



**MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION  
September 17, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.  
MINUTES**

**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.**

**Library Media Center**

**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, Bonnie Bacon, Timothy Shanahan, Tina Grove, Erika Striebel, Donna Funk; Carol Burgess, and Lisa Terry.

Also participating were: Superintendent of Schools Dianne Vumback, Assistant Superintendent Andrea Flynn, Recording Secretary Pamela Rodgers, Business Manager Kathy Lamoureux, Administrators Paula LaChance, Rob Alves, Ken Daniewicz, Amanda Brown, Jessica Lilienthal, David Gollsneider, William Klinefelter, Jill Mazzalupo and Liz Dumond.

**Item 2. Alterations to the agenda**

*None*

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

*None*

**Item 4. Letters and Communications**

*None*

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

Motion: To approve the consent calendar as presented.

Moved by: Tim Shanahan  
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell  
Vote: Carried (9-0)

- a. Budget update: Kathy Lamoureux

*We have officially closed out the 2023-2024 fiscal year, and the accountants have begun the year-end audit. While we are still awaiting confirmation that our records reconcile with the Town's, our internal records currently reflect a surplus of approximately \$140,000. In line with the new legislation regarding the non-lapsing account, which became effective on May 28, 2024, we plan to request that this surplus be deposited into that account once the audit is completed.*

*At this time, I have begun reviewing the special education tuition accounts. Currently, these accounts are showing a shortfall. However, given the volatility of these expenditures, we will continue to monitor and report on them. Typically, when special education tuitions are underfunded, the purchased services for transportation also tend to follow a similar trend.*

*We have not yet received any of the tuition bills for the magnet schools or the Vo-Ag programs. I anticipate being able to provide updates on these accounts at the next board meeting.*

*Next month, I will review the salary accounts. We have experienced some late resignations and are still in the process of filling vacancies, which has delayed this review.*

*To update on the school projects discussed at the last board meeting:*

- *The High School Scoreboard installation encountered some unexpected delays, but we expect it to be operational for Friday night's game.*
- *Al Jacunski has informed us that the HVAC projects for both Murphy and Palmer are expected to go out to bid by November.*
- *The school security camera installations have been completed.*

*We are approaching the end of the ARP ESSER grant period, which requires districts to obligate all funds by September 30, 2024. Additionally, the State has informed us that we may submit one final revision to the grant before this deadline to account for any changes since the last modification. Dianne and I are scheduled to conduct the final review of the grant this Friday, September 20, 2024.*

*In addition to the opportunity for further modifications, the liquidation period has been extended from January 28, 2025, to March 31, 2026, to ensure ample time to conclude all activities.*

*The most recent modifications to the grant allocated funds for several purposes, including:*

- *A portion of the reading program and related support*
- *iPads, Chromebooks, and carts*
- *Walkie-talkies and electronic services*
- *Professional development through purchased services*
- *Project Courage and consultant services*

## **Item 6. New Business**

- a. Discussion and possible action regarding Policy 6172.4 Title I Parent Involvement as recommended by the Policy Committee

Superintendent Vumback explained:

*We reviewed this policy back in June with the policy committee and had it on our agenda for this month to approve.*

*This policy offers engagement opportunities for parents of children participating in Title I Programs so they can be involved in the education of their children.*

- *This policy requires Murphy and Mohegan to hold Title I meetings at each school during their Back to School Nights.*
- *This annual Title I meeting would be an opportunity to hear about the reading and math intervention programs and to learn from each classroom teacher about curriculum, assessment, state standards and the importance of parent involvement in their child's education.*
- *Parents will be able to communicate directly with the school about the assistance they need and better ways to communicate with them.*
- *This was communicated to both principals last Spring.*
- *At this meeting, parents will have the opportunity to offer suggestions regarding items in the policy itself and the Title I parent compact. The compact is about shared responsibility for student learning.*
- *We will update you on the changes the parents suggest after the meeting.*

*These schools meet the need-based qualifications due to the number of students qualifying for free and reduced priced lunch.*

Board Chair Wills commented: *Like the sound of this and would like to make this uniformed between the two schools.*

Board Member Lisa Terry: *What type of training will be provided to the parents?*

