

**MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MONTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL  
SUPERINTENDENT'S CONFERENCE ROOM  
January 21, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.**

**Board of Education Goal:  
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/ Pledge of Allegiance**

Board Chair Sandra Berardy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. All stood and pledged the flag. Board members present were: Bob Mitchell, James Wood, Sheelagh Lapinski, Carol Burgess, Monica Pomazon, and Joe Aquitante. Absent were Steven Loiler and Dana Ladyga.

Also present were Superintendent of Schools Laurie Pallin, Assistant Superintendent Dianne Vumback, Business Manager Kathy Lamoureux, Administrators Heather Sangermano, Will Klinefelter, M.J. Dix, Amy Espinoza, Jason Daly, David Gollsneider, Denise Dunning and Laura Zurell.

**Item 2. Presentation:**

A) Montville Marvels

Mohegan Elementary - For showing consistent academic growth due to their exceptional efforts, strong work habits and good citizenship, while being excellent role models: Kevin Hu, Kristopher Wu and Kimi Li.

For spearheading a food and toy collection around the holidays which provided many disadvantaged families with food and presents: Lisa Halloran and Betty Waselik.

*Marvels were presented by Principal Will Klinefelter supported by Board Member Jim Wood.*

Murphy Elementary - For raising the level of professional knowledge at Murphy School by researching and then sharing pertinent new learning at Professional Development Opportunities: Suzanne LoPresto, Mary Aledia, Melissa Ambrosio, and Angela Young.

*Marvels were presented by Principal Amy Espinoza supported by Board member Bob Mitchell.*

B) Tyl Middle School Choir

*The Middle School Choir performed a medley of songs, led by Judy Abrams.*

C) Mohegan Elementary Presentation on virtual fitness journaling using google slides and cross curricular days

*Mohegan Teachers Anthony Occhialini and Krista Peltier presented their work with students to promote physical fitness by participating in physical activities and creating online Google Slides journals of their progress. Sample journals were displayed, and the progress students have made in achieving fitness goals and building skills using Chromebooks was highlighted. The engagement and motivation the project has fostered in all students was emphasized.*

**Item 3. Alterations to the agenda**

*We will adjust the agenda to open a community budget forum at 7:30. This time was selected to ensure that parents who work have a voice in our budget development by setting a later time for public comment*

**Item 4. Hearing of delegates and citizens (regarding agenda items only)**

*None*

**Item 5. Letters and communications.**

*None*

**Item 6. Approval of the consent calendar.**

Motion: That the Board approves the consent calendar as presented.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell  
Seconded by: Joe Aquitante  
Vote: Carried (vote -0)

**a. Budget report from Kathy Lamoureux, Business Manager.**

*We are reviewing the 2019-20 accounts in conjunction with compiling the 2020-21 budget. Presently there are three areas of concern: 1) Salaries for Paraprofessional/Behaviorist positions created after the budget development for new students or positions added to address safety concerns; 2) Tuition costs for outplaced special education students – currently there are 18 students with an additional student pending placement; and 3) subcontracted transportation for outplaced students. As we develop the budget we are reviewing accounts for projected overages and ways to reduce the transportation costs. However, because of the volatility of these accounts we will continue to monitor and will request transfers later in the school year if deemed necessary.*

*Budget development*

*Terry Hart and I met with MDG Benefit Solution along with Anthem to review our health insurance claims. For the period of 11/1/18 to 10/1/19 the actual claims were \$5,918,229 versus expected claims of \$6,659,904 which was very positive news. For comparative purposes, the actual claims for the same period last year were running \$7,454,126. This should be helpful during the renewal process assuming this trend continues. This would be also helpful to us in getting closer or achieving the fully indemnified insurance rate. In addition to reviewing claims, both MDG and Anthem talked about exploring some programs to assist in managing claims.*

*HD Segur, our insurance broker for the property, liability and workers compensation recommended the 20-21 budget factor in an 8% increase over the 2019-20 premiums. They stated they will have more information at the end of next month but presently this would be their recommendation. However, if you remember we reduced the insurance in the 19-20 year to utilize a credit we received late last year therefore this increase will reflect closer to a 14% increase.*

