

**Montague Township Board of Education Meeting  
Regular Action Meeting Minutes  
August 13, 2025**

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

**2. ROLL CALL**

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

Others Present:

	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
James Andriac - CSA	<u>  x  </u>	<u>      </u>
Michael Bussow, SBA/BS	<u>  x  </u>	<u>      </u>
Joseph Garcia, Esq. – Board Atty.	<u>  x  </u>	<u>      </u>
Dana Berry, Adm. Asst. to Bd. Sec.	<u>  x  </u>	<u>      </u>

**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. 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 6:32 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin                      2<sup>nd</sup> Christopher Bell                      Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Executive Session at 7:14 p.m.

Motion Christopher Bell                      2<sup>nd</sup> Paul Brislin                      Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Motion Christopher Bell                      2<sup>nd</sup> Caitlin Statkus                      Voice Vote: All in Favor

**7. CSA REPORT - James Andriac, CSA -** There are 20 days left until the first day of school. Thank you to Dave Miller and the custodial staff for getting the building ready. The addition is all complete. Furniture being delivered tomorrow. Welcome back letters were sent out on August 12, 2025. We will have soccer and cross country in the Fall and start the 1st day of school. Dr. Autotte will be at the school to give free physicals. Prek starts at 8AM and K-8 starts at 9AM. There will be a holding room. Bussing will be different.

**8. SBA REPORT - Michael Bussow, SBA** - Commented on the addition and how marvelously that's been moving forward. Very happy with all the inspections. We are ready to go and our in-house staff under Dave Miller have done a great job. Mr. Bell asked if we will be having a ceremony? Mr. Andriac said no. Mr. Bell asked about a delayed opening and Mr. Andriac stated that it will be a 2 hour delay so Prek will come in at 10AM and K-8 will come in at 11. Mr. Andriac stated that the pickleball courts will be installed tomorrow. There will also be a full size basketball court and hopscotch.

**9. BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Andree Campbell** - thank you to everyone involved in getting the addition completed.

## 10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Regular Meeting Minutes and the Executive Minutes of July 9, 2025.

Moved: Caitlin Statkus

Seconded: Michael Zernhelt

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Johnson	Statkus	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x		x	x	6
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT					x			1

## 11. 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 7:22 p.m.

Motion Caitlin Statkus

2<sup>nd</sup> Michael Zernhelt

Voice Vote: All in Favor

4 people online

Motion to close Public Comment at 7:23 p.m.

Motion Caitlin Statkus

2<sup>nd</sup> Paul Brislin

Voice Vote: All in Favor

## 12. FINANCE AND INSURANCE

**Motion to approve Resolutions F-1 through F-14 as listed below:**

Moved: Paul Brislin

Seconded: Caitlin Statkus

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Johnson	Statkus	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x		x	x	6
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT					x			1

**F-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the July 10,2025 through August 13, 2025 - Bill's List listed below:

Fund 10	\$ 389,205.14
Fund 11	\$ 592,159.38
Fund 12	\$ 4,050.00
Fund 20	\$ 53,912.34
Fund 60	\$ 11,647.42
Grand Total	\$1,050,974.28

**F-2 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the 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 **June 2025** pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10(C)3 and 4.

**F-3 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the transfer report of June 30, 2025.

**F-4 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Contract for Educational Services between the Sussex County Educational Services Commission and the Montague Township Board of Education for the following students to attend Northern Hills Academy for the 2025-2026 School Year commencing September 4, 2025.

