

**TOWN OF MONTVILLE  
REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MONTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER  
May 16, 2017, at 6:00 p.m.**

**2016-2017 Board of Education Goals**

**To engage in a cycle of continuous improvement to ensure all students are educated with high standards and achieve at the highest levels of learning in the Montville Public Schools.**

**Item 1. Call to order**

Board Chair Robert Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Montville High School Library/Media Center. Board members present were; James Wood, Colleen Rix, Monica Pomazon, Daniel Boisvert, Joseph Aquitante, and Carrie Baxter. Board member Steven Loiler and Sandra Berardy were absent.

Also present were Superintendent of Schools Brian Levesque, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Laurie Pallin, Business Manager Kathy Lamoureux, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Jennifer LeMay, Administrators, Mary Jane Dix, Denise Dunning, Amy Espinoza, William Klinefelter, Phil Orbe, Jill Mazzalupo, Tanya Patten, Heather Sangermano, Jennifer Russell, and Jeff Theodoss, and Student Board Representatives Karishma Chouhan and Joshua Archibald were absent.

**Item 2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All stood and pledged the flag.

**Presentation: A) CAFE Student Leadership Awards:** Board Chair Robert Mitchell introduced Principal M.J. Dix to introduce and share information regarding her two award recipients, Tyler Pendleton and Persephone Tierney, Board Chair Robert Mitchell presented the certificates to the recipients.

Board Chair Robert Mitchell introduced Principal Jeffrey Theodoss and Assistant Principal Tanya Patten to introduce and share information regarding his two award recipients, Van Heller and Karishma Chouhan Tierney, Board Chair Robert Mitchell presented the certificates to the recipients.

**B) Montville Marvels**

**Montville High School:** Assistant Principal Tanya Patten and Board Chair Robert Mitchell presented Joshua Cushing with a Montville Marvel for his excellence in teaching, leadership and tireless dedication to the students of Montville.

C) Student Representative Karishma Chouhan was absent.

D) United Way; Thank You; Board Chair, Robert Mitchell introduced Sarah McDermott from The United Way. Sarah spoke briefly about The United Way and recognized their partnership with Montville Public Schools. Sarah shared all of the ways Montville has contributed this year including regular volunteers from PBL, over \$10,000 in donations, and 108% increase from last year's participation rate. The School Campaign was recognized as the School Campaign of the year at an even last week at Mohegan Sun.

E) Paraprofessional of the Year 2018 – Ruth Delacruz. Board Chair Robert Mitchell introduced Superintendent Levesque who spoke about Ruth Delacruz the 2017-2018 Paraprofessional of the Year for Montville Schools. Ruth was presented with a small gift and citations from Mayor McDaniel and Representative Kevin Ryan.

F) Reception in honor of 2016-2017 retirees; Colleen Rix presented to Michelle Cavaros, Secretary, Central office, and Gerlinda Lehner, Teacher, Carrie Baxter presented to Mona Levin, Teacher, Monica Pomazon presented to Robert Thorn, Teacher, Jim Wood presented to Anna Wojick, Teacher and Nancy Ziegler, Paraprofessional were all read resolutions, and were presented with citations from The Town of Montville as well as the State of Connecticut. Marilyn Courville, Food Manager was unable to attend the meeting. These eight retirees represent two hundred years of service to Montville Schools.

At 6: 41 p.m. Board Chair Robert Mitchell called for a break until 7:00 p.m. for a brief reception honoring the retirees and Paraprofessional of the year.

At 7:02 p.m. Board Chair Robert Mitchell called the meeting back to order.

**Item 3: Hearing of delegates and citizens (regarding agenda items only).**

Tara Crossly, 1326 Old Colchester Road, business owner, spoke of her concerns about privatizing bus company. Importance of relationships with drivers which she feels you will not get from a larger company.

Robin Marquand, 853 Old Colchester Road. A para with Special needs students here in Montville. Each and every driver cares deeply about students and have special training with the equipment. Drivers know students' names, and are amazing people which she does not want to lose. She says the drivers live here and know and care for her kids.

