

**New Milford Board of Education
 Committee on Learning Special Meeting Minutes
 November 15, 2011
 Lillis Administration Building**

Present:	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Board Chair Mr. David Lawson Mrs. Lynette Rigdon Mr. Tom McSherry, Alternate
Absent:	Mrs. Alex Thomas Mrs. Nancy Tarascio-Latour

GEORGE C. BUCKBEE
 TOWN CLERK
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NEW MILFORD, CT

Also Present:	Dr. JeanAnn C. Paddyfote, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Maureen McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent Mr. Greg Shugrue, Principal, New Milford High School Mrs. Susan Greene, Asst. Principal, New Milford High School Mr. Daryl Daniels, Teacher Mr. Justin Ongley, Teacher Mrs. Eileen Reed, Teacher Mr. Jason Schemm, Teacher
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1.	Call to Order The special meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning was called to order at 6:30 p.m.	Call to Order
2.	Public Comment Bill Wellman, a member of the Board of Education, noted that he was on the Board of Education in 1980 when the discussion about computers replacing textbooks came up. He said there has been an explosion of online opportunities for education for teachers and students. He suggested the schools have not done a good job of including online education as a critical part of mainstream education. He noted college students often have opportunities to take online courses, but they are not all prepared for that. He submitted some articles on online learning that he wanted to have as part of the official minutes. Mrs. Faulenbach said that the articles will be passed out to the board members as board correspondence. Lynda Wellman said she has been attending school board meetings for years, as a teacher and as a reporter. She noted that when she visited North Carolina this past summer a newspaper reported that students were required to take a computer course for credit to graduate from high school. She said all	Public Comment

	<p>professions now are using computers. Mrs. Wellman also encouraged the continued funding of professional development for staff on technology.</p>	
<p>3. A. 1.</p>	<p>Discussion and Possible Action Review and approval of curriculum: AP Language & Composition Justin Ongley, who co-authored the curricula with Melissa Stancheck, was present to present the course. He said it was a new course with a non-fiction focus. In this course, students will learn the way language functions and how it is used to create meaning. They will look at classical models and updated models. In the course, a wide range of topics will be covered including rhetorical, argumentative, and synthesis essays.</p> <p>In the first marking period, the focus will be on rhetorical essays. The second marking period will focus on argumentative and the third will be on synthesis. The AP test will be conducted in May. There will be eight, full length papers, two per quarter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. McLaughlin said there are three sections of this course currently. • Mr. Shugrue said this course was a by-product of the PSATs. He said this syllabus has to be presented to colleges for approval for AP testing. • Dr. McLaughlin noted that even though AP gives guidelines, the curriculum still has to be written, and she is impressed with what students will have to do in this course. • Mr. Ongley noted that the students taking this course will be prepared for next year should they take AP Literature. • Mr. Lawson asked if this course was being offered only to 11th graders, and Mr. Shugrue said 12th graders can take it as well. • Mr. Lawson said this course would be good for English requirements at the university level. <p>2. Civics Dr. McLaughlin noted the two authors, Chuck Lynch and Cristina McCullough, could not be present this evening, so she introduced the course. She said it is a required course since 2004 for juniors and seniors.</p>	<p>Discussion and Possible Action Review and Approval of Curriculum: AP Language & Composition</p> <p>Civics</p>

