

# April 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>
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Summaries: All end of year evaluations for members of the staff are completed.

## 2. Guest lecturers

- New Milford High School was able to secure a \$500.00 grant to offer an intervention program for the junior and senior class that took place on April 20, 2010. Sean Campbell is a motivational speaker who has faced many obstacles in his life that caused him hardship and turmoil throughout his adolescent years. Throughout his development, he was forced to endure the negative repercussions of his father's mental health issues, abusive behaviors, and addiction to alcohol. He also witnessed his mother's inability to stop enabling his father's behaviors and remove herself from the situation. Sean openly discussed how he too endured mental health issues regarding depression and anxiety; however, he was able to take control of his life and develop a new and healthy path for him. Sean, at the age of twenty-one, is a published writer and a successful motivational speaker. His ability to succeed in life shows the adolescents that no matter how hard they perceive their life, with time and conviction they too can meet their goals.
- Mr. William Felice, former New Jersey State Senator, returned to the High School to participate in its Career Day activities. Mr. Felice met with Mr. Tusa's 10th Grade Honors American History students to discuss career opportunities in local and state governments. Further stimulating student interest was Mr. Felice's narrative of his personal experiences working as an engineer in Saudi Arabia and other foreign countries prior to becoming engaged in politics. Mr. Felice's narrative of his experiences as an engineers and legislator significantly enhanced student knowledge and interest of career possibilities in these areas.
- Mr. Adam Bailey, former graduate from the High School and now a successful Wall Street attorney, returned to the High School to meet with Mr. Tusa's Honors and AP American History students. Accompanied by Mr. Alan Friedman, a fellow attorney, Mr. Bailey participated in a Mock Trial exercise in collaboration with the High School's Mock Trial team. Collaborating with both attorneys proved to be a particularly invaluable pedagogical experience for team members Nishant Patel and Sheryl Mathew, attorneys for the defense, as well as for team members Diane Montecuollo and Melissa Milne, attorneys for the prosecution. Jessica Milne, Corey Fetzer, Anita George, Alvin George, Aimee George, and Ryan Bigger served as witnesses; however, it should be noted that they, too, benefited from working closely with the aforementioned attorneys. For the student body in attendance, Mr. Bailey's and Mr. Friedman's subsequent presentation and lively Q/A session proved to be an unparalleled legal tour de force, enlightening many to the potential of studying law and law-related disciplines.

## 3. Innovations

- During the weeks of April 5 to April 14, Mr. Engström's C.P. English 10 class created and presented their "Radio Macbeth Podcast". The "Radio Macbeth Podcast" project is an authentic learning project. The students are assigned an Act from the play. They re-read their assigned Act, and created a radio news program modeled after their own favorite FM radio program. The students had to highlight all of the newsworthy events

in the act, taking turns to read the news stories, and they had to incorporate at least two sound effects in to the program. The students recorded their news program and added the effects using the mobile Macbook lab, and ,specifically, the Garageband software program.

