

NOTICE OF MEETING:

TO ALL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the DMK Black Box Theater, 1980 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to notice sent to each member.

Mr. Cohan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Ms. Dixiana Carbonell, Mr. Michael Cohan, Mrs. Elsie Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Guida Faria, Mr. Mr. Greg Nasta, Ms. Chastity Santana

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Ronnie McDowell (6:02 p.m.), Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Gerald Benaquista, Dr. Jose Rodriguez, Mrs. Yolanda Koon

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Lester Taylor, Esq.

Mrs. Faria led the Board and audience members in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the district's mission statement.

Mrs. Koon read the statement required under the "Open Public Meetings Act" that adequate notice was published in The Union County Local Source, The Star Ledger and/or Tap into Union, posted in the Administration Building and the Clerk's Office of the Township; a copy of which is on file in the office of the Board Secretary.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Ms. Carbonell, that the Board go into Executive Session at 6:03 p.m. to discuss the following subject matters without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b: personnel, legal update

Please take notice that minutes will be taken of the discussion conducted during the executive session and the Board will disclose the minutes of the executive session when the disclosure will not result in unwarranted invasion of individual privacy or prejudice to the best interests of the Board of Education and provided that such disclosure does not violate federal, state or local statutes and does not fall within the attorney/client privilege.

Action may be taken when the Board reconvenes in public session.

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,  
Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION:

There being no further business before the Board, it was moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Faria, that the Board return to public session at 7:00 p.m.

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,  
Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

Moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Ms. Carbonell, that the following minutes be adopted:

1. February 10, 2026 – worksession
2. February 10, 2026 – executive session
3. February 24, 2026 – regular meeting
4. February 24, 2026 – executive session

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,  
Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Faria (#3, #4)

MOTION CARRIED

Communications:

**LETTERS OF RESIGNATION:**

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – LANGLEY

Letter of resignation from Brittany Langley, speech therapist-Burnet and Kawameeh Middle Schools, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – DUPLISSIS

Letter of resignation from Kerri Duplissis, health and physical education teacher-Battle Hill Elementary School, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – GLAUDE

Letter of resignation from Innodet Glaude, part-time bus drive-Transportation Department, effective April 15, 2026.

**LETTERS OF RETIREMENT:**

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – FIORDILINO

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Maria Fiordilino, special education teacher-Burnet Middle School, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – KERR

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Allan Kerr, full-time bus driver, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – WEINSTEIN

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Sharon Weinstein, math teacher-Burnet Middle School, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – DABNEY

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Dwaine Dabney, head custodian-Washington Elementary School, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – WILLIAMS-MINITELLI

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Jayne Williams-Minitelli, second grade teacher-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – WHITEHOUSE

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Janet Whitehouse, special education teacher-Jefferson School, effective July 1, 2026.

**REQUESTS FOR LEAVE:**

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – SCOCOZZA

Request for paid FMLA from Isabella Scocoza, Director of Instruction and Funded Programs, March 30, 2026-May 26, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – LaPOLLA ARPINO

Request for maternity leave and unpaid FMLA/NJFLA from Erin LaPolla Arpino, CST-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, June 15, 2026-June 22, 2026 and September 1, 2026-December 3, 2026, respectively.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – LILOIA

Request for paid intermittent FMLA and FMLA/FLA from Dana Liloia, second grade teacher-Livingston Elementary School, February 23, 2026-March 30, 2026 and April 6, 2026-June 30, 2026, respectively.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – SARA VIA

Request for paid FMLA/FLA from Jose Saravia, custodian-Burnet Middle School, February 17, 2026-April 14, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – AZEVEDO

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA from Michelle Azevedo, third-grade teacher-Livingston Elementary School, April 27, 2026-November 6, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – MARTINEZ

Request for unpaid maternity leave from Yaire Martinez, paraprofessional-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, March 11, 2026-June 22, 2026.

