

**MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MONTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL  
Library Media Center  
May 19, 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.**

**Electronic Meeting**

**Item 1. Call to order**

Board Chair Sandra Berardy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Item 2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All stood and pledged the flag. Board members participating were: Bob Mitchell, James Wood, Carol Burgess, Dana Ladyga, Steven Loiler, Sheelagh Lapinski and Monica Pomazon. Joe Aquitante was absent.

Also present were Superintendent of Schools Laurie Pallin, Assistant Superintendent Dianne Vumback, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent Jennifer LeMay, Business Manager Kathy Lamoureux, Administrators Paula LaChance, David Gollsneider, Jill Mazzalupo, Will Klinefelter, M.J. Dix, Amy Espinoza, and Heather Sangermano, and Town Council Liaison Joe Jaskiewicz.

*Board Chair Sandra Berardy opened the meeting for comments from citizens, none were offered.*

It is recommended that the Board of Education acknowledge the following students, teachers, and community members in the areas noted:

Recognition: A) CABE Student Leadership Awards:

Sarah Azarjew - Leonard J. Tyl Middle School  
Tyler Lawton - Leonard J. Tyl Middle School  
Noah Carver - Montville High School  
Stephen Duhamel - Montville High School

*Superintendent Pallin acknowledged the students above who will be recognized during virtual award ceremonies by their schools.*

*Unfortunately, given our circumstances we cannot recognize our middle and high school student leaders in person. But I am very proud to recognize them by name at this meeting.*

- *Sarah Azarjew - Leonard J. Tyl Middle School*
- *Tyler Lawton - Leonard J. Tyl Middle School*
- *Noah Carver - Montville High School*
- *Stephen Duhamel - Montville High School*

*have been recognized by their teachers and administrators for their leadership skills which include:*

- *Willingness to take on challenges*
- *Capability to make difficult decisions*
- *Concern for others*
- *Ability to work with others*
- *Willingness to commit to a project*
- *Diplomacy*
- *Ability to understand issues clearly*

Ashley Seldon, recognition for serving as Student Board Representative for the last two years. Ashley will be presented with a gift from the Board in June

*Ashley has served as an outstanding student board rep for the past two years. Her participation in subcommittee and general board meetings has enriched our discussions, provided valuable insight and influenced our thinking. She taught the Communications Committee how to use Twitter accounts, she represented her classmates as we revised our graduation requirements policy, and she shared her classmates' ideas and opinions as we considered new course offerings. I will present her with a gift and personal note on behalf of the Board along with our very best wishes for her future success.*

### **Item 3. Letters and communications**

None

### **Item 4. Approval of the Consent Calendar**

Motion: The Board moves to approve the consent calendar.

Moved by: Steven Loiler

Seconded by: Bob Mitchell

Roll Call Vote: Carried (8-0)

#### **a. Budget update; Business Manager, Kathy Lamoureux**

*Tonight I think it is important to discuss the projection of our year-end position for the 2019-2020 expenditures in accordance with Board Policy 3160 which breaks the budget into the following buckets: Salaries (objects 111-130) – Employee Benefits (objects 204-222) – Purchased Services (objects 310-551, 580-591) – Tuitions (Objects 560-563)– Supplies (610-643)– Property (730-739) and Other (810) because there are some transfers on the agenda that will be discussed later.*

*Salaries – Certified, Non-Certified, Monitors, Tutors, Substitutes and Coaching are projected to have an overage at year end while paraprofessionals are projected to have a shortfall. Some of the overages were the result of positions being unfilled (such as the athletic director), unpaid leave, workers' compensation, and substitutes not being available to fill staff absences. However, the majority of the overages in the salary object are a result of the school closure as drivers, security officer, crossing guards and monitors were furloughed. In addition to the furloughs, spring sports,*

*after school activities, and intramurals did not occur. We had projected a larger shortfall in the paraprofessionals salary line item however this is currently reduced because positions were not filled as resignations occurred and many are currently collecting only 2/3 pay through leave granted under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). Currently a conservative projection for the Salary bucket would be an overage of \$650,000. This amount is prior to the transfer proposed under New Business on tonight's agenda.*

*Employee Benefits - We are projecting an overage. We have discussed all school year that we anticipated an overage in this which was going to be utilized to cover the shortage we projected in outsourced transportation for outplaced students. Currently this overage has increased because of furloughed drivers and not having to pay Teamsters for their insurance from April through the end of the year. We are also projecting overages in FICA, Medicare and pension as these costs are directly related to wages which have been reduced for the remainder of the fiscal year. Some of the overages in these objects will be used to cover the projected shortfall in unemployment compensation. Unemployment compensation is very difficult to project at this time. We have not received the March bill from the Department of Labor and we are still receiving additional claims. We have reached out to the Department of Labor to receive guidance on if the Board will be obligated to pay unemployment during the summer which does not normally occur for school employees. They have referred our question to their legal department, and we will let you when we receive guidance. If benefits will continue over the summer, we did not account for having to pay unemployment in the 2020-21 budget. We did quickly review the total maximum exposures for the employees who had filed, and it was over \$500,000 but many of these individuals are currently working. We anticipate an overage of about \$225,000 in employee benefits*

*Purchased Services - we are currently purchasing the normal services that occur at this time along with evaluating students for testing and reviewing existing contracts to see if the school closure will yield any concessions going forward. We are still in talks with our transportation vendors (Curtin, Learn and Lighthouse) discussing transportation costs that they expect us to pay based on the executive order. However, Curtin, our largest vendor, has gone from asking for 87% to 40% of the original daily bill, and we feel we will be within our budgeted amount. (We had expected to go well over budget in this area.) We do have an overage of about \$17,500 of purchased services that were related to the spring sports that did not occur.*

*Tuitions are expected to have a surplus based on the expected revised cost for our outplaced students during the closure. There has been some reduction because of services which have been reduced such as providing 1 on 1 paras for students or decreasing scheduled student time. Recently we were notified of a student who was state-placed, and we are trying to determine if this student will be Montville's financial responsibility as the student is in a private placement. A conservative projection would reflect an overage of \$100,000 in the tuition account assuming no other students enroll in Montville.*

*It is important to note - both purchased service transportation and tuition costs for the excess cost grant were filed by the District prior to the school closure and therefore don't reflect the reduced cost for these students. At the completion of the auditors' review of the yearend report for these students, there will be a charge due back to the state to reduce the grant to the actual cost incurred by the District for these students. The State will reduce the ECS grant next year for this chargeback. The Town 19-20 budget reflected \$316,000 in revenue this year and the grant was about \$550,000.*

*The 20-21 budget for the Town has \$400,000 in this revenue account. The overage in this account should be used to offset the reduction to our ECS grant next year.*

*Supplies and Textbooks – We are in the purchasing cycle of schools placing orders for supplies for next year which is taking a little longer than normal due to our remote working circumstances. I anticipate these objects will be spent out because any remaining money will be used to plan for next year and will be devoted to ordering supplies necessary for cleaning and sanitizing and for PPE equipment.*

*Property – There is a proposal to transfer funds from both Salary and Employee benefits to pay off the equipment that was secured for distance learning (chrome books and iPads). We are looking at purchase rather than a lease, and it is anticipated if the Board approves the transfer, it will eliminate the interest and help future budgets by removing the lease payments.*

*Dues – it is anticipated that Dues would generate a shortfall which is why we requested a transfer. As we discussed during the Budget presentation, we did not budget all dues necessary due to the year when we worked with the Town to give back funds because the State reduced the ESC after budget were finalized.*

*Therefore taking transfers into account, if approved, it is anticipated that the Board would still be able to return at least \$475,000 to the Town at the end of the fiscal year.*

*Jim Wood: When do you realistically believe that you will be able to close out the books for this year? Kathy: Not until July*

*Bob: I like the idea of paying off the Chromebook Lease.*

**b. Review of Town’s decision regarding Capital Plan**

*The town approved the Board’s capital requests except for:  
\$255,000 for Oakdale Parking Lot  
\$52,000 for replacement pavement at the SE entrance at MHS  
\$34,000 for a maintenance van*

**Item 5. Unfinished Business**

- a. Discussion of possible reductions to the 2020-2021 Board of Education Budget

Motion: That the Board approves the addition of one Social worker to be hired for the commencement of the 2020-2021 school year.

