

**Montague Township Board of Education Meeting
Workshop Action Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2023**

1. CALL TO ORDER at 6:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

	Present	Absent
Barbara Holstein, President	x	
Michael Zernhelt, Vice President	x	
Christopher Bell	x	
Paul Brislin	x	
Andree Campbell	x	
Tasha DeGeorge	x	
Jaime Johnson	x	

Others Present:

	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
James Andriac - Acting Superintendent	x	
Michael Bussow, SBA/BS	x	
Joseph Garcia, Esq. – Board Atty.	x	

3. FLAG SALUTE - FOLLOWED BY A MOMENT OF SILENCE OR PRAYER

4. MISSION STATEMENT - The mission of the Montague Township School District is to provide the best educational experience and opportunities to realize the potential of every child.

5. LEGAL NOTICE - In accordance with the New Jersey Sunshine Law, a legal notice of this meeting has been posted on the official bulletin board at the school and advertised in the New Jersey Herald and the Sunday New Jersey Herald.

6. PRESENTATION - Some of Miss. Weiss’s 3rd Grade students read their descriptive writings to the Board

7. ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montague Township Board of Education recess and proceed to executive session to discuss personnel matters and legal issues. Action may or may not be taken.

Motion to open Executive Session at 6:47 p.m.

Motion Christopher Bell 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Executive Session at 8:01 p.m.

Motion Andree Campbell 2nd Tasha DeGeorge Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Motion Tasha DeGeorge 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

- 8. CSA REPORT - James Andriac, Acting Superintendent** - Announced Teacher of the Year - Jessica Coppolino and Educational Services Professional of the Year was Samantha Frost. Congratulations to both of them. They are both wonderful people who do great things in the building for our students. Announced November students of the month. We had our TREP\$ marketplace and book fair last Thursday. This showed that we need our parking lot done. We had people parking on the grass. The kids had a blast doing it. Thank you to Ms. Tagliabue and Ms. Coppolino for running the TREP\$ Marketplace and we will be having another one in the Spring. Bell Choir performed live this morning on WSUS. Thank you to Jody Taylor for having them prepared. Friday, December 15th is picture retake day. Also, Friday, December 15th Dana and Melinda will be holding a Family Fun Night in the cafeteria. They are looking for donations of mittens, scarves, gloves, hats for families in need and the PTA is also hosting a Make It Take It event in the gym. Wednesday, December 20 at 6PM our 7th and 8th graders will be versing the Staff in a Snow Brawl (it's like dodgeball). Friday, December 22, 2023 will be a 1:30 p.m. dismissal. The reason why we have a 1:05 p.m. sometimes is because when High Point has a full day when we have a half day is to allow time for our bus drivers to get to High Point on time. 1:30 p.m. is our normal half day schedule and if HP is a half day too we don't have to rush up to HP to get our high schoolers on the bus.
- 9. SBA REPORT - Michael Bussow, BA** - We have an update on the parking lot expansion. We are at 90% of the planning and all the board members have been provided with a copy of the plans to date so any adjustments would be made on your recommendations. We provided a copy to the Township today and our engineer would be willing to meet them at the township committee meeting on December 26th if they find it necessary. We are going to submit tomorrow to the Upper Delaware Soil Conservation District for permitting through them and the next phase would be going out to bid in February hopefully and construction starting in the Spring and having the parking lot ready by next school year. On the HVAC upgrades, the engineering has been approved for the gym, cafeteria and the office and classrooms down this front hallway between and gym and office. The equipment has been ordered and we are just waiting for it to come in and then schedule construction for that. The LED project, the exterior has been completed as well as the middle school classrooms and by the end of December the front hallway and gym will be done.
- 10. BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Barbara Holstein** - I was happy to be able to listen to the children on the WSUS today, It was beautiful and the children did a fabulous job. Happy to see that Ms. Blasdell attended as well. Also attended the tree lighting and the bell choir was fabulous there. Commended Ms. Weiss for bringing the children in tonight. I haven't been able to attend the TREP\$ but have seen pictures and it seems to be an amazing event of the different items the students have made and I'm thankful that we are doing the program. Very happy that the lighting system has been finished. It's another achievement at the school.

11. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION TO DO A CONSENT TO APPROVE BOTH MINUTES

Moved: Paul Brislin 2nd: Jaime Johnson

BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Regular Meeting Minutes and the Executive Minutes of November 8, 2023.

BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Regular Meeting Minutes and the Executive Minutes of November 29, 2023.