**REQUESTS FOR LEAVE UPDATE:**

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE UPDATE – MANOCHIO

Request for paid intermittent FMLA/FLA update from Cristina Manochio, special services-CST-Burnet Middle School, December 9, 2026-June 30, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – MENDES

Request for leave update from Christie Mendes, OT-Franklin and Connecticut Farms Elementary School, new return date March 2, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – KORZEN

Request for leave update from Olga Korzen, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, new return date March 12, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – OSBORNE

Request for paid FMLA update from Melissa Osborne, special education teacher-Burnet Middle School, new return date April 20, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – CALDAROLA

Request for paid FMLA updated from Anne Marie Caldarola, art teacher-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, new return date March 12, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – DeJESUS

Request for unpaid FMLA/NJFLA update from Jazmine DeJesus, paraprofessional-Jefferson School, new return date June 23, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – RODRIGUEZ

Request for unpaid maternity/FMLA update from Alicia Rodriguez, school counselor-Union High School, new return date September 1, 2026.

**REQUESTS FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE:**

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – KRUSE**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Kenneth Kruse, Head Custodian-Burnet Middle School, February 20, 2026-February 10, 2027.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – COTA-SOLER**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Rocio Cota-Soler, CST-PT-districtwide, February 25, 2026-June 30, 2026.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – NEDELKOV**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA/FLA from Nenad Nedelkov, custodian-Kawameeh Middle School, January 21, 2026-June 30, 2026.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – WALKER**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA/FLA from Deinava Walker, pre-kindergarten teacher-Livingston Elementary School, March 4, 2026-June 20, 2026.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MELILLO**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA/FLA from Toni Ann Melillo, first grade teacher-Battle Hill Elementary School, March 9, 2026-June 30, 2026.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – WHITFORD**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA/FLA from Lauren Whitford, math coach-districtwide, March 9, 2026-June 22, 2026.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – WRIGHT**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA/FLA from Yolanda Wright, secretary-Battle Hill Elementary School, March 23, 2026-March 26, 2027.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – DOWLING**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA/FLA from Nikki Dowling, English teacher-Kawameeh Middle School, March 24, 2026-June 25, 2026.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MAURIELLO**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA/FLA from Natalie Mauriello, social workers-Union High School, March 10, 2026-April 6, 2026.

**REQUESTS - MISCELLANEOUS:**

**LETTER FROM UHS CLASS OF 1975 REUNION COMMITTEE – PLANT A TREE**

Letter from Jill Hall, on behalf of UHS Class of 1975 Reunion Committee, requesting to plant a tree on the grounds of Union High School, together with a simple plaque in memory of Keron Gabriel (Class of 2025).

Mr. Taylor indicated that the Board would like to take the agenda out of order and vote on G-2. There was no objection by the Board members present.

Mr. Taylor indicated that the Memorandum of Agreement was negotiated in good faith; however, the salary guides have not been agreed upon, therefore, the salary guides are not binding and are not being approved this evening.

Board Vice President Cohan indicated that he is pleased that an agreement has been reached and the Board of Education bargained in good faith. We will meet with the UTEA and if an agreement is reached on the salary guides, retro payments will be made by July 15<sup>th</sup>.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution was moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Faria, for adoption:

**G-2. APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT ONLY, NOT PROPOSED SALARY GUIDES – UTEA**

Approve Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) only, not proposed salary guides, between the Township of Union Board of Education and the Union Township Education Association, as the Successor Agreement - September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2029, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,  
Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Comments from Public (on resolutions):**

Mr. Cohan thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and that the Board values their input and appreciates their time. She reminded the audience that all comments are to be respectful and constructive, and to refrain from calling out and yelling. The Board is unable to engage in back-and-forth dialogue; however, your comments will be reviewed and considered, and if feasible, the Superintendent or designee will provide a response at a later date.

Glenda Rea Placio – she is concerned with the budget cuts and has concerns regarding universal pre-K. She asked for clarification of the location, to help her understand the rationale and timing of this.

Peter Leone – it was a long process but thank you for reaching an agreement on the MOA. He hopes the salary guides can be done quickly.

Ann Margaret Shannon – glad that the MOA was approved.

