



**MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
MONTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
Electronic Meeting
March 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.**

Minutes are informational only due to a lack of a quorum.

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 participated in the pledge. Board members participating in this electronic meeting were: Bob Mitchell, James Wood, and Monica Pomazon. Absent were Steven Loiler, Carol Burgess, Sheelagh Lapinski, Dana Ladyga, and Joe Aquitante.

Also present were Superintendent of Schools Laurie Pallin, Assistant Superintendent Dianne Vumback, Director of Special Education Paula LaChance, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent Jennifer LeMay, Administrator Laura Zurell, Mayor Ronald McDaniel and Town Council Liaison Joe Jaskiewicz.

Item 2. New Business

a. Discussion regarding plans in response to COVID-19

Superintendent Laurie Pallin reported that she was surprised to hear the Governor indicate today that he feels that Connecticut schools will likely not reopen until the fall. Laurie updated the Board and meeting attendees on the work the district has done to prepare students and staff for distance learning. The Governor's statement today makes all of the steps that we have taken seem that much more necessary. The devices we are providing to our students are their only access to education, possibly for the remainder of the year. The State has applied to the federal government for a waiver of all accountability. This means that there will be no Smarter Balance Assessments, no Next Generation Accountability scores and CT School Day SAT exams.. We do not know what the spring College Board SAT will look like. We have heard that Advanced Placement tests will be administered online in a condensed format.

The school closure has required a phenomenal effort on everyone's part: Jen LeMay, our secretary staff, Nic Savoie and the IT staff, Steve Carroll and his maintenance and

custodial staff,, Dianne, Paula, and our Administrative Team. We had people who worked in buildings all weekend to prepare for device, instructional material and personal belonging pickup on Monday. Nic's staff collected every device in the district to prepare for pickup. We believe that we distributed about 700 devices yesterday. All were labeled and ready to go by appointment. We emptied every locker in all schools into bags and prepared packets of materials for students to prepare them for distance learning.

Dianne- It was a really good process at the elementary schools, on Sunday we labeled every locker with the student's name and locker number, the custodians bagged all of the locker contents and transferred the labels. We received assistance from paras and custodians on Monday when parents came to collect materials and the bagged locker contents. Everyone worked extremely well together and it was nice to see the students and parents pull up and greet us excitedly; the parents were so appreciative of the packets.

Laurie – We also served over 1,000 meals yesterday.

We are expecting Chromebooks to arrive at the end of the week and will plan another distribution in the near future to get devices to the remainder of our secondary students.

Sandra – How will the materials be distributed to the students who have not picked up?

Laurie – The bus garage will deliver the materials to the 12-20 students at each school who did not pick up their packets, likely with a para. For the devices we will schedule another pickup day.

The teachers are working to get their classrooms setup for distance learning which will begin next Monday. Teachers are learning entirely new programs this week and thinking through the resources they will use.

Delivery of special services is much more complicated, these include: OT, Speech, Social Work, counseling, EL, reading intervention, and special education. We will utilize video conferencing for these services. 1:1 conferences are not a privacy concern, however if we wish to work with a group of students such as a small group of special education students, it is more complicated due to privacy concerns. We consulted with our attorney and received a letter of consent to share with our parents granting permission for group work. This letter gives parents the opportunity to opt out of receiving these services. We are hopeful that parents understand that this is an important time for students to meet with their peers.

We are working now to assign paras to students from a list of paras who are interested in continuing to work. Paras will log interactions with students and will be overseen by teachers. I believe that we are pretty well poised to begin our online learning on Monday.

Monica – Will teachers be conferencing with one another to ensure that the delivery of education is equitable? Laurie – Principals have established weekly meetings with each

group to monitor, make adjustments and work through concerns. Principals will be monitoring the interactions and work assigned daily and meet weekly with teachers.

We have reached out to Bill Bundy and determined what the Governor's Stay Home Stay Safe order means for us. He has assured me that we distribute devices as this is essential for distance learning. Everyone is encouraged to work from home if possible, but the offices are disinfected daily so that staff is safe to come in and work as needed. Steve will begin the process of deep cleaning all of the buildings.

Our certified teachers have been working all along. As we discussed at our last meeting, I reached out to all hourly workers and offered them employment at their current rate with their current number of hours. 52 Para's offered to work, the rest have opted for unemployment. Three bus garage employees offered to work, I need to get additional guidance from Bill Bundy to determine whether this will fall under essential work.

Secretaries- eight are working, four opted for unemployment, they know that any day they can do the work from home, they should.

Kathy has done a lot of research on how all of this will impact health insurance, MERS, etc.

We have placed the Chromebook lease and expect delivery at the end of the week. We entered into a smaller iPad lease to meet the needs of our K-1 and Special Education Students. Only alliance districts are eligible for the free devices provided by the state that you have likely been hearing about. The Mayor forwarded me information about a group who is making books available through Scholastic. I will let you know when I have additional information about our eligibility for that.

There are still a lot of unanswered questions including: graduation requirements, grading, attendance requirements, federal funds reimbursements, and whether we are required to adhere to contracts for outplaced students. We are anxious to have this information as we make daily decisions that this information will impact. We have established a process for taking attendance which includes an entrance and exit ticket daily. All teachers will report attendance, but we are unsure what that attendance will mean in regards to state reporting. Grading will continue and assignments will be graded and posted in PowerSchool.

We are taking advantage of empty buildings to work on maintenance projects. The wireless project started at Tyl last week, Steve is beginning the fire suppression work at Tyl and looking at the roof project at Murphy. All projects will be done with the understanding that we may reopen in April.

Sandra – Board Members, I have guidance on a new policy to give the Superintendent the ability to make decisions without Board consent in this emergency situation. I have shared that document with you and I would like you to review it before our meeting next week so that we can discuss it.

The meeting adjourned at 6:36 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sandra Berardy, Chair
Montville Board of Education

Monica Pomazon, Secretary
Montville Board of Education

Minutes Approved: _____