

March 2010 New Milford High School Monthly Report

Compiled by Eric Sheninger

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1. Observations

<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Observed by</u>
Lauren Bettini	Art	3/9	1	Eric Sheninger
Matt Frederick	Health 11	3/10	7	Eric Sheninger

Summaries:

2. Guest lecturers

- Mr. Shalmi Barmore, the Israeli historian for the overseas Holocaust trip, spent the day at New Milford High School on March 1, 2010. In addition, 2009 and 2010 trip participants from New Milford and Jersey City participated in this daylong program. The day began with Mr. Barmore visiting the first period Holocaust course while they were discussing the first television experience for a Holocaust survivor in 1950 on the program "This is Your Life". Mr. Barmore was on hand for a discussion on this historical piece and how the event shaped the telling of survivor stories on television. Throughout the day, Mr. Barmore conducted workshops with the students who will be participating in the 2010 trip, which helps prepare them for the experience. Finally, we utilized Mr. Barmore during a video conference session with the students from Kansas and California who will be participating in this year's trip. This was a wonderful opportunity for the students to meet each other and for Mr. Barmore to lay the groundwork for the upcoming trip.
- Mr. Rich Fine from the New York City Art Institute came to talk to Ms. Beiner's cooking classes about the school and careers in the culinary field. Mr. Fine also treated the students to a cooking demonstration.

3. Innovations

- Under the direction of Ms. Zacher, the District Student Assistance Counselor, the first ever New Milford Health Alliance & Technology Seminar was held on March 18, 2010, in the High School Media Center. Ms. Zacher thought it was imperative that a program be offered to the parents, which would allow them the opportunity to choose seminars on various topics and to receive an education on the specific topics. Experts in the field of technology, depression, anxiety, self-harm, mood fluctuations, death and dying, domestic violence and effective communication volunteered their time and expertise in their particular domain to make the night and overall success.
- Mrs. Collentine's student teacher, Ms. Lisa Schiff, gave students an assignment that directed them to each start their own blog. She created a Powerpoint presentation that showed them how to do it. Each student now has a blog! They are colorful, creative, and original...the students' posts are made up of assignments they are given. Sometimes they write a poem, sometimes they reflect on their week; they have even written responses to assigned articles. Students must also read each other's blogs and comment on their peers' work as well. Students have really responded enthusiastically to this technological innovation. Kudos is given to Ms. Schiff for incorporating technology in such an important, effective, and educational way! If you would like to view Ms. Schiff's blog, its web address is <http://howmisssurvivedherstudentteaching.blogspot.com>. Once there, you can view any student blogs as well or Mrs. Collentine's blog, which is <http://Collentinein219.blogspot.com>.
- Mrs. Keesing is very enthusiastic about her new role as NMHS Site Coordinator for Virtual High School (VHS). In the fall, ten NMHS students will have the opportunity to

take an online class for credit. There are numerous options available to them, ranging from AP classes to such offerings as “Animal Behavior & Zoology”, “Business & Personal Law”, “Cultural Identity Through Literature”, and “Basic Mandarin”; students may not opt to take any class that is offered at NMHS. Mrs. Keesing will enroll each student in one of his/her top choices (hopefully). Students selected for VHS will attend class each day via computer. They must be highly motivated to keep up with assignments, to interact with other students through online discussions, and to achieve good grades. Each class has “seats” for about twenty-five students from all over the country and internationally as well. VHS presents a wonderful preparation for developing the attitude that will help students succeed in college too. Mrs. Keesing is in the process of completing twenty hours of training to learn the essentials for success as a site coordinator. In her role, she will serve as a liaison between VHS teachers and NMHS administrators and guidance counselors. She will be the daily teacher presence for our enrolled students, and she will have ongoing communication with everyone involved in NMHS’s participation with VHS.

