

April 2009 New Milford High School Monthly Report

Compiled by Eric Sheninger

1. Observations

Teacher Subject Date Period Observed by

Summaries:

2. Guest lecturers

- Ms. Gonzales from the Hackensack University Medical Center spoke to the students on Career Day (April 24th, 2009) about the opportunities in nursing.

3. Innovations:

- The science department held its first annual Science Exhibition Fair on Wednesday, April 22nd, 2009. Approximately 212 students participated with various projects from all areas of science.



Students were instructed to explain the chemistry behind different processes. Their projects included:

- Tie-dying natural and synthetic fabrics
- Making invisible ink
- Obtaining iron out of cereals
- Determining gender by foot characteristics
- Creating ice-cream cooler devices (including one which included a frozen pineapple)
- Omega-3 molecules

Students also created homemade FLOAM, Play Dough, and long lasting bubbles. Demonstrations of rockets, pea plants, different forms of magnetism and a cool interactive substance called Newtonian Fluid were also among the projects chosen.



The day turned out to be an enjoyable and informative event for all students and teachers who visited and participated in the event, especially Mrs. Daley's Gifted and Talented students from the middle school and Mrs. Beiner's ECD students.

All students who participated in the science exhibition fair received a certificate for their contribution and participation at the fair. In addition to this, they received an experience in Science that they will carry with them for a lifetime.

- Students in Mr. Ivchenko and Mrs. Vicari's 9th grade



Computer Applications courses just completed a career project using Microsoft PowerPoint. The students used the Internet as well as the websites www.bls.gov and www.collegeboard.com to research a career of their interest. The students used all skills learned during the third marking period in order to create their PowerPoint presentations. All students presented their careers to the class during the week that juniors and seniors were participating in “Career Day” at NMHS.

- Mrs. Keesing is happy to launch her new blog! Please feel free to read the posts and write comments by going to the library website. From www.newmilfordschools.org, click on high school and then on media center. You will see the link for the blog.
- Mrs. Kessing (Media Specialist) collaborated with Ms. Morel’s art classes (period 2 and 4) who are studying perspective. Ms. Morel’s unit provided an excellent opportunity to use the impressive art materials that comprise the grant award. On April 3rd, 2009, students worked in the computer lab with interactive websites to learn about and understand the concept of perspective. Ms. Morel and Ms. Keesing each provided informative websites for the students to explore. On April 7th, 2009, the students worked in the Library. The anticipatory set included a review in which students explained what they already knew about perspective. The students viewed representative works of art by “photo-realism” painter, Richard Estes. Ms. Keesing selected relevant works of art at the request of Ms. Morel. Students then worked in small groups to view and analyze many of the fine art reproductions. They discussed what sort of perspective was employed, and they identified the horizon and the vanishing point. Each group then shared the artwork they had examined and their explanations with the rest of the class. The students will create their own drawings or paintings, giving special emphasis to the perspective they seek to achieve.
- Mrs. Keesing collaborated with Mrs. Cabrera’s ESL classes. Over the course of several weeks, students in these classes will use websites, selected by Mrs. Keesing, to learn about famous Americans, including George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Paul Revere, and Benjamin Franklin. Mrs. Cabrera prepared questions that will guide their research during the first part of each period. During the second part of each period, students will use their growing vocabulary and verbal skills to analyze the specific artwork under study. Students will continue examining other pieces of artwork to increase their knowledge of American culture by studying New York area landmarks, such as the Brooklyn Bridge, the Chrysler Building, and others. Mrs. Keesing and Mrs. Cabrera believe that the artwork is a wonderful vehicle, not only to stimulate discussion, but also to incorporate art and history in a way to communicate American culture. The use of technology and the practice with using speaking skills combine to afford students valuable learning experiences.

4. Student honors:

- Ms. Schlamp and Gifted and Talented are pleased to announce that after nominating five exemplary New Milford High School juniors to the 2009 New Jersey Governor’s School Program, we have been honored to have two of these five selected as finalists who will attend the school to which they each applied:
 - Mark Diaz – School of Engineering
 - Sheryl Mathew – School of the Sciences

The academic records, extracurricular activities, and personal interests of these two students are quite impressive; their gifts, talents, and accomplishments have already brought distinction to their families, their school, and their community. The process of nominating these accomplished students has been most gratifying. Seeing her students write their letters of nomination in addition to reading letters submitted by their teachers made Ms. Schlamp feel fortunate that she could advise these students during the year in

our Gifted and Talented Program. New Milford should be proud that such fine students are willing to attend four weeks of rigorous academic study this summer. The Governor's School of New Jersey is a unique summer program committed to meeting the educational needs of academically talented high school students who have completed their junior year. Emphasis is placed on problem solving of complex issues that exist on a local, state, national, and international level, and leadership training. The Governor's School is an intensive residential learning experience held on five college campuses throughout the state.

