

**TOWN OF MONTVILLE
REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
MONTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER
April 12, 2016, at 6:00 p.m.**

2015 - 2016 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 6:02 p.m. in the Montville High School Library/Media Center. Board members present were Carrie Baxter, Sandra Berardy, Daniel Boisvert, Steve Loiler, Kim Navetta, Todd Pomazon, James Wood, and Robert Mitchell, Jr. Board member Colleen Rix was absent.

Also present were Superintendent of Schools Brian Levesque, Assistant Superintendent Laurie Pallin, Director of Special Services Paula LaChance, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Jennifer LeMay, Director of Technology Nicholas Savoie, Business Manager Kathy Lamoureux, Athletic Director Phil Orbe, Administrators Mary-Jane Dix, Denise Dunning, Amy Espinoza, William Klinefelter, Jill Mazzalupo, Heather Sangermano, Allison Peterson, Jennifer Russell, and Jeff Theodoss, and Student Board Representative Karishma Chouhan. Student Board Representative Rohit Sinha was absent.

Item 2. Pledge of Allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

Presentation: A) Montville Marvels.

It is recommended that the Board of Education acknowledge the following students, teachers and community members in the areas noted:

Leonard J. Tyl Middle School: Principal Mary Jane Dix and Assistant Principal Will Klinefelter recognized Montville Marvels Judy Abrams and Vanessa Wudyka, two fantastic music teachers, for going above and beyond to teach and support students, as they develop their musical talents. Board member Jim Wood presented these certificates.

Palmer Building: Principal Heather Sangermano recognized Montville Marvel Patrick Lang for effortlessly making meaningful connections with students that impact them both in and out of school. He has vast interests and skills that make him an invaluable asset to our school community. His certificate was presented by Board member Todd Pomazon.

Mohegan Elementary School: Principal Allison Peterson recognized Montville Marvels Mackenzie Bourdon and Zane Kingsborough, two fifth graders, for making positive

choices and staying focused when faced with challenges. Board member Dan Boisvert presented their certificates.

Oakdale Elementary School: Principal Jill Mazzulupo recognized Montville Marvel Cameron Payne for his effort and perseverance. He always thinks problems through and utilizes strategies before responding in all areas of the curriculum, as well as when problems arise in the classroom. Adam and Jason Sheridan were also recognized as Montville Marvels for their tireless efforts in fundraising at Oakdale Elementary School, raising over \$3,500 for Jump Rope for Heart, and being the top fundraisers for the first annual Jog-A-Thon this fall. These certificates were presented by Board member Steve Loiler.

Murphy Elementary School: Principal Amy Espinoza recognized Montville Marvel Jada Cheung for going above and beyond the Reading Hall of Fame expectations and completing an impressive 5 reading logs thus far. Jayden Burrell and Emma Tucker were also recognized as Montville Marvels for working diligently, for keeping a positive attitude, and for working hard when the work was hard, and finding success in reading. Board member Carrie Baxter presented these certificates.

Technology Department: Technology Director Nic Savoie recognized Montville Marvels Jill Bonner and Stacey Pittsinger for rising to the occasion when the Technology Department was short staffed by taking on additional tasks and striving to continue to provide help and problem solve in a timely manner. Sandy Berardy, Board member, presented these certificates.

Presentation: B) National Poetry Month Presentation – Montville High School.
Reading Poetry are: Caitlyn Castro (MHS Poet Laureate),
Karishma Chouchan, and Christianna Johnson.

Students Caitlyn Castro (MHS Poet Laureate), Karishma Chouchan, and Christianna Johnson credited their teacher, Mrs. Laurencot, who mentioned and then started Open Mic Night at Montville High School. Each student read a poem that she had written. C. Johnson read her poem “Enough;” K. Chouchan read her poem “17 Memories;” and C. Castro read “Ophelia.”

Presentation: C) Paraprofessional of the Year 2017 – Peggy Kelley

Superintendent B. Levesque introduced Peggy Kelly and read a list of her professional accomplishments noting that she began her career as a part-time special needs paraprofessional in 1998. Thereafter, he read a State Citation on behalf of the General Assembly that was to be presented by State Representative Kevin Ryan but he was unable to attend the meeting this evening as the legislature is still in session. Board Chair B. Mitchell then presented P. Kelly with a gift from the Board. P. Kelly thanked Administration and staff and stated, “We give our best every day for the students.”

There was brief recess called at 6:32 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 6:38 p.m.

Presentation: D) Problem Solving in Reading – Mohegan’s Grades 4 and 5 Reading Workshop Model – Mohegan Elementary School

Principal Allison Peterson and staff member Lisa Zablonksi presented revisions which Mohegan has made to their reading workshop model for 4th and 5th grade regular, special education, and intervention students. Students were provided with high interest choices for 4-8 week small-group reading units. Options offered included: Culturally Diverse Literature, Journalism, Book Clubs, Inquiry-Based Learning; Creative Writing, and Reader’s Theater. All groups utilized strategies from the Comprehension Took Kit and engaged in discussion and close reading techniques. STAR Reading assessments indicate that students had made progress in identifying main idea and supporting details in fiction and informational text. Future goals of the program include incorporation of myON into all sessions including the use of myON electronic journals and more strategic determination of student groups.

Hearing of delegates and citizens (regarding agenda items only).

Board Chair B. Mitchell asked three times for comments. There were none.

Item 3: Letters and communications. -- None

Item 4. Approval of Consent Calendar.

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

Proposed by: Steve Loiler

Seconded by: Carrie Baxter

Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

Item 5. Report from Student Board Representatives.

Student Representative Karishma Chouchan reported to the Board on the following activities during March – April 2016, as follows:

Music

1. The Choirs went to Annapolis, MD, where they were outstanding, professional, and able to represent Montville High School phenomenally. They scored two golds (of the three awarded) and were the only choirs to receive a standing ovation. Mya Millbauer received an outstanding soloist award for her part in Senzenina. The most amazing accomplishment of the choirs was their ability to adjust to new artistic ideas on the spot during 45-minute clinics with collegiate conductors. This shows as Mr. Cushing says, “These students have internalized the fundamentals of music making, and are beginning to understand the connectivity the arts foster.”

2. The Concert band, Jazz Band, and Percussion Ensemble are all working on their spring concerts and the Memorial Parade (where high schoolers and middle schoolers will march together).

Sports

3. Both defending ECC champions in girls track and baseball look strong again this spring.
4. The girls and boys lacrosse teams both opened their seasons on Saturday with victories.
5. Ten junior student-athletes attended the ECC Leadership Conference on March 28.
6. Senior football player Troy Sullivan will be honored as the school's National Football Federation Scholar Athlete at a reception on Sunday, April 24th.

School

7. Active Athletes has a Chili's fundraiser tomorrow, April 13 from 4:00 – 9:00 p.m. and 10 percent of the proceeds will go to Active Athletes.
8. AP Tests are coming up and teachers are trying their hardest to prepare the students.
9. ECE American Experience and AP/ECE Spanish are combining to go to the New Britain Museum of American Art that includes the Salvador Dalí exhibit.
10. Friday, April 15th is our annual Reading Across America field trip in which high schoolers volunteer their time to read to elementary students in one of the three district schools.
11. Next week, language students will travel to Cuba to experience the culture, language, and beauty that has so recently been opened to U.S. residents.

Item 6. Unfinished Business.

a. Budget Meetings

- **Public Hearing on General Government Budget, Wednesday, April 27, 2016, 6:00 p.m., Montville High School Auditorium.**
- **Public Hearing on Board of Education Budget, Tuesday, April 26, 2016, 6:00 p.m. Montville High School Auditorium.**

Motion: **That the Board approves a special meeting on April 25, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the upcoming budget meetings.**

Proposed by: Carrie Baxter

Seconded by: Jim Wood

Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

Item 7. New business.

- a. Consideration and action to schedule a reception to honor its retirees on May 17, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. and approve the writing of resolutions for retirees.**

Motion: That the Board schedules a reception to honor its retirees on May 17, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. and approves the writing of resolutions for retirees.