<p>B.</p>	<p>The course speaks to the different parts of government, our rights, etc. Dr. McLaughlin noted in relation to the earlier discussion on online learning that in the Suggested Resources section of each unit, curricula now offers links to websites for further information.</p> <p>Request for New Course – Project Lead the Way Eileen Reed and Jason Schemm presented the proposal for this new course. Ms. Reed said Project Lead the Way (PLTW) is a non-profit organization which promotes the STEM related curriculum. The organization was founded in the 1990s and has spread across all fifty states. There are currently 4,500 schools who are involved with PLTW including thirty-one in Connecticut. There are three curriculum pathways from which to choose – Gateway to Technology which is a middle school track, Biomedical Services for high school, and Pathway to Engineering for high school. The proposal is for the Pathway to Engineering to introduce students to basic engineering principles and careers. The curriculum is activity, project, and problem-solving based. There is engineering software but no textbook for this class. Ms. Reed noted there is a huge need in the job market for STEM related workers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Schemm said the reason this program should be offered now includes the fact that the students said they would love such a class and most high schoolers do not know what is expected for engineering. The high school is currently well staffed with four physics certified teachers and two trained engineers. Also, the block schedule lends itself to adding this program with the 79 minute classes. • Mr. Schemm also noted that PLTW connects locally with the University of New Haven and freshmen can avail themselves of college credit. • Ms. Reed said the Pathway to Engineering Program includes eight courses, two are foundational and must be offered, and six are special courses; two would have to be chosen. The two specialty courses would be digital electronics and biotechnical engineering. The courses would be rolled in over four years with 	<p>Request for New Course – Project Lead the Way</p>
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	<p>the first foundational course being offered next year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There would be a maximum of twenty students with one computer for each student. This would require a designated space.• Students do not need to take all four courses if they find they do not want to continue in the track.• The space that would be used is the photo darkroom in the physics wing because it is no longer used as a darkroom.• This program is costly to implement; however, the annual maintenance after the initial start up would only be \$5,000 per year.• Mrs. Rigdon asked if there was anything the PLTW organization does to help the schools, and Mr. Shemm said they offer their curriculum; they offer training, and they offer a way to purchase the materials through a collaborative which makes them less expensive.• Mrs. Rigdon asked why we need the agreement with the organization if we could do the work independently. Mr. Shemm said this curriculum is the current best practice. Ms. Reed said there would be no college credit available if we did not work through this organization.• Mr. McSherry said the concern is the budgetary impact – he said the purchase of computers is never one time. He asked if there would really be twenty freshmen interested in taking the course.• Mr. Shemm said he felt there would be twenty freshmen as there are approximately 400 students per grade.• Mr. Lawson asked who the target students would be, and Ms. Reed said the students should have earned 75 for a grade in science or math courses, have an interest in hands-on learning, creativity, an artistic bent. It is not intended for the highest academic students.• Mr. Lawson asked if the college credits would be transferable and if there would be a cost, and Ms. Reed said she would have to check on	
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	<p>the cost. Mr. Shemm said he thought the credits should transfer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Lawson asked how many new course proposals might be coming before the committee, and Dr. McLaughlin said there was one more on deck. Mr. Shugrue said he thought there would be one in history and one in business – Personal Finance II. • Mr. Lawson noted that the whole picture needed to be looked at and not just this course. • Mrs. Rigdon asked if the PLTW organization offered grants or incentives. Mr. Shemm said not through PLTW. • Dr. McLaughlin said that the five-year curriculum schedule can be revised to cover some of the implementation costs. • Mr. McSherry noted he was concerned with financing a new program, and Mr. Shemm said Mr. DeVito had been brought in to the discussion regarding the new computers. • Mrs. Faulenbach explained to the committee that the protocol for a new program request has to go the board before the budget season begins. Therefore, Mrs. Faulenbach requested that the committee vote to bring this proposal to the December board meeting <p>Mrs. Rigdon moved to bring the new course, Project Lead the Way, to the full board for discussion and possible action, seconded by Mr. McSherry and passed unanimously.</p> <p>A. Personal Finance</p> <p>3. Dr. McLaughlin noted that Janice Perrone and Daryl Daniels are the authors of the personal finance course. He said they received a \$25,000 grant to write this curriculum and another \$25,000 for Personal Finance II.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Daniels said there is a push towards financial literacy on the state level so that is why the grants are available. • Ms. Perrone said there may be a requirement from the state in the future to have personal finance for all schools. 	<p>Motion made and passed to bring the new course, Project Lead the Way, to the full board for discussion and possible action.</p> <p>Personal Finance</p>
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	<p>Mr. McSherry moved to bring the following curricula to the full board for approval: AP Language & Composition, Civics, and Personal Finance, seconded by Mr. Lawson and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Motion made and passed to bring the following curricula to the full board for approval: AP Language & Composition, Civics, and Personal Finance</p>
<p>4. A.</p>	<p>Items for Discussion Summer School Dr. McLaughlin said regular summer school education was offered this past summer for fifteen days in July. Of the 200 students who were recommended to take the program, only seventy-eight actually participated. Dr. McLaughlin said perhaps it was not advertised enough because the selection process was done after the spring DRP tests. Of the seventy-eight who participated, 63% saw an increase in DRP scores from spring to fall, 29% decreased, and 6% remained the same. Dr. McLaughlin noted that attendance did have an impact on performance. She said students who attended fewer than ten days saw less growth. Dr. McLaughlin said she plans to look at the data from students who did not go to summer school but were recommended to go and how they did on the fall DRP tests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Faulenbach asked if this information might be available for the budget season and Dr. McLaughlin said it would. • Mrs. Rigdon asked how many of the children used the bus transportation, and Dr. McLaughlin stated that she was at SNIS on several mornings to see students disembarking from the buses and that she will follow-up with the bus company to see if there was a way they can tell how many students took advantage of the transportation offer. • Mr. Lawson said that the cost of remediation was far more expensive than a bus ride. • Mr. McSherry asked when the decision as to who needed to come to summer school was made and when the notice was given. Dr. McLaughlin said the decision was made after the spring DRPs which was continually being pushed farther back because of the winter weather closures. 	<p>Items for Discussion Summer School</p>