**Superintendent's Report:** presentation appended to minutes

TUPS Talking Points: Enrollment – 2025-2026 (March 15<sup>th</sup>) – 7,770

BOE Student Liaison – Ali Silvestre – a senior, 4-yr varsity athlete, Captain of the varsity softball team and will attend Gettysburg College in the fall to study health sciences.

- Honoring Coaches: Dino Debellonia earned Union County Coach of the Year, district coach of the year and region coach of the year. Eric Loften-Harris earned – Coaches Association Union County Coach of the Year.
- Honoring JROTC Program – hosted the North Jersey League Drill Championship. Infantry Guard JROTC Competition – 1<sup>st</sup> place – unarmed color guard; 1<sup>st</sup> place – armed color guard; 1<sup>st</sup> place – unarmed regulation; 1<sup>st</sup> place – unarmed exhibition
- Spring musical – Frozen was a huge success.
- Girls’ basketball – 14-10; Boys’ basketball – 22-5; both teams advanced to State semifinals.
- Swimming – boys’ swim qualified for State tournament
- Bowling – qualified for State tournament
- Winter Track – girls won Section State Champions
- Wrestling – 22-5; Ariel Azeredo was the region 4 champion; State qualifiers to Atlantic City: Ariel Azeredo, Nicky Bertolotti, Obreight Ingram

Dr. Benaquista and Mrs. Koon presented the FY27 proposed budget:

- FY27 Grand Total Revenues Sources - \$190,800,066
  - Fund 20/Grants - \$3,369,488
  - Pre-k grant - \$10,252,208
  - Debt Service Bonds - \$1,636,700
  - Operating - \$175,541,670
- FY27 Total Operating Revenues - \$175,541,670
  - State Aid - \$54,388,322
  - Semi - \$176,333
  - Extraordinary Aid - \$2,600,000
  - Fund Balance - \$2,991,691
  - Local and Miscellaneous - \$115,385,324
- FY27 Appropriations - \$175,541,670
  - Salaries/extra - \$89,542,979
  - Employee benefits - \$35,094,561
  - Purchase Professional and Technical (legal, Morris, etc.)- \$8,798,251
  - Repairs - \$1,390,636

- Purchase Service (tuition, transportation, etc.) - \$31,900,170
- Supplies and Materials - \$5,111,994
- Equipment - \$595,132
- Other (judgements, DW misc, etc.) - \$1,767,947
- General contribution to special education pre-k - \$1,340,000

How did we get here?

- Revenue Challenge
  - State Aid lost in 2025-2026 - \$1,734,137
  - State Aid lost in 2026-2027 -\$1,682,113
  - Tax Levy Cap of 2%
- Expenditures – Increases
  - Health care cost increase - \$4,500,000
  - Annual increase in salaries - \$3,000,000
  - Other cost drivers: transportation, education, inflation
- Action Items to Consider:
  - Transition to K-5 in all elementary schools, including Jefferson
  - Repurpose Franklin to pre-k center
  - Anticipating savings in transportation
  - Re-evaluate central office registration
  - Renegotiate/refinance leases
  - Reduction in staff
  - Evaluate programs
  - Re-evaluate technology software
  - Evaluate shared/related services
  - Evaluate after school sport programs/activities
  - Update boundary lines

Around TUPS:

- Union High School Environmental Club
- Read Across America
- Steam Fair 2026
- 2026 Hall of Ame Inductees – May 7<sup>th</sup>
- Lima Live at Burnet with Mayor Guerra-Frazier
- AP Awards Night
- Top 25 of the Class of 2026
  - Eli Matthieu Abaya
  - Xavier Aro
  - Mikayla Astudillo
  - Temiloluwa Bamigbe
  - Markens Desir
  - Michael Giaimo
  - Keilyn Gomez Ozuna
  - Charlotte Garland
  - Hannah Hipolito

- Talia Johnson
- Jacqueline Martinez
- Giuliana Muscavage
- Sean Nnoli
- Dubem Okafor
- Toluwanimi Ojo
- Emily Pasiecznik
- Jochebed Quaye
- Anaisa Rodriguez
- Ava Soares
- Ethan Sumiquiab
- Kacper Tarnowski
- Elvin Teixeira
- Kauri Townes
- Dylan Yeager