**Item 7. Unfinished Business**

- a. Solar project update

*Steve Carroll explained that the project is about 90% done and should start up in about three to four weeks. He described an issue which occurred during last Thursday's wind storm. Multiple panels blew off because they hadn't been secured properly. The town has demanded a third party inspection of the system to ensure this has been corrected.*

**Item 8. New business**

- a. Budget Forum for community input will begin promptly at 7:30
- b. Discussion regarding the Boards Participation in the CT Municipal Net Metering Program

*Superintendent Pallin: Steve, Kathy and I met with Mayor Ron McDaniel to discuss the town council's exploration into a Municipal Net Metering Project for solar energy. The town asked that the Board join them in authorizing execution of a non-binding letter of intent to allow for study of this virtual solar power project. Solar panels would be installed on private property in town that would generate energy that would go to the general power grid. The town and school system would receive credits for hosting the panels that would provide a discount to our Eversource transmission and distribution charges. The credits could be used at different facilities throughout the town and can be carried over for 20-25 years. The total 20 year savings to the town/schools is estimated to be a little over \$2,000,000. At this time we are not agreeing to participate, but simply to engage in the exploration. The virtual net metering program needs this authorization to move forward with an application to Eversource and develop a net metering credit agreement. The presentation which was provided to the town is in OneNote for your review. The Mayor and I do not believe there is any risk to agreeing to explore this option.*

Motion: That the Board authorizes the execution of a non-binding letter of intent to study the virtual solar power project.

Moved by: Monica Pomazon  
Seconded by: Carol Burgess  
Vote: Carried (vote 7-0)

- c. Consideration and action to approve a transfer in the amount of \$7,990 to Transportation Equipment (Object 2700-739) for the purchase of a repeater; and \$7,500 to Transportation Vehicles (Object 2700-732) for the purchase of a used bus; from Transportation Supplies (Object 2700-628).

Motion: That the Board approves a transfer in the amount of \$7,990 to Transportation Equipment (Object 2700-739) for the purchase of a repeater; and \$7,500 to Transportation Vehicles (Object 2700-732) for the purchase of a used bus; from Transportation Supplies (Object 2700-628).

Moved by: Bob Mitchell  
Seconded by: Monica Pomazon  
Vote: Carried (vote 7-0)

*Superintendent Pallin: The repeater which enables the bus garage to communicate by radio to the bus fleet while they are on the road failed in November. We received quotes to repair and replace it. The old repeater was seven years old and the model is no longer available. The repair would have cost \$3,730 and a new repeater (including installation) was \$7,990. Because of the critical need to communicate with buses at all times, the age of the current repeater, and difficulty in continuing to repair it, I authorized the purchase of a new repeater, and it was installed in December.*

*We had the opportunity to purchase a used bus (year 2007 with 129,000 miles) to replace a bus which an engine that would have cost about \$20,000 to repair. This used bus for \$7,500 is in considerably better condition than our other older buses aged 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, and 2005. It had new brakes and exhaust system. The mechanic and transportation coordinator believe that these two purchases were important and are willing to reduce the supplies we had in the budget to offset these purchases.*

*Jim Wood: Is there money left in the budget for transportation equipment?  
No, we would have to move funds from other equipment accounts and we would prefer to transfer funds from transportation supplies.*

d. NESDEC Enrollment projection results

*Superintendent Pallin: For a number of years, we have been creating our own enrollment projections using information from the town regarding birth rates. Given the number of questions we have received regarding the possibility of closing one of our elementary schools in the future, I decided it was important to utilize the New England School Development Council to provide a professional enrollment study. The study reviews our past ten years and provides projected enrollments for the next ten years. As you can see by the document in OneNote, the projected enrollment for preschool through grade 5 is expected to increase by 56 students (or 6%) over the next ten years. Our current 2019-2020 enrollment is the lowest enrollment and the highest enrollment will be an increase of 67 students in 2025. This means that without renting a number of portable classrooms, we cannot close a school in the next ten years.*

*Over the past 10 years, we lost 601 students (from a high of 2600 to a low of 1993). The enrollment study shows a net decline districtwide in the next ten years of only 59 students. This decline will occur at Tyl and MHS as our current smaller elementary classes pass through the secondary schools. However with larger elementary groups projected, the secondary enrollment will increase when those students reach secondary grades.*

*We are using these figures as we plan for numbers of sections in our 2020-2021 budget. With the increase in K-5 enrollment projected for next year, if we maintain current staffing, we will have very large 2nd or 4th grade classes at Oakdale (2 sections of 24.5 second graders or 2 sections of 26 fourth graders). Second grade at Murphy would be 21 students which is large for us. In addition, we are projecting an increase in our Transition Academy which may well mean additional staff there. MHS is projected to increase by 17 students, and Tyl to decrease by 16.*

*The total enrollment K-12 figures do not include the magnet and outplaced students for whom we are also responsible. We currently have 209 choice students and 15 outplaced special education students. That data is shown on the last page of the study.*

- e. Consideration and action to request that the Montville Town Council deposit \$68,605 into a dedicated, non-lapsing account, the unexpended educational appropriation which is reflected in the auditor's report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019. This amount does not exceed 2% of the total budgeted appropriation for fiscal year 2018-19, as allowed under CT State Statute Sec. 10-248a.

Motion: That the Board requests that the Montville Town Council deposit \$68,605 into a dedicated, non-lapsing account, the unexpended educational appropriation which is reflected in the auditor's report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019. This amount does not exceed 2% of the total budgeted appropriation for fiscal year 2018-19, as allowed under CT State Statute Sec. 10-248a.

Moved by: Jim Wood  
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell  
Vote: Carried (vote 7-0)

*Superintendent Pallin: As we cut our budget this year, we assumed more risk that spending during the year will require us to go over budget. This year, we have been required to hire extra behaviorists and paras, we have an unplanned outplacement with related transportation, and we are very concerned that we will need an additional pK teacher to accommodate previously unidentified three year old students. One outplaced student has an average tuition of \$90,000, so maintaining this fund is very important.*

- f. Consideration and action to approve the 2020-2021 district calendar

Motion: That the Board approves the 2020-2021 district calendar

Moved by: Monica Pomazon  
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell  
Vote: Carried (vote 7-0)

*The proposed calendar in OneNote does not have the built in snow days which we used for the past two years. The purpose of those days was to allow us to fix our graduation date. With the new legislation we can fix the graduation date at any time as long as it is after the 180<sup>th</sup> scheduled day of school so this is no longer necessary. Built in snow days postpone the last day of school, potentially unnecessarily, and vacation days during the year mean students have fewer instructional days prior to state testing in the spring. Otherwise this calendar preserves our traditional holidays. We are starting two weeks before Labor Day due to the late Labor Day. This*

*is similar to the LEARN calendar and most area schools. We have maintained our regional PD days.*

**g. Set date for special policy meeting to review the 3000 policy series**

Motion: That the Board sets February 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM as a special policy meeting.

Moved by: Jim Wood  
Seconded by: Monica Pomazon  
Vote: Carried (vote 7-0)

Item 8. Committee and liaison reports:

- a. **Policy** – *No Meeting, special meeting scheduled for Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, 5PM*
- b. **Educational Evaluation** – *Bob Mitchell was elected chair and he reviewed proposed changes to courses including: Changes to the levels of non-ECE statistics, the addition of a new grade 11 science course, and the addition of two new PE elective courses for juniors and seniors. These will be brought for Board approval at the February meeting.*
- c. **Communications Committee** – *Monica: we have held two budget forums to date (MHS /Tyl and Mohegan), and visited each of these three schools to view facility needs.*
- d. **Montville Education Foundation** – *Laurie  
On Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> grants were awarded at Oakdale (for sensory pathways at each of the three elementary schools) and at Tyl (for SS virtual reality goggles)  
Upcoming dates include:  
Feb. 5 Chili's fundraiser from 4:00-9:00  
Feb. 28 Foxwoods Bingo fundraiser, \$15 / ticket  
Aug. 17 – Golf tournament  
Fall 2020 Skybox concert*
- e. **LEARN** – *Bob Mitchell: At the last meeting they viewed LEARN's new special education facility and discussed services provided. They also learned that Salem, East Lyme, and Waterford are considering seeking a cooperative bid for transportation*
- f. **CABE/NSBA** – *Bob will attend a 5 day trip to Washington to meet with Congress to advocate for education issues. He also will attend the April 3-5 NSBA conference*
- g. **Montville Youth Services Bureau** – *No Meeting was held*
- h. **Student Board Representatives** –

