

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
December 9 , 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 6:31 p.m.

II. Roll Call

At roll call, the following members were present:

Dr. Dana Guidiciopietro
Mr. Jordan Hyman
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 Mr. Michael Goodwin were absent.

III. Executive Session - Resolution (Attachment #1)

Moved: <u>Mrs. Schiano</u>	Seconded: <u>Mr. Hyman</u>		
RC: Dillon - absent	Goodwin - absent	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
- Send/Receive contract
- Residency issues
- Feasibility Study

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 6:32 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: Dr. Guidici Pietro Seconded: Mrs. Schiano
RC: Dillon - absent Goodwin - absent Guidici Pietro - yes
 Hyman - yes Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Venes - yes

The public meeting reconvened at 7:33 p.m.

V. Flag Salute

VI. Approval of Minutes

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

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- ❖ Minutes of the Executive Session of November 11, 2025

VII. Correspondence - none

VIII. Public Participation - none

IX. President's Report - Mrs. Pupo joined Mr. Kinney with presenting tonight's awards.

X. Superintendent's Report - Mr. Kinney and Mrs. Pupo thanked and honored Mr. Venes, as he steps down from his many years of service as a Board member. Previous Board members spoke about his years of dedication to the Mountainside community and his immense impact. Mr. Kinney continued to present awards to middle school students who won the Patriot's Pen Essay contest. He went on to congratulate the Trailblazer students of the month. He welcomed the new incoming Business Administrator and Supervisor of Special Services. Mrs. Pupo thanked Dana Sullivan, who will be stepping down as our Interim Business Administrator.

XI. Business Administrator's Report - Mrs. Sullivan said the Budget Calendar will be set once Ms. Burik joins the District in January.

XII. Berkeley Heights Liaison Report - none

XIII. Administration

** Mrs. Pupo read the resolution for Mr. Venes. Mr. Venes thanked the community for voting for him, and noted his appreciation for our staff and students. He always put the*

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interest of the students first, and is proud of the work the board has done to make Mountainside a great community.

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

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

1. **WHEREAS**, Carmine Venes is a resident of Mountainside, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, Carmine has been a dedicated member of the Mountainside Board of Education, committing himself to providing for the educational needs and success of the students in the Mountainside School District; and

WHEREAS, Carmine has served on the Mountainside Board of Education with distinction from April 2004 through December 2025, including over twenty-one years as the County School Boards Association Delegate; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, he has contributed significantly through his service on the Budget and Finance, Buildings and Grounds, and Negotiations Committees, as well as in his recent role as the Mountainside Senior Citizen Liaison. He has been instrumental in the successful settlement of numerous union contracts and in the oversight of district improvements through referendums that upgraded Mountainside Schools; and

WHEREAS, his steadfast dedication and leadership leave a lasting legacy of fiscal responsibility, support for staff, and service to the Mountainside community;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mountainside Board of Education hereby recognizes Carmine Venes for his exceptional contributions to the students and staff of the Mountainside Public Schools, and expresses its sincere appreciation for his long-standing service to the community of Mountainside; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mountainside Board of Education extends its best wishes to Carmine for continued success, good health, and happiness in all his future endeavors.

2. **WHEREAS**, on November 11, 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.

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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: 252603, 252604

3. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the revised job description as attached. (Attachment #2)
4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Acceptable Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidelines. (Attachment #3)
5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Beechwood and Deerfield Schools November 2025 safety and security drill reports.

XIV. Budget and Finance

**Mr. Hyman thanked the Watts Foundation for their donation.*

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Budget and Finance #1-13**

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

1. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the list of budget transfers for the month of November 2025. (Attachment #4)
2. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the payment of the bill list dated November 13, 2025, through December 10, 2025. (Attachment #5)
3. **WHEREAS**, the Board has received the Financial Reports of the Treasurer of School Monies for the month of November 2025 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for the month of November 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 November 2025:

RESOLVED THAT, the Board accepts the Treasurer Report for the month of November 2025 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for November 2025 as submitted and certified. (Attachment #6)