Proposed by: Jim Wood
Seconded by: Sandy Berardy
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- b. Consideration and action to appoint a Board member to serve on the Transportation negotiating committee for wages and insurance only. (5 - Positive Community Relationships)**

Motion: That the Board appoints a Board member to serve on the Transportation negotiating committee for wages and insurance only. (5 - Positive Community Relationships)

Proposed by: Carrie Baxter
Seconded by: Steve Loiler
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

Motion: That the Board appoints Board Chair Bob Mitchell to serve on the Transportation negotiating committee for wages and insurance only. (5 - Positive Community Relationships)

Proposed by: Sandy Berardy
Seconded by: Carrie Baxter
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- c. Consideration and action to authorize the superintendent to apply for interdistrict cooperative grants and state and federal grants for various programs.**

Motion: That the Board authorizes the superintendent to apply for interdistrict cooperative grants and state and federal grants for various programs.

Proposed by: Sandy Berardy
Seconded by: Dan Boisvert
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- d. Consideration and action to confirm the date of Monday, June 13, 2016, 6:00 p.m. for Montville High School graduation.**

Motion: That the Board confirms the date of Monday, June 13, 2016, 6:00 p.m. for Montville High School graduation.

Per discussion, Assistant Superintendent L. Pallin stated that the date was communicated with the Project Graduation Committee. As well, the date is the 180th day for students.

Proposed by: Steve Loiler
Seconded by: Jim Wood
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

e. Consideration and action to cancel the Regular Board of Education meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 19, 2016.

Motion: That the Board cancels the Regular Board of Education meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 19, 2016.

Per discussion, Board Chair B. Mitchell said that the July meeting is routinely cancelled each year.

Proposed by: Carrie Baxter
Seconded by: Kim Navetta
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

f. Consideration and action to approve the motion that the contract of employment of Amanda Whitney, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)

Motion: That the Board approves the motion that the contract of employment of Amanda Whitney, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)

Per discussion, Board Chair B. Mitchell stated that the reduction of staff is due to declining enrollment in each of the district elementary schools. Superintendent B. Levesque responded to a question by Board member C. Baxter stating that filling vacancies for open positions is dictated by the language of the union contract. The rehiring of staff is determined by seniority and certification.

Proposed by: Jim Wood
Seconded by: Steve Loiler

Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- g. Consideration and action to approve the motion that the contract of employment of Alan Reichle, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)**

Motion: That the Board approves the motion that the contract of employment of Alan Reichle, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)

Proposed by: Sandy Berardy

Seconded by: Todd Pomazon

Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- h. Consideration and action to approve the motion that the contract of employment of Melissa Ambrosio, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)**

Motion: That the Board approves the motion that the contract of employment of Melissa Ambrosio, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)

Proposed by: Jim Wood

Seconded by: Todd Pomazon

Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- i. Consideration and action to approve the motion that the contract of employment of Shara Bousquet, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)**

Motion: That the Board approves the motion that the contract of employment of Shara Bousquet, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016

school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)

Proposed by: Sandy Berardy
Seconded by: Kim Navetta
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- j. Consideration and action to approve the motion that the contract of employment of Heather Silera, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)

Motion: That the Board approves the motion that the contract of employment of Heather Silera, not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise this individual in writing of this action. (3 – Budget/Resources)

Proposed by: Jim Wood
Seconded by: Steve Loiler
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

Board member S. Berardy asked Superintendent Levesque whether he had met with the staff, who were not being renewed. The Superintendent stated that he had meet with all of the staff and informed them of the procedure for the nonrenewal. He also said that they each would be given a letter regarding the action taken this evening by the Board.

- k. Consideration and action to transfer \$40,000 from electricity account (410) to tuition accounts (560-563) to fund student outplacements.

Motion: That the Board approves the transfer of \$40,000 from electricity account (410) to tuition accounts (560-563) to fund student outplacements.

Per discussion, Superintendent B. Levesque stated the anticipated shortfall is \$260,000 and the transfers are budgeted for the future budget. Due to higher student placements, negotiations with advocates, outplacements, and new students with special needs moving into the district that get outplaced costs for the same have increased.