*Ashley Seldon:*

*Update: High school students are gearing up for their midterm exams after a nice long MLK weekend. I would like to recognize the success of the boys' basketball team this year, who have remained undefeated thus far with a record of 8-0 which qualifies them for the state tournament for the first time in over 10 years. Also, one of our athletes from the girls' basketball team, Maya Hillman, won ECC athlete of the week for Montville High School. National Honor Society is hosting a yearlong women's drive where you can donate unopened hygienic products to be given to local women in need.*

*Report: After attending this month's governance council meeting, I was pleased to hear the strides Montville High School is making to create pathways for those who don't*

want to go to college. As we know college isn't the choice for everyone, and you shouldn't have to go to have a successful life. Through a partnership with the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board, it has been made so that high school students who take the manufacturing classes and electric car classes offered here can qualify to take a hands-on skill assessment test at Grasso Tech. If students pass this test, they will be deemed eligible for employment in the field of manufacturing—which is growing in demand and offers many local opportunities for employment.

*David Baukus:*

*Summary: These past two months have been eventful for Montville High School. In the beginning of December, the production of Radium Girls went off very well and there was a large turnout for all three nights. From there the cast for the upcoming spring musical The Fantasticks was created and rehearsals are under way. Also, the winter Choir Concert was preformed, and the auditorium was filled. Winter sports have started, and the girls' varsity basketball season has been going strong with a 6-4 record. Boys' basketball and wrestling are also doing good with an 8-0 and 9-2 respectively.*

*Report: Midterms are this week and students and teachers have spent the last couple weeks preparing for their exams. I know many people are stressed, but I feel teachers have given adequate amounts of time and materials to their students for them to do well on these tests. The 3-day A week restored the ratio of A to B day classes enough that I, along with others, do not feel behind as we head into this week of testing. After midterms we are starting the second half of the school year and I am ready to see what will come of it.*

i. Principal Reports – All Schools

*Principals explained their priorities for inclusion in the budget:*

*H. Sangermano:*

- *Updated technology*
- *Full time social worker for the high school*

*M.J. Dix:*

- *Increase in computers in the classrooms*
- *Creation of an additional alterative classroom requiring an additional special education teacher for students who don't function well in the larger general setting*
- *Reinstatement of the Head Teacher position*

*D. Gollsneider:*

- *One-to-one Chromebooks*
- *PE exercise equipment- current machines are over 12 years old and many don't work*

*A. Espinoza (speaking for both Murphy and Oakdale):*

- *Replacement of part time paras with full time paras in the Pathways high needs classroom*
- *Increase time social worker is in building*
- *Stressed the value of small class sizes*

*W. Klinfelter*

- *Reiterated support for increasing the number of full time paras and increased time from a social worker.*

*At this time the meeting was opened to the public for comments about the budget:*

*Alan Seals, 99 Cottonwood: Supported principals' concerns about technology being outdated and requiring attention. He asked the Board to consider some type of "bring your own device" option in combination with purchase of new devices. He also expressed support for more full time paraprofessionals rather than part-time paras.*

*Jackie Meislitzer, 52 Pheasant Run: Described the importance of up to date technology, especially since students must be comfortable using devices prior to administration of state testing. Lack of familiarity with keyboarding and using a mouse may impact students' state standardized assessment scores. She also expressed support for small class sizes, stating that research shows students benefit from smaller class sizes.*

- j. *Board Chair Remarks – Sandra explained the importance of confidentiality of both executive sessions and superintendent's emails to the Board, she asked that Board members refrain from cell phone use at meetings, she also asked that they forward any negative comments, complaints or concerns heard from the community to either her or Laurie. She reminded Board members that they do not have privileges to visit schools that are any different than those of parents. Board members are expected to check in to the school office and follow all school processes.*

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

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

*I continue to meet with staff, administrators and support staff throughout the district on a regular basis. The past 2 months we have been exceptionally busy with difficult cases. We have had quite a few manifestation PPTs and per state guidelines we are required to conduct an FBA with most of these situations and with other we needed to commission 6 outside psychiatric evaluations and 6 FBA to be conducted by our contracted BCBA. I am also in the midst of the referral process for another student. As Kathy indicated we have 18 +1 OOD students. We also have 32 sped magnet students placed at LEARN or New London Schools.*