Around TUPS:

- World Down Syndrome Day – March 21
- Memorial Day Parade Grand Marshal – Jake Fernandez (Class of 2005)
- Science in Action at Jefferson

TUPS Attendance Initiative:

- District average for February 2026 – 93.684
- Attendance Award – 3<sup>rd</sup> graders at Hannah Caldwell – 95.96%

ParentSquare Update – 47%

HIB – see E-1-1

- Incidents to Report – March 18-24 – founded 0, unfounded 1
- Incidents to Affirm – February 25-March 17 – founded 9, unfounded 5, inconclusive 4

Mrs. Conteh-Mackey left meeting.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Ms. Carbonell, seconded by Mrs. Faria, for adoption:

E-1. *Agenda item affirmed at March 17, 2026 worksession (determination of HIB-February 11-24, 2026).*

E-1A. *Agenda item reported at March 17, 2026 worksession (report of HIB-February 25-March 17, 2026).*

**E-1-1. AFFIRM SUPERINTENDENT’S DETERMINATION OF HIB**

Affirm the Superintendent’s determination of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the periods February 25-March 17, 2026 in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**E-1-1A. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT OF HIB**

Superintendent’s Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period March 18, 2026 to March 24, 2026, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

**E-2. LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND HOME INSTRUCTION**

Approve to continue long-term suspension and home instruction for student #266593 from general education program.

**E-3. APPROVE PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILY CENTER AT MONTCLAIR -ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH SCREENINGS**

Approve partnership with Family Center at Montclair to provide the Annual Mental Health Screenings in compliance with the NJDOE Mental Health Depression Screener Grant Award at a rate of \$18,335.00 to be paid for using MH grant funds, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**E-4. APPROVE LOCATIONS FOR EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR**

Approve (a) Battle Hill Elementary School and the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue for the 2026 Extended School Year (ESY) program, ESY services, CST testing and home instruction, and (b) approve Union High School for the 2026 ESY program, ESY services, CST testing, home instruction, IEP Team meetings, and School Enterprises/Work Based Learning/Community Based Instruction (Farmer’s Café, Farmer’s Crafty Corner and Print Shop, Copy That/Copy Room) for the period of June 23, 2026 – the day after school ends or in accordance with the school calendar – through August 31, 2026.

**E-5. APPROVE LITERACY OUTREACH VISIT – MOUNT ST. DOMINIC ACADEMY**

Approve approximately five to six students from Lions for Literacy, a student reading advocacy group at Mount S. Dominic Academy, to visit Washington Elementary School on April 14, 2026 to conduct reading sessions with participating classes.

**E-6. APPROVE AGREEMENT – RAMAPO COLLEGE**

Approve Elementary Education Teacher Assistant to Teacher Agreement between Ramapo College of New Jersey and the Township of Union Board of Education for a three (3) year period (2026-2028), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**E-7. APPROVE REVISED SCHOOL CALENDAR – 2025-2026**

Approve the revised 2025-2026 School Calendar, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mr. McDowell, for adoption:

F-1. TREASURER’S REPORT

That the Treasurer’s Report dated February 28, 2026 be accepted.

F-2. SECRETARY’S REPORT

That the Secretary’s Report dated February 28, 2026 be accepted.

F-3. CERTIFY TREASURER’S AND SECRETARY’S REPORT

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a), I certify that as of February 28, 2026 no budgetary line-item account has obligations and payments (contractual orders) which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district Board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8 and 18:22-8.1.

/s/ Yolanda Koon  
Yolanda Koon, Board Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

Pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.2(h), we certify that as of February 28, 2026 after review of the secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials that to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.2(d)3 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year. This certification is solely based on the information provided by the School Business Administrator and Board Secretary and is assumed by the Board to be correct.