- While wrapping up their unit on *The Miracle Worker*, collaborative teachers Mr. Engström and Mrs. Mackey invited Special Education teacher Mrs. Tambuscio to teach the students the fundamentals of sign language. To extend the lesson, the students were invited to learn to sign their name in sign language in an effort to earn five bonus participation points.
- During this year's Holocaust Study Tour in Europe, Mrs. Tambuscio had her students blog each day about their experience and reflect on their learning experience. The blog can be viewed at <http://hst10.blogspot.com>
- On Wednesday April 14, 2010, fifty students in Mrs. DePoto's two sections of the English 10 Honors class celebrated the anniversary of Mark Twain's publishing of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn with colorful displays, costumes, and activities featuring the ante-bellum South that Twain used as the setting for most of his books. Students were given the project assignment four weeks in advance and worked in groups to research and explore six different aspects of ante-bellum southern society that included: foods, gadgets and inventions, art, music and dance; the carpetbagger and country store concept; slavery, and abolitionism. Research was conducted on the Internet with the help of Mrs. Linda Keesing who provided instruction on valuable websites as well as using the latest technology of "wikis" so students could work collaboratively online from their homes. Student displays ranged from poster panels to recreated rafts based on one of the major elements of the novel, the raft that carried Huck and Jim down the Mississippi River. Students also prepared typical Southern food for one table display, led Southern dances at another, showed sports of earlier times and their counterparts today using a Nintendo Wii. Several history and English classes were invited to view the displays and participate in the festivities. Students described the event as "a fun way to learn about the period" and about Mark Twain's country.
- As per the recommendation by members of student government to the Principal in March, a Facebook page was created in order to improve communication and the dissemination of information relating to NMHS. The page can be viewed at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/New-Milford-NJ/New-Milford-High-School/114382501908040?v=info>. At this meeting students also inquired about and requested access to the wireless network in the building if they were to bring in their own laptops from home. This request was also granted by the administration and is currently being piloted by a group of senior students.
- As a culminating activity to a unit on marine plants, students in Mrs. Torpie's Marine Biology class learned to cook with seaweed. Students learned about the nutritional benefits of various types of red, green, and brown algae, located recipes using seaweed and, with Mrs. Beiner's assistance, prepared a number of different dishes. After two days of preparation, students feasted on onigiri (rice balls with salmon), crab sushi, seaweed rice, cheese and seaweed scones, seaweed risotto, chicken and egg don (chicken with seaweed over rice) and seaweed cake. With the exception of sushi, the dishes provided a new culinary experience for most of the students and highlighted the importance of sea vegetables as a global food source.
- Mr. Sheninger was asked to write a guest post for Edutopia, The George Lucas Educational Foundation on the subject of NMHS's Project Prom Dress that occurred this past January. The post can be viewed at <http://www.edutopia.org/project-prom-dress-eric-sheninger>

- Students from Ms Bettini's and Mr. Pevny's class have been entered into the "Doodle 4 Google" Contest. Entries are from Meliset Martinez, Kasandra Appice, Kevin Mathew, Rob Amitrano, Krystle Toledo, and Ashley Aiello.
- Ms. Bettini's and Mrs. Morel's students (Jacob Ramos, Cara Walenza, and Christine Almeda) have entered a high school arts competition sponsored by the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives. The Congressional Art Competition is an opportunity to recognize and encourage the artistic talent in the nation, as well as in each congressional district. If chosen, students will have their work hung in the US Capitol in the Cannon Tunnel.
- April is designated "School Library Media Month", and this year's theme is "Communities thrive @ your library". As such, Mrs. Keesing invited the Board of Education and members of the NMHS PTO to attend a special evening where she highlighted some of the newer tools of the school library trade. On Tuesday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, Mrs. Keesing gave a presentation to discuss and demonstrate various interactive, Web 2.0 resources that she promotes with teachers and students. This evening was one way to celebrate the essential role that strong school library media programs play in a student's educational career. Featured resources include blogs, wikis, social bookmarking, Google Docs, Wordle, and Pageflakes. Those who attended enjoyed the presentation. Mrs. Keesing would be happy to consider offering her presentation at a future date for those who were unable to attend.
- The Culinary classes completed a study of digestive diseases and special diets. The students created a pamphlet explaining the disease and what dietary changes one would have to make. Each kitchen group then altered the recipes to fit the special diets.

#### 4. Student honors

- Senior Filip Piasevoli was featured in the April 2010 edition of Honor Student Magazine. The magazine highlights outstanding students with interesting stories to tell. All students that apply to be featured are eligible to win a scholarship.
- Gifted and Talented is pleased to announce that after nominating two exemplary New Milford High School juniors to the 2010 [New Jersey Governor's School Program](#), we have been honored to have one of these two selected as a finalist who will attend the school to which she applied:

Eileen Gongon – School in the Sciences

The academic record, extracurricular activities, and personal interests of Eileen are quite impressive and her gifts, talents, and accomplishments have already brought distinction to her family, school, and community. The process of nominating Eileen was most gratifying. Helping her perfect her nomination portfolio, in addition to reading letters submitted by her teachers, made me feel fortunate that I could advise her during the process and during her year in our Gifted and Talented Program. New Milford should be proud that such a fine student, after what was a challenging junior year of high school, is willing to continue her schooling by attending four weeks of rigorous academic study this summer; congratulations Eileen!