*We have 5 homeless students attending our schools living either in Montville or a surrounding town and 2 that are living here but attending their original school. What this means is we share in their transportation as required under the McKinney Vento Act.*

*Our diagnostically placed student in New Britain has been deemed appropriate for the program*



*therefor we will be holding one last diagnostic PPT tomorrow to place her permanently*

*As you know we are down a nurse so I have secured a long term nurse from an agency until we can fill that position. The nurses we do have been great with their availability and flexibility so that has been helpful.*

*The TA continues with 7 students in the program with one in the process of FT employment which is always exciting news. He will remain a student in the program until the end of this year. The job coaches will be assisting him with public transposition training along with on the job support until he is acclimated.*

*We are also in the process of identifying specific criteria for the Program as it continues to grow with diverse needs.*

*I continue to participate in the District Wide Attendance committee where we review chronic absenteeism data by school and share strategies and interventions in an effort to reduce our numbers.*

*Other than that and attending many PPT's I am just getting my head wrapped around budgetary needs for next year. Looking at the incoming student numbers for the TA as well as the preschool.*

**b. Report from Assistant Superintendent – Mrs. Dianne Vumback**

*I have been working with the District Wide Attendance committee. This is a state mandated committee that districts must establish to analyze attendance trends and implement strategies. I have worked with this team to review state and district policies, share best practices, discuss a family/community support review board and analyze school based data. This is a committed group of teachers and administrators from every school and our next level of work is to work with school based teams and develop a family support tier.*

*I have been working with the UCFS management team to align some of their mental health services for students at Tyl. This has just started, but it is promising. As the needs of students that require social and emotional support increases, it is great to be able to tap into this resource so that all students can get the help they need to be successful in school and in life.*

*We are currently working to get our discipline database management up to speed in PowerSchool. Nic has worked on developing templates for office secretaries to use as we notify parents about attendance, grades and behavior.*

*I am meeting with elementary teachers on their technology and keyboarding curriculum integration as a result of some information that came out of the Technology Committee. The Administrative Team continues to work on their social emotional skills that we have learned through RULER. We created an administrative charter and defined steps on how we will resolve conflict.*

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

*Town budget public hearings –*

*April 22 General Government budget, 6:00 MHS auditorium*

*April 23 Board of Education proposed budget 6:00, MHS auditorium*

*A flyer for the February 4<sup>th</sup> School and State Finance Project presentation was distributed. Plans for the meeting were described and Board and community members were urged to attend.*

*A meeting has been set with Chuck Bunnell, Chief of Staff for the Mohegan Tribe, regarding recent press inquiries about our use of the Indians as our team name and in our logo.*

**Item 10. Information Items**

- a. January 28, 2020 Oakdale Elementary, Budget input session 5:00 P.M. (Tour of Murphy scheduled for 4:15)

February 4, 2020 Meeting with Finance Committee and Mayor, 5:00 PM

February 4, 2020 Presentation by Connecticut School and State Finance Project.  
6:00 PM

- b. CABE Lighthouse Workshop January 27, 2020, 5:30 P.M. (*Monica and Joe cannot attend, Carol is not certain she can be present*) Sandra asked Board members to let us know if they can attend as soon as possible in case we need to postpone this workshop

**Item 11. Citizens' comments**

*None*

**Item 12. Future Agenda Items**

*None*

Motion: That the Board enters executive session at 7:53 to conduct the superintendent's mid-year evaluation, inviting Superintendent Pallin to remain.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell  
Seconded by: Jim Wood  
Vote: Carried (vote 7-0)

Motion: That the Board exits executive session at 8:09 with no votes taken.

Moved by: Monica Pomazon  
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell  
Vote: Carried (vote 7-0)

**Item 13. Adjournment**

Motion: To Adjourn  
Moved by: Monica Pomazon  
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell  
Vote: Carried (-0)

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sandra Berardy, Chair  
Montville Board of Education  
Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Monica Pomazon, Secretary  
Montville Board of Education

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