Superintendent Vumback explained: *This can be based on parent and student need or interest. Its aimed to help support parents as they become more involved with their child's education and progress.*

*One example can be if we provide parents with literacy strategies to use at home. It will improve student outcomes as they reinforce learning at home.*

Motion: To approve Policy 6172.4 Title I Parent Involvement as recommended by the Policy Committee

Moved by: Bob Mitchell  
Seconded by: Tim Shanahan  
Vote: Carried (9-0)

- b. Discussion and possible Action on the revisions of the DEI plan

Assistant Superintendent Flynn explained: *As you know we were tasked with creating a DEI plan for hiring, recruiting and retention of a diverse staff in the Montville Public Schools. This plan outlined ways to create more equitable hiring practices as well as creating a supportive and inclusive working environment.*

*After review, the state offered feedback for improvement on our initial plan. They indicated that much of our plan fell on the shoulders of the assistant superintendent and suggested more stakeholders be part of the plan. As you know, the superintendent feels strongly about building the capacity of others, so this feedback directly aligned with that vision. To that end, our revisions included tapping into our administrator and teacher teams and other central office staff to support the plan, we added measurable goals and laid out a plan that aims to implement and transform the policies, structures and practices that ensure equity and result in equitable hiring practices.*

Board Member Donna Funk: *What if a person of color doesn't apply?*

Board Chair Wills Pike explained: *The Superintendent will hire the very best person to be part of her staff.*

Board Member Lisa Terry: *Reaching out to our seniors and selling our town with a video at job fairs.*

Motion: To approve the revisions of the DEI plan

Moved by: Bob Mitchell  
Seconded by: Wills Pike  
Vote: Carried (9-0)

c. Discussion and possible action on the revisions of the Teacher Evaluation Plan

Superintendent Vumback explained:

*We received minimal required changes from the state. As a reminder, as we developed our plan, we had the option to adopt the state model plan as is, adapt the plan (which is what we did) or create an entirely new plan and submit for approval.*

*After review of our plan, the feedback was as follows:*

- *Include the state or national standards to be used – We chose Learning Forward Professional Standards developed in 2022.*
- *Include the non-negotiable “clearly articulated corrective support model that is separate from normal educator growth model”*
- *Differentiated tiers of support responsive to educator needs, including samples of tier 1, 2 and 3 supports. Utilize and document all three tiers prior to movement to a corrective support plan.*

- *Include the non-negotiable “Claims that the district has failed to follow the established procedures of the evaluation and support program shall be subject to the grievance procedures set forth by the current collective”*

*All changes came from the model plan we adapted from. I am very pleased with the work done by our PDEC committee!*

Motion: To approve the revisions of the Teacher Evaluation Plan

Moved by: Tim Shanahan  
Seconded by: Carol Burgess  
Vote: Carried (9-0)

d. Discussion regarding proposed changes to cell phone policies

*A very robust discussion was conducted on the cell phone policies. Board Members had differences of opinions on a total ban of cell phones or keeping current cell phone policy. Each Principal provided an overview of the current cell phone policy at their school. The Montville High School cell phone policy can be found on the school’s website under “Board of Education” and then in the drop down “Agendas & Minutes”.*

*Further discussion will be required.*

e. Discussion on Special Education - overview

*Director of Special Education, Paula LaChance, provided a presentation on the current Demographics of Special needs and the key Duties and Responsibilities of the Director of Special Services. The presentation can be found on the school’s website under “Board of Education” and then in the drop down “Agendas & Minutes”.*

*Board Chair Wills Pike requested an Organization Chart of Special Services.*

f. Discussion regarding Superintendents goals and evaluation process for consideration in executive session

**Item 7. Old Business**

a. Continued discussion regarding the recording of board meetings

Superintendent Vumback explained:

*As a reminder, we discussed at the June meeting we would monitor the use of the recordings.*

*The numbers were quite low.*

- *Finance 101*      *5*
- *Feb 2024*        *5*
- *Mar 2024*        *1*
- *Apr 2024*        *1*
- *May 2024*

*I wanted to let you know we would put an alert on the website when the recording is posted so that we can see if that would increase viewership.*

**Item 8. Committee and Liaison reports:**

- a. Policy – Tina Grove – Discussed DEI, Teacher Evaluation and Cell phone policies*
- b. Education Evaluation – No meeting*
- c. Communications Committee – No meeting*
- d. Montville Education Foundation – Superintendent Vumback - No meeting, We received an email that the Fall Grant Cycle just opened. Grants up to \$10,000 are awarded and the applications are due by October 31<sup>st</sup>. We are very lucky to have this support that fosters innovation in education.*
- e. LEARN- Bob Mitchell- Discussed the progress of new magnet school at 51 Daniels Ave. Waterford.*
- f. Montville Youth Services Bureau- Timothy Shanahan – Held meeting on 9/12. New Mental Health Flyers put in bathroom at the school. Next meeting October 10<sup>th</sup>.*
- g. Student Board Representatives*

**Senior Class Representative: Adam Gallagher**

*It's a pleasure to be back attending these meetings again, and I'm happy to get into the swing of things with the school year. Although many students are apprehensive to start school once again, the school year has started off strong with cross country, football, soccer, and volleyball starting their seasons. Speaking of, the football team had their first game this previous Friday, unfortunately losing in a close match against Lewis Mills. Cross country also had a very close loss to Lyman Memorial, only one point behind them in their first meet last week.*

*Student government has started planning the fall pep rally for the homecoming football game on October 10th. We also have our homecoming theme, which will be gold. Our honors societies such as National Art Honors society and National Honors society don't have any operations in the works quite yet, but as we progress into the school year we'll have projects to update you all on. The competition for the poet laureates this year will also be coming up soon, although there are no specific details yet.*

*The last thing I wanted to talk about was the phone policy that has been implemented at the high school. If you aren't aware, students' phones should be in a pouch at the front of the room during*

*class periods, and students can use their phones during passing periods and lunch. It's certainly been a change for many students, especially for the seniors and juniors who have been at the high school for multiple years, but as older students many of us have enough maturity to comply with the rules and use our phones appropriately.*

**Junior Class Representative: Tiana Bamber**

*Hello Everyone! My name is Tiana Bamber and I just want to start by saying I am very thankful to be here today as a student representative speaking on behalf of the students of Montville High School along with Adam. It really is a pleasure!*

*Although the school year just started, MHS students and teachers alike have been really excited to be back and are looking forward to starting the 2024-2025 school year off strong. I'm excited to share with you all some updates on our new phone policy and the academic progress we've made so far! This year our school has implemented a new phone policy to minimize distractions and enhance the productivity in our learning environment. Phones will be kept in designated pockets during class time but will be accessible to students during the last 5 minutes of class. Initially, there was some resistance, but many students have started to see the benefits. It is way easier for students to focus on lessons and there is less temptation to check social media during class. Teachers have also noticed the change in student participation and the increase in engagement which is great!*

*Academically, this year has started on a high note. Students are settling into their routines quite well and have been performing to the best of their abilities in the classroom. I am very hopeful this year that academic rates will continue to rise, especially since MHS has such a strong student support system always there to help students in need.*

*That is all for my report. I believe that if we continue at the pace we are right now, amazing things will be in store for the future of MHS during this school year. Thank you.*

**h. Principals' Report - Opening of School**

The full Principal reports can be found in the Board materials –  
[www.montvilleschools.org](http://www.montvilleschools.org)

**MHS**– Rob Alves: *Off to a great start, senior class kicked off the year with senior sunrise. Held our annual athletic night on Aug 22, Freshman orientation was held on Aug 26, we held grade-level assemblies to welcome back our students with enthusiasm and purpose.*

**PALMER** – David Gollsneider: *Fully staffed and off to a great start.*

**TYL**- Jessica Lilienthal: *518 students, highest enrollment in (5) years. 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Orientation held – positive feedback. Students received chrome books. Lots of Capital Improvement taking place, such as roof, new serving lines, WIFI. Maintenance staff has been wonderful. PD held on Aug 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. Para training conducted and held fire drills.*

**CEM** – Liz Dumond: *95 Resident verifications completed, 298 Enrollment. Excited for PTO involvement. Open House Thursday, you are all invited.*