- On April 1st, 2009, the Volunteer Center of Bergen County recognized fourteen students from NMHS who have donated their time through both New Milford community events and independent volunteer projects. Students received Certificates of Commendation from the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders and Dennis McNerney, Bergen County Executive. In addition to these certificates, students also accepted a Certificate of Appreciation from The Volunteer Center of Bergen County in recognition of their contributions as a volunteer in our community. In front of the crowded auditorium at Bergen County Academies, filled with volunteers from different organizations throughout Bergen County, Brenda Blackmon of My9TV recognized the following student volunteers: Regina Carbone, Amanda Favia, Matt Buchman, Stacy Hooch, Itsaso Kobayashi, Shanen Mulles, Nereida Millan, Dan Fontanez, Cristos Novakidis, Ariel Pasquale, Jasmine Jones, Felicia Trinidad, Krystle Toledo, and Stephanie Ramirez. Brenda Blackmon of My9TV introduced the students by reading the following:
“During the fall of 2008, the students of NMHS Community Service Club collected food to benefit the families of New Milford who did not have sufficient food in their homes. Through the organizational efforts of the high school students, donations collected from the middle, elementary, as well the high school delivered over fifteen boxes of food to the New Milford Food Pantry at the Ascension Church. The Community Service Students also organized Bear Hugs for the Holidays in an effort to deliver teddy bears to children in our community this holiday season. New Milford High School, along with Berkley Street School and D.E. Owens Middle School, collected over 1300 New Teddy Bears from the community of New Milford. NMHS Community Service Students had the profound experience of delivering the bears, as well as a smile, to pediatric patients at Englewood Hospital. Holy Name Hospital accepted over 600 Bear Hugs from our efforts, and was gracious enough to send 300 Bears to Christ Hospital in Jersey City, which houses a large pediatric center. Although the New Milford community may be small, it has proven to have a very big heart!”

Throughout the spring, the students will be participating in the Rape and Violence Eradication Walk as well as the Crohn's and Colitis Walk to raise awareness and funds for these important causes. Many students have applied to give up their time during weekends in May to work with Habitat for Humanity, an organization that depends on volunteers to build homes for families in the community. Students have also set up many goals for next year's Community Service Club. One main goal is to develop a program for the elementary students to interact with high school students through a mentoring program. The second goal is to collaborate with community businesses and organizations to create an opportunity to represent the different cultures that exist in our community through hosting a Culture Fest.

- Senior softball player, Kristi Saporito, reached the career 100 hits milestone.
- Azela Zarate (Junior) and Jennilyn Robles were accepted to sing with the 2009 All-State Chorus. They competed against more than one thousand students from the State of NJ. Azela was ranked in the top ten of her section. They will start rehearsals in June on

Saturdays and continue them in September until the concert occurs. Rehearsals are in Central Jersey. The Star Ledger considers them the “Best of New Jersey.”

5. Field trips

- On April 6th, 2009, students from Mr. Frederick’s Physical Education classes traveled to the Gravity Vault in Paramus. Before the trip to the Gravity Vault students participated in trust building and team building activities. Through these activities students developed positive relationships with peers, experience and learn leadership skills that they will be able to utilize for the rest of their lives. Students worked in small groups going through a series of adventure-based activities in which they got to know one another better and learn how to work through difficult adventure-based challenges. The activities often use low-ropes course elements constructed activities which are just above the ground and which involve physical balance and flexible, problem-solving, determination and cooperation. By going to the Gravity Vault we had that opportunity. Upon return we had a group discussion on how the trip went, what could have been done differently, organization of teams and what aspects of the trip would the students like to see brought to New Milford. In relation to the 11th grade Physical Education curriculum this trip allowed students to further develop support within a group, increase their sense of personal confidence, as well as decision making, camaraderie, cooperation, team building skills, and trust building. Overall, the trip was a huge success; the kids really enjoyed their experience at the Gravity Vault and expressed their feelings about going back another time.
- The Culinary Arts classes visited the International/ French Culinary School in Manhattan on Thursday April 23rd, 2009. The school was recently featured in the Celebrity Apprentice. The trip provided the students the opportunity to view a commercial kitchen while learning about the possible careers in the food industry. The students ended the tour with a food demonstration covering the newest food science technology principles called Sobo cooking. This is a process of vacuuming the food prior to cooking in order to enhance the foods flavor. The chef created a fruit infusion using this type of cooking.
- The High School Band attended the NYC musical "Jersey Boys" in early April. The show was high energy and filled with great songs. The students found a connection with some great music from our area from another generation and have been talking about it ever since.
- The French classes traveled to New York City in late April. The day began with a visit to the French Embassy Cultural Services which is located on Fifth Avenue near the Metropolitan Museum. The embassy is located in a former mansion which was donated to the French government by its American owner in 1952. There is an original statue by Michelangelo in the main greeting room. Students learned about the educational resources offered by the French Government including scholarships to study in France, teacher assistantships to teach English in a French school, cultural restoration activities and much more. The classes then toured the Embassy and received pertinent information from the cultural attaché’s assistant. Next they traveled to the Metropolitan Museum to view the original paintings of impressionist artists that have been studied in class. Students participated in a scavenger hunt in which they had to locate various paintings. The Majestic theatre was the next stop where students attended the matinee of Phantom of the Opera. The play takes place in the Paris Opera House during the revolutionary period when the French lived under the restored kings. It was also around the same period that the Impressionist movement was born and that Victor Hugo wrote Les Miserables. Upon returning, students discussed how the opulence of the Opera House contrasted with the oppressive poverty that Hugo depicts in Les Miserables. Students made connections between the political oppression by the Royalist government

