

School Board Minutes
Montpelier Public School District #14
214 7th Ave
Montpelier, ND 58472
March 12th, 2025

Board Members Present: Scott Harms, Kyle Throener, Abram Valenta, Tony Roorda, Wade Dally, and Dan Koep. Absent: Brock Naze.

Also Present: Superintendent Mr. Phil Leitner, Business Manager Amy Maurer, and Dean of Students Tyler Lee.

Visitor: Mrs. Fehr, Science Teacher. Presenting online, Valerie Jordan and Collette Middlestead from Ellendale.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Board members were given the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda: No changes.

Consent Agenda: Open enrollment agreements were reviewed. There were three open enrollment applications out of the district: 1) One student had recently moved into the district and will attend Jamestown 2) Two are currently attending in Montpelier and will be attending in Jamestown in 2025-2026. These do not require Montpelier Board approval. There is one agreement for a student to start attending in Montpelier immediately.

Valenta made a motion, seconded by Throener, to approve the consent agenda which included the following:

- a. Approval of the March bills and financial reports.
- b. Approval of minutes from the February 12th regular meeting, as presented.
- c. Approval of non-tuition/open enrollment agreement for one student into the school district.

The motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports: A Policy Committee meeting will be held on March 17th to consider amending the policy concerning teacher professional development days which was a request by the teachers in contract negotiations. The Curriculum Committee met with the primary discussion being about the purchase of a new math curriculum and a review of a timeline for other curriculums. The Teacher Negotiations Committee met three times, including twice with teachers.

Superintendent's Report: Supt. Leitner reported:

- There is a piano the district plans to sell.
- Amy Maurer has been assisting the Litchville Marion School while they work to hire a new business manager.
- The third quarter ends on March 13th. There are 42 days of school left.
- We have two of our regular substitute teachers who will not be able to finish the year due to family situations/new employment and this will cause a large strain on our sub pool. We had hoped to have them involved in filling our open Title para position, but they will not be able to.

- The superintendent will be visiting the legislature on March 27 and will attend the legislative social that evening.
- Budget preparation is continuing as we follow the legislature. We know that we will be running a very tight budget in 2025-26 as we look at the following pending/proposed legislation:
 - The state currently has a 2% increase to the per pupil payment for each year of the biennium
 - Initial reports are that our transportation funding may increase around \$20,000
 - 3% caps on political subdivision tax increases
 - Expansion of free/reduced lunch planned, but not free to all.
 - 3-year lookback provision for state aid.
 - Currently there is an overlay with the state budget through the legislative process and there will have to be some cuts to balance the budget.
- We currently have a need for additional Jamestown busing for the 2025-26 school year. We are 2 students away from being at capacity for the two buses we have and we will need to add a bus route, get a bigger bus, contract for services with a bus company, or deny prospective students transportation.
- Thank you to Mrs. Schrader, Mrs. Bear, and Mrs. Wilson for their work to help secure the over \$800,000 (over 4 years) ND Climbs grant to promote relationships and literacy.
- Demographics in our school have changed and based on preliminary data our free/reduced lunch percentage is around 35%. For many years in the recent past we have had a percentage of 50% or higher.
- A transportation committee meeting is needed.
- Current Open enrollments according to STARS: 47 students are open enrolled into the district and 19 students are open enrolled out of the district.

Dean of Students Report: Mr. Tyler Lee reported:

- Raffle tickets are being sold for \$20 each to fund the drone racing program and student scholarships.
- There was a “coin wars” competition which was won by the 8th grade who will select a charity to which to donate.
- The February Science Fair winners were Azrael, Zander, Warren, David, James, and Ella.
- Mr. Wright will be taking middle school students to Stem Day at UJ on March 3rd.
- CeCe Bear presented to Duck Unlimited.
- Mr. Ingerson will be taking students to All State Music in Bismarck the end of March.
- Regional science fair winners from Montpelier were Clara Harms and Ella Lien, with Isabella McIntyre to serve as alternate.
- Mr. Wright will be taking students to Techwars, a coding competition, at UJ the end of March.
- Prom is March 29th.
- Mr. Wright will be taking students to a math competition on April 9th.
- The state archery meet begins March 20th.
- There are two speech meets left.
- There is one student participating in track and one girl participating in 5-6 basketball.

Mill Levy: The possibility of putting a request for additional mill levy on the ballot in excess of that allowed without a vote was discussed. No motion was made.

VCSU Rural Partner School Benefit Program: Montpelier is participating in this program which allows two of our highly qualified teachers to offer dual credit courses to our students. Mrs. Bear will offer English I/ENGL 110-College Composition and English II/ ENGL120-College Composition II, and Ms. Harris (new to our district next year) will offer College Algebra/MATH 103 and Elementary Statistics/MATH 210. The teachers will be compensated \$35 per student per credit by VCSU. The student will pay VCSU for the college credits. The memorandum of understanding for the program was reviewed. Roorda made a motion to approve the memorandum, and Dally seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

ND Climbs Grant: Montpelier has been awarded a ND Climbs Grant of around \$800,000 over 4 years. The grant must be used specifically for implementing the BARR Educational Model and new literacy initiatives. The funds may be used only to supplement and not supplant current budgeted items. If the grant is accepted the district must fulfill the obligations of the grant for the entire 4 years. There were some initial concerns expressed by some Montpelier teachers about what would be involved with the program when the information was first presented to them but they were more on board once they got firsthand information from the teachers using the program in Ellendale. Valerie Jordan and Collette Middlestead from Ellendale joined the meeting virtually and shared details of how the BARR program is being implemented in their district and answered questions from the board. Roorda made a motion to approve acceptance of the grant if enough teachers are on board with the program. Valenta seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Superintendent Evaluation: The superintendent evaluation was reviewed and discussed. Roorda made a motion, seconded by Throener, to approve the superintendent evaluation. A roll call vote was taken with all members voting aye. Motion carried.

Negotiations: Roorda made a motion, seconded by Throener, to go into executive session to discuss teacher negotiations as permitted by NDCC Section 44-04-19.1(9). The motion carried unanimously. The board went into executive session at 7:55pm. The board returned to open session at 8:25 pm.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Scott Harms, Board President

Amy Maurer, Business Manager

Approval Date