Student ID #	Tuition Amount	Paraprofessional	Add't Therapy	Total
100280	\$62,920.00	\$30,376.00	\$4,428.00	\$97,724.00
160002	\$62,920.00	\$30,376.00	N/A	\$93,296.00
13958977	\$56,401.00	\$30,376.00	N/A	\$86,777.00
100390	\$62,920.00	\$30,376.00	N/A	\$93,296.00
13844119	\$62,920.00	\$30,376.00	\$4,428.00	\$97,724.00
13958990	\$56,401.00	\$15,188.00 (shared)	N/A	\$71,589.00
100472	\$56,401.00	\$15,188.00 (shared)	N/A	\$71,589.00
100626	\$56,401.00	\$30,376.00	N/A.	\$86,777.00

**F-5 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Tuition Contract Agreement between the Montague Board of Education and the Sussex Vocational Board of Education for the 2025-2026 school year commencing September 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 at an estimated cost per pupil of \$3,000.00.

**F-6 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education authorize the submission of the IDEA Grant applications for FY2026 and accepts the grant award of these funds upon subsequent approval for the FY2026 applications as listed:

IDEA Basic - \$117,853  
IDEA PreK - \$ 4,810

**F-7 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education authorize the submission of the ESEA Grant applications for FY26 and accepts the grant award of these funds upon subsequent approval for the FY2026 application as listed:

Title I Part A - \$104,202  
Title II Part A - \$ 12,642  
Title IV - \$ 10,000

**F-8 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve Michael Bussow, SBA/Board Secretary, to attend the New Jersey School Board Association's Annual Workshop conference at the Atlantic City Convention Center, from October 20-23, 2025 with a total approximate cost of \$1,200.00 (\$550.00 Registration fee, hotel cost not to exceed \$150.00 a night (3 nights), mileage and toll costs).

**F-9 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve entering into an agreement with Sycamore International to dispose of decommissioned, obsolete and broken electronic equipment. (approximately 45 Chromebooks and iPads). This service is free of charge and complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for data destruction. We will receive a complete inventory of all equipment destroyed along with a certificate of destruction.

**F-10 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Request to Provide Services Contract for educational services provided by the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired from September 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 for Student ID#100316 with a cost of \$16,863.00.

**F-11 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve 2025-265 Joint Transportation Agreement between Kittatinny Regional High School and Montague Township School District at the total cost of \$1,177.00.

**F-12 BE IT RESOLVED** at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve DMR Architect's August 6, 2025 Proposal for the Pre-Referendum and Post-Referendum Services for various school additions/renovations (DMR Proposal #M2025-153) as outlined in the proposal, not to exceed \$25,000 for the Pre-Referendum Services.

**F-13 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CERTAIN ACTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSED SCHOOL FACILITY PROJECTS**

**BE IT RESOLVED** The Board Of Education of the Township of Montague in the County of Sussex, New Jersey Authorizing Certain Actions in Connection with a Special Election.

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education of the Township of Montague in the County of Sussex, New Jersey (the Board when referring to the governing body and the School District when referring to the territorial boundaries governed thereby), seeks to submit to the voters various school facilities improvements, renovations, and alterations to school facilities at the Montague Township School;

**WHEREAS**, the School District will seek Debt Service Aid with respect to the eligible Projects; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board now seeks to take the initial steps in order to proceed with the planning and authorization of: (i) the Projects; and (ii) a School District special election at which time a bond referendum authorizing the Projects shall be presented to the voters of the School District,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Montague Township Board of Education of the Township in the County of Sussex, New Jersey, as follows:

Section 1. In accordance with the requirements of Section 6A:26-5.1 through 6A:26-5.3 of the New Jersey Administrative Code, the Board hereby authorizes/ratifies the preparation of Schematic Plans and Educational Specifications , if required, by DMR Architects (DMR) in connection with the Projects and the Board further authorizes and directs DMR to submit same to the New Jersey Department of Education and to the Sussex County Superintendent of Schools for review and approval. The Board further authorizes and directs the submission of the Schematic Plans to the planning board for its review, to the extent required by law.

Section 2. In accordance with the requirements of Section 6A:26-2.3 of the New Jersey Administrative Code, the Board hereby authorizes/ratifies any amendments to the Long-Range Facilities Plan, as necessary, to reflect the Projects and approves the submission of any such amendments to the New Jersey Department of Education.

Section 3. In accordance with the requirements of Section 6A:26-3.2 of the New Jersey Administrative Code, the Board hereby approves/ratifies the submission of the Project Applications and its decision seeking debt service aid for the Projects,

Section 4. With respect to the Projects, the Board hereby authorizes/ratifies and directs the Board President, the Superintendent Business Administrator/Board Secretary, DMR Architects, to execute the amendment(s) to update the Long-Range Facilities Plan, the Project cost estimate sheets and all related project documents allowing submission of same to the New Jersey Department of Education.

Section 5. The Board hereby authorizes and directs the Board President, the Superintendent, the Business Administrator/Board Secretary, DMR Architects, and Bond Counsel (To Be Determined), as applicable, to take all action required to preserve the opportunity to present the Projects to the voters via a bond referendum at School District special election to be held on March 10, 2025 (anticipated) or such other date as may be available and selected by the Board.

Section 6. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

#### **F-14 RESOLUTION TO INCREASE THE BID THRESHOLD**

**WHEREAS**, Rene Metzgar, Treasurer of School Monies, 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 Montague Township 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 and the Qualified Purchasing Agent (Rene Metzgar, Treasurer), to award contracts, in full accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3 (a), for those purchases that do not exceed 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 School Business Administrator/Board Secretary and QPA shall award contracts after soliciting at least two competitive quotations.

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

### 13. PERSONNEL

**Motion to approve Resolutions P-1 to P-7 and P-9 and P-10 as listed below:**

Moved: Caitlin Statkus		Seconded: Michael Zernhelt				Discussion: P-8 Tabled		
Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Johnson	Statkus	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x		x	x	6
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT					x			1

**P-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Montague Township Board of Education approve **BRODY BERRY** and **YAKELIN CIRRITO** as part-time custodians at \$20.00 per hour for the 2025-26SY.

**P-2 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Montague Township Board of Education approve **JESSICA COPPOLINO** and **LORIE JESKEY** as Lead Teachers for the 2025-2026 school year each to receive a \$2,500 stipend.

**P-3 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve to correct the salary step of **ALEXIS HAUREY**, Maternity Leave Replacement Guidance Counselor, from Step A/BA to Step A/MA, for the 2025-26SY effective August 26, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

**P-4 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve to change the name in P-15 on the July 9, 2025 agenda from Amber Bocai to **AMBER DeOLIVEIRA**.

**P-5 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the change in position for **ANDREA RETTING** from Maternity Leave Replacement Teacher to full-time Teacher, at Step BA/E, effective August 26, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

**P-6 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education accept the resignation of Employee #10870668 effective October 3, 2025.

**P-7 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Scheduling and Assessment Coordinator job description.

~~**P-8 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **JESSICA COPPOLINO**, as the Scheduling and Assessment Coordinator with a \$3,000 stipend, effective August 26, 2025 through June 30, 2026.~~

**P-9 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **CLANCEY LANE**, teacher to work two days per diem in August 2025 and to be paid according to the negotiated MEA hourly rate.

**P-10 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the following stipend positions according the the MEA Agreement for the 2025-2026 school year:

8th Grade Advisor - Rachel Sikora and Jessica Coppolino

Archery Club (2 sessions) - Scott Tanner and Molloy Jacobs

Bait Buddies - Carl Ferriere

Basketball (Boys) - Emily Weiss and Dana Berry

Basketball (Girls) - Emily Weiss and Dana Berry

Bell Choir (2 sessions) - Jody Taylor

Buddies Bistro (Monty's C.A.F.E.) - Lorie Jeskey and Rachel Sikora

Cross Country - Brent Runne and Emily Weiss

Dapper Dudes - Brenten Runne

Dungeons & Dragons - Kayte Snyder and Michael Spina  
FFA Advisor - Rachel Sikora