and the revolt and struggle of the early Impressionist painters to gain recognition. In their individual class reports it was pointed out that it was through the American painter Mary Cassat that Impressionism became known in America. American support of the Impressionist painters enabled them to finally gain recognition in France despite the oppressive royalist regime. All enjoyed the trip and it made the language, culture, history, and art so much more meaningful for our students.

6. Guidance

- In an agreement with St. Thomas Aquinas College (STAC) in Sparkill, New York, New Milford High School will offer college level courses to eligible 11th and 12th grade students at NMHS for its second consecutive year. Upon successful completion of a class, students will be issued three college credits through a transcript provided by STAC. Students will be able to take this transcript to many participating colleges and transfer the credit. Each college level course taken at NMHS will cost \$75 per credit. This is a deeply discounted rate, even when compared to tuition at New Jersey State schools which cost, on average, over \$300 per credit. In addition to getting a head start on their college education, students will have full access to STAC's library, special events and lectures, and teachers will have the opportunity to bring students to sit-in on classes and lectures at STAC. For the 2009-2010 school year NMHS will be offering two college level courses through STAC—Pre-Calculus Honors and Film Studies.
- On Tuesday, June 9th, 2009, the staff of New Milford High School will gather with students, families, and members of the community to celebrate the eighth annual Senior Awards Night. Recognition, award, and scholarship recipients will be announced during the banquet. The valedictorian and salutatorian of the class of 2009 will be honored with plaques presented by the New Milford/Teaneck Elks Club. More than fifty individual scholarships will be awarded to members of the graduating class of 2009, including recognition of the "Top Ten Graduates". In addition, special recognition awards, the President's Education Awards, and the Edward J. Bloustein Distinguished Scholars Award will be presented.
- On Friday, April 24th, 2009, the Guidance Department hosted Career Day for 11th grade students. There were over forty presenters representing a wide variety of professions. Students learned about two different careers during thirty-five minute small group sessions where they were able to ask questions about the occupations. We are very grateful to the presenters for giving of their time to assist our students with their career exploration.
- Advanced Placement (AP) students in grades 11 and 12 will be taking their AP exams on certain days from May 4th-13th. These tests are a culmination of a year of rigorous and intense coursework. Since AP classes are taught at a college level, students have the opportunity to earn college credit depending on their scores, and the college they decide to attend.
- On Saturday, May 2nd, 2009, New Milford High School will be holding the SAT exam beginning at 8am. Students participating in this test will receive detailed instructions of when and where they should report on that day. The SAT is also being administered at local area high schools on June 6th, 2009. Register online for the June test at www.collegeboard.com before the May 5th, 2009, deadline.

7. Professional Development

- On Tuesday April 21st, 2009, Officer Wilde and Mr. Manuppelli attended the 2009 Snap Conference presented by the Bergen County Prosecutors Office at the Venetian in Garfield, NJ. Various topics were covered including School Security, Drug and Gang Awareness, Sexting, and current youth trends.