- Mr. Coviello, Mr. Wilson and students in Contemporary Issues participated in a Skype session with Van Meter High School in Iowa this past month. Mr. Coviello's sociology class engaged in a sociological study of the Van Meter area and tested social hypotheses during the Skype session. It was a phenomenal opportunity for students of different schools to communicate about modern-day issues such as the current economic crisis.
- **Science and Math Day** was held on Friday, March 12, 2010, on the third floor of the New Milford high school building. Students displayed many projects and demonstrated activities showing what they have learned in both their Math or Science classes to students and teachers at both the high school and students from DEO Middle school. There were projects ranging from the warming up of soup using a device that incorporated chemical reactions to demonstrate the food chain/predation of a snake enjoying a meal of a mouse. This display and many others fascinated numerous students. Other projects that were talked about throughout the day were the static electric shock demonstration in Physics, the changing of a penny to gold, and the desalination of water. In Math, which coincided with Pi day, there were many activities. This included the making of Pi bracelets and dishes. The day ended with a Pi run off competition with the prize being a nice size apple pie and a glow in the dark T-shirt. Congratulations to the winner of Pi day, Kafu Kristian Shoda, a junior, who was able to recite 504 digits of the Pi number. In addition, his picture will be displayed in the display case on the main floor of the high school for the remainder of the school year. Below is a collage of pictures showing the day.



The day was a great success and promoted a lot of excitement, enjoyment and enthusiasm for math and science among all students who participated through out the day.

- In celebration of Pi Day, Miss Schneider's Skills for Independent Living Class compared the circumference of an Apple Pie to the circumference a Chocolate Chip Cookie Pie after following both recipes from scratch!



4. Student honors

- Over 100 students and staff donated blood at the spring blood drive held on March 25, 2010. A lucky senior be randomly selected from those who donated blood to receive a \$1000 scholarship.
- Meredith McCann, a junior, was recently accepted to the Economics for Leaders program, run by the Foundation for Teaching Economics. This is a non-profit organization committed to increasing economic literacy and building student leadership skills throughout the United States. The EFL program teaches the next generation of leaders to integrate economics concepts into the process of decision making through a hands-on, experiential atmosphere. Over 4,000 students have participated in EFL since its inception in 1991. This is a summer program only for students who have completed their junior year of high school. Meredith was invited to apply because she is a HOBY Alumnus. There are fourteen college locations throughout the United States with about thirty participants at each location that are accepted. Meredith was accepted and will be going to The University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, MN the week of July 11 - July 18 this summer.
- On Saturday February 23, 2010, Jennilyn Robles, a sophomore, performed at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center with the All-State Women's Chorus. She auditioned last March and practiced at specified high schools in Central Jersey every other Saturday since September. The Star Ledger named those who participated the "Best in New Jersey." We are very proud of her dedication and great talent.

5. Field trips

- Members of the Choral Ensemble and the Tri-M Music Honor Society attended a day of workshops at Montclair State University on Friday March 12, 2010. In the morning, the students participated in workshops on Singing, Dancing, Acting, and Stage Combat. In the afternoon, they had the opportunity to be part of a meet and greet with the actors and then watch the musical "Sideshow." Joshua Dela Cruz ('07) had the lead as Jake and was outstanding in his portrayal. Your eyes automatically shifted to him as he entertained the audience with his talents. Matt Kaprelian ('09) was involved in the design and building of the remarkable set. The boys took the time to answer questions and take pictures with the students after the show. It was a great day and a wonderful learning experience for all involved.

- Dr. Asa-Awuku took students from the Engineering Club to Rutgers University on March 17, 2010. Students learned directly from science and engineering professionals about the applications of science and mathematics in multiple engineering fields.
- On March 19, 2010, twenty-seven New Milford High School students, Ms. McNeill and Mrs. Zacher attended a seminar on the negative repercussions on the use of nicotine products. The seminar also addressed how tobacco companies target the youth of America, what public schools in New Jersey can do to assure that their students are not being forced to breathe in second-hand smoke, and the modifications of policies and procedures developed by their Board of Education addressing smoking on school property.
- On March 18 - 19, 2010, fifty-one students attended a trip to The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. Students had the opportunity visit the Permanent Exhibition of the Museum prior to the official opening of the Museum, thus affording the students better access to the exhibition space. Additionally, students were given an introduction by Mr. Pete Fredlake, the Director of National Outreach, of the new exhibition on Nazi Propaganda. A private visit to the Collections and Conservation archive was given to a small group of students in which they had the opportunity to hear from the conservators about their work in preserving artifacts. Students were given an in-depth look at the conservation process of artifacts, which included a concentration camp uniform, the acquisition of a new diary, photographs, and Otto Wolf's diary. This is the second time that the Collections Department has allowed our group to see Otto Wolf's diary, a diary we read in the Holocaust course and visit the site of Trsice (the town where the Wolf family was hidden for three years during the Holocaust) on the overseas trip. In addition, students were given the opportunity to hear from a Holocaust survivor.
- Mr. and Mrs. Solomon Weiss, a donor to the Holocaust Study Tour program, arranged a luncheon for the students attending this year's trip and former trip participants at Princeton University on March 24, 2010. The purpose of the luncheon was to give the students the opportunity to speak about their experiences and for Mr. and Mrs. Weiss to thank the students for their dedication to Holocaust Education. Kate Jelaska, Meredith McCann, Maria Panchenko and Filip Piasevoli each spoke about their experiences studying the Holocaust in Germany, Czech Republic and Poland. Mr. and Mrs. Weiss also arranged for the students to have a guided tour of the history of Princeton University, which added greatly to the educational value of the day.
- On March 25, 2010, Mr. Coviello's sociology class and Mr. Wilson's law classes went to the Bergen County Jail to study deviance and social control. The trip was comprised of a tour of the jail and interviews with local inmates. Officer Wilde and Dana Buzzelli were also in attendance and a special thanks goes out to Officer Wilde who made the trip possible. The sociology students will use the data they collected along with classroom learned material to create an authentic learning assessment that will consist of a filmed newscast related to an original correctional reform they must synthesize in pairs.
- On March 11, 2010, Miss Schneider's Skills for Independent Living class had the pleasure of touring The Woodcliff Lake Hilton. Upon arriving at the hotel, the class was greeted in the lobby by Ms. Melissa Hazim, who took them on an extensive tour of the hotel and the backhouse facilities. She explained the various positions required for the hotel to operate on a daily basis. These positions included many that had been discussed in our classroom such as: Front desk/concierge, housekeeper, bellhop, waiter/waitress, bartenders, engineers, managers, and banquet staff. As the hotel is currently undergoing renovations, the students had the pleasure of seeing what the remolded hotel rooms will look like in comparison to the current rooms. Everyone enjoyed our tour and several students expressed an interest in possibly pursuing a career in the field of hotel operations.

- On March 25, 2010, Mrs. Vicari's Business Practice Firm class, "Wizard of Vase Florists", attended the annual New York City Virtual Trade Fair. Over 100 schools set up booths to market their products. The class created a florist business this year from the ground up and transacts on a daily basis virtually with these schools in a closed network. The students attended the fair as customers and were able to purchase products virtually using their own virtual bank accounts and checks. In addition, students were able to meet other students from companies that they have been doing business with all year. Please visit our student created website at www.wovflorists.com to learn more about our company.
- Chesapeake Lodging Trust celebrated its recent IPO by ringing the opening bell on the NYSE on March 29, 2010. Students in Mrs. Vicari's Intro to Business/Accounting class and The Business Practice Firm class were invited by Doug Vicari to be a part of this ceremony. The students had the opportunity to attend the company's breakfast and gift giving ceremony, meet Principals of CLT and the NYSE, as well as watch the ringing of the opening bell on the trading floor. The students were given a personal tour of the exchange as well as learn about its history.

6. Guidance

- The Guidance Department is currently working on the scheduling process for the 2010-2011 school year. Students in grades 9-11 will have an individual meeting with their counselor to discuss classes for next year and to make elective requests. 11th grade students will also participate in an initial post high school planning meeting at this time.
- On Friday, April 23, the Guidance Department will be hosting a Career Day for 11th grade students. This is a great opportunity for juniors to learn more about careers in which they have an interest. This day should be used as an opportunity to gather information that can help them decide on a college major. The Guidance Department has many informative and exciting speakers lined up for the day

7. Professional Development

- Ms. Lyons attended a workshop entitled "21st Century Skills: Preparing our students to succeed in today's world" held at Farleigh Dickinson University on March 5, 2010. This event was sponsored by The Record/Herald News. The workshop was split into two sessions. The first session presented by Rosemary Rowlands addressed how to appropriately infuse Social Networking Technology into the classroom. It addressed when and where social networking can be used in the classroom. The second session was entitled "Internet Resources to Support Classroom Instruction in the 21st Century". This workshop examined new Internet Resources that teachers could use in their classroom. We learned about "cloud computing" and experimented with free online tools such as "Google Apps".
- Mrs. Keesing's successful application to attend TEDxNYED resulted in a full day of professional development on Saturday March 6, 2010, in New York City. She heard sixteen different speakers all address how education is changing for 21st century learners. Chris Lehmann, creator and principal of Philadelphia's Science Leadership Institute, gave a strong conclusion to the day's presentations. He talked about the "maddening paradox" of education in 2010, where we can do amazing things, but nobody cares unless you can pass the test. He said that while technology may not help students pass the test, it could help them learn. To be successful and functional in today's world, he posited that students must be able to think for themselves. Technology provides avenues to accomplish this goal by enabling students to create, research, collaborate, present, and network. Please read her blog post for more about the event on

my library website (you may have to scroll down),

http://www.newmilfordschools.org/NMHS/library_page/index.htm.

- On March 10, 2010, Mrs. Keesing participated in a webinar entitled, "Classroom 2.0: How You Can Use Social Networks and Web Technology for Learning" led by Steve Hargadon. Hargadon stated that education is experiencing a shift from an older authoritative model to a newer more collaborative model. With Web 2.0, there is a peer relationship with the web, in which people everywhere contributes, collaborate, and create. In order not to drown in information overload, Hargadon says that teachers and students need to learn how to add meaningful content. He referenced the book, *Disrupting Class* that discusses some of technology's impacts on education. A copy of the book has been purchased for our school library. The final part of the webinar gave suggestions about how to move into this newer, educational model. Hargadon recommends that teachers become learners first and learn how to "harness Web 2.0's inherent capabilities". We can do that in part by becoming part of the conversation, joining a social or educational network, and embracing the change process. He acknowledges that it is a process that will take time to integrate, but he insists that we need to get started.
- On March 11, 2010, Susanna Michels and Barbara O'Donnell attended a professional development seminar given by Madison Institute entitled "Utilizing Technology to Increase Student Achievement." The workshop explored advancements in technology such as the PISM and how these advancements will affect the content of the 21st Century Curriculum and the way it will be presented. The seminar explored issues such as the globalization of education, in which frontiers in such studies as cultural brokerage will need to be cultivated. Also discussed was how the remote classroom and instruction will become more prevalent. Likewise, with the advent of computers' providing essential data, the need for factual knowledge may become less imperative. As a result, even greater emphasis will need to be placed on critical thinking, with the further development of problem-based methods and the demand for higher order thinking skills as imperative to success. The critical elements for the mastery of the 21st century skills included Standards, Assessment, Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Development, and Learning Environments. For success, educational institutions will need to recognize change in all these elements.
- Mr. Ramsey participated in the "Encouraging Girls in Math and Science" forum, hosted by the Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic and New Jersey Department of Education held at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, Livingston Student Center in Livingston Hall on March 18, 2010. Mr. Ramsey engaged in developing an introductory understanding of the topics and goals of the forum. Girls are more likely to choose courses and careers in math and science if their interest in these fields is sparked and cultivated throughout the school years. The fourth recommendation focuses on the importance of fostering long-term interest and provides concrete strategies that teachers might use to promote greater interest in math and science. A final way to encourage girls in math and science is to help them build the spatial skills that are crucial to success in many math- and science-related fields, such as physics, engineering, architecture, geometry, topology, chemistry, and biology. Research suggests that spatial skills, on which boys have typically outperformed girls, can be improved through specific types of training. Thus, our final recommendation is that teachers provide students, especially girls, with specific training in spatial skills." Mr. Ramsey was able to collaborate with peer educators from across New Jersey to explore and gain a working knowledge of the following recommendations.
- Ms. Smith participated in a webinar entitled "NBC Archives On Demand" on March 18, 2010. This webinar focused on how teachers could utilize NBC's on demand video

