

**Montague Township Board of Education Meeting  
Regular Action Meeting Minutes  
September 10, 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 Arrived at 7:05 p.m. |        |
| 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> Michael Zernhelt                      Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Executive Session at 6:59 p.m.

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

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 6:59 p.m.

Motion Christopher Bell                      2<sup>nd</sup> Tasha DeGeorg                      Voice Vote: All in Favor

**7. CSA REPORT - James Andriac, CSA -** We had our first week of school. It was a great week. Thank you to Ms. Citro for all the hard work she put in and for getting us up and going. Thank you to Mr. Romano for making sure our network is working properly and thank you to Mr. Miller for making sure our building is clean and to all of our teachers for being here and doing the wonderful job that they do. Back to school night is Thursday, September 11, 2025 - 6PM to 8PM. Soccer, GOTR and Cross country have all started. There are probably about 100 students signed up between the 3 clubs. Our first home meet is September 19th against Pope John. The basketball court will be done by the end of the week. Thank you to all the PreK teachers and parents for working with us as we adjust to the new start time. It has been very successful. Our current student enrollment is 346. No current open job positions. Congratulations to all the teachers who are newly tenured.

8. **SBA REPORT - Michael Bussow, SBA** - Update on construction project. We are wrapping up the final stages. We received our certificate of majority of completion. We updated and filed with the State our modification of our long range facility plan. Our last demographics census was done in 2021 and went through 2027. We are having a new demographic student completed.

9. **BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Andree Campbell** - Thank you to the staff, teachers, administration and custodial staff for doing a fabulous job making this place shine and sparkle. The driveway situation has been going really well and hopefully it will continue.

LET THE RECORD SHOW THAT CAITLIN STATKUS ARRIVED AT 7:05P.M.

## 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 August 13, 2025 and the Special Meeting Minutes of August 26, 2025.

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge

Seconded: Paul Brislin:

| Roll Call | Bell | Brislin | Campbell | DeGeorge | Johnson | Statkus | Zernhelt             | Total |
|-----------|------|---------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------------------|-------|
| YES       | x    | x       | x        | x        |         | x       | X to August 13, 2025 | 6     |
| NO        |      |         |          |          |         |         |                      |       |
| ABSTAIN   |      |         |          |          | x       |         | X to August 26, 2025 | 2     |
| ABSENT    |      |         |          |          |         |         |                      |       |

## 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 7:06 p.m.

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

Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Public Comment at 7:07 p.m.

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

Voice Vote: All in Favor

## 12. FINANCE AND INSURANCE

**Motion to approve Resolutions F-1 through F2 as listed below:**

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge

Seconded: Jaime Johnson

| Roll Call | Bell | Brislin | Campbell | DeGeorge | Johnson | Statkus | Zernhelt | Total |
|-----------|------|---------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-------|
| YES       | x    | x       | x        | x        | x       | x       | x        | 7     |
| NO        |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSTAIN   |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSENT    |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |

**F-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the August 14, 2025 through September 10, 2025 - Bill's List listed below:

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| Fund 10     | \$ 3,429.61  |
| Fund 11     | \$319,125.19 |
| Fund 20     | \$320,073.59 |
| Fund 30     | \$348,648.98 |
| Grand Total | \$991,277.37 |

**F-2 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the transfer report of July 31, 2025.

### 13. PERSONNEL

**Motion to approve Resolutions P-1 through P-8 as listed below:**

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge

Seconded: Jaime Johnson

| Roll Call | Bell | Brislin | Campbell | DeGeorge | Johnson | Statkus | Zernhelt | Total |
|-----------|------|---------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-------|
| YES       | x    | x       | x        | x        | x       | x       | x        | 7     |
| NO        |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSTAIN   |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSENT    |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |

**P-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Leave of Absence Request (maternity leave) for Employee #10870728 utilizing sick and personal days & FMLA beginning October 6, 2025 and returning on or about March 2, 2026. Said employee will be responsible to pay for health insurance benefits for any unpaid time utilized.

**P-2 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **SAMANTHA BRAUCHLE** as a substitute teacher, at the sub rate of \$115.00/day, pending receipt of her substitute certificate from the NJDOE, criminal history and background check and proper employment paperwork, for the 2025-26 school year.

**P-3 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **PENELOPE HEWITT**, as a substitute teacher, at the sub rate of \$115.00/day, for the 2025-26 school year.

**P-4 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **IVETTE MANNING**, as a part-time Paraprofessional, at Step C, effective September 16, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

**P-5 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **EMILY BRAVO**, as a part-time Paraprofessional, at Step C, pending receipt of criminal history and background check and proper employment paperwork, effective on or about September 22, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

**P-6 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **HALEY HALL**, as a part-time Paraprofessional, at Step C, pending receipt of criminal history and background check and proper employment paperwork, effective on or about September 22, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

**P-7 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **JOHN GWIAZDOWSKI**, as a substitute custodian, at \$20 per hour, pending receipt of criminal history and background check and proper employment paperwork, for the 2025-2026 school year.