Gamers Unplugged - Elizabeth Palazzo

Girls on the Run - Darah Pinzone and Samantha Frost

Irish Dance Club - Devyn Smith

National Junior Honor Society - Jessica Coppolino and Lorie Jeskey

Photography Club - Melissa Neamand

Ski & Snowboard Club - Molloy Jacobs and Scott Tanner

Softball - Rachel Sikora

Soccer Club - Molloy Jacobs and Kayte Snyder

Student Council - Jessica Coppolino and Lorie Jeskey

Sunny Seeds - Stacey Blasdel

Theatre Club - Clancey Lane

Track & Field - Emily Weiss and Brooke Senesac

TREP\$ - Jessica Coppolino and Kayte Snyder

Yearbook - Korinn Loriz and Danielle Conklin

Asbestos Certified

Black Seal Certified

National Board Certified

## 14. POLICIES

**PL-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the first reading of Strauss Esmay Policy #5111 - Eligibility of Resident/Non-Resident Students.

Moved: Christopher Bell      Seconded: Tasha DeGeorge      Discussion: Christopher Bell wanted to make it known that this is in line with the law and personally wishes we could have kept it the way it was.

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Johnson	Statkus	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x		x	x	6
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT					x			1

## 15. BUILDING AND GROUNDS

**BG-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve Healthy Kids usage of the building for their before and aftercare program for the 2025-2026 school year.

Moved: Christopher Bell      Seconded: Tasha DeGeorge      Discussion: Mr. Bell asked what Healthy Kids was. Mr. Andriac stated that it the Before and Aftercare service at the school.

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Johnson	Statkus	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x		x	x	6
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT					x			1

## 16. ADMINISTRATION

**A-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve to use the Marshall evaluation model for the 2025-2026 school year.

Moved: Christopher Bell      Seconded: Tasha DeGeorge      Discussion: Mr. Bell asked what is it? Mr. Andriac stated that it is the evaluation model that we use in the district to evaluate our teachers. Non-tenured teachers get 3 evaluations and tenured teachers get 2 evaluations. We used to use Danielson but was not a fan of it.

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Johnson	Statkus	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x		x	x	6
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT					x			1

## 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 7:30 p.m.

Motion Christopher Bell      2<sup>nd</sup> Michael Zernhelt

Voice Vote: All in Favor

5 people online

Motion to close Public Comment at 7:30 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin      2<sup>nd</sup> Tasha DeGeorge

Voice Vote: All in Favor



## 18. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Superintendent Evaluation - please complete them by September 1, 2025
- District and Board of Education Goals (due in Sept.) - Let us know if you want to add or change any

## 19. NEW BUSINESS

- NJSBA Conference registration October 20-23, 2025. Please let Mr. Bussow if you would like to attend. Mr. Bussow said it is in Atlantic City that offers a lot of workshops on different topics.

### ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA

#### PERSONNEL:

1. **BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education accept the resignation of Employee #10870649 effective immediately.

Moved: Michael Zernhelt

Seconded: Paul Brislin

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Johnson	Statkus	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x		x	x	6
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT					x			1

2. **BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **EDWARD BRADLEY**, as full time Teacher, at Step E/MA, pending criminal history and background check and verification of credentials, for the 2025-26SY effective August 26, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

Moved: Christopher Bell

Seconded: Tasha DeGeorge:

Roll Call	Bell	Brislin	Campbell	DeGeorge	Johnson	Statkus	Zernhelt	Total
YES	x	x	x	x		x	x	6
NO								
ABSTAIN								
ABSENT					x			1

#### ADJOURNMENT

Motion Christopher Bell      2nd Michael Zernhelt      Voice Vote: All in Favor  
Time of Adjournment: 7:34 p.m.

Next board meeting: September 10, 2025 @ 6:30 p.m. Also, the architects will be presenting at the next meeting for a proposal that would add an extension onto the gym and to the building as a whole.

Respectfully submitted

*Dana Berry*

DANA BERRY  
Administrative Assistant to the Board Secretary