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4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, a shared services agreement with Winfield Park Schools, effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2029, for School Business Administrator Services, pending Board Attorney review. (Attachment #7)
5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, a transportation contract between **Student Transportation of America** and the Mountainside Board of Education, from 1/28/26-6/30/26, in the amount of \$37,440. (Attachment #8)
6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, parent tuition contract for **Students #15362 & 15404** in the amount of \$1,582.40 per child per month, effective September 1, 2025 until Certificate of Occupancy is obtained.
7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, an agreement with **MiniDramaStream Corp.** for use of Deerfield facilities on 12/13/25, at a total cost of \$2,300, per Tier 6 usage fees in district Policy 7510. (Attachment #9)
8. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept a donation from the **Watts Foundation**, in the amount of \$14,621.00, to be used as follows:
 - STEAM supplies (Grades 6-8)
 - STEAM assembly (Grades 3-5)
 - Sensory Room Equipment at Beechwood
 - Media Supplies at Deerfield
9. 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 #10). 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.
10. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, an agreement with Mountainside FC, Inc. for use of Beechwood facilities on 12/20/25, at a total cost of \$200, per Tier 4 usage fees in district Policy 7510.
11. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, special education placements and services as per (Attachment #11).
12. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve home instruction for **Student #2936698529**, for up to 10 hours per week, provided by Dr. L. Hanes & Associates, at a rate of \$78/hour.
13. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the updated Independent Contractors/Physicians/Agencies for the 25/26 school year as attached. (Attachment #12)

XV. Personnel

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Personnel #1-6**

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Moved: Mr. Hyman Seconded: Mr. Venes
 RC: Dillon - absent Goodwin - absent Guidici Pietro - yes
 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, to rescind the offer of employment of **Liliana Sanchez-Chouquet**, for the position of Spanish Teacher, at her request, as previously approved on November 11, 2025. (Attachment #13)
2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the resignation of **Amarilis Alejo**, part-time custodial leave replacement, effective 11/11/25.
3. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the appointment of the following new hires for the 2025-2026 school year (Attachment #14):

Name	Loc.	Position	Salary/Step	Start	End
Amy Giaccio	BW/ DF	Supervisor of Special Services	\$125,000 (prorated)	2/9/26 (or sooner if released)	6/30/26
Ivanova Araujo	DF	Spanish Teacher	\$86,900 Step 17 BA (prorated)	1/20/26	6/30/26
Lukas Antico	DF	Part-time custodian (leave replacement)	\$19.12/hour	12/10/25	TBD

4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, a medical leave of absence for **Employee #90183856**, beginning October 2, 2025 through June 30, 2026.
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.

Name	Position	Salary
Victoria Tiscia	Set Design & Construction	\$2,734
Sandra Vendas & Irene Rigos	After School Paraprofessionals (beginning 12/1/25)	Per individual's hourly paraprofessional rate

6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following volunteers & *high school student volunteers to assist Mr. Rosenblum and Mrs.Somers-Guerassio with the middle school play.

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Allison Adornato	Jennifer Ropelski	Michele Worth
Anisa Peters	Jennifer Schiff	Nadia Durravi
Anna Georgiou	Julie Heegel	Nicole Altavilla
Christine O’Grady	Jess Domenick	Ray Fischer
Chutima Freeman	Katie Bowman	Ryan Wistreich
Cristina Zuniga	Katrina Wasserman	Seema Gupta
Danielle Catone	Keith McDougall	Urvi Kadakia
Dineasha Potter-McQuilkin	Lauren Klein	Valerie Agresta
Emmanuelle Costa	Lilian Bourdier	Valerie Fischetti
Heather Mitchell	Lisa Diiusto	Zowie Boswell
Ingrid Errico	Lisa Massimo	
Jami Krempecke	Marissa Garabedian	*Ava Shahid
Jennifer Costa	Michael Klemens	*Ally Gardner

XVI. Curriculum

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

Moved: Mr. Venes Seconded: Dr. Guidici Pietro
 RC: Dillon - absent Goodwin - absent 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 motion was approved by roll call vote: **Policy #1-2**

Moved: Mr. Venes Seconded: Mrs. Schiano
 RC: Dillon - absent Goodwin - absent Guidici Pietro - yes
 Hyman - yes 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 2365	Acceptable Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)	New/Recommended
P 2530	Resource Materials	Revised/Recommended
P / R 2535	Library Material	New/Mandated
P 9130	Public Complaints	Revised/Recommended

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

Bylaw 0143	Board Member Election and Appointment	Revised/Recommended
Bylaw 0173	Duties of Public School Accountant	Revised/Recommended
P 1636.01	Notification of Promotion, New Job, and Transfer Opportunities	New/Recommended

XVIII. Old Business - none

XIX. New Business - none

XX. Committee Reports - none

XXI. Public Participation - Previous and current Board members and administrators spoke about the years of service of Mr. Venes, and shared their appreciation for his guidance, thoughtful input, and support over many years.

XXII. Adjournment- Resolution (Attachment #1)

A motion was made by Mr. Venes at 8:09 p.m., seconded by Dr. Guidici Pietro to adjourn. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote, 5 ayes - 0 nays.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Sullivan
Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary