



**MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
May 17, 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, Timothy Shanahan, Florence Turner, Tina Grove, Carol Burgess. Board Members James Wood, and Sheelagh Lapinski were absent.

Also participating were: Superintendent of Schools Laurie Pallin, Assistant Superintendent Dianne Vumback, Director of Special Services Paula LaChance, Business Manager Kathy Lamoureux, Administrators Rob Alves, M.J. Dix, Gregory Gwudz, Jill Mazzalupo, Amy Espinoza, and David Gollsneider, and Recording Secretary Pamela Rodgers.

Item 2. Recognition

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

Leonard J. Tyl – For her dedication to academic excellence: Anna Bubucis

For being a hard-working, upstanding citizen: Michael Vogt

For acting as a role model to his peers and an asset to the Leonard J. Tyl Community: Eric Richmond

Montville High School – For all of the hard work and dedication displayed this school year: Mr. Burns, Kelsey Bradley, Alyssa Emming, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Elizabeth Mutch, Peter Speciale, and Sofia Williams. Lucas Willhoit will be recognized at a later date.

PBL & Pathways Campus – For their extraordinary efforts to earn their high school

diplomas this year: Ray Belardo and Ayden Thomas

CABE Student Leadership Awards: Students were not present, but Middle School awards were read and middle school students recognized.

Sienna Gressly - Leonard J. Tyl Middle School
Zack Thomas - Leonard J. Tyl Middle School
Ariana Seldon – Montville High School
Sydney Kulz - Montville High School

Recognition of Senior Student Board Representative: Gigi Johnston – not present.

Item 3 Alterations to the agenda

None

Item 4. Citizens' Comments, (regarding agenda items only)

None

Item 5. Letters and Communications

None

Item 6. Approval of the Consent Calendar

a. Budget update: Kathy Lamoureux

Motion: To approve the consent calendar as presented.

Moved by: Timothy Shanahan
Seconded by: Bob Mitchel
Vote: Carried (6-0)

There has not been much change from last month therefore this will be a short report. We have had a couple of new outplacements since the last Board meeting so tuition costs are ticking up. We are in the process of reconciling the tuition accounts with the open purchase orders to be able to project these tuition accounts for the next Board meeting. We have been in contact with New London to verify some of the students being billed for the 21-22 school year to ensure they are Montville students. We have received tentative projections for the magnet schools for next year, however, the acceptance process is not complete so we anticipate changes. We will be reviewing what we have received and compare it to the 22-23 budget proposal.

We are currently processing purchase orders for the next school year and are reconciling open purchase orders for the current fiscal year. We are experiencing higher than normal price changes after the purchase order is issued because of the market conditions.

We are still waiting on both the health and liability insurance brokers for the 22-23 rates. It is my understanding we should be receiving them shortly.

Nic and I had a telephone conference with the liability broker regarding a required survey necessary for Cyber insurance. During the call, the broker indicated she did not feel we would have any issue getting coverage, and we would have the rate sometime in June. Nic is completing the required items for this to be completed.

Item 7. New Business

- a. Consideration and action to appoint the assistant principal at Leonard J. Tyl Middle School

Motion: To appoint Marceline Dillon to the position of Assistant Principal of Leonard J. Tyl Middle School effective July 1, 2022.

Moved by: Bob Mitchel
Seconded by: Timothy Shanahan
Vote: Carried (6-0)

Superintendent Pallin - I am pleased to present to the Board the Tyl Leadership Search Committee's selection for assistant principal at Leonard J. Tyl Middle School. With over 60 applicants, we had several very strong candidates, and we were able to find a candidate who has seven years' experience as an assistant principal in Griswold. Prior to that, Marci was an English and Drama Teacher and a middle school curriculum facilitator and instructional coach in Ledyard. As assistant principal, Marci was especially involved in social and emotional learning, equity, and work to promote a drug-free community as well as curriculum development and instructional coaching, her references describe her as "a superior educational leader who is collaborative, intelligent, and instrumental in moving the district forward. She handles every student discipline situation with the utmost care, commitment, confidence and consistency and is most professional in communicating with parents. She led the school in establishing an Advisory Program geared toward positive relationships with every student in our school community. She is passionate about students and their social-emotional wellness. She is an expert in promoting attendance and worked with community resources and the JRB to improve student attendance. Her principal told me Marci is "great at forming relationships, superb with student discipline, skilled in supporting teaching and learning," and summed up her comments by saying, "You are hitting the jackpot!" Her superintendent stated, "Without question, Ms. Dillon has the intellectual wherewithal, multi-layered experiences, and critical know-how to serve successfully as Assistant Principal of the Leonard J. Tyl Middle School."

- b. Presentation of athletic data – Meagan Sears

Ms. Sears provided several data points and slides concerning the demographics of the Montville athlete and participation rates. These slides included data before, after and

during the COVID pandemic. The national average for sports participation is 57%, and we are at 57% this year.

