

**MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
MONTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
Library Media Center
June 16, 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/ Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair Sandra Berardy called the meeting to order at 5:59 p.m.

All stood and pledged the flag. Board members participating were: Bob Mitchell, James Wood, Carol Burgess, Steven Loiler, Sheelagh Lapinski, and Monica Pomazon. Joe Aquitante, and Dana Ladyga were 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, Laura Zurell, M.J. Dix, Denise Dunning, Amy Espinoza, and Heather Sangermano, and Town Council Liaison Joe Jaskiewicz.

Item 2. Hearing of delegates and citizens (regarding agenda items only)

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

Item 3. Letters and communications

Thank you email was received from Ashley Seldon for the gift from the Board; Ashley will be attending Providence College.

Item 4. Approval of the Consent Calendar

Motion: The Board moved to approve the consent calendar.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell
Seconded by: Jim Wood
Vote: Carried (6-0)

a. Budget update; Business Manager, Kathy Lamoureux

Laurie and Kathy reviewed the changes listed below.

| | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------|
| TOTAL Proposed Revised Board of Education Budget | | \$39,878,639 |
| Proposed Reductions for Board Approval | | |
| Eliminate request for two new teachers | (\$140,000) | 39,738,639 |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|
| Health insurance (move from 92% to 88% of fully indemnified rate, pending negotiations, credit for reduced costs this spring, reduced costs for new hires) | (\$100,000) | 39,638,639 |
| Reduce technology (see detail below) | (\$41,000) | 39,597,639 |
| Reduce workbooks / textbooks / supplies | (\$25,000) | 39,572,639 |
| Reduce transportation supplies | (\$20,000) | 39,552,639 |
| Reduce attorney fees | (\$26,000) | 39,526,639 |
| Workers comp insurance dividend | (\$17,000) | 39,509,639 |
| Medicaid reimbursement | (\$26,000) | 39,483,639 |
| Reduce summer school staff and transportation | (\$50,000) | 39,433,639 |
| Reduce 0.2 math teacher at MHS | (\$17,800) | 39,415,839 |
| Fall sports - coaches, officials, reconditioning equipment; at this time CIAC is planning to run fall sports. With PPE needs, costs may actually increase | \$0 | 39,415,839 |
| Eliminate plan to reduce part time paras and increase fulltime | (\$50,000) | 39,365,839 |
| TOTAL PROPOSED REDUCTIONS | \$512,800 | |
| ADDITIONAL REDUCTIONS NEEDED | (\$94,035) | |
| Town Appropriation | | \$39,271,804 |
| | | |
| Possible Sources of Additional Reductions | | |
| Contract negotiations - drivers, paras, secretaries; currently in negotiations with these three groups | | |
| Custodial retirement not filled through Aug | | |
| Liability insurance (credit for reduced liability for busses) | | |
| Additional health insurance savings | | |
| Substitute teachers / tutors | | |
| Late retirees?? | | |

Item 5. Unfinished Business

- a. Discussion and possible action to adjust the 2020-2021 Education Budget to make necessary reductions.

Motion: That the Board reduce the 2020-2021 Board of Education Budget by \$512,800.

Moved By: Jim Wood
Seconded By: Bob Mitchell
Vote: Carried (6-0)

- b. Consideration and action to approve a total education budget of \$39,271,804 for 2020-2021.

Motion: That the Board approve the 2020-2021 education budget of \$39,271,804.

Moved By: Monica Pomazon
Seconded By: Bob Mitchell
Vote: Carried (6-0)

Additional \$94,035 in reductions will be presented this summer once we have completed our contract negotiations and hiring process.

Item 6. New business

- a. Consideration and action to approve the Agreement Between General Teamsters Local No. 493 and Montville Board of Education for the period of September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2022 as recommended by the negotiating committee.

Motion: The Board moves to postpone the vote until its next meeting.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell
Seconded by: Jim Wood
Vote: Carried (6-0)

Table until next month as union has not ratified the contract yet.

- b. Consideration and action to appoint Board members to serve on the Montville Education Association (MEA) negotiating committee. (5 – Positive Community Relationships).

Motion: The Board moves to include the full Board in the Montville Education Association (MEA) negotiating committee.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell
Seconded by: Monica Pomazon
Vote: Carried (6-0)

Negotiations will begin in August through September and will include evening meetings.

