

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
December 21, 2021**

**MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**BEECHWOOD SCHOOL - 1497 WOODACRES DRIVE, MOUNTAINSIDE, NJ 07092  
DEERFIELD SCHOOL - 302 CENTRAL AVENUE, MOUNTAINSIDE, NJ 07092**

For agenda attachments available to the public, please contact the Mountainside Board of Education Office at (908) 232-3232 or peruse 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 Mr. James Ruban, Jr., at 6:30 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

At roll call, the following members were present:

- Mr. Bill Dillon
- Dr. Dana Guidiciopietro
- Mr. Jordan Hyman
- Mrs. Vivian Pupo
- Mr. James Ruban, Jr.
- Mrs. Candice Schiano - arrived after roll call at 6:32 p.m.
- Mr. Carmine Venes

Also present were Janet Walling, Superintendent of Schools, and Michael Falkowski, Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary.

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

Moved:	<u>Dr. Guidiciopietro</u>	Seconded:	<u>Mrs. Pupo</u>
RC:	Dillon - yes	Guidiciopietro - yes	Hyman - yes Pupo - yes
	Ruban -yes	Schiano - absent	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:

1. Personnel matters
2. Covid testing discussion
3. Watts grant

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 adjourn to executive session at 6:31 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. Dillon        Seconded: Mr. Venes  
RC:            Dillon - yes            Guidici Pietro - yes    Hyman - yes    Pupo - yes  
                  Ruban -yes            Schiano - yes        Venes -yes

The public meeting reconvened at 7:36 p.m.

**V. Flag Salute**

**VI. Approval of Minutes**

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

- ❖ Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 16, 2021
- ❖ Minutes of the Executive Session of November 16, 2021

**VII. Correspondence - none**

**VIII. Public Participation - none**

**IX. President's Report - none**

**X. Superintendent's Report** - Mrs. Walling presented a slideshow highlighting our Educator of the Year winners. She thanked the following staff for their excellence in education: Stephanie DeBaun, Dawn Bladzinski, Lisa Arroyo from Beechwood, and Nina Woo, Sharon Bradley and Julie Goerlich from Deerfield. Mrs. Walling provided information on the ARP grant and how funds would be spent. She commented on the Watts grant that was just received today. She noted the current increase in COVID in the area. She acknowledged the passing of Elena Bentley, a recently retired Life Skills teacher, and her accomplishments in our district. Lastly, Related Arts teachers presented the Board with an overview of their programs.

**XI. Business Administrator's Report** - Mr. Falkowski gave an update on the Bond Refunding. It was priced on 12/1, and will close on 12/29, saving 3.287%. The present value is \$402,365, with gross savings of \$464,113.

**XII. Berkeley Heights Liaison Report** - Mr. Hyman reported from the 12/9 meeting where they thanked outgoing Board members. They discussed the National Honors Society, the start of winter sports, and the school performance scheduled for March 24-26th.

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**XIII. Administration**

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

Moved:	<u>Dr. Guidiciopietro</u>	Seconded:	<u>Mrs. Schiano</u>
RC:	Dillon - yes Ruban -yes	Guidiciopietro - yes Schiano - yes	Hyman - yes Pupo - yes Venes -yes

1. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Beechwood and Deerfield Schools November 2021 safety and security drill reports. (Attachment #2)
2. Move to accept the Superintendent's recommendations on the HIB incident summary dated December 8, 2021.

**XIV. Budget and Finance**

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Budget and Finance #1-7**

Moved:	<u>Mr. Hyman</u>	Seconded:	<u>Mrs. Schiano</u>
RC:	Dillon - yes Ruban -yes	Guidiciopietro - yes Schiano - yes	Hyman - yes Pupo - yes Venes -yes

1. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the list of budget transfers for the month of November 2021. (Attachment #3)
2. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the payment of the bill list dated November 18, 2021, through December 22, 2021. (Attachment #4)
3. **WHEREAS**, the Board has received the Financial Reports of the Treasurer of School Monies for the month of November 2021 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for the month of November 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, the Interim Board Secretary, Michael Falkowski, 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 November 2021:

**RESOLVED THAT**, the Board accepts the Treasurer Report for the month of November 2021 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for November 2021 as submitted and certified. (Attachment #5)

4. **BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the Mountainside Board of Education grants approval for the Superintendent to make an application for and accept subsequent receipt of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Grants for fiscal year 2021 - September 2024 as follows:
  - ESSER: \$555,178
  - Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant: \$81,166
  - Evidence-Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant: \$40,000

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- Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities Grant: \$40,000
- NJTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Grant: \$45,000

5. Move to approve in accordance with MBOE policy 6471, School District Travel, and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the travel, professional development requests, and related expenses itemized in (Attachment #6). 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. All reimbursements shall be made in accordance with state guidelines 18A:11-12.
6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, special education placements and services as per (Attachment #7).
7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept a \$22,000 grant donation from the Watts Foundation, to be used as follows: \$12,000 Deerfield sign upgrade, \$5,000 alternative outdoor learning/work spaces, and \$5,000 for Kindergarten Chromebooks. (Attachment #7A)

**XV. Personnel**

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Personnel #1-10**

Moved: Dr. Guidici Pietro      Seconded: Mrs. Schiano  
 RC:            Dillon - yes                      Guidici Pietro - yes      Hyman - yes      Pupo - yes  
                     Ruban -yes                      Schiano - yes              Venes -yes

1. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to recognize the following staff members for their dedication to the students, families, and staff of the Mountainside School District. Their support, professionalism, and commitment is recognized and appreciated on a daily basis:

<b>Beechwood School</b>	
Stephanie DeBaun, Kindergarten Teacher	Teacher of the Year
Dawn Blazinski, Librarian	Educational Services Professional of the Year
Lisa Arroyo, Paraprofessional	Support Staff of the Year
<b>Deerfield School</b>	
Nina Woo, Spanish Teacher	Teacher of the Year
Sharon Bradley, Librarian	Educational Services Professional of the Year
Julie Goerlich, Special Services Secretary	Support Staff of the Year

2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the resignation of **Kristin DalCortivo**, Guidance Counselor, effective January 22, 2022, and thank her for her service to the Mountainside School District. (Attachment #8)
3. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Maternity Disability Leave for **Kelcie Sweetwood**, Paraprofessional, effective February 14, 2022, until April 8, 2022. She will be permitted to utilize any accumulated sick days. It is also recommended that Ms. Sweetwood be

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granted unpaid Family Leave from April 19, 2022, until June 21, 2022 in accordance with FMLA and NJFLA. Ms. Sweetwood anticipates returning to work at the start of the 22/23 school year. (Attachment #9)

4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Maternity Disability Leave for **Jessica Botkin**, 4th Grade Teacher, effective March 11, 2022, until May 5, 2022. She will be permitted to utilize any accumulated sick days. It is also recommended that Mrs. Botkin be granted unpaid Family Leave from May 6, 2022, until October 7, 2022 in accordance with FMLA and NJFLA. Mrs. Botkin anticipates returning to work on October 10, 2022. (Attachment #10)
5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the addition of **Heather Goldbeck** to the 2021-2022 Substitute Teacher List, pending paperwork. (Attachment #11)
6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the addition of **Jennifer Malgeri** to the 2021-2022 Substitute Teacher List, pending paperwork and successful criminal background check. (Attachment #12)
7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve **Desiree Ganz**, to provide supplemental instruction for student #9074404763, 2 hours/week at a rate of \$43.29, effective October 2021 and for the remainder of the 2021/2022 school year.
8. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the 2021-2022 School Year Stipend Positions, contingent upon student enrollment for those student activities subsidized in accordance with Board Policy 2436, Activity Participation Fee Program. (Attachment #13)
9. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the following list of teachers to provide before/after school instruction for students through the use of ARP Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities Grant funds, at the rate of \$43.29/hour.

Ellie Barkin-Baron	Deborah Posner	April Starling
Jayne Hartnett	Rosemarie Sardina	
Barbi Higinbotham	Laurie Naftilin	

10. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the appointment of **Brittany Baldwin**, to the position of School Guidance Counselor at Deerfield School, at a salary of \$57,718, MA Step 1, prorated for the 2021-2022 school year. The position begins January 24, 2022, pending successful criminal history and paperwork. (Attachment #14)

**XVII. Policy**

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

Moved:	<u>Mr. Venes</u>	Seconded:	<u>Dr. Guidici Pietro</u>	
RC:	Dillon -yes	Guidici Pietro - yes	Hyman - yes	Pupo - yes
	Ruban -no	Schiano - yes	Venes -yes	

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

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P 0131	Bylaws, Policies, and Regulations	Revised
P 5751	Sexual Harassment of Students	Revised/Mandated

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

*Mr. Ruban commented that Grades 9-12 should not be in our policy 2422. The Board discussed the matter with additional guidance from Strauss Esmay.*

Moved: Mr. Hyman                      Seconded: Mrs. Schiano  
 RC:              Dillon -yes              Guidiciopietro - yes      Hyman - yes      Pupo - yes  
                     Ruban -no                      Schiano - yes              Venes -yes

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

P 2422	Comprehensive Health and Physical Education	Revised/Mandated
P 8550	Meal Charges/Outstanding Food Services Bill	Revised/Mandated
P 8600	Student Transportation	Revised/Mandated

**XVIII. Old Business** - Mr. Hyman asked about Start Strong testing, to which Mrs. Walling responded that she will be reporting on this at the January or February board meeting.

**XIX. New Business** - Mr. Venes went to the county meeting which had a detailed presentation on compiling District Data. Mr. Ruban mentioned that the annual Reorganization Meeting will be on January 4, 2022. Mr. Hyman congratulated the choir performance at Radio City.

**XX. Committee Reports** - none

**XXI. Public Participation** - none

**XXII. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Dr. Guidiciopietro at 9:40 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Schiano to adjourn. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote, 7 ayes - 0 nays.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Michael Falkowski  
 Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary