



**MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
October 19, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.
MINUTES**

Board of Education Goal:

Montville graduates will possess the skills and dispositions to navigate complex tasks. Our graduates are communicators, information consumers, problem solvers, and independent learners. They exhibit empathy, perseverance, inclusivity and self-awareness.

Library Media Center

Item 1. Call to order/ Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair Sandra Berardy called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Board members attending were: Bob Mitchell, James Wood, Monica Pomazon, Carol Burgess, Wills Pike, Dana Ladyga Joe Aquitante, and Sheelagh Lapinski.

Also participating were: Superintendent of Schools Laurie Pallin, Assistant Superintendent Dianne Vumback, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Jennifer LeMay, Business Manager Kathy Lamoureux, Administrators Paula LaChance, Principals M.J. Dix, David Gollsneider, Heather Sangermano, and Assistant Principal Rob Alves.

Board Chair Sandra Berardy asked for a motion to move item 5D to the end of the meeting.

Motion: The Board moved to move item 5D to the end of the meeting

Moved by: Wills Pike

Seconded by: Bob Mitchell

Vote: Carried (8-0) * The full Board was not in attendance for this vote

Item 2. Presentations

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

A) Teacher of the Year recognition – *Montville's 2022 Teacher of the Year Patti Miceli performed her original song and was recognized by The Board for becoming a semi-finalist for State of Connecticut Teacher of the Year.*

B) Montville Marvels; Principal M.J. Dix, Principal David Gollsneider and Principal Sangermano presented the following Marvels:

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

Leonard J. Tyl Middle School: For their work with the 50 Yard Challenge; Joseph Nenna and Calvin LaFrance.

For her writing success; Lily Mahonen.

Palmer Building: For his successful participation in an internship, being a respectful member of the school community and his willingness to try things outside of his comfort zone; Christian Cyr.

Christian was unable to attend.

For keeping the school running as smoothly as possible, anticipating the needs of staff and students before they even realize what they need; Nicole Caskey.

Montville High School: For her dedication in supporting her peers by tutoring throughout the school year and over the summer; Linda Ru.

C) Presentation; Spring 2021 state assessment data.

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Dianne Vumback shared the Spring 2021 Student assessment data.

Board Chair: Did you indicate that you had students take the assessments both remotely and in-person? Dianne: Yes, some students took the assessments remotely while being monitored by a teacher.

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

Karen Duhamel, One Fox Hollow Drive Oakdale, my son Brandon plays on the tennis team. I am asking you to support the funding of the rehabilitation of the tennis courts. The courts are not only an eye sore but a poor representation of what Montville is all about. Last year parents were responsible for providing transportation to practice and were bussed for meets. Every court at Camp Oakdale has cracks both sealed and unsealed.

Asking The Board to look at the bigger picture students are leaving Montville, let's provide our students with the best facilities possible.

Item 3. Letters and Communications

The Board received a letter from Rocky Stone regarding the tennis courts, the Board will address this letter later in the meeting.

Item 4. Approval of the consent Calendar

Motion: To approve the consent calendar as presented.

Moved by: Joe Aquitante
Seconded by: Monica Pomazon
Vote: Carried (9-0)

a. Budget Update: Kathy Lamoureux

Since the last Board meeting we have been notified by Teamsters that they completed their audit for the period of January 2016 through December 2020 for the health insurance and no exceptions were identified.

I have been working on projecting the salaries and health insurance accounts however more trending is necessary in order to have reliable numbers. As of 9/30/2021, there have only been 22 days of the 181 school year, or 13% completed which would not give dependable numbers especially when there are vacancies still being advertised. However, as previously reported there continues to be additional positions and hours that were not budgeted for to address staffing needs which have arisen due to issues that have surfaced since the start of the school year. Additionally the permanent substitute teacher's rates were modified as of October 1, 2021. The rate changed from \$110 to a rate of pay based directly on the level of education for the employee. The rates are \$150 for valid Ct teaching certificate, \$140 for bachelor's and beyond college degree and \$110 for high school/associates degree needing a state of Connecticut waiver per day. Since the start of the school year, the District has been unable to cover for certified staff absences and needed to increase the rate to keep us competitive with surrounding districts.

