

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

February 18, 2025

MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

BEECHWOOD SCHOOL - 1497 WOODACRES DRIVE, MOUNTAINSIDE, NJ 07092

DEERFIELD SCHOOL - 302 CENTRAL AVENUE, MOUNTAINSIDE, NJ 07092

Click here for [agenda attachments](#) available to the public, or please contact the Mountainside Board of Education
Office at (908) 232-3232 or peruse the same at the respective meeting.

Also, Mountainside Board of Education policies may be accessed via the district website.

I. Call to Order

A Regular Meeting of the Mountainside Board of Education of the Borough of Mountainside in the County of Union, New Jersey was called to order by Vivian Pupo, at 6:32 p.m.

II. Roll Call

At roll call, the following members were present:

Mr. Bill Dillon
Mr. Michael Goodwin
Dr. Dana Guidiciopietro
Mr. Jordan Hyman
Mrs. Vivian Pupo
Mrs. Candice Schiano
Mr. Carmine Venes

Also present were Janet Walling, Superintendent of Schools, and Dana Sullivan, Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary.

III. Executive Session - Resolution (Attachment #1)

Moved: Mr. Goodwin

Seconded: Dr. Guidiciopietro

RC: Dillon - yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidiciopietro - yes

Hyman - yes

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Venes - yes

WHEREAS, Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 (R.S. 10:4-13), permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting or portion of a meeting of this public body in circumstances; and **WHEREAS**, the Board must consider matter(s) involving the following:

- Legal/personnel matters
- HIB Reports

The disclosure of which could constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy; now

WHEREAS, the discussion of individual items to be considered by the Board in closed session may be made public once the need for confidentiality no longer exists, but the Board cannot state at the present time then that will be.

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board adjourns to executive session at 6:42 p.m. to discuss the above mentioned matter to the exclusion of all others. Matters discussed may or may not be made public this evening. If an action results, it will be taken following reentry into regular session.

IV. Close Executive Session and Reconvene Public Session

Moved: Mr. Hyman

Seconded: Mr. Goodwin

RC: Dillon -yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes

Hyman - yes

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Venes - yes

The public meeting reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

V. Flag Salute

VI. Approval of Minutes

Moved: Dr. Guidici Pietro

Seconded: Mr. Venes

RC: Dillon - yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidici Pietro -yes

Hyman-yes

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Venes - yes

- ❖ Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 21, 2025
- ❖ Minutes of the 1st Executive Session of January 21, 2025
- ❖ Minutes of the 2nd Executive Session of January 21, 2025

VII. Correspondence - none

VIII. Public Participation - none

IX. President's Report - none

- X. Superintendent's Report - Mrs. Walling reported on the Student Safety Data System (SSDS) report. She reported on the recent and upcoming events in Deerfield. She met with Imagine, and we have been chosen as part of a pilot program on grief education for 8th graders. They will provide free training and resources for staff as well. This is a required curriculum beginning next year. She and Mrs. Crisafulli are looking into our math curriculum and data, since Berkeley Heights will be changing their 8th grade courses. We are finishing mid-year benchmarking, to identify growth and challenges. Our new Reading Specialist, Ms. Blanco has been a great addition.

- XI. Business Administrator's Report - Mrs. Sullivan reported that the first draft of the budget is ready, she is still waiting on state aid numbers. She will be meeting again with the Budget and Finance Committee before the March meeting. The passing of the public question has helped our tax base.

- XII. Berkeley Heights Liaison Report - Mr. Dillon reported that the Board President and Vice-President are in place, committees are still officially pending, but some ad-hoc groups have been established meanwhile. Spring coaches and the architect for the referendum have been approved. A special meeting will take place to give information on the referendum. Mr. Dillon

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likes the student participation at board meetings, and thinks their concerns are important to hear, and communication is key.

XIII. Administration

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Administration #1-5**

Moved: Mr. Venes

Seconded: Mrs. Schiano

RC: Dillon - yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes

Hyman - yes

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Venes - yes

1. **WHEREAS**, on January 21, 2025 the Board of Education received a report from the superintendent containing the results of investigations conducted by each school regarding alleged incidents of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB); and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(b)(6)(c) states, the report also includes information on services provided, training established, discipline imposed, or other action taken or recommended by the superintendent; and

WHEREAS, the Board has considered the report presented by the superintendent.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education affirms that the findings of the investigation and the report comply with the district's HIB policies and procedures for the following HIB incidents:

Case #s: 242509, 242510

2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Student Safety Data System (SSDS) Report, from September 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024, as reported to the NJ Department of Education. (Attachment #2)
3. **WHEREAS**, N.J.A.C. 6A: 23A-5.3 provides that a school district may request a waiver of compliance with respect to the district's participation in the Special Education Medicare Initiative (SEMI) Program for the 2025-2026 school year; and

WHEREAS, the Mountainside Board of Education, desires to apply for this waiver due to the fact that the state projects Mountainside having eight (8) Medicaid eligible classified students and is therefore not required to participate in SEMI.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mountainside Board of Education hereby authorizes the Superintendent to apply for the waiver with the Executive County Superintendent of Schools in the County of Union following submission of an appropriate waiver of the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.3 for the 2025-2026 school year.

4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following dates and times for the Extended School Year (ESY) Program for Summer 2025:

- Dates: June 30, 2025 - July 31, 2025 (Monday - Thursdays, no school Fridays)

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- Times: 9:00 - 12:30

5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Beechwood and Deerfield Schools January 2025 safety and security drill reports.

XIV. Budget and Finance

The board asked Mrs. Walling about the G2 clubs, and she noted they are well attended, as are the recreation clubs run by Mr. Gormly. They are pleased to see these offerings. The board also thanked the Watts Foundation for their generous donation.

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Budget and Finance #1-8**

Moved: Mr. Hyman

Seconded: Mr. Goodwin

RC: Dillon - yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes Hyman - yes

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Venes - yes

1. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the list of budget transfers for the months of January 2025. (Attachment #3)
2. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the payment of the bill list dated January 23, 2025, through February 19, 2025. (Attachment #4)
3. **WHEREAS**, the Board has received the Financial Reports of the Treasurer of School Monies for the month of January 2025 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for the months of January 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Interim Board Secretary, Dana Sullivan, certifies that subject to the approval of budget transfers appended to these minutes, payment of the claims set forth in the accompanying bill list will not result in the over expenditure of any budget line item appropriation, as modified to date set forth in the level of detail contained in the Reports of the Board Secretary for January 2025:

RESOLVED THAT, the Board accepts the Treasurer Report for the months of January 2025 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for January 2025 as submitted and certified. (Attachment #5)

4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, an agreement with G2 Athletics, LLC for Sports Camps open to Beechwood students, at costs as outlined under Tier 6 usage fees in district Policy 7510. (Attachment #6)

Club	Dates	G2 Usage Fees
Lacrosse Club (Gr. 1-2)	March 13-May 8	\$440
Spring Break Sports Camp (Gr. K-2)	Apr 15-17	\$825

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5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept the Watts Foundation donation of \$1,600 to be used for video editing club equipment. (Attachment #7)
6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, an agreement with Golden Arrow Transportation to provide transportation for the spring season, at a rate of \$550.00 per bus. (Attachment #8)
7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, building use application for Mountainside FC, Inc. It is recommended to approve use by this non-profit organization as a Priority 4 use, as indicated in board Policy 7510, with fees being waived for this current request. In the event that any custodial or maintenance fees are required, the organization will be charged accordingly.
8. Move to approve in accordance with MBOE policy 6471, School District Travel, and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the travel and related expenses itemized in (Attachment #9). This travel is deemed educationally necessary and fiscally prudent, and all travel expenditures shall be directly related to and within the scope of the staff member's current responsibilities and the district's Professional Development Plan.

XV. Personnel

Dr. Guidici Pietro and Mrs. Walling noted the resignation of Mrs. Eckert, who will be truly missed.

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Personnel #1-7**

Moved: Mrs. Schiano

Seconded: Mr. Venes

RC: Dillon - yes

Goodwin -yes

Guidici Pietro - yes, abstain #6 Hyman - yes

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Venes - yes

New personnel employment appointments are contingent upon the required state and federal criminal history background checks (in accordance with N.J.S.A. CH 116, P.L. 1986), required certification, and completion of employee paperwork).

1. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the resignation of **Kristin Eckert**, Kindergarten Teacher, effective June 30, 2025, and thank her for her years of service to the Mountainside School District. (Attachment #10)
2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staff member(s) to serve as mentor(s) during the 2024-2025 school year:

Staff Member	Assignment (dates are approx.)	Fee Amount
Deb Posner	Ferdinando Melo 17 weeks: 2/24/25-6/20/25 13 weeks: 9/15/25-12/12/25	\$311.67- 24/25 SY \$238.33 - 25/26 SY (CEAS: \$550 for 30 weeks total)
Dawn Bladzinski	David Chango (10 months)	No fee for residency mentorship

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3. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staff for 2024-2025 School Year Stipend Positions, contingent upon student enrollment for those student activities subsidized in accordance with Board Policy 2436, Activity Participation Fee Program.

Staff Member	Position	Rate
Greg Gormly	Recreation Club Supervisor (Spring)	\$36/session <i>NTE 30 sessions</i>
James Mikula	Recreation Club Asst.(Spring)	\$36/session <i>NTE 15 sessions</i>
Shea Cody	Recreation Club Asst. (Spring)	\$36/session <i>NTE 15 sessions</i>

4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, **Jessica Milstrey** and **Shea Cody**, to provide student support during before/after school activities, at a rate of \$24.00/session, for the 24/25 school year.
5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to increase the salary of **Antonio Negron**, Custodian, by \$500, since obtaining his Black Seal License. Effective immediately, his annual salary is \$47,688, Step 3 Maintenance (BS).
6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following volunteers to assist Mr. Rosenblum and Mrs. Wargaski with the middle school play.

Prudence Alseika Rebecca Biland Tina Diamond Chutima Freeman Dana Guidici Pietro Jen Heritis Louise Hough Stefanie Jabri Flavia Kannaley Ann Kovacs	Jami Krempecke Shara Krout Rebecca Ladenheim Cecilia Martinez Carly Massotti Keith McDougall Mandi Moore Aimee Plamenco Kirsten Post	Sharon Riggs Jennifer Ropelski Maria Rose Sandra Sariava Christina Shahid Daisy Vargas Beth Whalen Michele Worth Danielle Zieser
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7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the addition of the following to the 2024-2025 Substitute List, pending paperwork and successful criminal background check. (Attachment #11)

Name	Certification	Rate
Wendy Fech-Caccamo	Sub Cert. (pending)	\$115 per diem

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Katherine Tulko	Sub. Cert	\$115 per diem
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XVI. Curriculum

The following motion was approved by roll call vote: **Curriculum #1**

Moved: Dr. Guidici Pietro Seconded: Mr. Goodwin
RC: Dillon - yes Goodwin - yes Guidici Pietro - yes Hyman - yes
 Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Venes - yes

1. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, field trips as detailed to the Board of Education.

XVII. Policy

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Policy #1-2**

Moved: Mr. Venes Seconded: Mrs. Schiano
RC: Dillon - yes Goodwin - yes Guidici Pietro - yes Hyman - yes
 Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Venes - yes

1. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following bylaws/policies/regulations for the first reading:

P 5512	Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying	Revised/Mandated
P 9163	Spectator Code of Conduct for Interscholastic Events	New/Mandated

2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following bylaws/policies/regulations for the second reading and adoption:

P 5533	Student Smoking	Revised/Mandated
P 7441	Electronic Surveillance in School Buildings and On School Grounds	Revised/Mandated
P & R 9320	Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies	Revised/Mandated

XVIII. Old Business - none

XIX. New Business - Mr. Venes attended a School Boards meeting, where they discussed HIB procedures. Mr. Hyman entered the motion below based on board discussions.

Walk-on Motion

1. **RESOLVED** that the Mountainside Board of Education advertise a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for a Feasibility Study pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-13, to explore the possibility of severing the send-receive relationship for its high school students and entering into such a relationship with another district.

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Moved: Mr. Hyman

RC: Dillon - yes

Pupo - yes

Seconded: Mrs. Schiano

Goodwin - yes

Schiano - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes

Venes - yes

Hyman - yes

XX. **Committee Reports** - Dr. Guidici Pietro mentioned the PTO Spring Fundraiser will be taking place on 3/27. Mr. Hyman reported that the Send/Receive Committee met. Mrs. Schiano reported the Negotiations Committee met with the MEA to begin discussions and exchange proposals on the upcoming contract. Mr. Goodwin reported from the Finance/Buildings & Grounds Committee, discussing field use at Beechwood and Deerfield locker room work that may need to be done.

XXI. **Public Participation** - A resident asked the board about the possibility of full day preschool, noting it could be appealing for working parents in the community. Mrs. Walling responded that since Covid, our space and costs have made it difficult to consider a program that is not mandated by the state. She researched our expenses to run the current program and costs per student. Mrs. Walling noted the cost to make it self-sustaining for the long term and recommended the board consider looking at ways to expand it only if it could be self-sustaining. The Board noted the budgetary constraints, and also the benefits of the full day program, and will consider their options going forward.

XXII. **Executive Session** - Resolution (Attachment #1)

Moved: Mr. Goodwin

RC: Dillon - yes

Pupo - yes

Seconded: Dr. Guidici Pietro

Goodwin - yes

Schiano - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes

Venes - yes

Hyman - yes

WHEREAS, Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 (R.S. 10:4-13), permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting or portion of a meeting of this public body in circumstances; and **WHEREAS**, the Board must consider matter(s) involving the following:

- Superintendent Search

The disclosure of which could constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy; now

WHEREAS, the discussion of individual items to be considered by the Board in closed session may be made public once the need for confidentiality no longer exists, but the Board cannot state at the present time then that will be.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board adjourns to executive session at 8:25 p.m. to discuss the above mentioned matter to the exclusion of all others. Matters discussed may or may not be made public this evening. No further action will be taken.

XXIII. **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Mrs. Schiano at 8:58 p.m., seconded by Mr. Hyman, to adjourn. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote, 7 ayes - 0 nays.

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Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Sullivan
Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary