

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
August 19, 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 6:33 p.m.

II. Roll Call

At roll call, the following members were present

Mr. Michael Goodwin
Dr. Dana Guidiciopietro
Mrs. Vivian Pupo
Mrs. Candice Schiano
Mr. Carmine Venes

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

Mr. Bill Dillon and Jordan Hyman were absent.

III. Executive Session - Resolution (Attachment #1)

Moved: <u>Mrs. Schiano</u>	Seconded: <u>Dr. Guidiciopietro</u>		
RC: Dillon - absent	Goodwin - yes	Guidiciopietro - yes	
Hyman - absent	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/student matters
- HIB Reports
- Send Receive

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 6:35 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: Mrs. Schiano Seconded: Dr. Guidici Pietro
RC: Dillon - absent Goodwin - yes Guidici Pietro - yes
 Hyman - absent Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Venes - yes

The public meeting reconvened at 7:29 p.m.

V. Flag Salute

VI. Approval of Minutes

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

- ❖ Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 17, 2025
- ❖ Minutes of the Executive Session of June 17, 2025
- ❖ Minutes of the Special Meeting of August 5, 2025

VII. Correspondence - MEA members' letters to the Board were accepted.

VIII. Public Participation - none

IX. President's Report - none

X. Superintendent's Report - Mr Kinney reported the ACCESS testing results, and he reviewed our services to support the students who are multi-language learners. He continued to discuss the District Goals, Board Goals, and community involvement initiatives that will be implemented this school year to reach goals in our Strategic Plan. Mr. Kinney noted we will be developing an AI plan and policy, as well a long range facility plan and reviewing our facility use policy as well. Mr. Kinney then introduced our new website, thanking Kelli Castro and Paul Litwa for the work on it over the summer to launch it for the new school year. He introduced Mike Marini, our new Supervisor of Maintenance and Custodial Services. Mr. Kinney thanked Wayne DeVico for his service and selfless dedication to the district during the transition in the Buildings & Grounds Department. Mr. Marini reviewed his background, his mission statement, and thanked the board for the opportunity. Mr. Kinney continued and reminded the community of upcoming events and important dates. Mr. Goodwin added a comment that he is impressed with the speed that we were able to launch the new website, and feels the interface is very user friendly. Other board members agreed.

XI. Business Administrator's Report - none

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XII. Berkeley Heights Liaison Report -

XIII. Administration

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Administration #1-12**

Moved: <u>Dr. Guicipietro</u>	Seconded: <u>Mr. Goodwin</u>		
RC: Dillon -abent	Goodwin - yes	Guidicipietro - yes	
Hyman - absent	Pupo - yes	Schiano - yes	Venes - yes

1. **WHEREAS**, on June 17, 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 incident(s):

Cases: # 242523 and 242524

2. Move to appoint **Christopher Kinney** as the School Safety Specialist for the District.
3. Move to appoint **Michael Marini** as the following for the District:
 - Chemical Hygiene Officer
 - AHERA Coordinator
 - Asbestos Management Officer
 - IAQ Coordinator
 - Integrated Pest Management Coordinator
 - Right to Know Contact
 - Right to Know Officer
4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Student Safety Data System Report for the 2024 - 2025 school year, which includes HIB incidents, Trainings, and Programs. (Attachment #2)
5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the Board Goals for the 2025-2026 school year as follows:
 - **Goal 1:** During the 2025-2026 school year, the Mountainside Board of Education endeavors to support district administration and staff in sustaining a supportive environment that welcomes community involvement to increase collaborative efforts that

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will enhance the educational journeys for all of the students in the Mountainside School District.

- **Goal 2:** During the 2025-2026 school year, the Mountainside Board of Education, utilizing the facilities audit and community input, will collaborate with Administration to create a user-friendly long range plan to advance and upgrade the facilities and fields along with reestablishing a transparent facilities usage policy that allows for adequate access to all community stakeholders.
- **Goal 3:** During the 2025-2026 school year, the Mountainside Board of Education, using a thorough analysis of educational, financial, and operational impacts to safeguard long-term stability, will work collaboratively with its partnering district to develop a manageable, transparent, and sustainable send/receive contract that prioritizes the best interests of the Mountainside community.