We are unable to project out the regular education tuition because LEARN and Ledyard VO-AG have not given us the enrollment as of 10/1/2021. The special needs outplacements and transportation are still trending with a shortfall. We will continue to monitor and advise the Board with significant changes. We are exploring other transportation vendors to see if we can reduce future costs in transportation and have consolidated a couple of the runs.

Nic and Steve are working with CT Communication to start the installation process for the new phone system. Additionally Nic is scheduling the wireless for the three elementary schools and Palmer Academy that is partially funded with E-Rate.

Monica – Did we see an increase in the number of substitutes applying for the Permanent Substitute positions? Laurie – Yes, we were able to hire two additional Permanent Substitutes as a result of this change in the rate of pay.

Item 5. New Business

- a. Consideration and action to approve the submission of the application for the 2021 CABA Board Recognition Award.

Motion: To approve the submission of the application for the 2021 CABA Board Recognition Award.

Moved by: Bob Mitchell
Seconded by: Joe Aquitane
Vote: Carried (9-0)

The district safety and security committee met yesterday to discuss the revised plan. The only changes which have been made in the plan involved changes in the personnel with responsibilities in different areas based upon our hiring. We discussed upcoming work for this year to include: additional of cybersecurity to the plan, convening of table top exercises to role play responses to specific scenarios which Mike Collins offered to coordinate with Lt Radford and Paul Barnes, explore use of a common sound throughout the district to use to signify an emergency lockdown, and use of the security grant funds if our application is approved.

- b. Consideration and action to approve the security plan for annual submission to the state

Motion: The Board moved to approve the security plan for submission to the state.

Moved by: Wills Pike
Seconded by: Sheelagh Lapinski
Vote: Carried (9-0)

- c. Discussion of Capital request to rehabilitate tennis courts in FY 2022-2023

The Board capital plan submitted to the town last spring as part of our budget process for FY22 includes a capital request for rehabilitation of the tennis courts in the 2022-2023 year. This includes filling cracks, sanding courts, fabric application, leveling and resurfacing, painting and net post reinstallation, tree removal and fencing. The estimated cost is about \$185,000. Replacement of tennis courts would cost about \$800,000

In the 2021-2022 school year, we included higher priority items that affected the health, safety, and education of larger community (Tyl roof - \$900,000; Parking lot repairs - \$330,000; Technology upgrade - \$600,000)

At this time the courts are closed completely as they are too dangerous to use.

At our meeting to discuss our capital requests, we explained that we are currently using courts at Camp Oakdale (and I understand that the town just approved funds to restore 4 courts there).

A question for the town to consider is if the town wants to pay for courts at both Camp Oakdale and MHS or if it is more cost effective to have courts at only one location.

Boys Tennis participation –

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
12	13	10	11	7	12	10	14
<i>Girls</i>							
21	25	21	26	20	19	26	24

Bob Mitchell- How long does the refurbishment buy us? We estimate five years. Wills: The tennis courts have been in bad shape since my kids were I school. This year the tow did not fund our capital requests. This year the district funded both the roof project and the IT infrastructure project. I think the Board and the Town should discuss this project together. The Town has been fairly generous recently but we have to think about our priorities, if we can work on an agreement for Camp Oakdale that would be great if not then we will have to look at the project. Carol- I am concerned about families having to transport their students in the middle of the work day. We have done a pretty good job of supporting other sports, tennis can become a lifelong sport unlike many of the other sports offered. Tennis brings a different value. I would support finding a way to replace the courts on our property. Jim- I think we need to have Steve do another assessment, perhaps reducing the number of courts. Maybe a combination of Town Council and Board of Ed putting our resources into one location. Dana- The courts have never been in good shape and all sports should be treated equally and we should try to keep the students on campus. Jim- When the renovations were done the courts were usable, but the roots of the trees have really wreaked havoc. Wills – Parents should not have to transport the students to Camp Oakdale.

6. Information Items

None

7. Committee and Liaison reports:

- a. Policy – *Jim Wood, the Policy Committee did not meet this evening.*
- b. Education Evaluation – *Bob Mitchell – No Meeting*
- c. Communications Committee – *Monica Pomazon – No Meeting*
- d. Montville Education Foundation – *Laurie, they met and are working on the grant applications for the next round, offering \$10,000 grants for the next cycle*
- e. LEARN – *Bob; LEARN is facing the same challenges finding substitutes*
- f. CABE/NSBA – *Bob- Convention is coming up on November 13th, registration has been closed.*
- g. Montville Youth Services Bureau – *Sheelagh, \$5000 was allocated to the tutoring room, drug take back day will be on the 23rd, Basket Raffle tickets will be sold through November*
- h. Student Board Representatives – *Had athletic competitions and were unable to attend.*

Junior Class Representative; Matthew Malbourn

One of the events we had during the break of the meetings was the Back-to-School Night. Parents had the opportunity to meet teachers, watch presentations on both NCAA and financial aid advice, and enjoy treats provided by the culinary department (which I found to be amazing). We students also had spirit week, which turned out a huge success for all classes. Participation numbers were high, and per usual, the seniors were the class with the most spirit that week! Some of the themes included a flannel day and a tourist day!

Student government has finalized the idea for a fall festival, which will take place November 6th, from 1pm-4pm. Posters have been handmade and placed around the school to advertise. Activities such as painting and an obstacle course will be there, as well as food and drinks provided by food trucks and the culinary department. Student government has also begun selling Montville face masks during lunch waves.

The junior class council has begun their first fundraiser of the year to raise money for our senior year activities, such as our senior trip and our senior prom. This fundraiser is a Heritage Candles fundraiser which will close on October 27. Alongside the candle fundraiser, the council is selling tickets to Jim Spinnato, a hypnotist that will come to Montville High School on November 3rd. Tickets are being sold for \$10 during lunch waves and in the main office, and tickets at the door are \$12. Show starts at 6! For more information, you can refer to the many yellow posters in the main foyer.

*The Montville Drama Department is currently in production week, the reason for my absence, for their play *The Servant of Two Masters!* The dept. has been working long and hard for the past month and a half, and is excited for the shows on this Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 7pm. Tickets for the show are sold at the door, and I hope to see you there!*

The Music Department is working in collaboration with Victor Valez, a Puerto Rican bomba musician. This project involves every ensemble in the department not only learning one of his pieces, but also collaborating with Valez to arrange the song. This project will be performed at the first concert of the year on December 22nd. Pep-band is back up and running at our home football games. Finally, both the jazz band and the A Capella choir are back up and running after school.

Senior Class Representative; Gigi Johnston – *Was unable to attend the meeting*

- i. Board Chair remarks – *This is the final meeting for many of us, it has been a difficult couple of years, and I want to thank you all for your service.*

Item 8. Superintendent's Report

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

There continues to be a lot of movement within the special education department in terms of students and para staff. We have received 5 new referrals just in the month of October at the secondary level with an additional 9 new students with Service Plans at ST Bernard's the start of the year with Service plans.

At the elementary level we have had 14 referral at the preschool level and an additional 10 across the district in K-5. Oakdale – 5 Mohegan – 4 Murphy – 1

This is important to note because even if we do not agree with the referral we still need to go to PPT and often to evaluations which takes up a great amount of our staff's time.

Additionally we are at a cross roads with several more students in need of a clinical day placement. I held a PPT today and have one more on Friday where the recommendation will be OOD. We also have two in district that we are moving from their home schools to programs in other schools. A majority of our PPTs are still held remotely however we are receiving an increase of request for in person PPT's.

The para situation continues to be difficult. We are training people and they are leaving for full time jobs. I held a training on Oct 8th and three of the paras that participated have since left for full time employment so it is extremely difficult to compete with that these days.

During the October 8th PD day we held an ABA and DTI training for several teachers and para's to support our students with significant needs. Handle with Care Training was also provided to paras and staff that were either new to the district or in need of a refresher.

On a positive note, as you know I am continuously assessing whether I can bring students back to district and will be holding a PPT next week to do just that for a 9th grade student. I will continue to monitor others in the same manner.

- b. Report from the Assistant Superintendent – Dianne Vumback

DESSA/EJI Committee

We have really begun our work on DESSA, the social emotional universal screener. Our primary goal right now is to support our elementary staff in the screening process and then move on to other levels.

Our goal is to gather benchmark data so that we can support students with their social-emotional needs at the classroom level and measure the growth at the midyear data collection. We have an amazing district team that has been working diligently on organizing an effective rollout process.