Jeff Toohey, 101 Orchard Drive, Wife is a driver and comes home with stories about the students and cares deeply about them. She knows how to calm an autistic student down, feels that the company is in business to make money and in five years when the contract is up will have us over a barrel.

Loretta Schmidt, home daycare owner in town. Students have same bus route for years, drivers know students and students are safe. Don't know who will drive with company coming in.

Mike Butterworth, 128 Connecticut Blvd., Read agenda item aloud. Thought Superintendent would be up front and honest. Says \$238,000 savings – need to talk to other towns this will go up 10% a year and we will be back where we started from. Listening to radio yesterday, six student's caregivers were not home. Drivers finished route circled back to homes. Today two trips popped up, how much would these things cost with a new company to add these routes? In the future you can't go back – need to stay the course.

John Coffey, 112 Main Street, Baltic, CT., Commuted to work here in Montville because he loves it here. Has worked for public companies-special needs students are sub-contracted out to Curtain \$40,000 per kids a year and you won't get good service. Here we have control of buses and vans and we will lose that by the second year with the company.

Jeff Rogers, 146 Forsyth Road, heard drivers and parents speak about what they don't want. There is a larger audience that may not be here. Agenda is misleading – people aren't informed and resulted in a smaller audience. Should make a reasonable presentation and see if people are happy or not happy because they don't know because you haven't explained. People paying the bill should have information and be heard.

Chuck Longton, 31 Laurel Drive, Dad and Grandad with three youngsters in Montville. All rode the buses. I'm invested in the schools and the buses. We are in this together. As town counselor you learn how much things cost and how much liability there is. Town budget is really tight – no wiggle room, the new rate is close to a 2 mill increase. General and school budgets make up the two parts. Looked at school budget with Brian for two hours. It is very tight. Discussed the possibility of going private, save \$50,000- 100,000 in operating costs, almost \$700K in sale of buses. \$850,000 off of town budget that plus early return = \$1 million, puts mill rate in spot most people can afford. Know the effect of your decision-if you approve the town will have a manageable budget, if not the only place the town has to look to cut is the school budget. Do not want to cut the school budget. Please consider financial impact decision will have on the town and its people. A lot of drivers do not come from Montville. They still know the kids and care about them.

Joe Jaskiewicz; Agenda item is honest mistake no one is trying to hide anything. Assume we will have people to answer all of these questions?

Erwin Schmidt. Uncasville, heard discussion already made decision why have the meeting?

Amy Driscoll, 4 Jamies Way, Works at Murphy kitchen. Not going to get personal care if you hire out. You take the bus drivers away I am worried about my job next. All you care about is money.

**Item 4: Letters and communications.**

None.

**Item 5. Approval of Consent Calendar.**

**Motion:** That the Board approves the Consent Calendar.

**Proposed by:** Colleen Rix  
**Seconded by:** Carrie Baxter  
**Vote:** Carried (vote 6-0)

**Item 6. Unfinished Business. – None**

**Item 7. New business.**

- a. Consideration and action to rescind Policy 5134; Student Pregnancy, as recommended by the Policy Committee at its last meeting.**

**Motion:** That the Board rescinds Policy 5134.

**Proposed by:** Jim Wood  
**Seconded by:** Carrie Baxter  
**Vote:** Carries (vote 6-0)

Policy Chair the committee looked at the policy last month, the policy is dated and not needed. State Law covers the topic; the policy is redundant.

- b. Consideration and action to rescind Policy 5141.23; Psychotropic Drug Sue, as recommended by the Policy Committee at its last meeting.**

**Motion:** That the Board rescinds Policy 5141.23.

**Proposed by:** Carrie Baxter  
**Seconded by:** Monica Pomazon  
**Vote:** Carried (vote 6-0)

Policy chair Jim Wood; this is covered by State Statute and substance abuse policy.