6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the District Goals for the 2025-2026 school year. (Attachment #3)
7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the Five-Year Curriculum Revision Cycle. (Attachment #4)
8. Motion to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staff members to serve on the district ScIP (School Improvement Panel)/Professional Development Committee for the 2025-2026 school year:
 - Deerfield School: Suzanne Jenks, Natalie Crisafulli, Kathy Goldbeck, Corrin Lavery
 - Beechwood School: Jessica Vierschilling, Katherine Blanco, Sue Goracy
9. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the use of the Charlotte Danielson 2013 Rating System for teacher and other certificated staff evaluations for the 2025-2026 school year.
10. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the use of the "New Jersey Principal Evaluation for Professional Learning Observation Instrument" for administrative staff evaluations for the 2025-2026 school year.
11. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Student Handbooks for the 2025-2026 school year for Beechwood, Deerfield Grades 3-5 and Deerfield Grades 6-8. (Attachments 5, 6, 7)
12. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Beechwood and Deerfield Schools June and July 2025 safety and security drill reports.

XIV. Budget and Finance.

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Budget and Finance #1-19**

Moved: Mr. Goodwin

Seconded: Mr. Venes

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RC: Dillon -absent Goodwin - yes Guidici Pietro - yes
Hyman - absent Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Venes - yes

1. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the list of budget transfers for the month of June and July 2025. (Attachment #8)
2. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the payment of the bill lists dated July 1, 2025, through August 19, 2025. (Attachment #9)
3. **WHEREAS**, the Board has received the Financial Reports of the Treasurer of School Monies for the month of June and July 2025 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for the month of June and July 2025; and

WHEREAS, the 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 June and July 2025:

RESOLVED THAT, the Board accepts the Treasurer Report for the month of June and July 2025 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for June and July 2025 as submitted and certified (Attachment #10).

4. **WHEREAS**, Dana Sullivan, Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, possesses a Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA) certificate:

WHEREAS, the State Treasurer, in consultation with the Governor and pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:34-7 and N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3 (b), has increased the bid threshold amount for school districts with a Qualified Purchasing Agent, from \$44,000 to \$53,000, effective July 1, 2025;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mountainside Board of Education, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3 (a), establishes and sets the bid threshold amount of **\$53,000** for the school district, and further authorizes the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, the Qualified Purchasing Agent, to award contracts, in full accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3 (a), for those purchases that do not exceed in the aggregate of the newly established bid threshold amount.

Furthermore, for contracts in the aggregate that are less than the bid threshold but fifteen (15%) or more of the amount, the Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, shall award contracts after soliciting at least two competitive quotations.

The Interim School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-37(c), is authorized to award contracts that are in the aggregate less than fifteen (15%) percent of the bid threshold without soliciting competitive quotations.

5. **BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the Mountainside Board of Education grants approval for the Superintendent to make application for and accept subsequent receipt of the IDEA Consolidated Grants for fiscal year 2026 as follows:

IDEA Preschool	\$7,318
IDEA Basic	\$163,257

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6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the acceptance of and subsequent submission of the ESEA grant application for the fiscal year 2026 as follows:

Title I	\$24,923
Title IIA	\$13,227
Title III	\$804

7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Tuition Agreement contract between Union County Vocational-Technical Schools and the Mountainside School District for the 2025-2026 school year. (Attachment #11)
8. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, building use application for Girls on the Run. It is recommended to approve use by this non-profit organization as a Priority 4 use, as indicated in board Policy 7510, with all fees being waived. In the event that any custodial or maintenance fees are required, the organization will be charged accordingly.
9. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, acceptance of FY25 Nonpublic School Transportation Aid in the amount of \$45,075.
10. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the acceptance of FY25 Extraordinary Aid in the amount of \$168,595.
11. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the agreement with Golden Arrow Transportation to provide transportation for fall sports, at a rate of \$550.00 per bus. (Attachment #12)
12. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, an agreement with G2 Athletics, LLC for an 8 session after school program for Beechwood students, to be held Sept. 11th - Nov. 20th, 2025, at a cost of \$440 as outlined under Tier 6 usage fees in district Policy 7510. (Attachment #13)
13. Move to **rescind** upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, a parent transportation contract, in the amount of \$22,000 (ESY=\$4,000, RSY=\$18,000), pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A: 39.1 et seq. and N.J.A.C.6A: 27-9.9, between the Mountainside Board of Education and the parent/legal guardians of **Student #7828989571** for 25-26 ESY and Regular School Year. ***This was previously approved on 6/17/25.***
14. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the contract renewal with Progressive Therapy of New Jersey for BCBA services, from July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026, at a rate of \$118/hr., per the following schedule:
- ESY: not to exceed *14 hours per week from 6/30/25-7/31/25; and the
 - 2025/2026 school year: not to exceed **25 hrs./wk. 9/4/25 - 6/19/26

