



## **MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**October 10, 2023 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 / Moment of Silence – 6:00 P.M.**

Board Chair Wills Pike called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

*Wills explained - As a reminder to the Board, we are conducting a trial filming of this Board meeting for possible posting on the district website according to the Board's strategic plan. Please speak loudly so that you can be heard by all in the room and picked up by the camera microphone.*

Board members attending were: James Wood, Lilyana Sherbanee, Sheelagh Lapinski, Timothy Shanahan, Tina Grove and Lisa Terry. Board Members Carol Burgess and Bob Mitchell were absent.

Also participating were: Superintendent Laurie Pallin, Assistant Superintendent Dianne Vumback, Recording Secretary Pamela Rodgers, Nicholas Savoie and administrators Paula LaChance, Rob Alves, Greg Gwudz, Jessica Lilienthal, William Klinefelter, Jill Mazzalupo, David Gollsneider, and Liz Dumond. Town Council Liaison Colleen Rix was absent.

#### **Item 2. Alterations to the agenda**

*None.*

**Item 3. Presentations**

- a. Montville Marvels: Principals Will Klinefelter, Liz Dumond, and Jill Mazzalupo presented the Montville Marvels.

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

Mohegan Elementary School - For being a driving force behind social emotional learning and awareness at Mohegan: Liz Bryer

Murphy Elementary School – For always being kind and respectful to peers and a role model for others: Riley Evans.

Oakdale Elementary School – For making his classmates feel included and going out of his way for friends: Kolton Meikle.

For planning and creating a mural for the atrium at Oakdale School: Jesse Rivera, Amy Joseph, Olivia Silva and Charles Brazee.

- b. CABE Presentation - Jody Goeler: Impacts of new state legislation on policy and budget
- Training for new BOE members
  - BOE meetings must post agenda and materials 24 hours prior for public review
  - Indoor Air Quality HVAC compliance
  - Remote Online Learning
  - Substitute Teacher qualifications
  - Kindergarten enrollment age
  - Special Education age for completion of school year
  - Impact on student integrity. What is AI?
  - Teacher and Superintendent evaluations
  - School climate policy
  - Personal Finance ½ credit for graduation

**Item 4. Citizens' Comments (regarding agenda items only)**

*None.*

*Wills explained -The Board welcomes public comments. When you speak, please clearly state your first and last name and your address so that we can reach out to you after the Board meeting. Please try to limit your comments to*

*3 minutes. The Board's protocol is that they do not respond to citizen's comments at the meeting. They do however, listen carefully and follow up after the meeting as appropriate. Your comments may lead to further dialogue at a future Board or sub- committee meeting or a follow-up phone call from a district administrator for more information.*

**Item 5. Letters and Communications**

*E-mail from Jas Ribbon regarding Oakdale traffic pattern will be discussed later in the agenda.*

*E-mail from Erika Jones regarding after school pick up – resolved.*

**Item 6. Approval of the consent Calendar**

- a. Budget Update: Kathy Lamoureux – postponed until next meeting

Motion: To approve the consent calendar as presented.

Moved by: Tim Shanahan  
Seconded by: James Wood  
Vote: Carried (7-0)

**Item 7. New Business**

- a. Consideration and action to send a member to the CABA Delegate Assembly on November 16, 2023

Motion: To send Carol Burgess as a representative to the CABA Delegate assembly.

Moved by: Tim Shanahan  
Seconded by: James Wood  
Vote: Carried (7-0)

- b. Review and possible approval of revisions to Policy 5145.53 Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth

*Laurie explained -Based upon new legislation in the state's antidiscrimination statutes that replaces the old definition for "sexual orientation" with a new one.*

- *Adds a definition for sexual orientation as a “person’s identity in relation to the gender or genders to which they are romantically, emotionally, or sexually attracted, including any identity that a person may have previously expressed or is perceived by another to hold.”*

Motion: To approve the revisions to Policy 5145.53 Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth

Moved by: James Wood  
Seconded by: Wills Pike  
Vote: Carried (7-0)

c. Review and possible approval of revisions to Policy 5112 Ages of Attendance

*Laurie explained - Reflects changes in legislation:*

- *At age 18 student can withdraw from school without enrolling in any other program*
- *At age 17, with parent or guardian permission, student can withdraw from school but must enroll in adult education (was the age you could withdraw without obligation to attend a public-school program)*
- *Under age 17 a student can request permission to attend adult education if they are a parent (was only a student who was a mother)*

Motion: To approve the revisions to Policy 5112 Ages of Attendance

Moved by: Tim Shanahan  
Seconded by: Lisa Terry  
Vote: Carried (7-0)

d. Review and possible approval of revisions to Policy 6159 Instruction, Individualized Education Program/Special Education Program

*Laurie explained - Reflects the change in age through which the district is required to provide transition services to special education students to state the end of the school year during which the student reaches 22 (changed from the date on which the student turns 22).*

Motion: To approve the revisions to Policy 6159 Instruction, Individualized Education Program/Special Education Program

Moved by: Tim Shanahan  
Seconded by: Lisa Terry  
Vote: Carried (7-0)

- e. Consideration and action to approve the District All Hazards Safety and Security Plan for annual submission to the state

*Laurie explained - This confidential plan is reviewed annually and updated as needed based upon the DESSP template provided and changes in district. The changes made to the plan for the November submission include revision of names, roles, and contact information to reflect current school and town staffing, additional of the emergency athletic protocols which are part of the MHS Athletic Manual and used by all coaches, and revision of the emergency protocols for special education students based upon changes in the DESSP template.*

Motion: To approve the District All Hazards Safety and Security Plan for annual submission to the state

Moved by: Lisa Terry  
Seconded by: Lilyanna Sherbanee  
Vote: Carried (7-0)

- f. Discussion regarding Oakdale parking lot changes

*Laurie explained - During the pandemic, the entrance to Oakdale from Indiana was changed from one way to two-way traffic to facilitate parent drop off and pick up of students. We later revised the traffic pattern so that parents drop off and pick up their children at two locations in front and in back of the school which have parents enter from Indiana Circle and exit from Maryland Rd. We have been discussing reverting the traffic pattern back to fully one-way traffic for a while. We have not observed safety concerns, but there is no need for the two-way traffic at the Indiana end of the Oakdale entrance. We are in the process of repainting and have ordered signs. Once the signs come in, Jill will communicate the change.*

- g. Consideration and action to approve the 2024 Board of Education Policy, E&E and Communications Committee meeting dates as presented

Motion: To approve the 2024 Board of Education Policy, E&E and Communications Committee meeting dates as presented

Moved by: Lisa Terry  
Seconded by: Tina Grove  
Vote: Carried (7-0)

h. Review of NESDEC enrollment projections

*Laurie explained - We have not had NESDEC conduct a formal enrollment study for several years, but a professional enrollment study is a requirement in the School Construction Grant application for the Tyl roof, so we commissioned an updated study. The study shows the slight increase in overall enrollment which we have experienced each year for the past three years and projects an increase of 20 students next year. Over the next 5 years, enrollment continues to look steady with overall increase of 8 students from the current enrollment. In 2034, the enrollment is projected to be exactly what it is this year (1964 students in district K-12 schools).*

*This enrollment study does NOT reflect the new legislation regarding entry age for kindergarten which will reduce the K enrollment for one year only and increase pK enrollment. Dianne and I are currently working with elementary principals to look at enrollment projections and changes to K numbers. We plan to convene a committee of elementary administrators, staff, and parents to discuss the best way to staff our elementary schools and would welcome Board representation.*

**Item 8. Old Business**

a. Para Staffing

*Laurie explained - Attraction and retention of paras continues to be an issue for the district, and at our last meeting you asked that I provide a report regarding para staffing. Since the summer, principals have collected data on our retention of paras for the 2023-2024 school year. Twenty paras resigned over the summer or this fall - 7 at Oakdale, 7 at Mohegan, 3 at Murphy, 2 at Tyl and 1 at MHS. Thirteen of those resigning cited the need for full-time employment as their reason for resigning. We are currently short 19 paras – 7 at MHS, 5 at Oakdale, 3 at Mohegan, 4 at Tyl. Paras are working over their allotted hours to help fill these vacancies. Increasing the number of full-time positions varies in cost to the district based upon the insurance coverage the para needs.*

b. Update on Tennis Court Project

*Laurie explained -Work has begun on the tennis courts. A protective construction fence has been installed and demolition is underway. They will be bringing in the reclaiming machine on Friday. We are very pleased that the project is finally moving forward*

c. Update on communications with the Town Council regarding results of the district air conditioning study.