collection in all content areas. Videos are also aligned to specific NJ Core Curriculum Content areas.

- On March 18, 2010, case manager Mrs. Hall-Goldman attended a workshop entitled “The Moody Teen: It May be More Than You Think” presented by Dr. Maureen C. Kelley, a clinical psychologist who specializes in treatment of a broad range of behavioral disorders. The focus of this workshop was depression among teenagers. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), one in eight teens suffers from a mood disorder and 14% of these teens will suffer from depression before the age of 15. Among these teens, 16.9% will think of suicide and 8.4% will attempt suicide. Suicide is the third leading cause of death amongst fifteen to twenty-four year old adolescents. The typical teenager can be described as moody and impulsive so how do we know when these signs are something more than hormones and an immature brain? Depressed teens exhibit the following: severe mood changes, somatic complaints, sudden drop in grades, loss of interest in daily pleasures, have outburst of crying, abuse alcohol or drugs, exhibit extreme sensitivity to rejections or failure, exhibit truancy, are reckless, are impulsive, feel worthless, have extreme guilt, can be self injurious, have low or over inflated self-esteem, and run away or talk of running away. If a teen is depressed, they will or have exhibited five or six depressive symptoms. Causes of depression are biopsychosocial, in other words three-fold. There are biological causes that stem from genetics, hormones, and lack of serotonin in the brain. There are psychological causes such as personality, lack of coping skills and temperament. There are social causes such as trauma, stress or loss, and severe social problems. Treatment of depression among teens can be very successful. Treatment can include psychotherapy, pharmacology and a combination of the two.
- Mr. Perrone, NMHS Director of Athletics, attended the Directors of Athletics Association of New Jersey (DAANJ) conference on March 15-18, 2010. The opportunity was provided to meet with state representatives of NJSIAA and national representatives of NIAAA for the presentation, interpretation, and discussion of new legislation regarding athletic participation, eligibility, and compliance requirements. Mr. Perrone participated in workshops led by various athletic administrators throughout the state of New Jersey covering critical issues in athletics such as the 2010-2011 NJSIAA mandated realignment of leagues and conferences, Title IX, student-athlete safety, current athlete, parent and community issues and concerns, present and future trends in technology, coaching and mentoring high school athletes and coaches, NCAA recruitment, in addition to other local and national trends and concerns.
- Physical/Driver’s Education teacher Mr. Kelly visited Cresskill High School on March 24, 2010. The objective was to observe Cresskill’s Physical Education program specifically the Fitness Unit. Cresskill has a brand new fitness center and gymnasium equipped with Life Fitness Equipment capable of meeting the different needs of the student body. The 9th grade class observed was engaged in a circuit training style program with an emphasis on teaching the different apparatus.
- Mrs. DePoto attended a webinar entitled “A Teacher in Your Pocket: Learn How to Build a 24/7 Classroom” on March 24, 2010. This webinar explained way in which the Smart Pen could be used in various disciplines.
- Mrs. Keesing is a member of TL (Teacher Librarian) Ning. On March 1, 2010, she participated in an evening TL Café, where a panel of school librarians discussed school library Web presence. Part of the discussion concerned how library instruction, program, and tools can become more accessible for students and the community. There were up to 175 school librarians online for this interactive event! The 45-minute session was intense. It was interesting, although the running online chat competed against the main presenters for participants’ attention.