**ESY hours were updated to 14 hours rather than 8 as originally approved on 6/17/25*

***RSY hours were updated to 25 hours rather than 22.5 as originally approved on 6/17/25*

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Cory Berger	5th Grade Teacher	Effective 9/29/25 <i>unless filled sooner</i>
Colleen Laurendi	4th Grade Teacher	Effective 10/10/25 <i>unless filled sooner</i>

2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the appointment of the following new hires for the 2025-2026 school year (Attachment #17):

Name	Loc.	Position	Salary/Step	Start	End
Tiffany Guzman	DF	Secretary to the Principal	\$69,904 Step 14 (prorated)	8/19/25	6/30/26
Juliette Kelliher	BW/ DF	Social Worker/ Case Manager	\$69,186 MA Step 10	9/1/25	6/30/26
Edward Puchalski	DF	5th Grade Teacher	\$63,900 BA Step 9	10/15/25 <i>unless released sooner</i>	6/30/26
Gabrielle Lombardi	DF	4th Grade Teacher	\$57,000 BA Step 1	9/1/25	6/30/26
Jeni Starinsky	BW	Kindergarten Leave Replacement Teacher	\$57,000 BA Step 1-3	9/1/25	6/30/26
Maria Papatatto	BW	Lunch Aide	\$16/hour	9/4/25	6/26/26
Amarilis Alejo	DF	Part-time custodian (leave replacement)	\$19.12/hour	9/1/25	TBD
Moses Lazarre	BW/ DF	Part-time custodian (leave replacement)	\$19.12/hour	9/1/25	TBD

3. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staffing of the 2025-2026 ESY Program from June 30, 2025 through July 31, 2025, from 9:00-12:30, Mon-Thurs (no school Fridays), as detailed below:

Salary based on MEA Contract

Name	Position	Salary/Hour
Aneta Ferriere	Substitute Paraprofessional	\$28.08/hour
*Irene Rigos	<i>*Paraprofessional</i>	<i>*\$28.08/hour</i>

** This is a correction to the salary of \$27.34/hour as previously approved on 6/17/25*

4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the 2025-2026 **Substitute Teacher/Support Staff List** (Attachment #18)

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- 5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the 2025-2026 School Year **Stipend Positions**, contingent upon student enrollment for those student activities subsidized in accordance with Board Policy 2436, Activity Participation Fee Program. (Attachment #19)
- 6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, **Paola Conte** to assist with office duties, as needed, at a rate of \$16.00/hour during the 2025/2026 school year.
- 7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the request for reimbursement for classes from **Jennifer Smith**, PEAK Teacher, for classes taken at TCNJ for the 2025 Spring/Summer Sessions for six (6) graduate credits in the amount of \$3,990. (Attachment #20)

XVI. Policy

The following motion was approved by roll call vote: **Policy #1-2**

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

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

P 1620	Administrative Employment Contracts	Revised/Mandated
P & R 6111	Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program	Revised/Mandated
P 6220	Budget Preparations	Revised/Mandated

- 2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following regulations for the first reading and adoption:

R 5200	Attendance	Revised/Mandated
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XVII. Old Business - none

XVIII. New Business - none

- XIX. Committee Reports - Mrs. Schiano noted the Curriculum Committee met over the summer, and discussed the attendance policy, report cards, and curriculum revision plan. The plan will be available to view on the website.**

XX. Public Participation - none

XXI. Adjournment- Resolution (Attachment #1)

A motion was made by Dr. Guidici Pietro at 7:52 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Schiano, to adjourn. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote, 5 ayes - 0 nays.

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Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Sullivan
Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary