

MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
August 18, 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 via Zoom

Item 1. Call to order

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

Board members participating were: Bob Mitchell, James Wood, Joe Aquitante, Monica Pomazon, Sheelagh Lapinski, and Dana Ladyga. Carol Burgess and Steven Loiler 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, Amanda Brown, Jill Mazzalupo, Jason Daly, Rob Alves, Will Klinefelter, Laura Zurell, M.J. Dix, Amy Espinoza, and Heather Sangermano, and student Board Representatives David Baukus.

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

None.

Item 3. New Business

- a. Discussion regarding district plans for staffing for the 2020-2021 school year.**

Motion: To set September 8th as the first day of school for the 2020-2021 school year.

Moved by: Dana Ladyga

Seconded by: Bob Mitchell

Roll Call Vote: 7-0

Mrs. Pallin: approximately 12% of students have elected full distance learning, around 12 staff members who have requested ADA accommodations or other leave including several pending maternity leaves. These are the stumbling blocks we are facing right now. At this moment we do not have a full count of who is returning and who is not as we are still receiving responses from parents. My recommendation is that we should move the start of school to September 8th to ensure a smooth start. This is not for lack of effort; we have been working long hours throughout the summer, but this is an ever changing situation. If we start students on the 8th, the end of the school year would be June 16th for staff (June 15th for students) to account for our 177 days. When we open, we want to open well, ensuring all of our procedures are followed and we are fully staffed.

Jim Wood: How will we communicate this change to families? Immediately following this meeting we will send a message to families and post the updated calendar. Monica: I think this is a good plan to start a little later.

Staff who are facing a child care hardship have been applying for leave under FFCRA. I have explored a number of ways to provide childcare for teachers' children. I am currently working with Barbara Lockhart to see if we can set up childcare up in district. Currently we have approximately 25 teachers' children who would need care, all are school-aged children in grades k-6.

Jenny Natale: What will the beginning of the year look like: Laurie: We will keep the PD schedule as is for the week of August 24th, the following week would be a week off and they would return on September 8th.

b. Discussion regarding plans for Fully Remote Learning Learners for the 2020-2021 school year.

We have 250 students who are expecting a full academic program while full distance learning. While the state has waived some certification requirements, with specialized courses such as statistics, it is important to offer real support for the classes which they are enrolled in, not someone checking in on them once a week. We have pursued many different options and all were problematic. Students deserve content that is designed for them and a teacher who is dedicated to them. We use a company called Educere for expelled students or credit recovery and it has worked well for us. In Educere, students can select a full load of courses. Classes are taught by Connecticut Certified Teachers and students have access to live help from teachers from 7:30-7:30 every day. All students would have an Educere-assigned personal learning coach as well as the certified teachers for their courses, and we will provide a Montville teacher who will also touch base with the students to ensure they are making progress. Educere provides IEP and 504 plan modifications and Special Education students would be assigned a district special education teacher her to oversee their work. Educere provides weekly progress updates to students, parents and the district and the personal learning coach reaches out to parents every two weeks by phone.

Dana: Is this the same idea of what East Lyme is doing? Laurie: They are similar, and this would be used for secondary students only.

Monica: If we all have to go remote do those students remain on Educere or would they just join their regular classes? Laurie: It would depend on at what point in the semester we had to make that change. It would be best for continuity for them to commit to a whole semester. David: Would the transcript be Educere or Montville? Heather: A Montville transcript. Laurie: The cost has been factored into our Cares Act funding and I estimate that it will be around 50K-60K. There is no limit to the number of courses a student can enroll in.

No vote was taken, the Board was in support of the plan to utilize Educere.

c. Discussion regarding use of CARES Act Funds

We are working on the application to receive all of the funds available to Montville through the CARES Act (\$220,000). We plan to use the monies on technology, shields to retrofit classrooms, PPE including masks, science goggles, thermometers, plastic face shields for each staff member, barriers, cots, rented storage containers for the furniture removed from classrooms. Schools are working on videos to share with families reviewing new protocols, and showing the students what to expect at the schools.

Item 4. Community Comments

None

Item 5. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 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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