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Holstein	Johnson	Zernhelt	Total
YES	X for Nov. 8, 2023	x	x	x	X for Nov. 8, 2023	x	x	7 - for Nov. 8, 2023 5 - for Nov. 29, 2023
NO								
ABSTAIN	X for Nov. 29, 2023				x for Nov. 29, 2023			2 - for Nov. 29, 2023
ABSENT								

12. PUBLIC SESSION – AGENDA ITEMS

Public comment is invited on all matters pertaining to the school district. All participants shall be permitted four (4) minutes to speak and shall state their name, place of residence, and group affiliation, if appropriate. The board uses the public comment as an opportunity to listen to Citizen concerns, but please be aware that not all issues brought to a board meeting will be resolved this evening.

Motion to open Public Comment at 8:13 p.m.

Motion Andree Campbell 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

Mr. Andriac stated that there was an email going around the Sussex County schools and that we are one of two schools that are still providing zoom meetings where the public can still comment. Ms. Holstein stated that she doesn't understand why any school district would have stopped. Ms. Holstein wanted to thank the Student Council for the candy canes they left for the Board members. Mr. Zernhelt said thank you too.

Motion to close Public Comment at 8:15 p.m.

Motion Christopher Bell 2nd Andree Campbell Voice Vote: All in Favor

13. FINANCE

MOTION TO DO CONSENT AGENDA FOR ITEMS F-1 THROUGH F-6

MOVED: PAUL BRISLIN 2nd: TASHA DEGEORGE

F-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the November 30, 2023 through December 13, 2023 - Bill List below:

Fund 10	\$ 43,491.42
Fund 11	\$553,094.11
Fund 20	\$ 49,135.92
Fund 60	\$ 23,744.88
Fund 61	\$ 3,735.88
Grand Total	\$673,202.21

F-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Board Secretary’s Report and the Treasurer of School Monies Report for the Month of October 2023 pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(C)3 and 4.

F-3 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the transfers adjustments as of November 30, 2023 (see attached).

F-4 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve David Miller, Director of School Facilities, to attend the 2024 NJSBGA 26th Annual Conference/Expo at Harrah’s Waterfront Conference Center from March 17, 2024 through March 20, 2024 with a total cost of \$815.89. (Registration fee \$325.00, hotel cost \$300.00, mileage cost and tolls \$190.89).

F-5 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Contract for Services 2023-2024 between Michael Cedeno & Luis Cedeno/Prestige Education Consultants LLC and Montague Township Public Schools to provide Independent Child Study Evaluations at the rates outlined in said agreement.

F-6 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the submission of application for the School Security Grant and assure the availability of local funds in case the total estimated costs of the proposed work exceed the school district’s grant allowance.

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Holstein	Johnson	Zernhelt	Total
YES	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	7
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT								

14. PERSONNEL

MOTION TO DO CONSENT AGENDA FOR ITEMS P-1 THROUGH P-6

MOVED: CHRISTOPHER BELL 2nd: TASHA DEGEORGE

Discussion: Mr. Zernhelt said regarding P-3 said it is good to see someone that actually came to the school on the agenda. He is not friends with her. She was a couple grades below me. Ms. Holstein said welcome back to the halls of Montague.

P-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **LORIE JESKEY and RACHEL VAN GORDEN** as Monty’s Cafe Advisors for the 2023-2024 school year with a stipend of \$1,000 each.

P-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve tuition reimbursement to Employee #10870670 in the amount of \$4,932.90.

P-3 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **CHRISTINA LOCASCIO** as full time preschool through grade 3 teacher, Step A/BA, pending background check and NJ Certification for the 2023-24 school year with a start date of on or about January 8, 2024.

P-4 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **JENNIFER SEMINERIO** as Preschool Master Teacher, Step E/MA, for the 2023-2024 school year effective January 2, 2024 .

P-5 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **KATLYN VALLIS** as full time Preschool through Grade 3 Teacher, Step B/BA, for the 2023-2024 school year effective January 2, 2024.

P-6 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **RACHEL VAN GORDEN** as a Basketball Coach for the 2023-2024 school year with a \$1,000 stipend.

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Holstein	Johnson	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	7
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT								

15. BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Paul and Andree Campbell - Ms. Holstein is glad to see the Optical Academy coming back. It is a benefit to the students and the Town. Mr. Andriac stated that all the children will be getting eye exams and glasses.

BG-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the following Request for Use of Facilities or Grounds for the following:

REQUESTED BY:	EVENT	ROOMS	DATE	TIME
7th & 8th Grade	Snow Brawl - Staff vs. Students	Gymnasium	Wed., Dec. 20, 2023	6:00PM
MEA	Optical Academy	Gymnasium	Tues., Jan. 24, 2024	7:30AM to 2:00PM
Dana Berry & Melinda Tanzola	Family Cornhole Event	Gym & Bathroom	Fri., Feb. 16, 2024	6PM to 9PM
Dana Berry & Melinda Tanzola	Family Movie Night	Gym & Bathroom	Fri., March 8, 2024	7PM to 9PM

BG-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Board of Education approve the submission of the Montague Township School Stormwater Management Plan and associated fee of \$1,025.00 payable to the Upper Delaware Conservation District.

BG-3 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the **Montague PTA's** Request for Use of Facilities or Grounds for the following:

USE/PURPOSE	ROOMS	DATE	TIME
General Meeting	Cafeteria & Bathroom	Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2024	6:30PM to 8:00PM
Sweetheart Dance	Gym, Cafeteria & Bathroom	Friday, Feb. 9, 2024	4PM to 9:30PM (includes set up & clean up)

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Holstein	Johnson	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	7
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT								

16. ADMINISTRATION

A-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the following January 2024 to December 2024 Board of Education hybrid meeting schedule the calendar is as written in the agenda:

WORKSHOP ACTION MEETINGS	REGULAR BOE MEETINGS
January 10, 2024	
February 7, 2024	
March 13, 2024 (Approval of Tentative Budget) (Tentative)	March 27, 2024 (Public Budget Hearing) (Tentative)
April 10, 2024	
May 1, 2024 - Reorganization Meeting (Tentative)	
May 8, 2024	May 22, 2024
June 12, 2024	June 26, 2024
July 10, 2024	July 24, 2024
August 14, 2024	August 28, 2024
September 11, 2024	September 25, 2024
October 9, 2024	October 23, 2024
November 13, 2024	
December 11, 2024	

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge Seconded: Jaime Johnson Discussion: Mr. Brislin asked if we need two meetings or can we go with just one month? Mr. Brislin questioned the February meetings. Ms. Holstein stated that she doesn't believe we should alternate between a 1st and 3rd and 2nd and 4th just to accommodate a holiday. The school is on a good trajectory. We are past the roughest days and there are so many successful things going on. Why do we need 2 meetings a month? If we do need a meeting we can call a meeting within 48 hours notice. In the month of May there will be 2 meetings because of the ReOrg Meeting. In March or April there may be an extra meeting because of the Budget. Ms. Holstein does not think it is necessary for 2 meetings a month. Ms. Holstein asked Mr. Bussow what would be the best meeting date? Mr. Bussow stated that the 2nd Wednesday of the month would be best with getting bills paid. Ms. Holstein also stated that if anyone had any questions regarding Administration Mr. Andriac's and Mr. Bussow's doors are always open and they would reach out and get a response. Mr. Brislin asked that January 24, 2024 would be optional. Ms. Holstein asked if the resolution would have to be amended. Mr. Zernhelt asked if it would be worded that it could be changed that if something happened that if they felt that two meetings were necessary. Ms. Holstein stated that they could always call an extra meeting. The calendar would be the 2nd Wednesdays of the month and if you need a meeting we would advertise 48 hours in advance. Mr. Zernhelt clarified that if we need a special meeting we just need to advertise 48 hours in advance and Ms. Holstein said yes, so if you have a meeting on February 14th and on February 16th the State says you have to have your HVAC project you need to approve this before the 28th, you call a special meeting for that particular item and that would be it and then we could look ahead and this calendar that is in front of us is based on 2nd and 4th and 1st and 3rd and what Ms. Holstein is prepared to do is amend this resolution to where we are looking at we have January 10th to reflect January 14th not the first and 3rd and then you would have your meeting on March 13 with the tentative budget but you might have to the 27th meeting for the public hearing so we can go ahead and approve that tonight too so that the public is aware we are having that meeting on the 27th and we would have April 10th but X out April 24th. Then you would have your meeting on May 8th. Now I'm going to go back and say once the election happens the 3rd week of April, we have to wait for the mail-in ballots so this May 1st is not realistic. It's probably going to be the 2nd week of May that you have the ReOrg meeting. There's a timeline they are going to release and there's so many days after the mail-in ballots are released to call final results. Ms. Holstein asked if we can add the ReOrg meeting in later. Mr. Garcia said he would keep May 1st in there as a placeholder and if it is not workable then we can schedule a different date as we did this particular year. Ms. Holstein asked if we can make May 8th the Reorg date and Mr. Garcia thinks the Reorg is supposed to be 7 days from certification. We will leave May 1st for Reorg and first meeting with the new board on May 8th. The rest of the 2nd meetings of the month are all done as well. Two meetings a month were necessary when most of this Board was formed because of some much planning and work that needed to be done for staffing and change of programs and so forth so it made sense for 2 meetings a month. Special meetings can be added within 48th. Mr. Garcia said that you can do one notice for multiple special meetings (i.e., April 24, May 22) because you are still satisfying the notice requirement. Mr. Bell asked for clarification for June on. Ms. Holstein listed the following dates:

January 10, 2024

February 14, 2024

March 13, 2024 (Approval of Tentative Budget -**Tentative**)