Proposed by: Todd Pomazon
Seconded by: Jim Wood
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- l. Consideration and action to transfer \$125,000 from Supplies – Heat account (620) to tuition accounts (560-563) to fund student outplacements.**

Motion: **That the Board approves the transfer of \$125,000 from Supplies - Heat account (620) to tuition accounts (560-563) to fund student outplacements.**

Per discussion, Board member S. Berardy asked whether the Board could approach the Town to get the Excess Cost Grant (ECG) that it receives if the Board is in need of funds. Superintendent B. Levesque responded that he has begun a dialog with Town Council Chair/Board Liaison Joe Jaskiewicz and hopes to meet with the Town Finance Committee concerning the same. He also commented on the One-Percent Non-lapsing Account that was proposed to the Town by the Board and that the Town did not fund this year. Superintendent Levesque stated that the transfers for approval this evening were budgeted line items but next year the Board may need to request additional funding from the Town given the State's budget shortfall and cuts to State services and funding.

Proposed by: Kim Navetta
Seconded by: Carrie Baxter
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- m. Consideration and action to transfer \$25,000 from gasoline/diesel accounts (589 and 627) to tuition accounts (560-563) to fund student outplacements.**

Motion: **That the Board approves the transfer of \$25,000 from gasoline/diesel accounts (589 and 627) to tuition accounts (560-563) to fund student outplacements.**

Proposed by: Jim Wood
Seconded by: Steve Loiler
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

- n. Consideration and action to transfer \$50,000 from employment benefit accounts (213-222) to tuition accounts (560-563) to fund student outplacements.**

Motion: **That the Board approves the transfer of \$50,000 from employment benefits accounts (213-222) to tuition accounts (560-563) to fund student outplacements.**

Proposed by: Steve Loiler
Seconded by: Dan Boisvert
Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

Item 9. Committee and liaison reports.

a. Policy (James Wood).

Board member J. Wood reported that the Committee met earlier this evening and reviewed four (4) policies. Three of the policies required no changes but more information will be obtained for the fourth policy regarding employee drug testing concerning transportation.

b. Educational Evaluation (Carrie Baxter).

Board member C. Baxter reported that no meeting held as several Board members could not attend.

c. Montville Education Foundation (Kim Navetta).

Board member K. Navetta reported that she was unable to attend the last MEF meeting. She reminded the Board of the deadline for spring grants that is April 30, 2016. She also said that the date has been set for the annual golf tournament that will be held on August 8, 2016.

d. LEARN (Colleen Rix).

Board member C. Rix was absent from the meeting.

e. CABA/NSBA (Robert Mitchell).

Board Chair B. Mitchell reported that he attended the NSBA convention last week that was also attended by Board Member Steve Loiler. He added that the NSBA Legislative Advocacy session that was postponed on January 25th due to a snowstorm in Washington, D.C., has been rescheduled for June. B. Mitchell also said that work has begun on the annual CABA Convention held in November.

f. School Building Committee (Todd Pomazon).

Board member T. Pomazon had no news to report.

g. Atlantic Broadband (Todd Pomazon).

Board member T. Pomazon reported that the minutes for the January 20, 2016, meeting of the Advisory Council were available in Dropbox for the Board to review. He added that the Council meets six (6) times a year.

h. Montville Youth Services Bureau (Daniel Boisvert).

Board member D. Boisvert reported that he visited the Bureau and that they would meet next on April 14th and that a fundraiser was upcoming.

i. Administrative Monthly Reports.

Board members commented favorably on the content of the reports.

j. Chair's Remarks.

Board Chair B. Mitchell commented that terminating staff "with time, effort, and professional development was the most distasteful thing as a Board of Education member, as well as expulsion hearings."

k. Other. -- None

Item 10. Superintendent's Report.

a. Report from the Director of Student Services – Mrs. Paula LaChance.

Director of Student Services Paula LaChance reported to the Board on the following:

She is thrilled to be here and has received a warm welcome from everyone. She has been focusing on acclimating herself to the district and the special programs throughout the schools. She has also visited some of the schools and hopes to get to the remaining schools this week.