- c. **Consideration and action to approve Policy 5145.1; Dissent/Freedom of Speech without revisions as recommended by the Policy Committee at its last meeting.**

**Motion:** That the Board approves Policy 5145.1 without revisions.

**Proposed by:** Jim Wood  
**Seconded by:** Dan Boisvert  
**Vote:** Carries (vote 6-0)

Policy chair, Jim Wood no need for changes.

- d. **Consideration and action to approve the educational specification for the Leonard J. Tyl Well School Project.**

**Motion:** That the board approves the educational specification for the Leonard J. Tyl Well School Building Project.

**Proposed by:** Colleen Rix  
**Seconded by:** Carrie Baxter  
**Vote:** Carries (vote 6-0)

Superintendent Levesque explained that this authorizes the board to submit educational specification to the State. Council already voted to move the project forward.

- e. **Consideration and action to approve the Superintendent to enter into an agreement with a private contractor for a period of five years beginning on July 1, 2017.**

**Motion:** That the Board approves the motion to approve the Superintendent to enter into a private agreement with a private contractor for a period of five years beginning on July 1, 2017.

**Proposed by:** Colleen Rix  
**Seconded by:** Carrie Baxter  
**Vote:** Does not carry (vote 3-4)  
**Abstentions:** None

Board Chair Robert Mitchell said it was his fault the agenda did not say Transportation and it was just missed in editing and approval.

Superintendent Levesque; Also indicated that the omission of the word transportation is missing. Publicly apologized, 100% my fault. This fall the board voted to authorize him to do an RFQ for transportation. Received four bids, met with three vendors, negotiated details of proposed contract. The proposal which stood out was Durham, they are here to

speaking after me and answer any questions regarding the proposals and information which was provided to the Board last week. The proposed contract language authorizes us to go out to bid if we are unhappy with the contract. All of our drivers will be offered employment. All are guaranteed employment and offered the opportunity to work for the contractor. 12 of 169 towns in the State remain as private contractors, why? Outside contractors have the skills and safer transportation than we can offer. It is a scare tactic to say that the drivers will be different. We will have the same drivers. If we have an issue with a driver, we can call Durham and tell them we want a new driver. This decision is NOT just financial.

**Buses:** Age of our bus fleet- Buses are 10, 15 and even as old as twenty-seven years old. Average age of fleet is over 11 years. New contract states that fleet is never older than an average of 5.5 years. No single bus may be over ten years old. We would have safer buses moving forward and we do not have the resources to purchase new buses. In the first five years we will get twenty-four new buses under the proposed contract.

**Expertise:** The contractor provides expertise in transportation, expertise that we do not have as a district. References were checked- we have not spoken to a district who wants to go back to privatized transportation.

**Safety:** The new fleet under the proposed contract will have mandatory cameras. Current cameras do not work, some are still VHS and inevitably when there is an incident on the bus the video may not be obtained. All buses will be equipped with GPS and a free app for parents and administrators to keep track of the students at all times. This is equipment we cannot afford to purchase.

**Finances:** How can we find savings with the least impact on our classrooms? Five Year savings = \$2.2 million to the town and tax payers. \$993,000 in savings realized in year one. \$51,717 conservatively in the first year in operation savings with up to an additional \$60,000 in savings. Operation \$273,000 over five years conservatively. Capital requests not funded buses have been purchased from operation budget and 1% non-lapsing account. Savings of over \$1million over five years in Capital. Fleet will be purchase for \$653,123 plus \$28,344 for bus garage equipment and this money would go to the town. Finally, new contractor will pay taxes on buses equal to \$50,000 a year-we do not currently pay taxes on our fleet.

This proposal was delayed due to negotiations with Insurance. Several meetings took place and we will realize no insurance savings in the first year. Policy is based on paid claims not future liability. However, in the future we should see reductions. The financial savings is significant but safety is more important. The town is not in a position to support capital requests. The new contractor will have three people in the office, Manager, Dispatcher and a safety coordinator. We have two now and one is usually out driving.

The proposed contract will see a 2.75% increase each of the five years. After five years we will go out to bid again and will switch if the costs are too high. Kathy has analyzed every bus run – negotiated them carefully. Our hope is that drivers who are currently employed here will stay. Durham proposed to offer them a generous package.