F-4. APPROVE APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS

Approve appropriation transfers in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-5. APPROVE LIST OF CONTRACTS/PURCHASE ORDERS

Approve the attached list of contracts and/or purchase orders (copyrighted materials and licenses) pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5 (bid exceptions to requirement for advertising) and 18A:18A-10(a) (purchase through State agency; procedure), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-6. APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES

Approve districtwide travel and related expenses pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7 and Board Policy File Code 6471 and in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-7. *Agenda item approved at March 17, 2026 worksession (student field trips).*

F-7A. APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE STUDENT FIELD TRIPS

Approve districtwide student field trip destinations and purposes pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.8, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-8. APPROVE LIST OF 2025-2026 STATE CONTRACT APPROVED VENDORS

Approve the amended list of the 2025-2026 State Contract Approved Vendors pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-10(a) (purchase through State agency; procedure) to facilitate schools' purchasing, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-9A. APPROVED LIST OF CONTRACTS/PURCHASES (STUDENT ACTIVITY)

Approve the attached list of contracts and/or purchases pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(21) (paid by funds raised by or collected by students), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes:

School	Account Name/Account #	Vendor/Description	Amount
Battle Hill Elementary School	2013/Field Trip	Red Bulls-school wide trip amount for bus and entrance fees for students, staff, chaperones	\$6,940.00 (not to exceed)
Burnet Middle School	2006/Band/Chorus	Charter UP – transportation to Kimmel Center trip	\$1,185.27
Burnet Middle School	Drama Dept/Play	Hellbound Audio – audio for play, Legally Blonde Jr.	\$6,560.50
Franklin Elementary School	2197/Student Activity	Liberty Science Center-3 <sup>rd</sup> grade field trip	\$1,492.50
Hannah Caldwell Elementary School	2011	Liberty Hall Museum – 1 <sup>st</sup> grade field trip	\$1,200.00
Kawameeh Middle School	41/Musical Production	Circuit Lighting – lighting equipment rental for KMS musical, Willy Wonka Jr.	\$9,500.00 (not to exceed)
Kawameeh Middle School	41/Musical Production	Audio Inc. – audio equipment rental for KMS musical, Willy Wonka Jr.	\$8,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2077/Theatre	Music Theatre International – licensing for Advanced Musical Theatre production of Dare to Dream	\$1,500.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2084/Field Trips	Passaic Valley Coaches – bus payment for Ellis Island field trip	\$1,225.00
Union High School	2051/JROTC	Sport Network International – for JROTC-National Drill Team Meeting Room	\$1,025.00

Union High School	2051/JROTC	US Coachways – bus rental for Nationals	\$13,000.00
Washington Elementary School	2012/1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Von Thun’s Country Farm -1 <sup>st</sup> grade field trip	\$2,600.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	3340/girls’ softball	World’s Finest Chocolate – candy fundraiser	\$4,800.00 (not to exceed)
Connecticut Farms Elementary School	2013/field trip	Liberty Science Center	\$1,515.00

**F-9B. APPROVE FUNDRAISERS**

Approve the following fundraisers, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes:

Event Name	Date	Purpose
Dine to Donate	March 25-April 10, 2026	BMS/Club Unified – 7 <sup>th</sup> grade ELA classes - to raise funds for Club Unified
Reading Log with Pledges	March 25-April 10, 2026	BMS/Club Unified – 7 <sup>th</sup> grade ELA classes – to raise funds for Club Unified
PBSIS Rewards – sell flower petals	April 13-17, 2026	Jefferson/PBSIS – to raise funds for PBSIS rewards
Lollipop Fundraiser	March 25, 2026	KMS/Field Trips – to raise funds for 7 <sup>th</sup> grade trip to Medieval Times
Ice Pop Fundraiser	April 17-June 12, 2026	KMS/Field Trips – to raise funds for 7 <sup>th</sup> grade field trip fund
Soccer World Cup Fundraiser	May 15-June 15, 2026	Washington/Student Council – raise funds for charity - Camy Strong (see attached)
Popcorn Sale	March 25-27, 2026	UHS/Dance Team – raise funds for competition travel and costumes/gear
Pot of Gold (candy bags)	March 25-27, 2026	UHS/Dance Team – raise funds for spring competition and costumes
Vertical Raise-Online Donations	March 25-June 15, 2026	UHS/Softball – raise funds for senior day decorations/gifts for seniors end of year banquet
Vertical Raise-Online Donations	March 25, 2026	UHS/Marching Band – raise funds for band camp competitions