- On March 23, 2010, Mrs. Keesing took part in an online ISTE event, entitled “Constructing New Learning Landscapes: Evolving Practices in Education”, and hosted by Doug Johnson, David Loertscher, and Joyce Valenza. The questions that we all need to consider are how to use the new, engaging technologies to develop/emphasize higher order thinking skills in our students and to encourage the collaborations that are necessary components for success in the world of today and tomorrow. Among the highlights of this insightful discussion were the following: collaborative learning has real value (cited Richard Light, who noted that the ability to work in small groups is “one of the strongest determinants of students’ success in higher education”); we need to empower the staff first – otherwise, teachers won’t use collaborative technologies to empower the students; and, the concept of “knowledge building centers” or “learning commons”, in which the library media specialist is embraced as a necessary partner to student learning.

8. Facilities

9. Theatre Arts

- This year's spring musical, *Rent: School Edition* was a tremendous success. Not only was the performance moving and incredibly professional, but the show also tastefully communicated important issues facing our society today. An appreciation for life was gained by all who attended the show. The cast of thirty-seven and crew of twenty students did an awesome job and we are all very proud of them. Special thanks to Alexander Diaz, John Coviello, Heidi Kolb, Stacie Shivers, Peter Torpie, Lisette Morel, Matthew Kaprielian, Ruth Beiner, Kerr Lockhart, Jane Schwartz, George Milne and family, the Kaprielian family, James Africano, Bill Drew, Ted Froonjian, Bill Barton, Hayley Barton, Dan Conner, Jonell Robles, Jeff Geltman, Mario Romero, Kyle Van Saders, the Diekhaus family, and everyone who participated in this project.

10. Other

- On March 27, 2010, The U.S. Department of Education visited New Milford High School with a group of Polish educators to learn more about how our school teaches the Holocaust and genocide. The nine educators who visited New Milford are part of the International Leadership Program of the U.S. Department of Education. This educational and cultural exchange was specifically for the teachers to learn more about how we teach the Holocaust in America. They spent ten days in the United States traveling between New York and Washington, DC learning about the American approach to teaching the Holocaust and genocide. The morning began with an overview of our school's comprehensive Holocaust education program highlighting the course curriculum, the study seminar to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the overseas trip to Germany, Czech Republic and Poland. Meredith McCann, Maria Panchenko, and Filip Piasevoli each spoke about an experience on the trip that left an impression upon them, which they aligned with a video clip from our trip documentaries. These educators had many questions for us regarding our approach that led us into great discussions about content and pedagogy. We discovered that our approaches are not worlds apart and that we share many common themes in our teaching. These educators offered to collaborate with us during future trips to create student exchanges when we visit Poland. Jenny Eisenberg, from the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs arranged for the teachers to visit our school. She was very impressed with our students and offered to encourage our students to apply for student leadership and exchange programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. (see link <http://exchanges.state.gov/>) Cindy Hsu, a CBS Correspondent, interviewed the students

and teachers during this visit. The video can be viewed at

<http://wcbstv.com/video/?id=140342@wcb.dayport.com>

- Mrs. Keesing and Mrs. Torpie were pleasantly surprised to learn that they became the first winners of prizes from EdSteps for submitting students' projects, earlier in the year, to the organization to use in its Writing and Global Competence initiative. You can see mention of the award by clicking on the link, <http://www.edsteps.org/CCSSO/Home.aspx>. They each received a \$150.00 gift card from Target. The two teachers collaborated on a global climate change project that included giving the students experiences using Google Docs and a wiki created by Mrs. Keesing. The authentic learning experience involved conducting research in a collaborative manner and sending letters to President Obama before the December Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen, Denmark. **SPECIAL UPDATE:** Mrs. Torpie and Mrs. Keesing just received a response back from President Obama! Although it is a form letter, it is on White House letterhead, and it has the (photocopied) signature of President Obama.
- On Wednesday, March 24, 2010, fifteen members of the New Milford High School chapter of the National Honor Society volunteered as servers for the Senior Citizen Dinner Theater. The students were very professional as they served salad, dinner, and dessert to residents of New Milford. The students had the benefit of helping to make this an enjoyable experience for the dinner guests.