In addition they have been meeting with me to discuss Equity, Justice and Inclusion. We are just beginning this work and in the process of identifying and determining the data we need to explore.

Vaccination Clinic

We had our last schedule vaccination clinic on October 8th. With each clinic, numbers declined of those opting to get vaccinated. This is not a surprise at this point.

Overall the collaboration with UNCAS Health and Griffin Hospital was awesome and many community members reached out letting us know they appreciated the convenience of this option for them.

MYSB

Barbara Lockhart at MYSB has been such a great resource for us. They have been sharing some wonderful tools for us to utilize with our staff.

As October is National Anti-bullying Month, they shared a film called “The Upstanders” and other resources that encourages others to stand up, speak out and support those that are bullied. Previously they shared resources on anxiety. Our social workers use these tools as they work with students in need.

On October 8th we had about 18 certified teachers, social workers and a few administrators get QPR training with MYSB. This is suicide prevention training designed to help empower individuals in their communities.

- c. Report from the Superintendent – Laurie Pallin

Masks – Executive order requires masks in school through February. Unless that order is changed, we must follow state requirements.

COVID Cases are slowing down, 7 cases last week with an additional 16 people quarantined.

***Staff vaccination requirement** – We have 48 employees who have not been vaccinated. They are submitting weekly test results and Jen LeMay has done a fantastic job working with the employees and their supervisors to ensure we comply with the vaccination or testing requirement. We have had several staff members absent without pay while waiting for them to verify testing and test results.*

***Oneness Lab** work with our administrators' team on the Empathy Gap – How do we build empathy in our community?*

***Response to citizens' comments at last meeting** - We are planning to run three sports at Tyl this year, one for each season. We will run cross country, basketball, and track. These three sports were budgeted for last year as well however, due to COVID, we did not run middle school indoor basketball. Based upon current CIAC guidelines, I am hopeful we will have a middle school basketball season this year. We also run a middle school intramural program which is just about to begin.*

Response to parent who spoke at the September Board Meeting: We share your belief that building strong relationships and taking time for students' social and emotional learning and wellness is critical. We do have a district-wide program, RULER, which we are currently phasing into use along with a number of other supports. Specifically at Tyl, students also have all selected a high interest enrichment block of their choice and these blocks meet every other day. They capitalize on a shared interest in a non-academic activity as a way to engage students in a group, build key dispositions, and build relationships. Mrs. Dix sought and received a grant to purchase materials for these activities and every teacher is presenting an activity of personal interest to them. This is really important because it reaches every student, whether they also participate in sports or not.

Sandra Berardy – I have received several phone calls from parents concerned with disruptive behaviors at the schools. Please refer these calls to the Principals of the appropriate school to ensure these concerns follow the appropriate chain of command. Thank you to the Administrators, we know it has not been easy lately.

*Wills – What is your recommendation to The Board to stop this loss of paraprofessional's?
Laurie – It is not as simple as adding additional full time para's to the budget. I am already very concerned about next year's budget. I think creating more fulltime positions is the only solution, but balancing that need with the budget increase is a tricky Process.*

Item 9. Citizen's Comments

Tracy Zurowski – Special needs teacher at Murphy, the para shortage is affecting my job, and other staff as well. We depend on developing relationships within the program. It

takes special people to work with these challenging behaviors.

Mikowski, 46 Crag Place, I have three students. I am a special education teacher, my district has also been working to staff our programs. LEARN is offering bonuses for showing up throughout the year. I would like to thank the district for giving the teachers a half day tomorrow to figure out how to build a community.

Item 10. Future Agenda Items

None

5d. Discussion of a confidential student matter

Motion: The Board moved to enter executive session to discuss a confidential student matter inviting Laurie Pallin and Dianne Vumback to join them at 7:16

Moved by: Bob Mitchell
Seconded by: Joe Aquitante
Vote: Carried (9-0)

Motion: The Board moved to exit executive session with no votes taken.

Moved by: Wills Pike
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell
Vote: Carried (9-0)

Item 11. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved by: Monica Pomazon
Seconded by: Jim Wood
Vote: Carried (9-0)

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

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

Monica Pomazon, Secretary
Montville Board of Education