

**Montague Township Board of Education Meeting
Workshop Meeting Minutes
June 22, 2022**

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

2. ROLL CALL

	Present	Absent
Barbara Holstein, President	x	
Denise Bogle, Vice President		X with notice
Paul Brislin	x	
Andree Campbell	x	
Danielle Christmann		X with notice
Tasha DeGeorge	x	
Michael Zernhelt	x	

Others Present:	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
John Nittolo- Acting CSA	x	_____
Carl Morelli – SBA/BS	x	_____
Joseph Garcia – Board Attorney	_____	x with notice

3. FLAG SALUTE

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. CSA REPORT AND ITEMS TO ADVANCE - John Nittolo - Read the April and May students of the month. Thank you Mr. Runne for bringing this back this year. Mr. Nittolo suggested that we increase the sub nurse pay rate to \$200.00 a day. That is comparable to other surrounding Districts. The initial NJSLA on demand reports came out today. They are preliminary reports. Lots of positive results. Numbers increased in all areas - 20% points in ELA and 21% points in Math. These numbers represent every child that have been tested in Montague. Numbers will trend higher when the official reports come in. Our Middle School ELA results were the tops in the District. Thanked Mr. Spina and Ms. Coppolino for their hard work. Thanked Ms. Bongornio and Ms. Weiss of 3rd grade for their hard work as well as Mr. Runne, 4th grade, for his hard work. Thanked everyone that he came in contact with during his career in education especially the children. Thank you all from the bottom of his heart and thanked his wife for her continued support.

7. SBA REPORT AND ITEMS TO ADVANCE - Carl Morelli - Roof project is moving along very well. Should be finished mid-August if the weather cooperates. The students were able to use the library the last few weeks of school. Construction continues on the library. Our school building is under construction. Work will begin in July to remodel the preschool bathrooms. The sinks will be lowered so that the students do not have to stand on platforms. Thanked the PresK teachers for providing me with samples of wall coverings,

floor coverings and materials. Each bathroom will have a different theme and all construction will be done in-house with our custodial staff with the exception of some plumbing which will have to be done from an outside contractor. There are several other small projects that are being discussed with staff and Dave Miller. Will report back to the board when decisions are made regarding projects. Regarding transportation, when buses were purchased, there was no transportation plan put into place. Have been researching other District transportation plans and attended a few seminars at the NJASBO convention. Transportation in general is a difficult area to handle and we are doing everything we can to come up with a plan implemented to make the transportation run smoother. Created an email specifically for transportation. Any questions, suggestions, concerns or comments, please email - transportation@montagueschool.org. The email will go directly to my desk and will reply to emails.

Ms. Holstein asked the public to send any ideas or suggestions to the transportation email. We have to put together a plan and do want to take into consideration the public's concerns and suggestions. Ms. Holstein remembers a parent coming in at the beginning of the school year requesting we move the start times back. The start times were changed abruptly with the purchase of the buses. It is one of the biggest things that she thinks about and how that the time of the school day changed and how it affected the parents. Ms. Holstein asked about the new asphalt on the driveways. Mr. Morelli stated that it was a surprise to him and when he showed up the Town of Montague had a crew ready to come up and fill the potholes in the driveway. Mr. Morelli thanked the crew for doing that. It's not a new covering of blacktop. He will respectfully ask them in the future, through our new facility manager, to please let us know ahead of time when they would like to do something so it can be discussed beforehand. It was an unplanned repair that just happened. Ms. Holstein thanked the mayor, DPW and Township workers for thinking of our driveways. It is much appreciated.

8. BOARD PRESIDENT REPORT AND ITEMS TO ADVANCE - Barbara Holstein -

1. There is a NJ School Board Association workshop October 24-26, 2022. Right now they are offering "early bird" pricing. If more than 3 board members or administrators want to go it will save over \$100 per person. Ms. Holstein may attend. Mr. Morelli stated that he attended the convention prior to COVID and it is an excellent convention to attend. He will email information to BOE members. If a BOE member can even attend one day it is worth it.
2. After flag salute, would like to add on the agenda Moment of Silent or Prayer. Would like to discuss and get thoughts. Mr. Brislin and Ms. Campbell both support it as does Ms. DeGeorge and Mr. Zernhelt. Will ask Ms. Bogle and Ms. Christmann if any objection.

