

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

September 15, 2026

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 6:45 p.m.

II. Roll Call

At roll call, the following members were present:

Mr. Bill Dillon

Mr. Michael Goodwin

Dr. Dana Guidici Pietro

Mrs. Vivian Pupo

Mrs. Candice Schiano - arrived after roll call at 7:31 p.m.

Mrs. Lauren Worgan

Also present were Christopher Kinney, Superintendent and Bernadette Pinto, Business Administrator/Board Secretary.

Mr. Jordan Hyman was absent.

III. Executive Session - Resolution (Attachment #1)

Moved: Dr. Guidici Pietro

Seconded: Mr. Dillon

RC: Dillon - yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes

Hyman - absent

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Worgan - 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

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 6:45 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: <u>Mr. Goodwin</u>	Seconded: <u>Mrs. Worgan</u>		
RC: Dillon - yes	Goodwin - yes	Guidici Pietro - yes	
Hyman - absent	Pupo - yes	Schiano - yes	Worgan - yes

The public meeting reconvened at 7:37 p.m.

V. Flag Salute

VI. Approval of Minutes

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

- ❖ Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 25, 2026
- ❖ Minutes of the Executive Session of August 25, 2026

VII. Correspondence - none

VIII. Public Participation - none

IX. President's Report - none

- X. Superintendent's Report** - Mr. Kinney started with a review of school openings for staff and thanked administrators for their work. He thanked the PTO for the welcome back goodies. He noted some calendar updates and highlights. He noted interactive flat panel models are here for teachers to sample. The soccer field at Beechwood construction is underway and we hope for it to be completed by Thanksgiving. Mr. Kinney introduced Mr. Litwa who presented the Technology Plan. He then introduced Mrs. Jenks, who said she reviewed with students the new cell phone policy, dress code, and attendance policies. She noted updates to the handbook and code of conduct to make expectations and consequences very clear. Her presentation went over the levels, point system, rules, and supports in great detail with regard to academics, attendance, and behavior. She also addressed the expectations of teachers with regard to grading timeliness.

- XI. Business Administrator's Report** - Mrs. Pinto noted the items on the agenda that were presented for a vote and provided additional information.

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- XII. Berkeley Heights Liaison Report** - Mr. Dillon reported on the 8/27 meeting. He was not in attendance, but reviewed the meeting details with what pertains to Mountainside. There were reminders about communication with board members and proper chain of command. He noted the concerns of parking fees for students and the doubled cost of the yearbook. Seniors have open campus privileges. They reviewed District Goals. There is a potential administrative structure change given a resignation. Filled stipend positions were approved, and construction projects were touched upon.

XIII. Administration

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

Moved: Dr. Guidici Pietro

Seconded: Mrs. Schiano

RC: Dillon - yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes

Hyman - absent

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Worgan - yes

1. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Statement of Assurance Regarding the Use of Paraprofessional Staff for the 2026-2027 School Year. (Attachment #2)
2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the 2026-2027 Professional Development Plan and Statement of Assurance. (Attachment #3)
3. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the 2026-2027 Mentoring Plan Statement of Assurance. (Attachment #4)
4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the School Safety and Security Plan.
5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the 2026-2027 District Technology Plan. (Attachment #5)
6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following curricular documents for Mountainside Schools:

Subject Area	Grade Levels
Mathematics	Grade 6, Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1, Geometry

XIV. Budget and Finance

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

Moved: Mr. Goodwin

Seconded: Dr. Guidici Pietro

RC: Dillon - yes

Goodwin - yes

Guidici Pietro - yes

Hyman - absent

Pupo - yes

Schiano - yes

Worgan - yes

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1. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the list of budget transfers for the months of June, July and August 2026. (Attachment #6)
2. **RESOLVED THAT**, the Board approve the payment of the bill list dated August 20, 2026, through September 14, 2026 (Attachment #7).
3. **WHEREAS**, the Board has received the Financial Reports of the Treasurer of School Monies for the month of August 2026 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for the month of August 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Board Secretary, Bernadette Pinto, 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 August 2026:

RESOLVED THAT, the Board accepts the Treasurer Report for the month of August 2026 and the Financial Reports of the Board Secretary for August 2026 as submitted and certified (Attachment #8).

4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the settlement agreement between the Board of Education and parents of student **#9433465316** for the 2026-2027 school year.
5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the joint transportation agreement between Garwood Public Schools and the Mountainside Board of Education for an out-of-district transportation route for the 2026-2027 school year, in the amount of \$48,000. (Attachment #9)
6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the submission of the NJDOE Funding for Optimal Comprehensive Universal Screening Grant (FOCUS) for FY 2027 in the amount of \$2,528.
7. 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.
8. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, special education placements and services as per (Attachment #11).