**OAK** - Jill Mazzalupo – *PTO did Chalk the walk with positive messages. Open House on*

*was held on Sept 11<sup>th</sup> with 90% of parents attending.*

**MOH-** Willian Klinefelter – *Teachers re painted the mural over the Summer. (18) Security Cameras installed. Sept 30<sup>th</sup> the before school sports program starts Sept 24<sup>th</sup> the after school academic program starts for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Tuesday is Open House you are all invited.*

Item 9. Information Items

*None*

Item 10. Report on District Operating Plan

a. Report from Director of Special Services – Paula LaChance

*The Special ed programs are all off to a strong start. We have provided each elementary school with a Restraint and Seclusion presentation by Shipman and Goodwin to ensure a clear understanding of the law. The TA students were excited to start working last week. They started at Dogs World, Mohegan Sun, Goodwill and Coogan Farm.*

*They also went to a voting rights workshop. Students learned about the accommodations they can access while voting. The staff will be able to take students to vote during the early voting period if they want to vote early. Lastly, they finished the week off with a wonderful hike at Gillette Castle.*

b. Report from the Assistant Superintendent – Andrea Flynn

*This year has been off to a great start. We have done so much important work so far. The PD plan for the first two days of school was well received and a lot was accomplished. We were very excited to have the consultants from CKLA our reading program spend the entire day with our K-5 teachers. These sessions were excellent and provided our teachers with the tools they needed to get started. It was an excellent opportunity for me to interact with so many staff members and get to know so many people.*

*We also are working on our standards-based report card. We have aligned the standards K-5 so that we have a through line to measure growth in reading over time. We can also use this to align to our SBAC data. And, what I am most proud of on the report card is that we reworked the soft skills section, the “work” and “social skills” section of our report card to align with our vision of the graduate. These changes will be in direct line to support the superintendent’s vision in creating district and school improvement plans. We still have work to do, but we are so excited with the changes and the cohesiveness of our plan.*

c. Report from the Superintendent – Dianne Vumback, Ed.D.

*As you know all summer long we prepare for the return for students. Our amazing team – during convocation, I called them the dream team, and they really are, did amazing work*



*to prepare for the 2024-2025 school year and this is talking about everybody in our district – whether they were physically here preparing the buildings, schedules, bus runs or engaging in professional learning to come back with innovative lessons and experiences or tutoring and teaching our students!*

*First day of school was amazing!*

*Paula and Andrea joined me as we walked the hallways of every building. It was buzzing with excitement and it was wonderful to see everyone back and ready to learn.*

*Bus routes are going well and the drop off times in the afternoon is coming in close to 4:30, which is the targeted timeframe. I will be setting up times with the Principals to engage in listening tours at each school. It will be an opportunity for me to gather information and data to make solid decisions as we engage in our work with our goals and strategies.*

*Lastly, Willie completed the tools for school's data collection and it will be submitted to the state this month. In addition, we will be updating this information on our website. The deadline for completion was December 31<sup>st</sup>.*

**Item 11. Citizens' comments**

*None*

**Item 12. Board Member Remarks**

**Lisa Terry** – *School safety is really important. Do we need badges to call 911? We want to make the schools as safe as possible. How can we make it better?*

**Donna Funk** – *Great job on the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Orientation and the wolves on the soccer field*

**Tina Grove** – *Thanked the Administrators for starting out a great year*

**Wills Pike** – *We are one team for the purpose of the education of children. Its nice we can have a conversation so open and clear amongst us. Thank you for all you do*

**Item 13. Future agenda items**

Need more information on AI.

**Item 14. Executive Session**

Motion: To enter executive session to discuss Superintendent's goals and evaluation process.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell  
Seconded by: Wills Pike  
Vote: Carried (9-0)

The Board entered executive session at 8:16 P.M.

The Board exited executive session at 8:52 with no votes taken

Motion: To adjourn

Moved by: Bob Mitchell  
Seconded by: Wills Pike  
Vote: Carried (9-0)

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Wills Pike, Chair  
Montville Board of Education

Bob Mitchell, Secretary  
Montville Board of Education

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