Moved By: Monica Pomazon  
Seconded By: Bob Mitchell  
Roll Call Vote: Carried (8-0)

*It is my recommendation that we set the Board of Education budget for \$39,271,804 at this time, but in light of the many unknowns around next year’s educational program, hold off until at least next month to determine exactly where these cuts will be taken.*

**Item 6. New business**

- a. Consideration and action to transfer \$250,000 from salary objects (111-130) and \$150,000 from employee benefits objects (204-222) to property object account (730) to fund the distance learning technology.

Motion: The Board moves to transfer \$250,000 from salary objects (111-130) and \$150,000 from employee benefits objects (204-222) to property object account (730) to fund the distance learning technology.

Moved by: Monica Pomazon  
Seconded by: Steven Loiler  
Roll Call Vote: Carried (8-0)

*As you know we have distributed both Chromebooks and iPads to students for use during our distance learning. We had originally planned to enter a lease for Chromebook for use at MHS and Tyl and had not planned to address our needs at the elementary level at this time. Instead, we have provided devices on an as-needed basis to all students. We would like to move from a lease to a purchase option for these devices so they are not in our budget moving forward and we need to purchase more than originally planned to meet elementary students' online learning needs.*

- b. Consideration and action to transfer \$5,000 from salary objects (111-130) to dues and fees object accounts (810) for memberships not appropriately budgeted for.

Motion: The Board moves to

Moved by: Monica Pomazon  
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell  
Roll Call Vote: Carried (8-0)

*These were memberships that have annually been in our budget but which were moved out for one year the year our ECS funds were cut \$1 million (e.g. CASBO) and we missed putting them back into the budget. We need to add these back into the budget.*

- c. Discussion of Return to Work Policy and procedures.

*Policy Chair Jim Wood explained the work the policy committee did to develop a protocol to address the safe return to work in buildings of staff who have been working remotely, based on recommendations from CDC and the Uncas Health District. .*

- d. Discussion of end of year events.

*Superintendent Pallin - Teachers are being given time to get back into buildings to gather belongings and close rooms starting this week, following outlined safety protocols. Half days are planned for June 15, 16, 17 to allow teachers to close out year-end grades, report cards, etc.. We will need to collect textbooks and devices*

*and allow students one last chance to get items which were bagged from lockers, plans are under way for this process. Awards ceremonies will all be virtual, schools are working on these plans. Promotions are being planned for grade 5 and Tyl*

- e. Discussion regarding planning for summer and fall.

*ESY – We are expecting guidance any day from the state on our Extended School Year program. We believe it will be very difficult to run an in-person program given the constraints we are currently working under.*

*We have established a Teacher committee to plan for the fall – there are many considerations for a safe and productive return including: how we will ensure physical safety, whether we will use virtual learning or a blended environment, how we will meet students' and staff emotional needs, and ways to ensure recovery of learning.*

*The CDSE has provided several drafts of possible models including: students come to school every other day, we run two half day sessions each day, or learning is all distant. Each of these models comes with its own set of considerations and potential problems including safety, fiscal and academic concerns.*

- f. Explanation of CARES Act Funding.

*We have been told we will receive \$269,000 in CARES Act funding. These funds can be used to recover learning, meet social emotional needs, meet technology needs, and provide safe learning environment.*

- g. Discussion and action to approve Montville High School Graduation Plans.

Motion: The Board moves to approve the Montville High School Graduation Plan.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell  
Seconded by: Monica Pomazon  
Roll Call Vote: Carried (8-0)

*Principal Heather Sangermano –*

*Over the last month have received input from: Members of project safe graduation, senior class advisors, senior class officers who surveyed the student body, governance council, solicited input from all parents in an email, teachers as well as spoke with principals from other districts.*

*Feedback indicates a desire for some form of an in-person ceremony, ideas include drive up movie theatre approach, moving to a larger venue (Dodd stadium and limiting the number of spectators, masks and social distancing, drive up parade type ceremony where diplomas are given while they stay in the car, to choosing a later date.*

*Guidance from the commissioner: Must abide by executive orders currently in place, no gatherings larger than 10 and maintain social distancing. However will allow people to come together if they*

*remain in their cars. We were also informed that a later date, late summer or fall, is unlikely to be feasible.*