9. 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 6:54 p.m.

Motion Andree Campbell

2nd Paul Brislin

Voice Vote:

All in Favor

Mark Romano, IT Specialist, Montague Township School - It was brought to his attention on June 13, 2022 that there was an issue with the voicemail system. Google updated a security setting and our voicemail system wasn't able to send voicemails to staff emails and wanted to let the public know that there was a technical issue with voicemail from June 7-10, 2022 and that is why staff did not return calls to parents during that time. Also, a search feature has been added to the school website. The Destiny Library Program is an online program and once the program is up and running and reactivated, students and/or parents will be able to look at the library inventory online to see what we have and it is a project that will be worked on over the summer. You cannot check books out through the program but can see all the library inventory available to the children.

Ms. Holstein thanked him for his clarification of the voicemail and thanked Ms. Coppolino and Mr. Romano for their work on the library.

Motion to close public comment at 6:58 p.m.

Motion Michael Zernhelt

2nd Andree Campbell

Voice Vote:

All in Favor

11. BOARD OF THE WHOLE DISCUSSIONS

A. Personnel (Due to the nature of personnel discussion, the Board of the Whole Committee will meet in Executive Session to discuss personnel items)

1. David Miller, Internal Pest Management Coordinator appointment - Ms. Holstein asked if it is just a housekeeping item. Mr. Morelli said yes, we should have this a coordinator appointed and David Miller has the certification to be appointed and at the next meeting we will appointment Mr. Miller and he will be working directly with Viking Pest Control who is in the building at least 2x a month.

B. Building and Grounds

1. Gymnasium curtains - Mr. Morelli stated that we research, investigate and replace the curtains. There are a few different options that we can look at and will share information with the BOE members (i.e., material, mechanical) along with quotes. Ms. Holstein asked if he could explore the option of tinting the windows. Also, brighten up the colors in the gymnasium. Mr. Zernhelt stated that there is a vinyl that can be used and can be fully printed on and still allow light and it is not expensive to do. Will forward information to Mr. Morelli. Mr. Morelli stated that the windows are not leaking and that is not why there are water stains on the curtains. The stains are pretty old. It seems possible that someone left the windows at some point.
2. Food Service Contract Renewal - Mr. Morelli stated that we are doing our renewal of food service contract with High Point. It is a renewal contract so the terms are the same and costs are the same. There are no increases at all. Prior to COVID the District was charging for breakfast and lunch and will go back to charging for breakfast and lunch in September as there has been no guidance at all from federal level or State level as far as free food as they were doing during the pandemic. As of today, to the best of our knowledge, everything will go back to the way it was a couple of years ago. It will be up to the Board to discuss during the summer what the charges will be for the meals. Ms. Holstein stated that we were going to look into offering different items. Mr. Morelli stated yes, we will look into costs of equipment, what can be brought in to supplement meals, like if we have special events at the school, like field day. There are different options available depending on what schools you want to serve. Believes it will

be beneficial to the school to be able to warm up food in the school for special events.