- Senior Sheryl Mathew is one of this year's Hotel Association of New York City scholarship winners. She will be receiving a four-year/\$10,000 scholarship to aid in furthering his education at the collegiate level.
- On Saturday April 24, 2010, the Varsity Boy's Track Team competed in the Twin Boro Relays and for a second year in a row they were crowned Champions! It was an outstanding effort by everyone but especially to John Follety who was part of the second place finishing 4X200 relay, the 4X400 relay and he placed third in 100M dash. Other notables were Raphy Velazquez who jumped a personal best in the first place finishing long jump 18'11" and the second place finishing triple jump 39'6". Relay partners Dante Tobler jumping a personal best in the long jump, Joey Carbone and Cody Carlson also

contributed to the wins in the long jump, triple jump, and Ray Morrissey helping out in the high jump. It was a very successful weekend for the Boy's and another major championship that brings them to a record of 5-1 on the season.

- Senior, Lavinia Galido's artwork is hanging in the large high school showcase. She has been accepted to Pratt Institute with the highest Scholarship and was graded a 96% on her portfolio.

## 5. Field trips

- From April 4-9, 2010, students from Mrs. Monroe's French classes traveled to Quebec. This trip provided a linguistic, cultural and historical adventure into the French language and people in the province of Quebec. The students visited Montreal, the second largest French-speaking city in the world after Paris, and Quebec, the only "World Treasure City" in North America designated by the UN. In Montreal, the students learned about not only the history of the French in New France but also American history through the war of 1812, in addition to the history of the Amerindian nation, who were the native people of Quebec. In Montreal, the students had a bus tour of the city, a walking tour of old Montreal and visits to historic places, a visit to the botanical gardens and an authentic 17th century meal at the "Cabaret du Roy" which included an interactive folklore program.

In Quebec City, the only walled city in North America, students began their visit with lunch at "Les Anciens Canadiens". This is a restored 17th century house that serves Quebec specialties. They then attended a diorama show that recreates the six sieges of Quebec City, which was followed by a historical walking tour of Old Quebec. Students who were repeating the trip took advantage of the alternate activity designed for them, which was a visit to a giant French book and media store, Archambeault. They then toured the historic Chateau Frontenac where the D Day landing was planned by Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin. After dinner, the students attended Quebec experience, which is a 3D multimedia show about Quebec.

The second day in Quebec began with a panoramic guided description of Quebec from the highest observatory tower in Quebec. Students then visited the Beauport coast where they toured Saint Anne de Beauport Basilica, the Montmorency falls, which are higher than Niagara Falls and had home made bread and maple butter at Chez Marie. They then went ice skating, attended a demonstration of dog sledding (for lack of snow they did not get to go dog sledding), and finished the evening with a tour of a maple sugar farm followed by a family style Quebec meal with singing and folk dancing at an authentic Cabane a Sucre (Sugar Shack).

On their 3rd day in Quebec, students had breakfast at the main dining hall in the Quebec Parliament building followed by a guided tour of the Quebec Parliament. They then attended a costume workshop at the historic Artillery Park Heritage Site where student volunteers dressed up as French and British soldiers. This was followed by a Tea Ceremony in the British Officers' mess hall where the students acted about roles in a period skit. After a lunch of French Crepes, students shopped in the historic Petit Champlain district and then attended a Quebec Hockey game in a smaller town called Victoriaville. Students noted that only French was spoken outside of tourist areas.

On their last day students visited the Quebec museum of civilization where they learned more about the reasons behind the Separatists' Movement in Quebec. Finally, students crossed the Saint Lawrence River in a ferryboat and were able to admire the magnificent city from the opposite side of the Saint Lawrence. All of these activities were carefully planned to immerse students in the French language, culture, and history of their unique province. Upon returning, all students in French classes reviewed the questions for our Quebec historic scavenger hunt. The study of Quebec language, culture and history continues as the students learn the history and culture through the study of correlated

folk and popular French songs which give not only the facts of historic events but also reveal the emotional effect these events had on the people. Each song study is followed by a test.