B.	<p>Online Learning</p> <p>Dr. McLaughlin noted there are several areas where online learning is prevalent including adult education and summer school. She said the district currently owns ten Odysseyware licenses, which serve more than ten people as they are not purchased per person. Adult Ed uses this for GED and credit courses. Odysseyware still requires a certified teacher to oversee the program, so teachers have been assigned for core subjects. Summer school was offered online using Odysseyware for the first time, since most students have gone to Brookfield in the past.</p> <p>Another software program used is A+ which is similar to Odysseyware but does not have the extent and rigor of course choices. It is used at SMS for students who struggle in the classroom. It is also used at the high school in the special education department and at Central Office in the Computer Based Instruction (CBI) program for students who are expelled, special education, or 504.</p> <p>The high school has offered courses online; some students take multiple online courses. Many take courses offered through BYU. The curricula also include links to online resources. The professional development has included a fair amount of technology this year including the Smartboard training – both for new and current users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. McSherry noted that high school number of online users was down this year, and Mr. Shugrue said it was early and that students would begin to go online for credit recovery after the first semester.• Mr. McSherry said the online learning will be key for electives and to getting to 25 credits.• Mr. Shugrue noted that online learning is a paradigm shift for most teachers and some are afraid. He also noted the cost of online learning is placed on the learner, due to Board policy, versus the school system.• Mr. Lawson said that children need a foundation of technology before they are forced to use it. He said it is not good to assume that all students have computers at	Online Learning
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<p>C.</p>	<p>home and that all students know how to use them. He said the Board needs to mandate a computer literacy course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Shugrue said before they allow students to take an online course, they sit down with the students to learn how comfortable they are with the use of computers. • Mrs. Faulenbach noted that the technology discussions have been ongoing and will be ongoing. She said there are so many pieces to the technology discussion such as equipment, curriculum, and training. • Mr. Lawson said the technology scope and sequence is not implemented, evaluated, or assessed and needs to be a foundation. • Mrs. Rigdon said she felt if the schools did not start getting technology into the schools, it could be too little, too late. • Mr. McSherry noted that we are using technology in the schools and the committee may be underestimating how much of it is being used. <p>Curriculum Update Dr. McLaughlin said she has looked at the five-year plan and there are already many curricula that have been completed, there are approximately a dozen others coming up in either December or March. There are still a few courses where no one has yet stepped up to author them. She noted the teachers have told her that they often learn a lot in the process of writing curricula.</p>	<p>Curriculum Update</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Adjournment Mr. McSherry moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. seconded by Mrs. Rigdon and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Adjournment Motion made and passed to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m.</p>

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson
 New Milford Board of Education