- c. Consideration and action to modify the 2020-2021 school calendar.

Motion: The Board moves to adjust the 2020-2021 school calendar as presented by Superintendent Pallin.

Moved by: Jim Wood
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell
Vote: Carried (6-0)

Given the events of this year and the nature of the fall, there is an increased need for professional development before the start of the school year. We need to discuss health

and safety protocols and procedures, transitioning to blended learning in a one-to-one computing environment that includes some degree of distance-learning based on lessons learned this spring, as well as ways to recognize cultural diversity, anti-harassment, anti-bullying or intergroup relations.

Our calendar currently has a PD day on June 10 and an extra student day on June 9. I am proposing that we take these two days and move them to the beginning of the year, to add staff development on Aug. 26 and on Aug. 31. That would give us two student days on Aug. 27 and 28 followed by two four-day weeks for students.

Bob: The teachers would still go 186 days, they would just have one additional PD day.

- d. Consideration and action to transfer \$79,000 from salary objects (111-130) to property object account (730) to fund technology.

Motion: The Board moves to transfer \$79,000 from salary objects (111-130) to property object account (730) to fund technology.

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

Steve Loiler joined the meeting at 6:20 and is included in the votes from that point on.

Laurie: As I mentioned at our last meeting, we are continuing our efforts to purchase devices to ensure that every student K-12 has access to a device. We need to be completely prepared to start the year with some degree of distance learning, to go back out of school completely should a second spike in infection take place, and to utilize blended learning in the classrooms as teachers differentiate to meet the needs of learners who return with significantly different learning needs. This would enable us to use iPads throughout grades pK-1 and Chromebooks in grades 2-5 in addition to the previously approved purchase of Chromebooks for grades 6-12.

- e. Consideration and action to transfer \$28,500 employee benefits objects (204-222) to other equipment (739) to fund purchase of lawn-mower and floor scrubber.

Motion: The Board moves to transfer \$28,500 employee benefits objects (204-222) to other equipment (739) to fund purchase of lawn-mower and floor scrubber.

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

Our current mower / bagger was purchased in 1996 and is badly in need of replacement. We had included this in our capital request last year and next year, but know that the town will find it increasingly difficult to fund capital requests in the next several years.

We don't believe we will be able to make the current mower last much longer. We currently have 4 tractors all more than 10 years old (between 1996-2009).

With our increased need for cleaning and disinfecting next year, we also believe that the purchase of an additional floor scrubber will be essential.

- f. Discussion and consideration of options for re-entry to school in the fall.

Laurie presented possible scenarios for the fall:

Fully in school – recently this seems more possible given the current low rate of infection in our region; we may need to establish cohorts of students who stay together throughout the day to contain any infection which does take place.

Fully out of school – This seems unlikely for the start of the school year unless we cannot meet transportation requirements or other increased costs (e.g. student per every other bus seat, monitor on every bus, additional custodian in every school, double the teachers / proctors because rooms can only be filled to 50% capacity)

Blended models –

pK-5 fully in school 4 days / week, 6-12 distance and in school one day / week

All students in every other day or every other week

Double sessions each day

Distance learning with teachers in school and groups of students coming in each day on an as-needed basis

We are hoping for more guidance by the second week of July. We need a much better understanding of the mandates which we will have to follow before we can plan for specific models, class groups, bus routes, etc. As soon as we get some direction, we will need to move forward very fast to make plans that implement those mandates / guidelines.

Transportation is one of the more difficult areas to plan for. Work is currently being done by the CT School Transportation Association to establish reasonable guidelines for fall re-opening regarding bus capacity limits, driver shortages, the length of time it takes to get a new driver licensed, issues with bus monitors, sanitation of buses, PPE for students and drivers, special needs student and athletic team transportation. Bus companies don't know who many drivers will return to work and won't know until they can share guidelines. COSTA was told they would get guidance in July.

The Board requested that parents serve on the committee to study options once they are known.

- g. Discussion of equity in response to weekend rally.

Sandra: There was a list of demands online following the rally.

Diann read the list of demands as posted on social media.