She met with both program leaders to review the caseloads, attended the professional development on Friday on the de-escalation portion of Handle with Care, as well as participated in the Family with Service Needs Review Board (FWSN).

b. Report from the Assistant Superintendent – Mrs. Pallin

Assistant Superintendent L. Pallin reported to the Board on the following:

- Project O: – We held our Board of Directors meeting last night with the newly hired Executive Director. He is a retired Coast Guard officer and the initial transition from the interim directors has gone very smoothly.
- Palmer Open House: – Principal Heather Sangermano held an open house last night. The school was filled with photos of students and staff and samples of student work. She and the staff worked very hard to promote their programs.
- Primary Elections: – With the CT primary elections coming up on April 26, Steve Carroll and I met with Dana McFee to plan for ensuring safety of students while allowing access to voters at Mohegan Elementary School.

- DARE Graduation: – Today, I had the pleasure of attending the Mohegan DARE graduation. Donna Lozupone worked with the students to present a musical program which was excellent and the program was very well attended.
- Strategies for Handling Challenging Students: – Based upon communication from principals and the MEA, I worked to develop a plan to provide professional development and consultation services to help teachers and administrators better meet the needs of those students who frequently present significant challenges in the classroom. As Paula LaChance mentioned, on April 8th, we held a workshop on de-escalation techniques which was presented by two Pathways teachers, Dorothy Griffis and Dawn Guntner. Then Brian, Paula and I fielded questions and concerns about teachers' roles, responsibilities, and liabilities. In May, we will hold a meeting of union representatives, teachers, and administrators with the consultant who helped us develop the Pathways program, MaryAnn Brittingham, regarding protocols/procedures for working with challenging students. This summer Heather Sangermano will present a 4-day Life Space Crisis Intervention training session for our mental health team and administrators, and in August MaryAnn Brittingham will return for a full day of professional development with all elementary faculty.

c. Monthly Update.

Superintendent B. Levesque thanked the Board expressing his appreciation for the 3 ½ weeks of medical leave that he was afforded. He also thanked Assistant Superintendent L. Pallin for filling in for him during his absence.

He also reported to the Board on the following:

- Spring Break: The district schools will be on vacation next week. The Central Office will be open next week with shortened hours from 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- Budget: Last night, he attended the Town Council meeting where the Board's budget was reduced by \$425,000 from a 1.9% increase to .77% that will be very difficult to achieve. He noted that one Town Council member said that he would not support a tax increase. The State budget cut \$517,000 from ECS funds to towns. Last week, the district was notified of a \$125,000 cut to ECS for the Town of Montville. In addition, the State cut the Afterschool Grant in its entirety—the district previously received \$25,000 from the grant. School transportation was also cut. When and where cuts can be done in the district 2016-2017 budget will continue to be discussed and will be easier to do prior to May 1. Cuts after May 1 would be deemed a termination and he anticipates more layoff notices.

Board member S. Berardy asked whether the laid off staff would be eligible for unemployment compensation. Superintendent Levesque responded that they would but stated that when reviewing the budget he would look at things that would

have the least impact adding that he would present the revised budget to the Board at its April 25th meeting. S. Berardy also asked about Board thoughts regarding the budget. Superintendent Levesque said that he would appreciate Board comments and that unlike the State the districts are not allowed to run a deficit budget.

- State of Montville: Spoke at the State of Montville this morning, along with the Mayor and The Chairman of the Mohegan Tribe. He noted that Oakdale Elementary School was recently recognized as a school of distinction and discussed the general state of Montville Schools.

Item 11. Information items. -- None

Item 12. Citizens comments (non-agenda items only).

Board Chair B. Mitchell asked three times for comments. There were none.

Item 13. Adjournment.

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

Proposed by: Steve Loiler

Seconded by: Carrie Baxter

Vote: Carried unanimously (vote 8-0)

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Robert Mitchell, Chair
Montville Board of Education

Carrie T. Baxter, Secretary
Montville Board of Education

Gloria J. Gathers, Recording Secretary

Minutes Approved: _____