 8. French III CP & Honors

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the following curricula:

- 1. English III CP & Honors
- 2. Journalism I CP
- 3. Journalism II CP
- 4. Grade 6 Social Studies
- 5. Grade 7 Social Studies
- 6. Grade 8 Social Studies
- 7. Spanish III CP & Honors
- 8. French III CP & Honors

F. Staff Laptop COVID-19 Equipment Request

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the Staff Laptop COVID-19 Equipment Request in the amount of \$225,186.00.

- Mrs. Faulenbach asked if this purchase will take care of the computer issues the staff has with the Chromebooks.
- Mr. Rush said it will and provide more functionality as well.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked about the life expectancy of the laptops. Mr. Rush said it is 5 to 8 years.
- Mr. McCauley said he likes this purchase. He said he has personal experience and that it is impossible to teach using the Chromebook. He said it is fine for taking classes though.
- Mr. Failla agreed with Mr. McCauley. He said we are asking so much of our teachers in this remote learning situation. This purchase will make it easier. He wishes it had been done sooner.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked about timing. Mr. Rush said once approved, the laptops should be received by late March.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked if the request is based on staff feedback. Mr. Rush said some staff feedback and from the Technology Integrators.
- Mrs. McInerney said she is happy with the purchase and the fact that they will replace desktops as well. Mr. Rush said every teacher will get a new laptop and desktops will not be replaced as they reach end of life.

The motion passed unanimously.

G. | COVID-19 Related Materials Request

Mrs. McInerney moved to approve the COVID-19 Related Materials Request in the amount of \$15,868.00; seconded by Mrs. Monaghan.

- Mrs. Faulenbach noted this is for additional desk shields and asked if there are more to come. Ms. DiCorpo said this order is for additional shields identified after the first walkthrough of the PK-5 schools. There may be more to come in March based on the survey information from the middle and high school.
- Mrs. Nabozny asked if they are the three sided type and Ms. DiCorpo said they are.

G. COVID-19 Related Materials Request

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the Staff Laptop COVID-19 Equipment Request in the amount of \$15,868.00.

- Mrs. Faulenbach said it makes sense to order in stages as we go through the process. She asked for an updated COVID related list for March.
- Mr. Giovannone said these purchases leave about \$100,000 in local funding already requested.
 There is still \$787,000 left to draw against as needed. This is detailed in the audit report memo.
- Mrs. Faulenbach noted that there are additional grant funds available, different pockets so to speak. Mr. Giovannone said that is correct and he will revisit these at Operations in March.

The motion passed unanimously.

H. | Human Resources Support Proposal

Mrs. McInerney moved to approve the Human Resources Support Proposal in the amount of \$16,500.00; seconded by Mr. McCauley.

 Mrs. Faulenbach said this was discussed at Operations.

The motion passed unanimously.

I. | Lillis Building

Mrs. Nabozny moved to approve the Relocation Feasibility Study in the amount of \$6,500.00, seconded by Mr. McCauley.

• Mrs. Faulenbach said the Lillis Building has been discussed at Facilities for several years now. A move to SNIS in an emergency fashion should the boiler fail was discussed about a year and a half ago. General figures were provided but it was not a data driven plan. This feasibility study is separate from the full enrollment study which is being funded by the Town. It is not a budgeted item by the Board so the cost will need to come from the operating budget. She asked if a favorable end of year balance is expected.

H. Human Resources Support Proposal

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the Human Resources Support Proposal in the amount of \$16,500.00.

I. Lillis Building

Motion made and passed unanimously to approve the Relocation Feasibility Study in the amount of \$6,500.00.

у. А.	Regulation Revisions:	Discussion A. Regulation Revisions:
9.	The motion passed unanimously. Items for Information and Discussion	Items for Information and
	enrollment can be a funny thing depending on other factors over time.	
	have. He thought the dollar amount was reasonable as well. He had a caveat in that	
	Mr. Helmus said the enrollment does show a buffer that looks reasonable. The independent assessment by professionals will be good to	
	driven decision for the long term. She asked that information be provided as it is received.	
	 and the architectural study. Until those are done we won't know the parameters. Mrs. Faulenbach said it is crucial to have a data 	
	Ms. DiCorpo said it is a three prong approach: the mini enrollment study, the feasibility study and the architectural study. Until these are done	
	might happen and whether or not it can be done while school is in session.	
	 the right direction finally. Mrs. McInerney agrees that a long term plan is needed and asked when realistically the move 	
	 Mr. McCauley agreed this has to happen. If not this summer, at least we need to start moving in 	
	at an additional cost. It is important to have the data, numbers and a proper plan to provide professional guidance.	
	to get started. Step 1 is the feasibility study. Eventually an architectural study will be needed	
	 then not long after. Mrs. Faulenbach said they have had many meetings with the Town about this and we need 	
	done correctly. The enrollment study shows the space is there and won't be needed in the future. He was hoping for a summer move but, if not,	
	Lillis back to the Town the better but he understands it is a big move and needs to be	4
	Mr. Failla said he has been on this issue for years. He said the sooner the Board can turn	
	 Mr. Giovannone said yes. This cost would be charged to Professional Services and a transfer done at the end of the year if needed. 	

- 1. 4118.112/4218.112 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment
- 2. 5145.7 Procedures for Reports and Complaints of Sexual Harassment of Students
- These revisions were discussed at Policy.