*Proposal: On June 17<sup>th</sup> we will begin a ceremony at the Tyl Middle School parking lot. Seniors will arrive at that lot, 1 car per senior, we will have a system for monitoring that. Cars will be directed into spots, we will have a stage set up on the grass divider between the two lots. All individuals will stay in their cars. We will have arranged for an FM transmitter and will provide the tune in station to them ahead of time as well as have it posted. Class speakers will go up one at a time to give their speech, we will have a lift to raise them up slightly so all cars can view. The event will be live streamed so it can be accessed on phones in cars or at home for those that cannot attend. Every speaker will have their own microphone and only one will be on the stage at a time. The ceremony will be videotaped. Designated spots on the other side of the divider for board members who wish to attend.*

*Once the ceremony part is complete, we will use volunteers and police support to direct cars, using very specific traffic patterns, into three designated diploma pick up stations. One station will be at the front of MHS, the second in front of the field in the back of MHS and the third in front of Tyl. Each station will be decorated with a podium, table, flowers, and balloons. A videographer will be present at each spot. Roughly 45 cars will be lined up at each pick up station, at a given checkpoint a senior, dressed in their cap and gown will get out, the car will proceed to the next check point, their name will be read (the cars at that station will be able to hear the names), they will walk to the table and take their diploma, photos and video will be taken, and they will get back in their car. Once they have their diploma they will head home.*

*The video will be spliced together then shared with the graduates.*

- h. Discussion and action to establish a Board of Education Finance Sub-Committee.

Motion: The Board moves to establish a Board of Education Finance Sub-Committee.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell  
Seconded by: Monica Pomazon  
Roll Call Vote: Carried (8-0)

*Board Members Bob Mitchell, Carol Burgess and Jim Wood will serve on the committee.*

## **7. Committee and liaison reports:**

- a. **Policy** – Jim: *Plan to schedule Policy Meetings prior to the end of the school year to move forward on the Policy Work.*
- b. **Communications Committee** – Monica: *We discussed plans for the High School Graduation, communication regarding the budget, the Cares Act, and how parents and students will feel returning in the fall in regards to their safety. We have learned a lot through this process and will expand on those things as we move forward.*

**Principals Reports** - Will Klinefelter: *Each elementary PE teacher will be creating their own At Home Field Day.*

*Virtual/At Home Field Day:*

- *When: The last week of school*
- *The students will be provided a number of different at home field day challenges. They will be similar to “minute to win it” challenges.*
- *Students can use equipment they find around the house to set up the activities.*
- *Students will keep track of their points and record their scores for each activity.*
- *The students will then respond on Seesaw with a picture/video of themselves performing one of the challenges and then also respond with their total combined score for all of the field day activities.*
- *I am also thinking about having students wear their old field day shirts also and having them take a picture with it on to make a giant picture collage.*

*Jill Mazzalupo: Art teacher, Bethany Bonner, created a Google Classroom for all students and staff at Oakdale School. She uses this classroom as a virtual art studio where she posts the weekly art work of students by grade level. She said she created it because she thought everyone might miss seeing all the artwork hanging in the hallways. It’s been really nice to see all the artwork in one place. We have some really amazing little artists in Montville. Thank you to Bethany for thinking outside of the box.*

*MJ Dix: Good News Emails from the School Counselors to students –The emails start with “Each day I ask for names of students who are rising to the top! Guess who I am recognizing and congratulating today??? You got it! YOU!!” and then give specific details like the example below. This is what your Math teacher, Mrs. Hedrick said:*

*“Student A has shown great improvement in his distance learning. He has done all of his math work since we returned from spring break. His math work has been completed with good effort. You make me and your teachers so proud in and OUT of the school building!”*

*Amy Espinoza; Murphy’s 5<sup>th</sup> grade team requested money from the PTO to buy a book that the entire grade level could read together as a uniting activity. They delivered the books to each child’s home along with a few goodies. The book is also available via audio for children unable to access the readability of the book.*

*As a highly creative way to engage a group of students, one of our teachers, during a Zoom meeting, will get her dog to give her students a virtual kiss when they complete an assignment. She puts a treat on the top of her computer and when the dog gets the treat, it looks in the camera like the kids get a kiss!*

## **8. Superintendent's Report**

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

*I continue to be in awe at the work our staff and students are doing. It’s really amazing to see the involvement and unity across the district.*

