

Report Card Narratives

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEW MILFORD BORO (03-3550)

New Milford Public Schools continue to represent a district on the move. Test scores are on the rise; the professional advancement of faculty is increasingly manifesting in enhanced lesson design; and ongoing program development is characterized by intelligence, imagination and sense of purpose. The administration and faculty think in terms of possibility. Young at heart, vibrant and open to new ideas, they value working collaboratively and understand the importance of maintaining consistent focus on the central mission of educating children. Organized into professional learning communities, teachers are dedicated to the advancement of student achievement and the enrichment of the total school experience.

The District is proud of its positive educational climate and the commitment of staff, students, parents, administrators, board members and the community. A stable administrative team with a common long-range vision is in place. Sustainable reform is at the heart of that vision, which embraces the creation of partnerships with local, county and state institutions, including higher education, regional arts and cultural centers and civic organizations because they are essential to the goal of connecting students with resources not readily available within the confines of a school setting. New Milford schools enjoy partnerships with the Bergen Performing Arts Center, Fairleigh Dickinson University and St. Thomas Aquinas College.

For the long term, the District is facing significant progressive change in the ways that schools provide relevant, innovative and challenging educational opportunities to students at all grade levels. Drawing upon best practice models, for example, the high school has laid the foundations for the development of career-focused concentrations in areas such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), Global Leadership (international business & entrepreneurship, diplomacy, language, travel), Environmental Studies, Performing Arts (drama, music, dance), Digital Media, Arts & Letters (interdisciplinary studies in the humanities) and a cross-disciplinary approach to Teaching as a Profession. To that end, the Academies@NMHS opened in September 2011 with an inaugural class of 47 students, and has grown to a current enrollment of 80 students spanning grades 9-12.

Understanding that the implementation of these programs cannot occur in a vacuum, complementary curricular components are being introduced at the elementary and the middle school levels. A Junior Academy, comprehensive after-school enrichment program, specialized programs addressing the needs of our most challenged students, comprehensive programs in science, math and literacy at the elementary and early childhood levels are systematically being developed and launched. Of particular note is the Inner Bridge Crossing program, designed to serve children with social, relational and communicative disabilities including Asperger's Syndrome, high-functioning autism, and nonverbal learning disabilities. A Supervisor of Elementary Education works alongside K-5 teachers to oversee the implementation of research based programs and guide ongoing, targeted professional development. A balanced literacy program includes elements of phonics,

reading, writing, and word study. Research based programs include Project Read and Teachers College Reading and Writing Project model. Comparable initiatives offering alternatives for students in the upper grades are also under development.

Whether we are looking at healthy decisions options, including food, exercise, and behaviors, or the introduction of engaging, interest-oriented educational programs, New Milford Schools are well poised to become models noted for accomplishment, drive, creativity, integrity and innovation. New Milford Schools are resolute in their attention to the development of the whole child. District programs prepare students to think critically, master the challenges of life-long academic, cultural, social, economic, emotional and professional advancement, as well as constructive participation as citizens of the world.

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