*There is a meeting of the Town Council tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m. with the following agenda items:*

*THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES to approve and adopt the Bond Resolution entitled “Resolution Authorizing An Appropriation Of \$15,500,000 For The Montville Schools Air Conditioning Project And The Financing of Said Appropriation By The Issuance Of General Obligation Bonds Of The Town And Notes In Anticipation Of Such Bonds In An Amount Not To Exceed [TBD – \$15,000,000/\$6,000,000] Therefor,” a copy of which resolution is attached hereto as Exhibit A; and to waive the reading of the entire resolution and to incorporate its full text into the minutes of the meeting. The Town Council will decide at the meeting whether to authorize bonds in the amount of \$15,500,000 or \$6,000,000. (Councilor McNally) e. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES to approve and adopt the Referendum Resolution entitled “Resolution Establishing A Date For A Referendum And The Preparation of Explanatory Text Related To (Resolution Authorizing An Appropriation Of \$15,500,000 For The Montville Schools Air Conditioning Project And The Financing of Said Appropriation By The Issuance Of General Obligation Bonds Of The Town And Notes In Anticipation Of Such Bonds In An Amount Not To Exceed [TBD – \$15,000,000/\$6,000,000] Therefor,” a copy of which resolution is attached hereto as Exhibit B; and to waive the reading of the entire resolution and to incorporate its full text into the minutes of the meeting. The Town Council will decide at the meeting whether to authorize bonds in the amount of \$15,500,000 or \$6,000,000. (Councilor McNally)*

*Steve, Dianne, and I and the engineer who completed the engineering study will attend this meeting.*

**Item 9. Committee and Liaison Reports:**

- a. Policy – James Wood – we reviewed the draft revised MOU with the Montville PD for SRO’s in the schools and revisions to policy 5142.4 to comply with recent changes to legislation
- b. Education Evaluation – no meeting
- c. Communications Committee- Laurie Pallin - The committee met on Oct. 5 to discuss the role of the Board rep. however only Adam was able to attend the meeting. We had a brief discussion and agreed to continue the dialog at our next meeting.
- d. Montville Education Foundation – Laurie- October grants are due on Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>.
- e. LEARN - Bob Mitchell -absent
- f. CABE/NSBA Carol Burgess -absent
- g. Montville Youth Services Bureau – no meeting
- h. Student Board Representatives- see below
- i. Principals’ Comments –

*Rob Alves – MHS - (2) of our sports teams doing very well, Volleyball and Boys Soccer are second in their division in the state.*

*Greg Gwudz- TYL – Veteran’s breakfast on November 9<sup>th</sup>.*

*Jill Mazzalupo OAK – Attended round table with other Elementary Principals, very informative.*

*Liz Dumond –Schools newsletter has new name the “Charlie Chatter.”*

**Senior Class Representative: Alexa Beams –absent**

**Junior Class Representative: Adam Gallagher**

*Last week I met with the communications committee to discuss my role. More specifically, what I wanted it to be. I want to be a voice for the student body, but I want to be able to reflect the entire student body, not just me or my friends' personal interests. I will make it a priority to gather opinions from students from different grade levels as well as teachers. I also don't want to throw every problem I encounter at you, I will try my best to cooperate with administrators before coming to you all with problems. I will also make an effort to look at agendas ahead of time to identify any issues I feel are especially important. Likewise, if there are issues you feel you would like a student's opinion on, don't hesitate to shoot me an email and I will try my best to make time to attend. I look forward to getting a bit more involved. I am excited to see the tennis courts are getting worked on. I can personally attest to the joy me and the other tennis team members felt when we saw the construction beginning last week. After reading the document on non-conforming gender identities, I can say I appreciate the effort to provide safety to transgender and non-conforming gender identities. I also think the addition of the sexual orientation definition is a very smart decision.*

*That's all I have for now, and thank you for listening.*

**Item 10. Information Items**

Future Dates

- Oct. 11 – Town Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Oct. 17 – MEA Negotiations Meeting, 4:45
- Oct. 19 – MEA Negotiations Meeting, 4:45
- Nov. 14 – Regular Board Meetings
- Nov. 17, 18 – CABE/CAPSS Convention

**Item 11. Report on District Operating Plan (Vision, Goals, and Strategies)**

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



*I have made several visits to our special programs throughout the district and they are all settling in nicely with programming for each individual student.*

*The Transition Academy has all their job sites up and running with two new sites; one at Goodwill and the other at Mohegan Landscaping.*

*They are working on personal finance and self-advocacy skills. For finance they are using weekly budgets and setting short- and long-term goals. Once a month they have a “wants” day where they can choose an activity in the community to enjoy while working on their interpersonal and community skills. For self-advocacy this month, they have been working on receiving feedback through creating skits about proper and improper ways to receive feedback. Students are enjoying coming up with what not to do.*

*There will be a DDS parent night on November 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 organized by our MHS special needs teacher Brian Burns. This event will provide MHS, Tyl and the TA families important information for applying and receiving services through the department of disabilities services. This is a lengthy and often complicated process so I am grateful to Brian for putting this together.*

- b. Report from the Assistant Superintendent – Dianne Vumback

***Attendance***

*We are on day 27 of the school year. Our attendance numbers are the best they have been in quite some time. Overall, from a district perspective, we are at 10% chronically absent – which is just under 3 days absent. We do have some students with significant medical conditions that required them to be out of school for an extended period of time. We have also had several absences due to vacations. Our social workers will work with families to help them overcome obstacles and troubleshoot with them to help get students to school.*

***Social Worker Update***

*In working with the social workers, I asked them a few questions and I thought I would share their responses with you. As a rough estimate, close to 20% of students in the schools seek some form of counseling/support. The needs range from executive functioning/organization support to support with anxiety or a peer buddy lunch group to promote specific social emotional and behavioral goals for a small group of students.*

- 1.) *What has taken up the most of your time since the beginning of the school year?*

- *Crisis intervention (including risk assessments)*
- *Interpersonal conflicts/negative peer relations*
- *Depressive feelings*
- *Counseling services required through IEP/504*

- 2.) *What are the primary concerns you are seeing?*
- *Relational aggression/negative peer relationships*
  - *Anxiety, depression – particularly around home discord*
  - *Nonchalant conversations about substance use*
  - *Impulsivity, emotional dysregulation*

*I did ask them for some positive things they experienced – and as you can imagine, it was all about the relationships - with students, families, staff and the community.*

- *It is the story of a student sharing their success around a tough goal dealing with substance use.*
- *Or the excitement staff shares that they have “their very own social worker ALL five days”*
- *and the parent that reaches out first to get advice and support before there was an issue, committed to being proactive to ensure their child has a successful school year.*
- *Or, as our brand new social worker shared – “I have had a very welcoming experience and I am happy to be part of the Montville community”.*

*We are grateful to have a dedicated social worker in each building now and they are all working to continue to build rapport with the students and families and assist in mitigating the risks around mental health.*

c. Report from the Superintendent – Laurie Pallin

*Capital plan work – Steve is currently investigating costs for replacement of the underground fuel tanks at the bus garage and Palmer which need to be replaced in 2027 when they are 30 years old. These tanks were installed in 1997. We are also conducting a study of our buildings’ roofs to get a sense of future work which needs to be done on the roofs and the timing of that work. The roofs at Oakdale, Murphy, Mohegan and part of MHS were installed in 1998. Work has been done on portions of the roofs since that time but the parts that were not replaced need to be identified and the costs for replacement needs to be determined. We still need to budget for more expensive engineering designs before any projects could go forward. Finally, we expect to receive our new maintenance van within the next two weeks.*

*The School Construction Grant for the Tyl Roof project has been resubmitted for the October review process. We corrected the two deficiencies which were brought to our attention (wording of a town motion and the need for a professional enrollment study).*

*Smart Board installation will be completed by the end of this week. The installation has gone extremely smoothly thanks to Nic's daily efforts to monitor their work, move equipment, and work with principals to coordinate access to classrooms. We are very excited to have them!*

*We are currently working on our federal entitlement grant application which support EL student, provides salaries for coaches and teachers, and help to fund our science curriculum at Tyl.*

*I attended a meeting by the state department regarding our reading waiver application. They were to schedule meetings with each district to review their application and ask any questions before making decisions. I believe those meetings are supposed to take place in October and districts should begin to hear about their applications in Nov. In the meantime our new ELA coach, Mary Aledia, has been working side-by-side with Suzanne LoPresto to continue curriculum work and provide support to teachers.*

**Item 12. Citizen's Comments**

*None.*

**Item 13. Board Chair Remarks**

*Wills – On behalf of the Board, I'd like to thank Jim Woods for 24 years of service to the Board...Jim has helped to guide the district through multiple renovation projects, and he has been instrumental in leading the policy committee through complete revision of district policy, providing historical context to the Board's decision-making process, and acting as a consistent advocate for ensuring an excellent education and focus on the well-being of children in Montville. In recognition of your long-term exemplary service, we would like to present you with our new wolf logo ball cap!*

*Sheelagh Lapinski is also not seeking a seat on the Board in the upcoming elections. Sheelagh, we wish you the best in your future service to the town of Montville and thank you for your contributions to the Board of Education over the past four years.*

**Item 14. Future Agenda Items**

*None.*

**Item 15. Adjournment**

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved by: Lisa Terry  
Seconded by: Tina Grove  
Vote: Carried (7-0)

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Wills Pike, Chair  
Montville Board of Education

Bob Mitchell, Secretary  
Montville Board of Education

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_