March 27, 2024 - (Public Budget Hearing - **Tentative**)

April 10, 2024

May 1, 2024 - **Reorganization Meeting (Tentative)**

May 8, 2024 - Meeting of new board

June 12, 2024

July 10, 2024

August 14, 2024

September 11, 2024

October 9, 2024

November 13, 2024

December 11, 2024

MOTION TO ADOPT AMENDED CALENDAR FOR A-1

Moved: Christopher Bell

Seconded: Paul Brislin

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Holstein	Johnson	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	7
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT								

LIAISON REPORTS

- High Point - Tasha DeGeorge - Nothing to report - no meeting since last meeting. Clash of the classes competing to fill the pantry.
- Montague PTA - Michael Zernhelt - They had the bookfair last week. They donated a book to every child. They fulfilled teacher wishlists. They donated \$500 to the library and \$500 to create a teacher’s resource cabinet. This Friday is their Make It Take It event. January 4th is planetarium assembly and January 30th is the General PTA meeting.
- Sussex County Charter/Tech School - Andree Campbell - Business as usual. The pool building is missing.
- School Board Association - Barbara Holstein - Look at NJ School board magazine.

17. PUBLIC SESSION

Public comment is invited on all matters pertaining to the school district. All participants shall be permitted four (4) minutes to speak and shall state their name, place of residence, and group affiliation, if appropriate.

The board uses the public comment as an opportunity to listen to Citizen concerns, but please be aware that not all issues brought to a board meeting will be resolved this evening.

Motion to open Public Comment at 8:38 p.m.

Motion Tasha DeGeorge 2nd Andree Campbell

Voice Vote: All in Favor

Ellie Murphy, 15 Plaza Drive, Newton, NJ. My Daughter goes to High Point HS and is part of the chorus and I am sure Montague kids go to HP and are part of the chorus and last Friday had the privilege to go to Carnegie Hall and watch the HP Chorus sing on stage with 3 other High Schools at Carnegie Hall.

Motion to close Public Comment at 8:40 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Tasha DeGeorge

Voice Vote: All in Favor

18. NEW BUSINESS

BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education authorize DMR Architects to prepare and submit to the New Jersey Department of Education documentation for the Electrical Service Upgrade at the Montague Township School.

WHEREAS, this project requires the preparation of schematic drawings, and schematic submission to the State of New Jersey Department of Education for the purpose of review and approval as an “Other Capital Project” which is not seeking state funding.

WHEREAS, this project is consistent with the current Long-Range Facilities Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montague Township Board of Education authorizes DMR Architects to prepare and submit the New Jersey Department of Education documentation for Electrical Service Upgrade at the Montague Township School.

Moved: Paul Brislin Seconded: Tasha DeGeorge Discussion: Ms. Holstein is really happy that we are moving forward. This electrical upgrade has been presented to the Board since 2021 as needing to be done and as we had to adjust with changes to projects and architects it’s nice to see this is going to happen. It’s a long time coming just like the roof repair and lighting project.

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Holstein	Johnson	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	7
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT								

BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education authorize DMR Architects to prepare and submit to the New Jersey Department of Education documentation for the Site and Parking Improvements at the Montague Township School.

WHEREAS, this project requires the preparation of schematic drawings, and schematic submission to the State of New Jersey Department of Education for the purpose of review and approval as an “Other Capital Project” which is not seeking state funding.

WHEREAS, this project is consistent with the current Long-Range Facilities Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montague Township Board of Education authorizes DMR Architects to prepare and submit the New Jersey Department of Education documentation for Site and Parking Improvements at the Montague Township School.

Moved: Andree Campbell Seconded: Christopher Bell Discussion: Ms. Holstein really loves the fact we are moving ahead with the parking. We are going to safeguard Mr. Finnegan’s tree. We definitely need parking.

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Holstein	Johnson	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	7
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT								

BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the QSAC District Improvement Plan (DIP) for the Instruction and Program Section and Fiscal Management Section of the Quality Single Accountability Continuum.

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge Seconded: Jaime Johnson

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Holstein	Johnson	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	7
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT								

BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Montague Little League’s Request for Use of Facilities or Grounds for the following:

USE/PURPOSE	ROOMS	DATE	TIME
Baseball Skills & Fundamentals	Gym & Bathrooms	Jan. 2, 2024 to April 1, 2024	6:00PM to 8:00PM

Moved: Andree Campbell Seconded: Christopher Bell

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Holstein	Johnson	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	7
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT								

19. ADJOURNMENT

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Tasha DeGeorge
 Time of Adjournment: 8:48 p.m.

Voice Vote: All in Favor/Opposed

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Berry

DANA BERRY
 Administrative Assistant to the Board Secretary