- c. Consideration and action to request that the Montville Town Council deposit \$514,663 of unexpended funds from FY 2021 into a dedicated, non-lapsing account in an amount that does not exceed 2% of the total budgeted appropriation for fiscal year 2020-21, as allowed under CT State Statute Sec. 10-248a, based upon the unexpended educational appropriation which is reflected in the auditor's report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021

Motion: To request that the Montville Town Council deposit \$514,663 of unexpended funds from FY 2021 into a dedicated, non-lapsing account in an amount that does not exceed 2% of the total budgeted appropriation for fiscal year 2020-21, as allowed under CT State Statute Sec. 10-248a, based upon the unexpended educational appropriation which is reflected in the auditor's report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021

Moved by: Bob Mitchel
Seconded by: Florence Turner
Vote: Carried (6-0)

Superintendent Pallin - Sec. 10-248a. Unexpended education funds account. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, and each fiscal year thereafter ...the board of finance ...may deposit into a non-lapsing account any unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year from the budgeted appropriation for education for the town, provided (1) such deposited amount does not exceed two per cent of the total budgeted appropriation for education for such prior fiscal year, (2) each expenditure from such account shall be made only for educational purposes, and (3) each such expenditure shall be authorized by the local board of education for such town.

2% of the FY 21 budget appropriation of \$39,271,804 is \$785,436.

The current balance in the 2% account is \$938,209. We anticipate that we will need to draw about \$550,000 or more from this account in June to meet our 2021-2022 operating budget. As Kathy has reported, we have over-expended the budget in the areas of special education private school tuition and transportation to these schools.

Since we will end the FY 22 fiscal year in a deficit, we will not have money to place in this account from FY 22. As I have communicated to you, we have not included any contingency funds in our FY 23 budget. One new outplaced student can cost more than \$100,000. An unanticipated boiler repair could cost over \$200,000. If we have another year like this, without this reserve account, we would have to go to the town for an additional appropriation.

Past uses of the non-lapsing account included a bus purchase which allowed us to leverage an EPA rebate and an unanticipated cost in the Tyl/MHS water project.

- d. Acknowledged the resignation of Board Member Tara Crossley

Superintendent Pallin - Wills has received Tara's resignation and we learned that the Montville Democratic Town Committee has nominated Grace Carlos for the vacancy this creates. Her nomination has been placed on the Town Council special meeting agenda for May 19 at 6:30.

- e. Discussion of the FY2023 budget information presented at the May 9th Town Council Meeting

Superintendent Pallin - I wanted to share with you the handout which I presented at the Town Council meeting on May 9th in response to a proposal that the Board's budget increase be limited to 2.5% instead of the 4.81% we requested. It is important to note that at the May 9 meeting, the Town Council did approve the use of \$200,000 from the municipal ARPA grant to put toward our budget. However, reducing the budget to a 2.5% increase would still require cutting more than \$700,000 from our operating budget.

I am very concerned about the idea of using the ESSER grant funds to meet our operating budget for two reasons – first that we will not meet our students' demonstrated learning needs and second that we will be creating a funding cliff when the grants are exhausted.

Item 8. Committee and Liaison Reports:

- a. Policy – Carol Burgess: they reviewed (3) mandatory policies on student success plans and ensuring student access to advanced courses or programs and career pathways.
- b. Education Evaluation – Robert Mitchell: meeting held tonight concerning requirements when participating in extra curriculum activities. The plan will next be brought to the policy committee next month.
- c. Communications Committee – Carol Burgess: no meeting was held.
- d. Montville Education Foundation – Grant Review.
- e. LEARN – Bob Mitchell; they are working on the budget; next meeting is May 20th.
- f. CAFE – Carol Burgess: they have a new Executive Director Patrice McCarthy; annual CAFE convention will be held in Mystic Nov 18th & 19.
- g. Montville Youth Services Bureau – Wills Pike: watched the movie recently shown at MHS on Suicide prevention; it was very instructional
- h. Student Board Representatives – not present.
- i. Board Chair remarks – Spoke previously concerning budget issues.

Item 9. Superintendent's Report

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

As I have mentioned before we are making the shift to the new CT-SEDS system on July 1st which is both exciting and stressful at the same time. In preparation for this my supervisors and I have been really busy holding as many PPT's as possible before June 1 so we can concentrate on the merger in June. We are also attending a training tomorrow on quality IEP writing in the new system.

Our Mohegan School Psychologist, Rachel Burke has graciously been participating in training to obtain her certification to conduct an evaluation called the ADOS. This is an autism evaluation for which we currently do not have anyone in district that is certified. This has been an extensive training that requires many hours of studying and practicing so I am grateful that Rachel was willing to participate in this.