R. Textbook Previews

- Mr. Failla said he has been told that students like a hard copy but he would like to see a more digital component. He said the Board is responsible for every book in our schools so it is important to take the time to look at what they are approving, especially given their cost.
- Mrs. Calabrese said digital resources are used to support the text.

C. Town of New Milford Audit Report dated June 30, 2020

- Mrs. Faulenbach said this was a good audit report, and represents a lot of hard work.
- Mr. Giovannone said there were no material weaknesses identified. He will be working with the Town to initiate withdrawals to the Board side to close out the balances now that the audit is complete.
- Mrs. Monaghan asked if mental health issues can be considered a COVID related expense, specifically to bring ESS back to the high school.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked if Mrs. Monaghan is requesting a permanent return of the program.
- Ms. DiCorpo said a concern is that there is a plan in place already at the high school to address these needs. She is concerned that this would be supplanting the budget.
- Mrs. McInerney asked, taking ESS out of the discussion for the moment, if needs are identified with students' returning in the fall, could additional temporary resources for psychologists, social workers etc. be allowed to supplement.
- Ms. DiCorpo said yes, that could be part of the needs assessment for the ESSER II funds.
- Mrs. Monaghan asked for the timeline that will be used to evaluate student needs.

1. 4118.112/4218.112 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

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2. 5145.7 Procedures for Reports and Complaints of Sexual Harassment of Students

B. Textbook Previews

C. Town of New Milford Audit Report dated June 30, 2020

- Ms. DiCorpo said the schools are currently working with their psychologists, social workers and guidance teams to identify students that were in remote that will be returning to school, or want to return to school but have anxiety, to make transition plans for them. Once they are in school, we will monitor plans for effectiveness as they go through the tiers of intervention. We are looking at six to eight weeks of support, intervention and analysis before any kind of declaration for Tier 3 support can be considered.
- Ms. DiCorpo said the district will be conducting a needs analysis over the next month in conjunction with a state coach in regards to the ESSER II funding. This neutral person will work with us to determine needs.
- Mrs. Faulenbach said that the emotional social element is a need, and the district needs to look at how to quantify that need and determine action.

D. NMPS 2021-2022 School Calendar – released February 23, 2021

- Mrs. Nabozny said she was excited to see the half days for professional development back.
- At the same time, Mrs. McInerney said she was glad to see that there are not too many half days.
- Mr. Failla noted the tremendous effort on the part of Principal Shugrue and the committee to develop this calendar. He commended them for their work.
- Mrs. Monaghan said the EdAdvance group had a
 lot of discussion about the Columbus Day
 holiday and the possibility of dropping it as a
 holiday or remaining it as Indigenous People
 Day or something in a similar vein. She said she
 would like to see it dropped in the future.
- Mrs. Nabozny said right now it is a contractual issue.
- Mrs. Faulenbach thanked Mrs. Monaghan for being the EdAdvance liaison and for reporting.

D. NMPS 2021-2022 School Calendar – released February 23, 2021

E. ESSER II Funding

E. ESSER II Funding

- Mrs. Nabozny asked for confirmation that the funding was for use through September 2023 and Ms. DiCorpo said that is correct.
- Mr. Failla said the Board is presenting budget to Town Council on Thursday. He thinks it is important to emphasize that this \$1.3 million can only be used for COVID expenses. The district is prohibited from using it to supplant the operating budget. He noted the complex approve process.
- Mrs. Faulenbach agreed that is an important point. The funding has very specific criteria for use based on the needs assessment and is designed to help students regroup from the pandemic.
- Ms. DiCorpo said the needs assessment focuses on four priorities: Academic supports, learning loss, learning acceleration and recovery; Family and community connections; School safety and social-emotional well-being of the whole student and of our school staff; and Remote learning, staff development, and the digital divide. She said these priorities will need to be linked to the district's strategic plan or theories of action.
- Mrs. Faulenbach asked that Ms. DiCorpo keep the Board updated.

10. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Discussion and possible approval of terms and conditions of Superintendent contract. Executive session is anticipated. The Board may take action when it returns to public session.

Mrs. McInerney moved to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of reviewing and discussing the possible approval of the proposed draft contract of employment for the Superintendent of Schools; and further move to invite Ms. Alisha DiCorpo into Executive session, seconded by Mrs. Monaghan.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Board took a brief recess at 8:36 p.m.

Discussion and Possible Action

A. Discussion and possible approval of terms and conditions of Superintendent contract.

Executive session is anticipated.

The Board may take action when it returns to public session.

Motion made and passed unanimously to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of reviewing and discussing the possible approval of the proposed draft contract of employment for the Superintendent of Schools; and further move to invite Ms. Alisha DiCorpo into Executive session.

	The Board entered Executive Session at 8:41 p.m.	,
	The Board returned to Public Session at 9:06 p.m.	
	Mrs. McInerney moved that the Board approve the proposed draft contract of employment for the Superintendent of Schools and further move to authorize the Board counsel to finalize the contract and for the Board Chair to sign the contract with the Superintendent of Schools on behalf of the Board, seconded by Mr. McCauley. The motion passed unanimously.	Motion made and passed unanimously that the Board approve the proposed draft contract of employment for the Superintendent of Schools and further move to authorize the Board counsel to finalize the contract and for the Board Chair to sign the contract with the Superintendent of Schools on behalf of the Board.
11.	Adjourn	Adjourn
	Mrs. Monaghan moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 p.m., seconded by Mr. McCauley and passed unanimously.	Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Cynthia Nabozny

Secretary

New Milford Board of Education

Cyntha M. Nabozy