

Mountainside Board of Education

Meeting Highlights

December 10, 2024



This newsletter provides a monthly summary of discussions and actions taken at the Mountainside Board of Education meetings.

These are not the official minutes. Please check our website for the official minutes and additional information.

Our meetings are recorded and can be viewed on our website.

Mountainside School District Board of Education
 Vivian Pupo (President), Dana Guidici Pietro (Vice President)
 Bill Dillon, Michael Goodwin, Jordan Hyman,
 Candice Schiano, Carmine Venes

Administrative Team
 Janet Walling, Superintendent of Schools
 Dana Sullivan, Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary
 Suzanne Jenks, Principal – Deerfield School
 Jessica Vierschilling, Principal – Beechwood School
 Sheri Rouleau, Supervisor of Special Services

| Action Items | Action Taken |
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| Approval of Minutes | <i>BOE approved minutes for:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 12, 2024 Minutes of the Executive Session of November 12, 2024 |
| Correspondence | none |
| Public Participation | none |
| President's Report | none |
| Superintendent's Report | Mrs. Walling shared the high school parent survey results, as the board will be entering a new send/receive contract at the end of the 26/27 school year. She also shared the 5-Year Strategic Plan, which was developed with community input, the board committee, and administration, and is on the agenda for approval. Mr. Dillon made comments about the plan, asking that periodically throughout the years, whenever there are milestones or goals met, that they be reported out to the board and community. This plan will be posted on the website. Mr. Hyman made comments and is pleased with the final plan and the community involvement. Mrs. Walling moved on to congratulate Patriot's Pen Essay contest winners from the Veteran's Day assembly; she presented certificates to the DF students who were in attendance. She thanked Mrs. Jenks, our local VFW and veterans, Boy Scouts, and other students for their participation in our annual event. We will be honoring our teachers and staff of the year at the January 21st meeting |
| Business Administrator's Report | Mrs. Sullivan reviewed the budget calendar for 25/26. Principals and department heads have been given information and she and Mrs. Walling will be putting together a preliminary budget. She noted state aide doesn't come out until later. March and April meetings are scheduled per state requirements as they stand now for budgets to be submitted. The 2% cap will continue to create a tight budget, but we are containing spending as much as possible. Mr. Hyman asked about Sp. Ed. expenses from Berkeley Heights that was an issue last year. Mr. Venes asked about our reserves. Mrs. Sullivan responded. |
| BH Liaison Report | Mr. Hyman reported on the last meeting from 11/14. He noted various student activities updates. There was a presentation on school counseling services, and a college fair. There were Buildings and Grounds updates. They extended the Interim Asst. Superintendent and Asst. Principal at GL. They approved other clubs and co-ops for wrestling and ice hockey. The next meeting will be on 12/12, which will be approving next year's calendar. Mrs. Walling expects our calendar to be on the January agenda, and will mainly align with GL for main holiday breaks. Several board members made comments about being pleased with the counseling services at the high school, and the good communication with Mr. Nixon regarding the calendar preparations and other issues during his time as Interim Superintendent. |
| Administration | <i>As recommended by the Superintendent, the BOE approved for 24/25:</i> HIB Reports; Personnel/Negotiations Committee member changes; 5-Yr. Strategic Plan for 2024-2029; Nov. Drill Reports; Revised job description. |

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| Budget and Finance | <i>As recommended by the Superintendent, the BOE approved:</i> Budget transfers for Nov 2024; Payment of the Bill Lists; Board Secretary Report for Oct. and Nov. 2024; School District Travel; Spec. Ed. placements and services; Parent transportation contract. | |
| Personnel | <i>As recommended by the Superintendent, the BOE approved:</i> Appointment of Cynthia Vazquez, to position as Spanish Teacher from 1/7/25-6/30/25; Appointment of David Chango, to the position of DF Media Specialist as a LTS, at the per diem rate of \$190, beginning 1/2/25. Once fully certified, he will be a permanent Media Specialist through 6/30/25; Additions to Stipend List; Additions to Substitute List; Increase the rate for lunch aides from \$15.25 to \$15.50, effective 1/1/25; Volunteers to assist with the middle school play. | |
| Curriculum | <i>As recommended by the Superintendent, the BOE approved:</i> Field trips as detailed to the Board of Education. | |
| Policy | <i>BOE had the first reading of the following policies/regulations:</i> | |
| | P 7610 | Vandalism |
| | | Revised/Recommended |
| | <i>BOE had the second reading and adoption of the following policies/regulations:</i> | |
| | P 5337 | Service Animals |
| | | Revised/Recommended |
| Old Business | none | |
| New Business | Mr. Hyman suggested start times for meetings to be discussed in January. Mr. Dillon asked about the process for suggesting a new sport or how to introduce co-op opportunities, to which Mrs. Walling responded. Mr. Dillon recommended at the Reorganization that the board create a new committee to oversee the send/receive agreement; they discussed the roles of the Berkeley Heights committee and if it can be all one committee or not. Mrs. Walling mentioned Blue Ribbon displays around town and in Deerfield, and the board discussed it further. She thanked the PTO for a new Deerfield entrance carpet and new podium, and thanked the Watts Foundation for their support of various wish lists for our schools. | |
| Committee Reports | Mr. Hyman thanked the Strategic Planning committee for their work to complete the plan. | |
| Public Comments | none | |

Our website: www.mountainsideschools.org

Please contact the office of the Mountainside BOE for additional information or questions: 908-232-8828