

**Montague Township Board of Education Meeting
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER at 6:31 p. m.

2. ROLL CALL

	Present	Absent
Barbara Holstein, President	x	
Denise Bogle, Vice President	x	
Paul Brislin	x	
Danielle Christmann		x
Krista Mikulski	x	
Glen Plotsky		x

Others Present:

	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
John Nittolo- Acting CSA	x	
Carl Morelli – SBA/BS	x	
Mark Nehme – Board Attorney	x	

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. 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 6:34 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Denise Bogle Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close Executive Session at 7:15 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Denise Bogle Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to reopen Regular Meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Motion Denise Bogle 2nd Paul Brislin Voice Vote: All in Favor

7. CSA REPORT: John Nittolo - HIB report no new investigation this month. There is a HIB to vote on from the previous month that I reported on. The board will be approving hopefully what was reported last month. Recognized February Students of the Month. We had a basketball school spirit day today organized by Mr. Runne and Ms. Weiss. Today we had a delayed opening. Presenters came and presented on resiliency, self awareness, self importance and self care for staff and students. Shared statistics 60% of our population say that

the stress from pandemic has harmed our mental health (adults and children); 1 in 4 teachers reported that the pandemic related stress has lead them to think about quitting; 25% of people that are doing this job are reconsidering what they want to do; 13% have reported symptoms of PTSD due to the pandemic. Approximately 1/3 of teens and preteens have experienced anxiety and depression. Our staff, counselor, administration and teachers are aware of this. We have gotten great support from our parents in this area. We understand that we are educating the whole child and we want to make sure students are emotionally well off and that they know that this is a safe place for them.

Barbara Holstein stated that she concurs and thinks the Board over the past year has given a lot of support to the District using our CARES Act and having certain activities take place in self awareness and self care for teachers. The District is pulling together and is very proud of it.

8. SBA REPORT - Carl Morelli - Good evening. My office has been diligently dealing with crafting a budget that is in the best interest of our District and students and unfortunately, our time constraints, thanks to Governor Murphy and postponing his budget address and releasing the State aide numbers, we were not provided numbers until Thursday of this past week so we've been working through the weekend in crafting our budget and basically our entire report and existence over the past week in between meetings has been regarding our budget and that process has been completed and we are in the process of reviewing everything and once again the budget that will be presented will be in the best interest of the students. I thank everyone for using email for budget. The email is still up and running.

Ms. Bogle asked where the budget will be published? Mr. Morelli said that when the Board approves the budget it will then be published on our website.

9. CORRESPONDENCE - Barbara Holstein read the Student Council March newsletter.

Moment of silence to pay respect to Ms. Christmann and her father who passed away.

10. 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 open public comment at 7:27 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Denise Bogle

Voice Vote: All in Favor

Motion to close public comment at 7:28 p.m.

Motion Denise Bogle 2nd Paul Brislin

Voice Vote: All in Favor

Moved: Paul Brislin Seconded: Denise Bogle Discussion: Barbara Holstein would like to commend Mr. Morelli, Mr. Nittolo as well as the entire administrative staff for their work since Friday to put together all of the documents despite delays from State and technology difficulties. We are on a forward path with the budget. This is the 3rd year in a row that this Board has been able to reduce the impact for the cost of education to our taxpayers. Going back 3 years ago when Ms. Holstein and Ms. Bogle who were not on the board. We had Danielle, Paul and Dale at that time who rejected the preliminary budget and set it down to the county office which resulted instead of a 6.78 increase to a 2.5 increase to taxpayers. Last year's budget we did move to move our elections back so the voters can have a voice on the budget and have control expenditures over 2%. When voters didn't believe the budget to be representative of what they wanted, we worked with the town and came up with cuts and we ended up changing the tax figure by just under \$20,000 for the last two years. This year's budget is being submitted on a zero percent increase on the tax levy so this is the exact same budget as last year and therefore in 3 years time with this preliminary budget should it go through there will be less than a \$20,000 impact for the whole town. We are very proud of the budget. Mr. Morelli stated that there was an auditor adjustment to the Special Revenue Fund. It is an accounting adjustment on both sides. It did not increase expenses or revenues. Paul Brislin reviewed the numbers and commended the Montague Team for a transparent budget. Ms. Mikulski stated that we really focused on giving our teachers what they need for our students. This is something we should be proud of. Ms. Bogle stated that they worked throughout the weekend on this and adjusted errors. Ms. Holstein stated that not one program has been cut, we are beautifying the school and it is very positive.

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

13. ADMINISTRATION

A-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Case Findings as reported on February 28, 2022.

Moved: Denise Bogle Seconded: Paul Brislin Discussion:

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

A-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the 2022-2023 school year calendar as follows:

- August 31, 2022 & September 1, 2022 - In-Service Days for teachers
- September 2, 2022 - District closed
- September 6, 2022 - Start Date for students
- June 12, 2023 - Last Day for everyone which will be an early dismissal. (The calendar does not count snow days so the last day is subject to change.)
- Inservice paid days for teachers will be on Columbus Day and Martin Luther King Day

14. PERSONNEL

P-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **SAM STARTUP** as a substitute teacher, pending background check, at the rate of \$95.00 per day for the 2021-2022 school year.