- On April 13, 2010, Ms. Bettini's art students went on a college visit to Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY where they had a tour of the school, watched a bronze casting event, and had personal critiques of their portfolios.
- On April 22, 2010, Mr. Andolino's Applied Music Theory class traveled to Radio City Musical Hall in NYC. They attended a behind the scenes tour of the whole venue. They were able to see some acoustical features that they have been studying. A history of the stage and many performers were also presented. They were lucky enough to see a real live event set up- the 2010 NFL draft; there was even a meeting with a real Rockette dancer!
- On April 28, 2010, Ms. Schneider took her Skills for Social Living class to Hillcrest Gardens. Students explored the different areas of the wholesale garden supplier. Within the area of billing, students interviewed employees in the ordering, receiving, and accounts payable departments. The career exploration tour led us to see the packaging of the plants and flowers as well as the arrangement and management of the delivery process. The student each prepared questions for the host as well as completing their Field Trip Journal entry for Skills for Independent Living.

## **6. Guidance**

- On Friday, April 16, 2010, the Guidance Department escorted a group of 40 admitted 12th grade students to visit Bergen Community College. The students received an information session from a member of the admissions staff and then took a tour of the campus. This was quite a valuable experience for the students because they learned about what to expect from college and are now able to prepare to enter BCC in the fall.
- On Friday, April 23 2010, the Guidance Department hosted Career Day for 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. There were 25 presenters representing a wide variety of professions. Students learned about two different careers during thirty-five minute small group sessions where there 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.
- 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in Advanced Placement (AP) classes will be taking their AP exams on certain days from May 3<sup>rd</sup> – May 12<sup>th</sup>. 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.

## **7. Professional Development**

- On April 16, 2010, Ms. Vargo, Ms. Buzzelli, and Mrs. Grompone attended at workshop entitled "An Introduction to Differentiated Instruction K-12" held at the Madison Institute in Montvale, NJ. At the workshop, the participants gained an awareness of the components of differentiated instruction and how to implement multiple strategies in the classroom that are designed to meet the needs of diverse learners. Participants also learned how to plan and implement tiered lessons and instructional units, and that content, process, and/or product can be differentiated according to readiness, interests and learning profile. The workshop presented the principles of differentiation, such as engaging students in meaningful tasks, understanding student diversity, and discovering the genius in every student.
- On April 21, 2010, Mrs. Zacher and Mr. Manuppelli attended the SNAP Conference in Garfield, New Jersey. This conference concentrated on the legal responsibilities in accordance to state, local and federal guidelines of all New Jersey Public Schools

regarding illegal activities by students such as sexting, possession of illegal mind altering substances, possession of weapons, latest illegal mind altering substances trends in the county and the proper procedures of searching students.

- Mrs. O'Donnell, the school nurse, attended a training provided by the NJ Department of Education on April 22, 2010 in which she learned about the school health index. The School Health Index is a self-assessment tool and guide to assist identifying the strengths and weaknesses in promoting health and safety. It provides a guide to develop an action plan to improve the students' health and well-being involving the staff, community, and parents.
- Mrs. Porr recently attended a counselor visitation program sponsored by the Mid-Hudson Valley College Consortium. She had the opportunity to visit the following institutions: Vassar College, Marist College, Culinary Institute of America, and the United States Military Academy at West Point. During each visit, Mrs. Porr toured the campus, spoke with student panels, and met with the school's admissions department. This was a wonderful opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of these colleges, as well as receive essential college admissions updates.
- On April 28, 2010, Ms. Millian, Ms. Vargo, Mr. Coyne, Mr. Manuppelli, Mr. Jacob, and Mr. Sheninger attended an in-house workshop utilizing AverMedia software, Document Cameras and AverPens. The attendees participated in a live Skype session with the Challenger Learning Center. During that time, the participants became part of a hurricane response team, receiving real-time data from the Challenger Learning Center, and calculating the speed, distance, and ETA in Tampa, Florida. All attendees became better acquainted with the AverMedia software and how to utilize it effectively in their classrooms to make instruction both more interesting and relevant to the real world. The participants were also given the opportunity to ask questions on how to implement the technology into their lessons and everyday activities in the classroom.