3. Garden Hallway access - Ms. Holstein stated that we cannot open the hallway door. Would like to have the door made function so that people can experience and use the spot. It is a secure place. Ms. DeGeorge asked if it would disrupt Ms. Neamand's art class? Mr. Nittolo stated that people do use it now and Ms. Neamand is very accommodating but he's sure she would welcome having another way in. He believes it was sealed years ago due to flooding issues. Mr. Zernhelt would like to know the cost of getting the door to open.
 4. Table curtains - Ms. Holstein personally doesn't see anything wrong with them but recommends maybe going with school colors. Ms. DeGeorge said they are not super expensive and you can get them on Amazon.
- C. Transportation - Ms. Holstein stated that Mr. Morelli talked about this in his report. We are definitely looking for the plans from Mr. Morelli for the Fall and we are paying close attention to it as BOE members and will work to get issues resolved.
- D. Policy
1. Policy 9130 amended per May 25, 2022 Workshop and will be on next agenda
 2. Stillwater Township Resolution #2022-112 & Montague Township Resolution. These resolutions were pertaining to parental rights. Joseph Garcia, Esq., did review them and made some recommendations. We would have to just change them up a little pertaining to our school district and will be on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. Garcia didn't have a problem with it because there are areas in State law in Ms. Holstein's opinion that step over parent's rights. Mr. Brislin stated that he has the Stillwater Resolution but does not have Montague's nor does any other BOE Member. Mr. Morelli stated that he received an email when they were going to put it up for a vote but hasn't confirmed if they have passed it or not but they are looking to do the same thing that Stillwater did. Mr. Morelli will follow up with them. Mr. Brislin stated that on Page 2 he doesn't like the word "demand". Ms. Holstein stated that was one of the words that would be changed. The BOE would omit anything that has to do with curriculum. Mr. Nittolo stated that the DEP write standards. School districts write curriculums. Everyone will read and come back with their notes. Mr. Morelli will follow up with the Town.
- E. Curriculum - Re- Formation of Teacher Curriculum Committee as per MEA contract - Ms. Holstein stated that since we did not renew a curriculum person in the school district we will put a resolution on agenda for this matter. There is a stipend that goes with this.
- F. Grants - Mr. Zernhelt said he saw on the internet a grant they are giving out for electric buses. Mr. Morelli stated that he is aware of it and it is a federal program that was announced about 4 weeks ago and preliminary submission date is August 30 and from what he understands is the grant will allow districts to sell their diesel buses and the grant would pay for the new electric vehicles. He is in the process of determining how many and what types of vehicles are involved. It came out of nowhere and not all information is available. It is something he is looking into. Ms. Holstein stated that there is a news video out of Virginia (Byram Bus Co.) and they have now 6 electric buses. It is an interesting video to watch, maybe even at a Board meeting.

G. Special Committees -

Mr. Zernhelt reported on the PTA meeting he attended. The PTA passed their budget so can spend money over the summer.

Ms. Campbell reported on the Sussex County Charter School. 8th grade graduation took place tonight with 4 Montague students who graduated with 17 Montague students who attend grades 6-8.

Ms. DeGeorge reported on High Point who will be having their meeting on June 28, 2022 at 7PM. Ms. Holstein stated that they just had their graduation the other night and we had several Montague students graduate that night.

14. 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 7:30 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Michael Zernhelt Voice Vote: All in Favor

Mr. Brislin stated that he favors having Executive Session at the end for all meetings. Ms. Holstein agrees and thinks it something that could be adjusted. Cannot remember how it got switched. Ms. DeGeorge stated that it was before the meeting at one point like 6PM to 7PM. Ms. Holstein stated that people complained about not having access or having to stay late to see what happened after the executive session. We did it like this today because it is a workshop. Perhaps make the executive session in the beginning for something that needs to be discussed in order to move the agenda and if there is nothing take it and put it at the end of the meeting and be more mindful for what we are going into the Executive session for. Mr. Brislin agrees and Mr. Zernhelt said that being on social media that is one of the complaints is being in executive session for so long. Ms. Holstein said that anyone can go on NJ School Board Association and can read about the Dos and Don'ts about Executive Session.

Motion to close Executive Session at 9:30 p.m.

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

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Tasha DeGeorge Voice Vote: All in Favor

Ms. Holstein stated that there will be a special meeting advertised for June 29, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. The purpose of the special meeting will be personnel.

15. ADJOURNMENT

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

Time of Adjournment:9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Morelli

CARL MORELLI, Board Secretary