Moved: Barbara Holstein Seconded: Denise Bogle Discussion: Krista Mikulski
asked how many substitute teachers do we have? Mr. Nittolo stated that he believes we have 3 substitutes. We need them everyday and are in desperate need of substitutes.

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

P-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **LISA HOEHN** as a substitute teacher, pending background check, at the rate of \$95.00 per day for the 2021-2022 school year.

Moved: Paul Brislin Seconded: Denise Bogle Discussion:

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

P-3 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **TARA FANSLER** as part time/substitute bus driver, Step A - \$17.50 per hour, pending background check, for the 2021-2022 school year.

Moved: Denise Bogle Seconded: Paul Brislin Discussion: Krista Mikulski
stated it was nice to see a bus driver on the agenda as she knows we need bus drivers.

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

P-4 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **EMILY WEISS** as Track and Field Coach (pending background check, if needed), \$1,500.00 Interscholastic Sports Stipend, for the 2021-2022 school year.

Moved: Denise Bogle Seconded: Barbara Holstein Discussion: Mr. Nittolo stated it is nice that we have volunteers to step up to do this. Barbara Holstein asked if we have any details yet. Mr. Nittolo said it is in motion. Ms. Mikulski asked if they would get uniforms. Mr. Nittolo stated we can get them uniforms. They do have jerseys.

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

P-5 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve **CASEY LEVENS and RACHEL VANGORDEN**, as Softball Coaches (pending background check, if needed), \$1,000.00 stipend each, for the 2021-2022 School Year.

Moved: Paul Brislin Seconded: Denise Bogle Discussion: Ms. Bogle said “Go Girls”. Ms. Mikulski asked if this was brought up because people were asking for softball and track and field? Mr. Nittolo stated that we had these as approved positions and if we offer things we have students who want to sign up. This is an in house softball. 4th grade to 8th grade. Ms. Holstein stated that all this started with Mr. Gregory and the programs were put in place. This is all the positive momentum of the positive work that has been done in the school this year.

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

P-6 MOTION to direct our board attorney to communicate the Board’s approval of Employee No. 143 to be granted unpaid leave of absence through April 12, 2022.

Moved: Paul Brislin Seconded: Denise Bogle Discussion:

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

15. TRANSPORTATION

T-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the **Kittatinny Regional High School** Choice School Application for Transportation Services for the 2022-2023 school year.

Moved: Denise Bogle Seconded: Paul Brislin Discussion: Ms. Mikulski asked if the cost went up or is it free? Mr. Nittolo stated that we pay aide in lieu and that is \$1,000 a student. We pay parents in 2 equal payments of \$500 for each child. Is the Kittatinny bus that picks up our children? (Someone from the audience was saying something but it was not audible). The Kittatinny bus would come up to the school and pick up our students.

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

T-2 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the **updated Sussex Middle School** Choice School Application for Transportation Services for the 2022-2023 school year.

Moved: Denise Bogle

Seconded: Paul Brislin

Discussion:

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

T-3 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education approve the **Lafayette Township School District** Choice School Application for Transportation Services for the 2022-2023 school year.

Moved: Paul Brislin

Seconded: Denise Bogle

Discussion: Ms. Mikulski

asked if we approve these every year because they are Sussex County or because we have children attending? Mr. Nittolo said we have children attending these schools.

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

16. POLICIES

PL-1 BE IT RESOLVED, at the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent, that the Montague Township Board of Education adopt Anti-Hazing Policy #5541.

Moved: Barbara Holstein

Seconded: Paul Brislin

Discussion: Barbara

Holstein stated that they went over this at the last meeting and this is the second reading.

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

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.

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Motion to open public comment at 7:58 p.m.

Motion Denise Bogle 2nd Paul Brislin

Voice Vote: All in Favor

Ms. Jeskey thanked BOE for sharing their newsletter. Upcoming events - Meet & Greet for BOE Candidates on March 23, 2022 at 6PM. PTA will be serving pizza. Forms are available online. Live streamed no interaction. Community Bingo MEA Pride Event on April 8, 2022 - all ages welcome.

Danielle Conklin, 68 Clove Road, Transportation Coordinator. Thanked parents and bus drivers for their patience during the bus driver shortage. We do have a Kittatinny bus that does come to the school daily. Didn't know the cost.

Andree Campbell, Armstrong Road. Very happy to see the development of extracurricular activities for the kids. It is a great thing for the kids.

Motion to close public comment at 8:04 p.m.

Motion Paul Brislin 2nd Denise Bogle

Voice Vote: All in Favor

21. ADJOURNMENT

Barbara Holstein made a motion for adjournment. The adjournment is based on the late numbers from the State and internal and structure balancing in our budget. We just received the preliminary budget from BA and to do our due diligence we need time to review the proposed preliminary budget. The adjournment meeting will reconvene in the gym on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 7PM.

Motion Barbara Holstein 2nd Paul Brislin Voice Vote: All in Favor

Discussion: Krista Mikulski thanked Carl for all his hard work on the budget. We will do our due diligence and really look and digest and ask our BA the right questions for our students, teachers and town. Barbara Holstein stated that due to the constraints to our Board, the Board decided to move the meeting.

Roll Call	Bogle	Brislin	Christmann	Mikulski	Plotsky	Holstein	Total
YES	x	x		x		x	4
NO							
ABSTAIN							
ABSENT			x		x		2

Time of Adjournment: 8:04p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Morelli

CARL MORELLI, Board Secretary