



**MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 15, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.**

Board of Education Goal:

Montville graduates will possess the skills and dispositions to navigate complex tasks. Our graduates are communicators, information consumers, problem solvers, and independent learners. They exhibit empathy, perseverance, inclusivity and self-awareness.

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Item 1. Call to order/ Pledge of Allegiance / Moment of Silence – 6:00 P.M.

Board Chair Wills Pike called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Board members attending were: Bob Mitchell, James Wood, Carol Burgess, Sheelagh Lapinski, Timothy Shanahan, Florence Turner, Tina Grove and Tara Crossley.

Also participating were: Superintendent of Schools Laurie Pallin, Assistant Superintendent Dianne Vumback, Recording Secretary Pamela Rodgers, Business Manager Kathy Lamoureux, Administrator Paula LaChance, Principals M.J. Dix, Rob Alves, Amy Espinoza, William Klinefelter, Jill Mazzalupo, and David Gollsneider.

Item 2. Presentation Montville Marvels

Presentation: Montville Marvels - Presented by Principal M.J. Dix, Principal David Gollsneider, and Interim Principal Rob Alves

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: For their demonstration of leadership and kindness to others, Abigail Daniewicz and Ryley Desjardins

Palmer Building: For supporting the students and staff at the PBL/Pathways Campus by bringing a calm demeanor, instinct to know who needs attention, and occasional comic relief to the entire community every single day, Maggie the therapy dog.

Montville High School: For their work with the Youth Action Council, Liyah Poulicakos, Jimsly Joseph, Addie Concascia, Brendan Duhamel, Josephine English, Alyssa Kotfer, Adam Sheridan, Nicole Hudson, Jenna White, Madison Wood, Amanda Corrice, and Kammi Zheng.

Item 3. Citizens' Comments (regarding agenda items only)

None

Board Chair advised the audience that Citizens will have opportunity to discuss the mask policy under new business 7a.

No additional Citizens comments were made at this time.

Item 4. Alterations to the Agenda

Motion: To remove the mid-year evaluation of the Superintendent and executive session from tonight's session and reschedule for a future meeting.

Moved by: Wills Pike

Seconded by: Tara Crossley

Vote: Carried (9-0)

Item 5. Letters and Communications

None

Item 6. Approval of the consent Calendar

Motion: To approve the consent calendar as presented.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell

Seconded by: Carol Burgess

Vote: Carried (9-0)

Item 7. New Business

- a. Discussion and possible action regarding BOE Policies 4218.237 and 5141.8 Face Masks/Coverings and COVID-19 related expiring Executive Orders

Motion: To suspend the Board's current mask policy and make masks optional but recommended in schools beginning on March 1, 2022 and incorporate upcoming CSDE and DPH guidance into our practices regarding contact-tracing, quarantine and isolation; and to follow federal law mandating mask-wearing on buses while this requirement is in place.

Moved by: Wills Pike
Seconded by: James Wood
Vote: 9-0

Superintendent Pallin review the following mask-wearing guidance which would go out to families and staff

Masks optional but recommended for students and staff beginning March 1.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) and Connecticut State Department of Education are expected to provide additional guidance around mask-wearing requirements and recommendations regarding contact-tracing, isolate, and quarantine and we will follow that guidance.

By federal law, masks must still be worn on school buses.

There may be specific activities for which masks are required including, but not limited to, athletic contests. The school will inform students in advance of any such requirement.

Should there be a large increase in COVID numbers, an email with details will be sent to the school community alerting those students and staff members who may wish to wear a mask to school, and if recommended by DPH/ Uncas Health District, a mask mandate may be reinstated.

Principals will still alert families of cases and cases will continue to be posted on the district web-site.

The decision to wear a mask is a parent and student choice and all decisions will be respected by the school community. The school district will not discriminate against any student who chooses to wear or not wear a mask, nor will the district tolerate any bullying or harassment of any student for their choice regarding mask wearing.

Parents who wish for their children to continue to wear masks should communicate their expectations clearly to their children. Teachers and administrators will not be responsible for monitoring student mask wearing beginning March 1.

Mask wearing will not be enforced by the schools unless the Governor issues an Executive Order returning the mask mandate or the Board reinstates the its mask policy based on a change in case rates.

Athletes will be subject to all CIAC guidelines following a COVID case.

This information is subject to revision based on guidance from DPH and CSDE.

Board Chair Wills Pike asked for Citizens Comments regarding the proposed revisions to the mask policy.

Robert Yuchniuk, 470 Fire Street, Oakdale, Parent, hopes that BOE takes recommendations and votes accordingly.

Jessie Ziolk, 13 Saltbox Circle, Uncasville, Parent, supports ending mask mandate

Lia, Montville Resident; 91 Leffingwell Rd, Montville, Parent, emotionally requested to end mask mandate regardless of vaccination status and allow for parent choice.

Kyle, 4th grade student at Dr. Charles E. Murphy School, would like masks made optional.

Jenna Purnell, Chapel Hill, Oakdale, asked the Board to vote tonight to end mask mandate and make vaccination optional.

Jessica Smith, Holly Hill, Uncasville, Parent, made a very emotional plea to end the mask mandate.

Luke, Dr. Charles E. Murphy School, feels opinions are muffled by masks and requested to please end mask mandate.

Two parents (Names not stated) expressed a desire to have better access to their child while they are attending school. Parents have been unable to enter school at times due to COVID restrictions.

*Wills Pike, Board Chair, thanked all for their comments.
Board Members discussed the motion and the impact of the policy.*

Moved by: Wills Pike
Seconded by: James Wood
Vote: Carried (9-0)

Board Member Tara Crossley asked whether “Covid days” had to be made up? Superintendent Pallin confirmed that any school closure days, regardless of the purpose, are made up at the end of the year. She mentioned that CSDE recently mentioned a waiver process for having a COVID absence not made up, but didn’t think it would apply to MPS since we have 181 days in our school year.

Superintendent Pallin also explained a related COVID-19 expiring Executive Order: Vaccination hiring requirements and weekly testing requirements for covered workers officially ended following February 15, 2022, making it unnecessary for staff to submit weekly testing results if they are unvaccinated.

- b. Presentation of 2022-2023 Board of Education Budget:

Detailed Budget Binders were passed out to all BOE members for review

Superintendent Pallin presented her recommendations for the 2022-2023 Board of Education budget. The presentation can be found on the district website.

Board Chair Wills Pike thanked Superintendent Pallin, her staff, and Business Manager Kathy Lamoureux for the work done on the budget, indicating that it was a clean budget and reviewed the information he shared with the town Council at their meeting on Monday.

Board Member James Wood shared that in his time on the Board that Mrs. Lamoureux has never presented a budget that was not clean or with any fluff during his time on the Board.

- c. Consideration and possible action to adopt revisions to Policies 5132 through 5142.1 (including Narcan Policy) provided by CABA as edited by the Policy Committee

Motion: To adopt policy number 5132 through 5142.1 as recommended by the Policy Committee.

Moved by: Jim Wood
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell
Vote: Carried (9-0)

Committee Chair Jim Wood thanked Marcia Wilcox for assisting the Policy Committee during their recent meeting addressing the Narcan and other health-related policies; she was extremely helpful.

- d. Consideration and action to appoint a Board Member to the Transportation Negotiating Committee

Motion: To appoint Board Member Carol Burgess to the Negotiating Committee for the Transportation contract.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell
Seconded by: Jim Wood
Vote: 9-0

Laurie explained that the committee typically meets in the middle of the school day and usually takes two meetings. We hope to begin meetings at the beginning of March.

- e. Consideration and action to appoint Board representatives to two leadership search committees for the administrator vacancies at Tyl Middle School
Montville High School

Motion: To appoint Board Members Bob Mitchell and Tina Grove to the search committees for the vacant administrative positions at Tyl Middle School and Montville High School

Moved by: Wills Pike
Seconded by: Jim Wood
Vote: 9-0

Laurie explained that she has received and regretfully accepted a letter of retirement from M.J. Dix, principal at Leonard J. Tyl Middle School and offered the following recognition to M.J.