The Transition Academy has been collaborating with the Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities through UCONN and through their work have developed Action goals and portfolio. Last month they participated in Mock Interviews at Mohegan Sun Recruitment Office, and as a result two students were asked to come back for formal interviews and were offered full time employment. Unfortunately, one of the parents did not feel his son was quite ready so he did not accept the position. Additionally, the Academy has partnered with Salem Ice Cream and two students were offered summer paid employment there. We have one student exiting the program with 5 others connected with BRS and DMHAS for summer employment. The collaboration and networking that Jodi has done really has paid off. They will be holding an "end of the year" celebration with three surrounding Transition Programs next week at Harness Park.

ESY recruitment efforts continue.

b. Report from the Assistant Superintendent – Dianne Vumback

We are beginning the end-of-year DESSA assessments which is the universal screening for social and emotional growth for K-8. We are also wrapping up the Smarter Balance and NGSS assessments. LAS Links scores are being re evaluated and we will have results soon.

This is the time of year when all schools are celebrating the students with concerts, band concerts, proms, outings and field trips.

c. Report from the Superintendent – Laurie Pallin

I am very excited to announce that last Friday, we recognized our paraprofessional of the year for 2022-2023, Jennifer Kelley. Jen has been a para in Montville for 17 years in Mohegan's RISE program. She received 11 nominations to be para of the year and her nominations mentioned there are hundreds of reasons why Ms. Kelley should be recognized.

These reasons included that Ms. Kelley:

- Ensures the highest quality instruction*
- Is a true team player who can work with anyone*
- Goes above and beyond expectations*
- Is dedicated to her students and the RISE program*

- *Accepts any challenge*
- *Willingly and capably trains other paras*
- *Is always enthusiastic and positive*

Jen is a key member of the RISE team and is an excellent representative for our district's paraprofessionals!

I was also very proud to attend the CT State Teacher of the Year recognition ceremony last week with Montville's 2022 Teacher of the Year and one of 15 semi-finalists from across the state, Oakdale's grade 4 teacher Patty Miceli.

At the May 9th Town Council meeting, there was discussion about the Juneteenth state and federal holiday and whether it should also be observed as a town holiday. I just wanted you to be aware that there is no prohibition against holding school on a federal holiday. The CT General Assembly left intact the provision stating that school may be held on state holidays except for those in December and January provided that, on other state holidays, school officials "hold a suitable nonsectarian educational program in observance of such holiday," as is the case in many districts with Veterans' Day. The designation of Juneteenth as a state holiday may result in requests from unions to designate Juneteenth as a holiday in collective bargaining agreements, but that would be a subject for future contract negotiations.

Tomorrow I have a transportation hearing regarding a parent's concerns about a bus stop location. I have asked a hearing officer to hear the evidence from the family and the district since the Board is already familiar with this request and I wanted to ensure an impartial hearing.

Hiring continues for next year. We have had an additional teacher resignation and a late retirement. Kathy and I are in the process of reviewing the impact on the budget of these staffing changes. We are very pleased by the quality of the new candidates we have selected. I am currently holding off on filling three teaching positions and two full-time para positions as we await more information from the town on the Board's budget.

Our COVID-19 rates have increased in the past several weeks. We had 22 cases reported yesterday and we have seen larger numbers of cases at Tyl and Murphy. Staffing is becoming more difficult. Today for example, we have 12 staff members who are absent because they tested positive for COVID. We are strongly encouraging mask-wearing, but otherwise we are going forward with the state's direction to approach cases as endemic, not pandemic. There has been no change in the state's guidance so we are moving forward with concerts, proms, etc. I have made Uncas Health aware of our cases and continue to post them on our website. Principals are reporting schoolwide data to staff and families.

MHS applied for and received a grant as part of the state's FAFSA Challenge. We were challenged to increase our FAFSA completion rate by 5% and through the work of our school counselors, we increased our completion rate by more than 10% (from 46% last June to 57.4% as of today with another month to go). We are one of 16 districts in the state to meet their FAFSA challenge goal this year. I commend our counselors for their work on this initiative. Completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid is an important step in the path to postsecondary education and is associated with increased rates of college enrollment.

I received an email from Mohegan Chief of Staff Chuck Bunnell saying that the tribe had planned to meet last week regarding the Board's request for assistance in funding the changes to uniforms and signs at MHS and Tyl related to discontinuation of the Indian nickname. They had to postpone their meeting due to COVID, but they will meet soon and Chuck Bunnell did say that they are committed to helping us.

I trust that you noticed the important role of our paraprofessionals as you were presented with the coffee cart by the MHS Occupations Class prior to the start of tonight's meeting. They are truly an essential part of our special education programs.

Item 10. Information Items

None

Item 11. Citizens' comments

None

Item 12. Future Agenda Items

Budget updates

Item 13. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn

Moved by: Timothy Shanahan

Seconded by: Florence Turner

Vote: Carried (6-0)

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

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

Bob Mitchell, Secretary
Montville Board of Education