**P-8 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the salary adjustment for part-time teacher Carol Speck from three-sevenths to four periods a day, Step I/MA+30, effective August 26, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

#### 14. POLICIES

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

Moved: Paul Brislin

Seconded: Christopher Bell

| Roll Call | Bell | Brislin | Campbell | DeGeorge | Johnson | Statkus | Zernhelt | Total |
|-----------|------|---------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-------|
| YES       | x    | x       | x        | x        | x       | x       | x        | 7     |
| NO        |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSTAIN   |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSENT    |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |

#### 15. BUILDING AND GROUNDS

**BG-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township of Education approve the Montague PTA's request for use of district facilities on the following dates:

| DATE           | LOCATION & TIME               | PURPOSE OF USE            | # OF PEOPLE EXPECTED |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Sept. 15, 2025 | Cafeteria - 6:30PM to 8:30PM  | General Meeting           | 15-20                |
| Sept. 26, 2025 | 5 Parking Spaces - 1PM to 7PM | Mum sale dropoff & pickup | N/A                  |

Moved: Paul Brislin

Seconded: Tasha DeGeorge

Discussion: Mr. Bell asked what is our relationship with the PTA? Mr. Andriac said they are a separate entity and to support the students of Montague school.

| Roll Call | Bell | Brislin | Campbell | DeGeorge | Johnson | Statkus | Zernhelt | Total |
|-----------|------|---------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-------|
| YES       | x    | x       | x        | x        | x       | x       | x        | 7     |
| NO        |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSTAIN   |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSENT    |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |

#### 16. ADMINISTRATION

**Motion to approve Resolutions A-1 through A-8 as listed below:**

Moved: Tasha DeGeorge

Seconded: Michael Zernhelt

Discussion: Mr. Zernhelt asked how old are the students who are attending the Luna Parc field trip? Mr. Andriac said it is 6-8 students. There was discussion about what rooms the student should not observe. Mr. Bell said the goals are hard to quantify. He said we need to have more specific in terms of quantifiable. Mr. Andriac stated that Dana asked the whole board for input and no one responded until the last day of the last meeting. Mr. Bell asked for the a baseline for the test scores in math and English. Ms. Statkus had a question about A-5 regarding the \$75.. How often do we get that? Mr. Andriac stated that we never had to use it before. However, if a parent decides they are not going to pick up their child at 2:30 and decides to come at 3:30 or 4 every day, what repercussions do we have? Ms. Statkus asked where would the money go? Mr. Andriac said it would go in the general fund. Ms. Statkus asked do we incur any costs? Mr. Andriac said it technically falls on Administration. Mr. Andriac made an announcement to parents to please monitor your child's internet usage.

| Roll Call | Bell | Brislin | Campbell | DeGeorge | Johnson | Statkus | Zernhelt | Total |
|-----------|------|---------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-------|
| YES       | x    | x       | x        | x        | x       | x       | x        | 7     |
| NO        |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSTAIN   |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |
| ABSENT    |      |         |          |          |         |         |          |       |

**A-1 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Interlocal Shared Service Agreement between High Point Regional High School Board of Education and the Montague Board of Education regarding Nurse services dated September 23, 2025.

**A-2 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Montague Township Board of Education approve **Alicia Citro, Vice Principal, Michael D'Amore, Security Guard, Darah Pinzone, School Counselor, Megan Stewart, School Counselor, Melinda Linder, School Psychologist, Samantha Frost, Social Worker and Lorie Jeskey, Teacher**, as the School Threat Assessment Team.

**A-3 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the District and Board goals for the 2025-2026 school year.

**A-4 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Board of Education, approve the Montague Township School District - Annual Nursing Services Plan 2025-2026 (N.J.S.A. 6A:16-2.1 through 2.5).

**A-5 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the return bus fee of \$75.00 for any student returned to the school if no one is at the bus stop or for any student who is not picked up at school at the designated dismissal time for the 2025-2026 school year.

**A-6 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Board of Education, approve to increase the security guard sub rate to \$30.00 per hour.

**A-7 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Board of Education, approve to increase the sub nurse rate to \$230.00 per day.

**A-8 BE IT RESOLVED**, at the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Montague Board of Education approve the following field trips:

| GRADE/CLASS                  | TEACHER             | DESTINATION                   | COST                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Intro to Digital Photography | Neamand             | Luna Parc                     | No Cost                  |
| 4th Grade                    | Runne/Palazzo/Shade | Medieval Times                | \$1,792.08               |
| MD Class                     | Jeskey              | GAIT Equine Assisted Services | \$1,050.00<br>(7 visits) |

## 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 7:19 p.m.

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

Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Public Comment at 7:20 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2<sup>nd</sup> Caitlin Statkus

Voice Vote: All in Favor

## 18. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - Board members need to finish the CSA Evaluation

**19. NEW BUSINESS - Mr. Zernhelt gave an update on the PTA and their upcoming events. Ms. DeGeorge asked about the late buses. Mr. Andriac said that they are running for both Tech and HP and there are centralized drop off locations. Ms. DeGeorge voiced her concerns about students walking on Clove Road especially at night.**

**20. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion Caitlin Statkus                      2nd Michael Zernhelt  
Time of Adjournment: 7:23 p.m.

Voice Vote: All in Favor

Next board meeting: October 8, 2025 @ 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Dana Berry*

DANA BERRY  
Administrative Assistant to the Board Secretary