XV. Personnel

The following motions were approved by roll call vote: **Personnel #1-9**

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Moved: Mrs. Schiano Seconded: Mr. Dillon
 RC: Dillon - yes Goodwin - yes Guidici Pietro - yes
 Hyman - absent Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Worgan - 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 revised step for the following leave replacement. *This was previously approved as Step 10 on 8/25/26 in error.*

Kelly Kalis	BW	2nd Grade Leave Replacement Teacher	\$67,616 MA Step 9	9/1/26	6/30/27
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2. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept the resignation/declined position of **Davina Giordano**, paraprofessional, effective September 1, 2026. (Attachment #12)
3. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the appointment of the following new hires for the 2026-2027 school year (Attachment #13):

Name	Loc.	Position	Salary/Step	Start	End
Jeferson Godoy-Godinez	DF	Custodian	Step 2 \$44,607 (prorated)	10/2/26	6/30/27
Al'Turik French	BW	Custodian	Step 16 \$57,057 (prorated)	11/1/26	6/30/27

4. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, to increase hours for the following staff by up to *30 minutes per day (**unless otherwise noted*) to assist with dismissal, for the 26-27 school year.

Kathleen Goldbeck (Mon-Fri)	Suzanne Tighe (Mon-Thur) <i>*15 min daily</i>
Jenna Rasp (T/Th/F)	Kirsten Post (M/W)

5. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staff members to cover lunch periods as needed at Deerfield School during the 2026-2027 school year, at a rate of \$36 per session:

Axl Hirsch	Lori Topel	Victoria Tiscia
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Melanie Kandl	Jenna Rasp	
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6. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staff for 2026-2027 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
Victoria Tiscia	Art Club (Gr. 3-5) <i>*add'l session due to high enrollment</i>	\$36/session <i>NTE 30 sessions</i>
Shannon Keegan	Chess Club (Gr. 3-8) <i>*add'l session due to high enrollment</i>	\$36/session <i>NTE 30 sessions</i>

7. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following staff members to serve as mentors during the 2026-2027 school year:

Staff Member	Assignment	Fee Amount
Susan Burke	Sydney Clous (CEAS - 30 weeks)	\$550
Adrienne Ridley	Jacqueline DeVivo (CEAS - 30 weeks)	\$550
Jessica Milstrey	Josephine Kwan (CEAS - 18 weeks)	\$330 (\$550 total -prorated)
Lori Topel	Joseph Scanzillo (CEAS - 30 weeks)	\$550

8. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the addition of the following to the 2026-2027 Substitute Teacher List, pending paperwork and successful criminal background check. (Attachment #14)

Name	Certification	Rate
Caitlin Colendenski	Sub Cert	\$115
Jessica Askins	Sub Cert	\$115
Murray Mazard	Sub Custodian	\$19.50/hour

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9. Move to approve upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, **Michaela Etlinger** to complete Clinical II Field Experience through Kean University at Beechwood School five (5) days a week from September 22, 2026 through December 4, 2026.

XVI. Policy

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

Moved: Dr. Guidicipietro Seconded: Mr. Dillon
RC: Dillon - yes Goodwin - yes Guidicipietro - yes
 Hyman - absent Pupo - yes Schiano - yes Worgan - yes

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

P 6112	Reimbursement of Federal and Other Grant Expenditures	Revised/Mandated
P 6115.02	Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls - Mandatory Disclosures	Revised/Mandated
P 6311	Contracts for Goods and Services Funded by Federal Grants	Revised/Mandated

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

P 2411	Career Education and Academic Counseling	Revised/Mandated
R 5200	Attendance	Revised
P 5561	Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion Techniques for Students with Disabilities	Revised/Mandated
P 5701	Academic Integrity	Revised/Recommended
P 8561	Procurement Procedures for School Nutrition Program	Revised/Mandated

XVII. Old Business - none

XVIII. New Business - none

- XIX. Committee Reports** - Mr. Goodwin said the Finance/Buildings & Grounds met today and saw a brief presentation about the health insurance plan options. More to come on that. There was no update from the Send/Receive committee. Mr. Kinney reported that the

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Referendum Committee met this afternoon with Solutions Architects. They are waiting to hear back from the state in the next couple of weeks for approval of proposed projects to vote on in a referendum.

XX. Public Participation - A member of the community asked if Mountainside was coming up with any new policies regarding pulling back on Chromebook/screen time usage, as many districts are looking into. Mr. Kinney commented about streamlining platforms in the Technology Plan. Mrs. Jenks addressed how staff were encouraged on opening days to consider if Chromebook use is truly relevant and necessary, and are encouraged to be intentional to limit screentime.

XXI. Adjournment- Resolution (Attachment #1)

A motion was made by Mr. Dillon at 9:19 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Schiano to adjourn. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote, 6 ayes - 0 nays.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bernadette Pinto
Business Administrator/Board Secretary