Durham (Keith)- Had a conversation with the Teamsters rep-will negotiate with them in good faith. Under law we have to negotiate w union if 50.1% of current drivers stay. Will require 40 hours of training for drivers, classroom and behind the wheel. Privatization advantages- can pull drivers from other towns, drivers will receive a 7% pay increase. \$20/hour average pay for CDL. New CDL \$18/hours. Should have less of a challenge hiring drivers as we are always recruiting. We don't decide who rides what buses- the district does. They can sub contract special needs students if they choose to- the contractor does NOT make that decision.

Before school starts each bus driver will come in and take their bus on all of their routes at the regular time of route. Make notes on hazards or changes and turn in. This will be paid time. We have a person completely dedicated to versitran and routing- it is all that they do.

Questions from the BOE: Dan Boisvert: \$653,123 – is this a steadfast price? Yes, paid to the town on 07/01/2017. Colleen: You say your feet are in small towns, have you driven the roads of Montville? Yes, I had a route in Eastern, CT as my area and worked for Laidlaw. Very familiar with Eastern, CT. We require our staff to be involved in the community that they are working in including community based projects. Jim: Spreadsheet- late run formula- Brian Late Bus, Tue, Wed, Th, attach to regular run, two rates will be billed at lesser rate. \$20 savings in just paying reg 4 to 5 to 6-hour rate.

Address Flexibility: Brian: Regarding comment from audience earlier should not have drivers driving kids around if the caregivers are not home, per district policy they should be returned to the schools. Call Parents. Durham will implement the approved board polices and adhere to them. Jim: What is different this time? Kathy responded, we did not have a consultant help us draw up RFQ – we were able to get much more detail with the expertise brought to this. This change transfers our insurance risks. Is there anything in the contract allowing Durham to break the contract with us? No but there is language in it allowing us to break the contract. Dan: Has Boe attorney looked at it? Once the contract is approved the attorney would review it, Kathy is very skilled at reading contracts and often points things out to our attorney.

Monica: Problems with students on bus- how would that be addressed? The district's policy would be followed as it is now, it would not be the bus garages responsibility but that of the building administrator. Parent calls would be relayed to the schools. Durham does not discipline, goes to school according to policy.

Carrie: I am conflicted. I hear both sides. Financial and personal and want to hear more on consistency and training. Is the is the way we solve our current problems with

drivers? Keith: Monthly training of drivers, three people in office who don't drive and are always available to answer the phone. Safety person goes out with drives to ride routes and evaluate the drivers. Fourteen weeks to train a new driver.

Jim: Offering all existing staff jobs? Yes

Bob: What type of buses? Brand new 77 passenger buses though close to the deadline to order for the fall. 36 total buses assigned to Montville – 24 new.

Chair Robert Mitchell asked the Board if they were ready to vote on this?

**f. Consideration and action to approve the extension of the Superintendent's employments for one additional year to June 30, 2020.**

This item was moved to the end of the meeting.

**Motion: That the board enters executive session and invites Brian Levesque into the session.**

**Proposed by:** Jim Wood  
**Seconded by:** Carrie Baxter

**Motion:** That the board exits executive session.

**Proposed by:** Colleen Rix  
**Seconded by:** Daniel Boisvert

**Motion:** That the board approves the extension of the Superintendents' employment for one additional year.

**Proposed by:** Monica Pomazon  
**Seconded by:** Jim Wood  
**Vote:** Carried 7-0

**\*It is anticipated that the Board of Education will meet in executive session**

**Item 8. Committee and liaison reports.**

**a. Policy Committee (James Wood).**

The meeting was cancelled.

**b. Educational Evaluation Committee (Carrie Baxter).**

Heather Sangermano presented updates on the programs at Palmer building. Phil Orbe presented on athletic presentation. Jeffrey Theodoss reported on current enrollment.

**c. Communications Committee (Colleen Rix).**

The meeting was cancelled, in addition the meeting for June 6<sup>th</sup> will be cancelled and rescheduled during the summer months per board discussion.

**d. Montville Education Foundation (Daniel Boisvert).**

Was unable to attend the meeting.

**e. LEARN (Colleen Rix).**

Was unable to attend the meeting.

**f. CABE/NSBA (Robert Mitchell).**

Reminded the board that there will be a workshop on teacher negotiations. Please let Jen know by Thursday if you would like to be registered. Please keep in mind that the teachers' contract will be negotiated this year beginning in August.

**g. Atlantic Broadband Communications Advisory Council (Monica Pomazon).**

The meeting is tomorrow.

**h. Montville Youth Services Bureau (Daniel Boisvert).**

Did not attend.

**i. Administrative quarterly Reports.**

Carrie thanked the principals for the reports and mentioned that she loves to read them and especially likes to hear about the upcoming events.

**j. Student Board Representatives.**

**Joshua Archibald** was unable to attend the meeting.

**Karishma Chouhan** was unable to attend the meeting.

**k. Chair's Remarks.**

Negotiations; Board please show up.

Carrie Baxter thanked the board for their support of Montville Loves to Read, she said it was a great day.

**l. Other. -- None**

**Item 9. Superintendent's Report.**

**a. Report from Director of Special Services – Mrs. Paula LaChance.**

This month I have been working with Heather Sangermano and Shilpa Nagaraj to develop standards with tiered interventions for addressing attendance issues at the school level. We will continue to have a Family with Service Needs Board but as you know, we will no longer have the weight of the juvenile court behind us.

I have finalized ESY staffing and looking to work with the teachers to adjust the curriculum the area of focus was on Co-Teaching. I will let Laurie elaborate more on that.

I spent quite a bit of time in meetings out of district this month and happy to have been able to bring two students back into district but my elation was quickly deflated with three new out of district placements. I am now in the process of assessing those students to see if we could provide services in district.

**Report from the Assistant Superintendent – Mrs. Pallin**

I met with the elementary principals to plan for the implementation of Readers Workshop. We continue to work to create book libraries, a process which involves leveling, cataloguing, and defining a method for circulating and tracking books, as well as determining a location and system for organization and storage of these books.

I have begun the work on the OneNote Curriculum binders in preparation for curriculum work for this summer.

This week I am working on finalizing the instructional materials orders.

On the May 26th elementary teachers' professional development we will focus on running records. On June 19th preparation for implementation of Readers Workshop will be the focus of the professional learning for elementary teachers and co-teaching will be the focus for secondary teachers. Summer PD in Readers Workshops will be held both in district and at LEARN.

**b. Monthly Update from the Superintendent.**

I spent a great deal of my week preparing the information from the transportation proposal which was requested by the Board at its October meeting. Finalizing numbers, working with our insurance agent to determine cost savings, if any and preparing the documentation.

In addition, I worker to determine the impact of the most recent changes in the Budget will have on our board budget in the year to come.

**Item 10. Information Items.**

None.

**Item 11. Citizens comments (non-agenda items only).**

None

**f. Consideration and action to approve the extension of the Superintendent's employments for one additional year to June 30, 2020.**

**This item was moved to the end of the meeting.**

**Motion: That the board enters executive session and invites Brian Levesque into the session.**

**Proposed by: Jim Wood  
Seconded by: Carrie Baxter**

**Motion: That the board exits executive session.**

**Proposed by: Colleen Rix  
Seconded by: Daniel Boisvert**

**Motion: That the board approves the extension of the Superintendents' employment for one additional year.**

**Proposed by: Monica Pomazon  
Seconded by: Jim Wood  
Vote: Carried 7-0**

**\*It is anticipated that the Board of Education will meet in executive session**

**Item 12. Adjournment.**

**Motion: That the meeting is adjourned.**

**Proposed by: Monica Pomazon  
Seconded by: Jim Wood  
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 7-0)**

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Robert Mitchell, Chair  
Montville Board of Education

Carrie T. Baxter, Secretary  
Montville Board of Education

*Minutes Approved:* \_\_\_\_\_