*Last week we held interviews for the Secondary Program Leader Position with a second interview with our top pick yesterday. Laurie and I met with her this morning to offer her the position. Unfortunately, the candidate does have another offer and would like some time to decide which position would be the most appropriate for her at this time. As you can imagine we are anxiously awaiting her response.*

*I am anxious to receive further guidance on ESY. While the state has given districts the option to hold ESY online. I need to learn more about the restrictions that will come with in person programming in order to make an informed decision. I will admit I am very concerned with our ability to provide a safe in person ESY with the most significantly challenged students so it is quite unsettling.*

*We have begun holding PPTs. We are addressing those that are past due as well as current annual and triennial PPTs and amending as many of them that we can. This is keeping us busy but they are going well.*

*I continue to monitor the online instruction and student participation. Overall participation continues to be strong but we are seeing some inconsistencies.*

*I collaborate regularly with my cohort of directors in the area while attending webinars and Zoom meetings to stay on top of new guidance and directives.*

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

*I have been attending curriculum meetings with LEARN and participated in webinars on a variety of topics from reopening schools to discussing curriculum practices and challenges throughout our region. We have shared resources, strategies and ideas on how to best support our students, staff and families. Some resources included supports to EL students and ensuring their needs are met.*

*I have been in conversations with our school social workers about attendance and social emotional needs of our students. They are busy! They have reported that the students miss school. This disruption has left many students struggling, including some that were not on their radar previously. As Mike McGovern stated to me “the school day provided consistency and routine, and warm, caring, personnel”. Our social workers are meeting frequently with students and families via phone, email and zoom to support them socially, emotionally and academically.*

*We are working on an online student enrollment process. This will save considerable time for staff and families, particularly at the beginning of the school year. It saves families time from filling out forms by hand every year and saves staff time by eliminating unnecessary printing, distributing and collecting registration and health forms. Additionally, this new system will accurately configure the data to our specific needs and feed into the student information system of PowerSchool. This personalized process modernizes the way we currently register students – for both returning students and those students new to Montville. Jen LeMay and Allie Forte have been instrumental in reviewing and updating forms and setting up the system to be user-friendly. We will be training secretaries in the coming weeks.*

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

*Much of our days are consumed with meetings. I meet weekly with the MMSA and SECASA superintendents to compare notes on plans and practices. Usually we try to make regional decisions or talk through each of several options. These meetings are very helpful for making plans for things like grading and graduation. I also meet weekly with a smaller group of four superintendents and guest experts (e.g. Patrick McCormack on Public Health, Jonathan Costa on re-visioning instruction, Heather Somers on legislative decisions, and Rebecca Adams, CABA attorney) to strategize plans for school in the fall. We know that the success of students' re-entry to school depends on how good a job we do at making people feel safe. We are also looking at distance learning and asking questions like: What are some things we used to do in in-person classroom instruction that we don't want to do anymore? What features of online learning will we carry forward to the classroom? In addition we have weekly updates from the Governor and the Commissioner.*

*I have been in discussion with the Mayor and Peter Bushway about summer camp and we plan to meet again as soon as we receive more guidance from the state about camp.*

*We are also working on setting up a new Website for the district and each of the schools. We found a website company that is highly recommended which is much less expensive than our current platform and is one of the reductions I will propose in next year's budget.*

*Sandra Berardy asked for citizens comments. Joe Jaskiewicz indicated that he is looking forward to working with the Board through the newly established Finance Sub-Committee.*

**It is anticipated that the Board will enter executive session to discuss contract negotiations, unaffiliated raises and the annual evaluation of the Superintendent**

**Item 11. Adjournment of the regular meeting at 7:14 PM.**

Motion: To Adjourn

Moved by: Steven Loiler

Seconded by: Bob Mitchell

Vote: Carried (8-0)

*Superintendent Pallin indicated that Board Members were emailed another number to call to join the executive session.*

Motion: To enter executive session at 7:18

Moved by: Monica Pomazon

Seconded by: Bob Mitchell

Vote: Carried (8-0)

Motion: To exit executive session at 7:36 with no votes taken

Moved by: Steve Loiler

Seconded by: Bob Mitchell

Vote: Carried (8-0)

Motion: To adjourn at 7:37

Moved by: Jim Wood

Seconded by: Steve Loiler

Vote: Carried (8-0)

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 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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