M.J., On behalf of the Montville Public Schools community, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the 15 years you have served as an administrator in the district. You have truly dedicated yourself to the students and staff at Tyl, and your work ethic and commitment are unparalleled. Under your capable leadership, Leonard J. Tyl Middle School has made significant improvements, and you have positioned the school for continued growth in the future. Most importantly, you have loved and nurtured Tyl students and staff.

As the MAA president, you created an administrative team which has truly partnered with me during some very difficult times in the district, and your loyalty, support, level-headed thought, and creative ideas have been instrumental to the well-being and growth of the entire district.

Thank you for your passion for your work and your devotion to the MPS community. You will not be easy to replace!

We are looking for Board representation on a hiring committee to fill the Principal and Assistant Principal at Tyl and a second hiring committee to fill the Principal and Assistant Principal at MHS. Meetings will be in the late afternoon and will commence next week to discuss the process and create brochures.

8. Information Items Budget Meeting Dates:

- a. Budget Meeting Dates:

- February 23, 6:00 PM – *Review of Capital Requests and response to questions / requests for more detail to the Operating Budget as well as a discussion about next steps and desired changes before the Board adopts an FY 2023 budget. Please call or email with questions and areas in which you would like more detail prior to the meeting so we can prepare the necessary materials for you.*
 - March 1, 6:00 P.M.
 - March 8, 6:00 P.M.
- b. Town Budget Hearings
- Town Budget, April 27, 6:00 P.M.
 - Board’s Budget, April 28, 6:00 P.M.

9. Committee and Liaison reports:

- a. Policy – *Jim Wood, information was covered earlier in the meeting*
- b. Education Evaluation – *Bob Mitchel- none*
- c. Communications Committee – *Carol Burgess reported that the committee agreed to send out a direct mail for the survey and postcards were mailed today.*
- d. Montville Education Foundation – *James Wood was not able to make the last meeting on fundraising such as golf tournament.*
- e. LEARN – *Bob Mitchell stated nothing new, having difficulty finding staff.*
- f. CABE/NSBA – *Bob Mitchel – nothing new.*
- g. Montville Youth Services – *no meeting*
- h. Student Board Representative, Matthew Malbourn:

Student government just finished a Valentine's Day fundraiser. Over the past two weeks, students were able to place orders for valentine's day bags with a little note. The goodie bags were delivered last block on Monday. Along with the bags of chocolate, you could also purchase a singing gram. The High School choir went around with student gov members delivering the goodie bags and sang from a selection of songs. I found this to be not only fun and morale boosting, but a great fundraiser for student government.

The junior class council is running a joint fundraiser with the freshman class council to try and maximize the amount of people participating. The fundraiser is Munson's chocolate, and some of the items include regular chocolate bars, chocolate covered potato chips, and chocolate bunnies for Easter. If you're interested in supporting our class, you can see me after the meeting or contact Cheryl Fish at the High School. The junior class will also hold a Bingo night on Wednesday, March 16th with prizes!

Before the next meeting, the Montville High School Drama Department will put on their production of Little Women. Actors and actresses, recently including myself, have been hard at work creating their characters since January, and the tech crew has been

doing amazing work developing the set. The seniors were able to decide on this show to conclude their high school drama career, and would love to see your support on the show nights! The Spring Musical will be on March 9, 10, 11, and 12 at 7pm, and I hope to see you there

- i. Board Chair remarks – none.

Item 10. Superintendent's Report

- a. Report from the Director of Special Services – Paula LaChance

In preparation for the budget I have been reviewing the movement within and outside the district looking for areas where I can enhance my fiscal responsibilities. To that vain I have been working with our of district administrators to ensure our students are making adequate progress in their programs in efforts to return student to district. The district I have been working the closest with is EASTCONN.

Both teams are working diligently to transition a student back to district. The collaboration between teams is amazing and moving along nicely. The staff that will be working with this student have been going up to his current placement to observe, interact and gain a full understanding of how this student learns best, the next step will be this Friday when the parents and student tour Mohegan's Rise program. Then the student and his EASTCONN Teachers will start ½ days at Mohegan on the 28th with full days beginning the following week.