## **8. Facilities**

- During a meeting with members of student government in March an inquiry was made about improving access to innovative technology, specifically iPod Touch's. The request was reviewed by the Administration and 10 iPod Touch devices were ordered and expected to arrive soon. They will be added to the mobile iPod learning lab.

## **9. Theatre Arts**

## **10. Other**

- The Senior Citizen "Twilight" Prom took place on Wednesday, April 21, 2010, from 6-9 PM in the High School Cafeteria. The Tri-M Music Honor Society and the Choral Ensemble fundraised all through the year for this special event. The following businesses donated the delicious food and door prizes: Big Jims, Bora Nails and Spa, Borderline Bagels, Celtic Kitchen, Charlie Browns of Oradell, Chartwell Cafeteria, Frankie's Imported Delicacies, Garden Café, Inner Bliss Spa, Italian Connection of Dumont, Lenz Deli ( the Hashash Family), Jersey Boys, Lieto's, Mangiannos of Riverside Square, Michael's Bagel Café, Michael's Bazaar Beauty Salon, New Milford Deli, Nails 2000+, Romann's, Sopranos, Shop Rite of New Milford, Stop and Shop of Dumont, What's Cooking, and Wine and Roses. Mrs. Swartz would like to thank Delix Joseph Alex for supplying the music for the night and Mrs. Beiner, Ms. Bettini, Mrs. Collentine and Mr. Pevny for their help in setting up the event. She would also like to thank Mrs. Beiner, Ms. Bettini, Mrs. McCann, and Mrs. VanSader for chaperoning the event and Mr. Manuppelli, for helping to fill the seniors' dance cards. The King Rick Vozak and the Queen Arey Zenion were thrilled to be crowned, given flowers and to share their first

dance with Azela Zarate, President of the Tri-M and Kenny VanSaders, President of New Milford High School respectively. Each was presented with a \$25 dollar gift certificate to a local restaurant. A good time was enjoyed by all!

- The 2010 Talent Show took place on April 23, 2010, and went to a new level this year. The evening was composed of many singer-songwriter acts both acoustic and electric. An intense group dance number and two of our own high school bands rounded out the night. The show ended with a special guest performance from guitarist [Mario Sebastian](#) and his band. The event was well attended and all ages had a great time.
- Mr. Sheninger attended and spoke at the 140 Characters Conference at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y in NYC on April 21, 2010. The panel we has on discussed the emerging role of social media in education and its essential integration in schools. The entire panel discussion and his thoughts can be viewed at [A Principal's Reflections](#), his official blog.
- The softball team qualified for the Bergen County Women's Coaches Association tournament and will be playing Paramus on 5/1 at 3pm at Paramus HS.
- With wins this month over Dwight Englewood and Saddle River Day, head girls track coach Greg Kelly won his 100th career dual meet as a head coach. Congratulations!
- Mrs. Miller is one of five math teachers State wide cooperating with Rutgers University Graduate School of Education on a research project and case study. Mrs. Miller was interviewed by a doctoral candidate from Rutgers about her lesson plans, beliefs, teaching strategies, and the future of math education. Samples of her lesson plans were taken back to the Graduate School for analysis and a follow up interview took place the end of April. The study results will be published this summer in a paper entitled, "Exemplary High School Mathematics Teachers' Beliefs and Important Components of Mathematics."
- A team from the High School will once again participate in this Year's Ethics Bowl competition sponsored by Stevens Institute of Technology. Under the guidance of Dr. Asa-Awuku and Mr. Tusa, team members Michael Henley, Corey Fetzer, Alvin George, Anita George, Aimee George, Gregg Winkler, Sagar Desai, and Keval Patel have started to prepare for the competition, which will be held on May 20, 2010 at Stevens. Students will analyze four contemporary issues and present their solution in exchanges with teams from other High Schools.