'We DEMAND Montville public schools take immediate action to establish an environment where students of color feel protected and safe while at school by:

- a. *Creating a designated safe space/area where students of color can gather and speak about social inequalities and these inequalities can be addressed and resolved.*
- b. *Requiring all students and staff participation in a cultural diversity, anti-harassment, anti-bullying or intergroup relations training program.”*

Dianne: In response to these demands, and as part of my work with the state discipline collaborative, we have focused greatly on race in education, which began in October 2018. In April 2019 we began working on dismantling systemic racism, November 2019 on Education Commissioner Cardona's vision of equity and student voice, and we are connecting this work now with the state's priority on critical consciousness. This work will help guide the school level to create avenues for students to engage in youth dialogue, student advocacy, social analysis, political agency and social action, all elements of critical consciousness that help students analyze inequities and inequalities, believe in their ability to create change, and challenge injustice. This work can be addressed through advisory or embedded throughout the curriculum.

*We currently have many board policies that emphasize the mindset of inclusion and many policies specifically require training of all MPS employees. Examples of policies include: **Equity & Diversity**, which specifically reflects our belief that learning environments are enhanced and improved by the contributions, perspectives and very presence of diverse participants; **Nondiscrimination Policy, Bullying Policy & Safe School Climate** – which requires a safe school learning environment for all stakeholders and offers strict guidelines on how to handle complaints, **Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents Policy**, and **Harassment**.*

7. Committee and liaison reports:

- a. **Policy** – *Jim: Policy meeting was cancelled; we will meet on Tuesday June 22 at 5:00 PM.*
- b. **Education Evaluation** – *Bob Mitchell: The meeting this evening was cancelled.*
- c. **Communications Committee** – *Monica: Reviewed the results of the surveys sent to parents and shared the results with the Board.*
- d. **Principals Reports** – *See Parent Involvement Reports prepared by each principal and included in your OneNote binders and emailed.*

8. Superintendent's Report

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

Like everyone I continue to navigate the distance learning journey. After careful review and consideration for ESY we made the decision to hold it virtually. We will be holding 5 different groups with a total of 40 students. I was very fortunate to have had many teachers offer to continue servicing their own students which will provide the continuity that is needed more now than ever. I have had a handful of parents decline services and requested activity packets and weekly check-ins.

Due to the school closure we were unable to conduct many required triennial evaluations therefore these will be conducted over the summer. We have approximately 30 to complete in preparation for fall PPT's.

Also this month I have been working on needs for next year. We will have 14 students attending the TA. This is a very large number and we are honing in on each students specific goals and objectives to develop their plan accordingly. The uncertainty of what school will look like in the fall creates additional challenges.

As you know my Program leader Denise Dunning will be leaving us at the end of the month and Amanda Brown will join us. I am excited to have her join Laura and I. She comes with 9 years of Sped administrative experience and will be a great asset to our team.

Monica: Has the aged out date been extended to age 22?

Paula: I have not had a request for the two students who will be aging out to remain in the program next year.

Laurie: We are waiting for more guidance from the CSDE, CAGE, CAPSS and our lawyers on the status of this change.

b. Report from Assistant Superintendent – Mrs. Dianne Vumback

Blended-Learning:

Blended Learning refers to a group of instructional models that mix face-to-face classroom teaching and online instruction.

These models engage students in learning, provide teachers with actionable data for more targeted, personalized instruction, and allow schools to extend learning beyond the traditional classroom as it usually includes some element of student control over time, place, path or pace.

When students experience blended learning with both collaborative learning activities and teacher-directed instruction, the student outcomes significantly improve.

Benefits include

- Flexibility for students to choose the way they want to learn.*
 - Opportunities for students to learn through activities that capitalize on different learning interests.*
 - Flipped classroom (students learn online at home then spend in-class time practicing with a teacher to assist them).*
 - Rotation centers (students move between learning stations, with at least one station being a digital space where students can access a variety of learning resources)*
 - Customizable and Personalized: Purposeful grouping/Intervention/Enhancement*
- Need*
- To change teaching style to blended learning model (can't replace the teacher!)*
 - To research your population, needs, and goals*
 - To include all stake holders*
 - Support for both the human AND digital resources*

**By blending fact to face instruction with technology, we provide personalized, student-centered learning that empowers students to dig deeper into the content and to fully explore their interests.*

It truly expands learning opportunities resulting in a more engaged, rigorous academic environment.