Working closely with the Tyl pathways team in restructuring the program there. We will be meeting with BCBA tomorrow to begin developing the structure and level system. It is my hope to have this presented and expectations developed with the student when they return from the four-day weekend.

Transition Academy hosted a health and wellness event this past Friday. Region 4 and Westbrook districts came here to co mingle with our students. They had yoga and candle making groups and then enjoyed a wonderful lunch together before wrapping up the day with breakout sessions on interest and skill building activities.

Other than that I continue to attend the Weekly CT-SEDS meetings in preparation for the next steps which will be an IEP quality training in March that a handful of staff will attend.

ESY is also in the wings in which I am working on staffing. I am also working with my supervisors to ensure appropriate recommendations are being made by our case managers.

b. Report from the Assistant Superintendent – Dianne Vumback

Attendance: We continue to track our attendance data across all schools in the district. I have participated in a few school attendance meetings and I continue to be impressed with how well the teams know their students and their families. Attendance teams are comprised of teachers, secretaries, counselors, social workers so they are not just reporting out attendance numbers – they are sharing information on the whole child and discussing strategies to support the student and their families.

Professional Development: This Friday we have a full day of professional development. We have some districtwide professional development happening, which includes:

- *Handle With Care – which is training in verbal de-escalation, safe physical management, passive holding methods for challenging behaviors.*
- *ALICE Training – which is training to help prepare, prevent, mitigate and respond to a critical incident.*
- *Narcan training – we have nurses, administrators, coaches and other personnel attending – close to 45 people.*
- *SEL work with social workers and school psychologists to create a resource of social emotional learning interventions and strategies*
- *ART around town – to begin the work we mentioned in our communication meeting – showcasing student work across the community.*
- *Building based work in PLCs on curriculum, department initiatives, DESSA and RULER.*

c. Report from the Superintendent – Laurie Pallin

Bus Garage – Our new transportation coordinator, Theresa Carter has quickly become acclimated to the district and works well with transportation team. She has begun to implement a training program to train new drivers and has brought in a licensed driver as well. She and Kim Ryone met with Steve Carroll, Jill Mazzalupo and myself to discuss the traffic pattern at Oakdale. We had received complaints about the back-up of vehicles on CT Blvd. We made adjustment to the parent drop off location which began on Monday and seem to be working much better. Kim and Theresa are in training now with VersaTrans so that they can begin to create bus routes for summer school and prepare for next year.

Administrators' Goal Meetings – I have been meeting this month with principals to discuss their work thus far this year and progress toward building goals. As we have communicated, the first half of the year has been extraordinarily difficult, but all report that students are beginning to settle in to routines and expectations.

Legislation Regarding a Use of Native American Names, Symbols or Images Without Tribal Consent – This legislation goes into effect in 2023 and certification forms are due to the Manager of Intergovernmental Affairs by March 15th.

PA 21-2 JSS Sec. 63 “...for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, and each fiscal year thereafter, no municipality shall be paid a grant from the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Fund established pursuant to section 3-55i, if a school under the jurisdiction of the board of education for such municipality, or an intramural or interscholastic athletic team associated with such school, uses any name, symbol or image that depicts, refers to or is associated with a state or federally recognized Native American tribe or a Native American individual, custom or tradition, as a mascot, nickname, logo or team name.”

As you are aware, we have been in communication with the Mohegan Tribe regarding the use of the honorific nickname “Indian” at Tyl and MHS. I will bring a recommendation to you at the Feb. 23rd budget meeting based upon a conversation in the next week with the tribe. We have been told by the tribe that they are in support of the name of Mohegan Elementary School and we can continue to use that name.

Item 11. Citizen’s Comments

None.

Item 12. Future Agenda Items

Use of honorific nickname

Item 13. Superintendent’s mid-year evaluation

This item was removed from the agenda under alterations to the agenda

Note: It is anticipated that the Board will enter executive session for the purpose of the mid-year evaluation of the Superintendent.

Item 14. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved by: Bob Mitchel

Seconded by: Jim Wood

Vote: Carried (9-0)

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Wills Pike, Chair
Montville Board of Education
Minutes Approved: _____

Bob Mitchell, Secretary
Montville Board of Education