- On Tuesday April 22nd, 2009, nine teachers at New Milford High School continued their participation in an on-going professional development project that will develop and implement authentic based learning at New Milford High School. These teachers participated in the fourth workshop (free to the district) of this continual process this month with Jim Gamble from Project ABLE (<http://www.themadisoninstitute.com/TMI-project-able-learning-initiative.asp>). The training consists of teachers from all of our prestigious departments creating authentic based learning projects for their students, and for the rest of the faculty within the high school. These projects are also being shared on-line in a massive database that Project ABLE has developed. This will enable the teachers of NMHS to network with schools nationwide to obtain, modify, and provide feedback for authentic learning lesson plans concerning every academic and performance based discipline available to our student body. This group of teachers includes Kerr Lockhart, Jennifer Lyons, Linda Keesing, Maria Grompone, Amy Solimano, John Coviello, Richard Cella, April Millian, and Joyce Monroe. They are the vanguard group who will spearhead this learning style both in New Milford High School and in schools across the nation.
- On Tuesday April 22nd, 2009, Mr. Engstrom and Ms. Bruno from the English Department attended an English Teachers' Conference at Pompton Lakes High School with the purpose being to share successful ideas and procedures utilized in the teaching of high school English. Specific topics addressed included literacy selections that are both challenging and accessible, writing assignments associated with literacy selections, evaluation of writing assignments in consideration of time restraints on the teacher, the use and frequency of rewrites, the advantages of utilizing rubrics, class time dedicated to standardized test preparations, and the role of technology in the classroom.
- Mr. Manzo and Mr. Engstrom attended a workshop on April 24th, 2009, based on the implementation of effective brain-compatible cooperative learning techniques. Some educators rarely focus on appealing to the diversity of student learning strengths. Teachers at this training received the opportunity to be educated on how to present, organize and implement cooperative learning activities that appeal to all types of learners and not just activities that specifically appeal to one type of learner (audio, visual, or kinesthetic). There are many lobes to the brain that process information and allow us to decode stimuli. In this respect we are all individuals/unique and typically all have different strengths. What was presented and learned were several techniques and strategies to implement in classrooms that cater to all strengths, which will increase literacy. For instance, several Social Studies teachers must teach about the Middle Passage and the plight of newly captured slaves and the horrid voyage taken to the New World. As teachers we can lecture students and describe to the best of our ability what the voyage would have been like and still students may not be able to grasp or comprehend what the actual voyages were like. Is it their fault? Are they just being lazy? Well, with Brain Compatible Cooperative Learning students have the opportunity to learn about the voyage using several different methods; catering to different students strengths (i.e. Providing small spaces in the classroom for students to physically feel what type of space each slave had on a slave ship or other activities that involve "cooperative games" that emphasize participation, challenges and comprehension on many different levels).
- Mrs. Swartz was a Soprano II judge for the All-State Chorus. She judged the first Saturday of April at West Deptford High School for the South Audition and the next Saturday at Columbia High School for the North Audition. A teacher must perform specific duties in order for their students to participate in the New Jersey Honors Choruses.

- Mrs. O'Donnell, the school nurse received training in the following areas through the Nursing Spectrum:
 - Child Care Quandary: When to Exclude an Ill Child
 - Food Allergies: More Common than Ever Among Children
 - Coming Soon to Your Neighborhood: Meth Abuse

8. Facilities

9. Other

- The Band put on a successful talent show this year on April 7th, 2009. The stage setting was similar to a late-night TV show format with Tony Crochelli serving as an entertaining host. A student "house-band" featuring Lani-Mae Lim, Nick Novak, and Mario Romero complimented the evening. The show had a great variety of singing, dance teams and solos. Several rock bands performed including "Viking, Viking, Viking" lead by senior Matt Kaprelian, and featured Brian Drew on guitar.
- Mrs. Keesing has won a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, called "Picturing America". She has received beautiful art reproductions that illustrate people, places, crafts, and history of America. Mrs. Keesing has collaborated with two different teachers (so far) to work with these works of art.
- The varsity softball team has qualified for the Bergen County Women's Coaches Association tournament and will play Paramus Catholic in a first round game on Saturday May 2nd, 2009, at 4:00pm at Paramus Catholic.
- The boys' track team is enjoying a successful season highlighted by a Group I team victory at the Twin Boro Relays held at Ramsey HS on April 25th, 2009.
- The boys' tennis team has qualified for the NJSIAA tournament and is awaiting word for their first round opponent and date of play. They hope to improve on last year's sectional finals appearance.
- On April 24th, 2009, students in the Environmental Club and Environmental Class, with Mrs. Torpie, joined forces with the Community Service Club, advised by Ms. Schneider, to carry-out an Earth Day Clean-Up Project. In an effort to beautify the NMHS Courtyard and the surrounding school grounds, students weeded, picked up debris, and spread mulch. The students in each of these groups worked tirelessly to enhance the school's appearance, and helped create a courtyard atmosphere students and staff alike can enjoy as the weather gets nicer!