Laurie will discuss how we will support the district to move in this direction.

Dianne: School Discipline Collaborative for CSDE

I am a member of the School Discipline Collaborative. Our work is centered on the National research that indicates that discipline practices that exclude students from instruction have negative consequences for students, including increased risk for retention, dropping out and involvement in the juvenile justice system. Research nationally and in Connecticut has found that low-income students, students with disabilities and students of color are significantly more likely to be excluded from school.

This collaborative is passionate about advising the SDE on issues, policies and practices related to school discipline which includes reviewing effective practices to increase alternatives to exclusionary discipline and to evaluate and recommend reform initiatives to the State Board of Education.

Today's meeting introduced the research behind "Schooling for critical consciousness" which addresses how schools can help Black and Latinx youth resist the negative effects of racial injustice and challenge its root causes. It's over-arching theme was that "when school is engaging and relevant – and helps all youth figure out who they are and who they will become – discipline goes down" and positive student outcomes improves. They effectively connected their timely publication with the impact of COVID-19, stressing the need to draw upon the expertise of students and families in a moment when teaching and learning is being recreated.

Webinars

I have attended many webinars on special populations, mental health, equity, and Title IX. One in particular was "Dear School Boards, Your Students and Staff of Color are Not Okay: What can School Boards and Superintendents do?" This was a conversation about how students of color are doing with this difficult period (Presenter Dr. Martha Bracken-Harris states that our students and their families are not just reliving history – they are not just seeing the violence but are bombarded by it (through the media). She talked about how districts can work toward equity and equality for all students. She encourages educators to develop trust and ground rules with their students before trying to have the hard conversations if they are not secure in their ability to navigate. Favorite quote: "It's not just about changing your intellect, it's a change of heart. If your heart doesn't change, whenever the conversation gets uncomfortable, you are going to stop".

ADL

We have been able to capitalize on the expertise of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) during trainings this year, specifically on "Responding Effectively to Hate and Bias Incidents." We plan to continue our collaboration with ADL this upcoming school year by having them work with our administration and teachers on race, equity and equality. We have a conference meeting next week to discuss further.

c. Report from the Superintendent – Mrs. Laurie Pallin

I have been working with a group of superintendents to discuss work we need to do for next fall in order to capitalize on lessons learned this spring by codifying the data we have collected, facilitating conversations about necessary change and growth, and working with the faculty to build capacity and measure the changes that result. We are exploring a partnership with the Highlander Institute to analyze this year's district data, convene a group of stakeholders including staff, students, and parents to extrapolate themes from that data and focus our work for next year. After identifying the areas that need action and determining PD needs, Highlander trainers would help us work on building capacity by co-developing PD in areas such as blended learning, social and emotional learning, and engaging students through use of authentic projects. They would also help us to measure the effects of our work over time using student, family, and teacher focus groups. Our goal is to provide a structure to move forward from the challenges this spring by capitalizing on our new one-to-one environment and increased knowledge of ways to use technology effectively.

Graduation at Palmer was last Friday evening and it was a wonderful ceremony. David should be very proud of his first graduation as Palmer A.P.

Graduation at MHS will be tomorrow from 1-7, speeches were recorded this afternoon and are terrific. They will be posted on the MHS website along with link for livestream of ceremony throughout the afternoon. A video and personal photos will be provided to all graduates.

Tyl promotion is Thursday evening.

Transportation – A CDL license waiver has been issued through Sept. 30 to allow CDL holders to renew their licenses since DMV was closed or provide medical certificates if they were unable to obtain appointments for physical examinations.

9. Information Items

- a. In accordance with Policy No. 1101.1(a) Parent Involvement Reports may be found in your OneNote binders.

10. Citizen's Comments

None

It is anticipated that the Board will enter executive session to conduct the Superintendent's evaluation.

Motion: To enter executive session.

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

Motion: To exit executive session at 7:41 with no votes taken

Moved by: Steven Loiler
Seconded by: Sheelagh Lapinski
Vote: Carried (7-0)

Item 11. Adjournment of the regular.

Motion: To adjourn.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:42P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sandra Berardy, Chair
Montville Board of Education
Minutes Approved: _____

Monica Pomazon, Secretary
Montville Board of Education

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