



MONTVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION

September 15, 2026

6:00 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING

Montville High School, Library Media Center

MINUTES

IN ATTENDANCE:

Wills Pike

Carol Burgess

Donna Funk

Timothy Shanahan

Robert Mitchell, Jr.

Tina Grove

Angela Sherbanee

Bonnie Bacon

ABSENT: Erika Striebel

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Dianne Vumback (Superintendent), Andrea Flynn, Deb Martin, Kristin Brewer, Kristine Roberge, Willie Quinones, David Gollsneider, Rob Alves, Ken Daniewicz, Amanda Brown, Liz Dumond, Will Klinefelter, Jill Mazzalupo, Jessica Lilienthal, Lorie Susi

Not in Attendance: Greg Gwudz

- I. Call to Order, Board Chair Carol Burgess
The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance / Moment of Silence
- III. Alterations to the Agenda: Chair Carol Burgess proposed the discussion surrounding recent ordinance passed by Town Council regarding the establishment of a permanent Building Committee be added to section XI as Item 4.

Motion to alter the agenda to include discussion of new Town ordinance made by Tim Shanahan, and seconded by Bob Mitchell. Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

- IV. Consent Agenda
 1. Board Minutes: June 16, 2026
June 15, 2026 (Special Meeting)
August 4, 2026
August 18, 2026
 2. Financial Reports: May 2026
June 2026

Motion by Tim Shanahan and seconded by Bob Mitchell to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. The Motion passed unanimously. (8-0).

- V. Communications
None

- VI. Public Comment –

Nicole Caskey of 30 Hunters Run, Oakdale requested on behalf of herself and staff at The Palmer Building, she be permitted to read a letter that was emailed to board members. Letter is

provided in Board Materials

VII. Student Representatives' Report – Charles D'Mitri and Emilyta MacKenzie were both in attendance.

D'Mitri Charles - Class of 2027

Oakdale Elementary

Oakdale had a very busy summer, with students from across the district attending summer school in the building. The HVAC project was also completed in time for the start of the school year. Students and staff were welcomed back with the PTO's annual Chalk the Walk event, which added some colorful and encouraging messages throughout the school.

Mohegan Elementary

Mohegan is off to a great start. They welcomed several new teachers, support staff, and paraeducators, and everyone has settled into the routines of the new school year. The custodial team did a great job preparing the building while working around the HVAC project. In August, staff also ran the Kindergarten Readiness Program, which gave approximately 15 incoming kindergarten students a chance to get comfortable in the school before the year began.

Murphy Elementary

Murphy has had a wonderful opening to the year. The maintenance teams did a great job getting the building ready, and our kindergarten students came in excited after a very well-attended Meet and Greet with their teachers. Our mascot, Charlie Rocker, helped welcome students and introduced them to our new SSO, Mark Hallbauer. The PTO also hosted a Welcome Back Family Picnic on August 28, giving families a chance to reconnect and enjoy some time together, including an opportunity to dunk the principal!

Tyl Middle School

Tyl has had a strong start to the school year. Sixth-grade and new student orientation on August 20 was extremely well attended. The first Advisory session covered attendance, bus expectations, and Chromebook expectations. Open House on September 8 was also very well attended. Fall athletics are underway, and nearly 40 students are participating in Cross Country.

Palmer School

Palmer has also had a terrific opening to the school year, with strong attendance and student engagement. They welcomed eight new students and two new staff members to the school community. Open House will be held on September 23. Three students are participating in fall sports at MHS, with one student on the boys' soccer team and two students on the cheerleading team.

Makenzie Emilyta - Class of 2028

Good evening,

I am Makenzie Emilyta, an 11th grade student at MHS. I currently participate in many extracurriculars including my class council as the president, FBLA, the Montville Leos, and many sports as the manager for soccer, a member of the unified basketball team, as well the basketball and lacrosse teams. I am very thankful for this opportunity to get to work with all of you for the next 2 years and help us students better connect with you all to make our school a better place.

To start off, MHS has been off to a great start these first few weeks of school. Starting off we had a very successful freshman orientation to get the year rolling. Each grade also started off the year with a way of the wolf assembly by Mr. Daniewicz reminding our students of the basic rules and expectations here at MHS. Many clubs have also begun meeting including student government, FBLA, class councils, etc. Specific to student government they have gotten a head start on planning an upcoming spirit week in October and have started discussing possible themes

for homecoming this year which will be taking place at Montville Highschool on Saturday October 10th.

Around the school there have been many improvements as well, including updates to our cafeteria with a new and improved look, better representing the wolf mascot with a more organized set up to lunch lines as well as a nice air conditioning system that students are seeming to enjoy with the persistent hot temperatures.

In the athletic department our fall sports have started off strong with Football starting the season with a big win 35-6 against Weston currently 1-0, Boys Soccer is 1-1, Girls Soccer is 2-0, Volleyball 1-2 and both the boys' and girls' cross-country teams are gearing up for their first meet today! The cross-country teams hosted their annual corn stalk fundraiser this past weekend and are now currently hosting a virtual raffle up until November 10th. Additionally, a new athletic leadership program is being implemented with its first meeting yesterday, its goal to help get students more involved in athletics and have more of a say as to what is going on within the department.

The transition back from summer break has been extremely smooth and will continue to be as everyone acclimates to the new school year.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

1. Opening of School report: Dr. Dianne Vumback - We had a wonderful opening of schools! As you know, we begin the school year with two PD days set to give teachers time to come back and prepare for the student's arrival in both their classrooms and in the professional development offered in their buildings and/or content or grade level. On the first day of school for students, Kristen, Andrea and I visited all the schools and it was brimming with excitement!

The buildings looked wonderful; the temperature was comfortable in most areas – definitely seeing the benefit of the HVAC system. Our facilities team that worked over the summer to prepare for the new school year did amazing work.

Bus routes, despite being short some drivers and creating slightly longer bus routes, are coming in close to typical time of 4:30 p.m. Theresa every year does a wonderful job scheduling and refining her practice. It was great seeing everyone back!

IT – The network switches purchased through capital funds have been successfully installed this summer at MHS, Tyl and Palmer.

Food Service – At the end of this meeting go check out the cafeteria! We have new paint / décor and we think you will love it. With no cost breakfast we have seen 500 more breakfasts served than this time last year and 200 more lunches! They are focusing on “scratch cooking” and working with Lathrop Farms, Sweet Acre Farms and Huntsbrook Farms to bring fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables to our schools - and it appears students are “eating it up”!

Montville Public Schools is the very first district to appear on the CTSDE website as “From research to practice” series called “Strategic School & District Moves” and it is all about Andrea's work with our coaches and teachers. They want to “show how districts across CT are applying this research and these tools to the classroom in order to maximize student engagement, achievement and growth”. Congratulations Andrea and to all teachers on this recognition!

Our official number of students beginning the school year: 1,723 students in our six buildings this year; 1,811 last year. At the elementary we lost roughly 23 students; Tyl lost over 80 students in the last two years (60 two years ago and 25 this year) and MHS lost 44 students this year. The Palmer School increased by 4 students.

2. Personnel Report – Resignations and Retirements, included in materials (38 resignations received since

June 2026 Board meeting)

Dr. Vumback reported: *We received 38 resignations and retirements since June! This included secretaries, permanent subs, bus drivers, paraeducators – including two full time paras, custodians, Monitors, IT, Behaviorists, Security and tutors.*

We also had six certified staff:

*Hope Toland, 6th grade Science;
Hannah Seddon, MOH Special Education;
Dean Fallas, MHS Math;
Rachel Berk, MOH School Psychologist and
MJ Dix, MOH parttime Art teacher.*

3. Special Education Review and Analysis: *Kristen Brewer- The number and rate of students with disabilities in CT is growing rapidly, while overall enrollment continues to decline. In the last 15 years, the percentage of students with disabilities in CT rose from 12.1% to over 19%, that is about 60%. That translates to over 26, 000 more students with disabilities today than we had in 2011, despite overall public-school enrollment falling over that time period. Montville is certainly over the 19% range for students with disabilities in our district. We are currently at 22% of students with disabilities.*

Special education costs are increasingly taking up a larger portion of budgets. I bring this up because Special Ed impacts Montville Schools because a larger share of Montville's budget is going toward special education. If Montville's percentage of students receiving special education services is around the statewide 19% figure, the district is likely experiencing greater-than-average pressure from special education costs. This matters because many special education costs don't decline proportionally when enrollment declines. Basically, this means more students with disabilities + more intensive needs → higher special education expenditures.

IX. Director of Finance & Operations Report

1. 2025-2026 Year to Date Financial Report – 98.15% spent, 1.85% remaining. \$405,211.50 allocation from the Town not spent.
2. 2026-2027 Year to Date Financial Report - \$48,504,616.00 Overall budget 11% spent, 30.67% unencumbered
3. HVAC Update
Willie Quinones provided comprehensive update on the work completed over the summer across the District, and remains ongoing.
4. Report on Non-Lapsing account SY 2025-2026 – Deb Martin
*Start of Year - \$705,851.66
Initial Approved Expenditures - \$644,445.00
Balance - \$61,407.00*

Deb Martin reported that the 24-25 Audit is underway, with an anticipated amount of \$346,466.00 returning to the budget. Board Member Wills Pike asked about who has admin rights to the program managing funds.

Martin explained that the Admin team at Central Office meet weekly to review Object Report. The Superintendent, IT and Business Manager maintain admin rights.

Pike requested that a dashboard be created that provides more user-friendly access to the state of financial affairs.

X. Committee Updates

1. Policy Committee – Wills Pike, Policy Chair; *reported that they reviewed policies which have been moved to the Board for a first read, Assistant Superintendent Flynn provided a brief overview of the proposed changes.*
2. Montville Education Foundation – *Carol Burgess Meeting held 9/14. No one was in attendance from the Board.*
2. LEARN – *Bob Mitchell: First meeting was held last week. Nothing to report, year is just getting started.*
3. CABE/NSBA – *Carol Burgess: Board of Directors meeting was held, no one in attendance from Board. Fall Convention is coming in November, held at Mystic Marriot. All Board Members welcome and encouraged to attend.*
4. Montville Youth Services Bureau – *Tim Shanahan: Met last week. September is Suicide Awareness Month, which was marked by a presentation of blue flags representing calls placed to 988.*

XI. Items for Discussion and possible Action

1. Approve the Agreement Between General Teamsters, Local No. 493. and Montville Board of Education as recommended by the negotiating committee.

Motion by Bob Mitchell and seconded by Wills Pike to approve the Agreement Between General Teamsters, Local No. 493. and Montville Board of Education. The Motion passed unanimously, (8-0).

2. The Palmer School: Air Conditioning and Repairs

Dr. Vumback: Reminded the Board that efforts continue to be made into making Palmer more comfortable. The portable large scale AC units were used in June, they did not work. Current options are: Window Units (Under \$10,000) Install a 225 Amp Breaker in the MPD, replace the 50 Amp feed with a 224 Amp feed from MPD to LLP1A panel. Provide and install new 20 Amp 120 V feeds from panel LLP1A to the window locations where the window units will go. The cost for this work is \$26,847.94. This decision can wait now that the weather is cooler, but should be part of the larger discussion about The Palmer School.

Willie Quinones presented proposed plan for air conditioning at The Palmer Building.

- *Window AC units: approximately \$10,000.00*
- *Electrical Work need to support units: \$27,000.00*

The Palmer Family has given their blessing for the necessary upgrades to the building.

The Board discussed the timing and potential ways to fund this work. The matter was tabled until the October 2026 meeting. In the interim, Quinones will reach out to vendor to ask for an extension on the quote provided.

Discussion of necessary repairs needed at The Palmer Building due to water damage.

Repairs are estimated to be around \$13,500.00.

Work on soffit needed to ensure safety, quote still pending.

Dr. Vumback stated that these are things that must be addressed and would come out of the operation budget.

3. The Palmer School: Relocation Options

Dr. Vumback: Reported on options including Portables (\$825k plus \$100K installation, delivery fees, \$21K for an ADA Ramp, \$6K for stairs, \$51,500 rough in of sprinkler system. Installation of utilities would be additional, AC/Heat Pump in each unit, removal if necessary is \$70k.

To Rent (monthly):

\$12,950 per unit

\$270 stairs

\$1,095 ramp

Utilities would be additional – AC/Heat Pump in each unit

I was asked by the Board to look into the Old Town Hall and / or the New Town Hall and I was told those two facilities could not be considered for the Palmer move. It would probably require conversations with Dennis Goderre, Director of Land Use and Development.

This would require architects to engage in a “programming and space needs assessment for The Palmer School”.

After much discussion, the Board determined that Chair Burgess will schedule a meeting with the Town’s Land Use committee. The Board also decided to create its own Building Use Committee to work on the relocation matter, and report back to the Superintendent on findings.

4. Discussion regarding recent Ordinance passed by the Town Council regarding the establishment of a permanent Building Committee

Chair Burgess shared that with this recent development, the Board needs to appoint a member to be a part of the Building Use committee. Said appointment is tabled until the October BOE meeting.

XII. Second reading and action on new, revised or repealed policies:

- a. New P5118.5 Student Use of the District’s Computer Systems and Internet Safety
- b. New P1009 Non-Discrimination
- c. Repeal P4118.51/4218.51 social media
Replace P4118.5/4218.5
- d. Repeal P6144.1 Exemption from Instruction
Replace P6144.1 Curricular Exemptions
- e. New P3542 Food Service
- f. Repeal P6161.1 Selection of Instructional Materials
Replace P6161.1 Library Collection Development and Maintenance

Motion by Tim Shanahan and seconded by Wills Pike to approve the Policies as presented. The Motion passed unanimously, (8-0).

First Reading on new, revised or repealed policies:

- g. Repeal P1112.6 Videotaping of Staff/Students by Non-District Parties
Replace P1112.6 Digital Recording and media of Students/Staff
- h. NEW P1112.7; 4118.61; 4218.61 Recording Meetings Without Consent
- i. Repeal P1312 Public Complaints
Replace P1312 Public Complaints
- j. Repeal P5112 Ages of Attendance
Replace P5112 Ages of Attendance/Admission/Placement
- k. Repeal P5141.4 Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Assault
Replace P5141.4 Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Assault
- l. Repeal P3171.1 Non-Lapsing Education Fund
Replace P3171.1 Non-Lapsing Education Fund
- m. Repeal P3542.43R Food Service Charging Policy
Replace P3542.43 Food Service Charging Policy
- n. Repeal P4111.1, 4211.1 Affirmative Action and 4111.3 Increasing Educator Diversity
Replace P4211 Recruitment and Selection

XIII. Board Information Items

Dr. Vumback shared that the cups presented to the members of the Board are part of the Wellness Initiative. All staff members across the district received one.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Angela Sherbanee and seconded by Bob Mitchell. The Motion passed unanimously. (8-0)
Meeting adjourned at 7:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Terni
Board Clerk