**F-9C. ACCEPT DONATIONS**

Accept the following donations:

From	For Use By	\$/Item
Douglas Michael Krueger Scholarship Fund	UHSPAC for future productions and scholarships	\$1,000.00
First Baptist Church of Vauxhall	Burnet Middle School	Baby Grand Piano (\$11,995.00)

**F-10. APPROVE 2025-2026 OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENT PLACEMENT LIST**

Approval be given to amend the 2025-2026 out-of-district student placement list (month of March 2026), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-ATTY. *For informational purposes only – vote not required.* List of legal services paid as of February 28, 2026 for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

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*Resolutions F-B1 through F-B6  
Concern the Proposed Tentative Budget for the 2026-2027 School Year*

The Superintendent recommends approval to adopt the Tentative Budget for FY 2026-2027:

**F-B1. APPROVE GENERAL FUND TAX LEVY – TENTATIVE BUDGET**

Approve the General Fund tax levy of \$115,185,323.69 in the 2026-2027 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-B2. APPROVE TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

Approve Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement (not to exceed \$126,086.00) for the 2026-2027 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-B3. APPROVE ESTABLISHING A MAXIMUM DOLLAR LIMIT – PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Approve establishing a maximum dollar limit for professional services \$4,527,768.00 for the 2026-2027 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-B4. APPROVE USE OF EXCESS SURPLUS FUNDS/FUND BALANCE**

Approve the Board of Education to include in the General Fund Budget \$2,991,690.81 of the Board of Education’s excess surplus funds \$2,400,000.00 and additional fund balance \$591,690.81 (@ 6/30/25 per audit) to help close budget gap.

**F-B5. APPROVE ADJUSTMENT FOR HEALTH CARE COSTS**

Approve in the tentative budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$2,731,453.00. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefit premiums.

**F-B6. APPROVE EARLY CHILDHOOD PRESCHOOL BUDGET – 2026-2026**

Approve the resolution approving the early childhood preschool budget for the 2026-2027 school year in the amount of \$10,252,208.00.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

## Grievance/Negotiations Committee:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Grievance/Negotiations Committee presents the following resolutions for the Board's consideration:

## G-1. APPROVE SIDEBAR AGREEMENT – UTASA

Approve Sidebar Agreement to the 2024-2027 Collective Negotiations Agreement, between the Township of Union Board of Education and the Township of Union Administrators' Association, for the purpose of clarifying the use of partial sick and personal leave days, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

G-2. *Agenda item approved at beginning of meeting – UTEA MOA only, not proposed salary guide (September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2029).*

## DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Conteh-Mackey returned to Board meeting.

## Operations/Technology Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mr. Nasta, seconded by Mrs. Faria, for adoption:

## O-1. APPROVE SECURITY DRILL/BUS EVACUATION REPORTS

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1 and P.L. 2009, Chapter 178, approve the following security drill for the month of February 2026 and, if applicable, bus evacuation reports for the 2025-2026 school year, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

## O-2. APPROVE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FOR USE OF RABKIN PARK

Approve the submission of the Picnic Area Application and Hold Harmless Agreement for the use of Rabkin Park on May 14, 2026 (rain date May 19, 2026) to the Union Township Parks and Recreation Department to hold picnic, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

## O-3. APPROVE REQUEST FROM UHS CLASS OF 1975 REUNION COMMITTEE – PLANT A TREE

Approve request from Jill Hall, on behalf of UHS Class of 1975 Reunion Committee, to plant a tree on the grounds of Union High School, together with a simple plaque in memory of Keron Gabriel (Class of 2025), who passed away prior to graduation.

## T-1. APPROVE RECYCLING OF EQUIPMENT

Approve list of equipment for recycling, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,  
Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, seconded by Mr. Nasta, for adoption:

P-1A. *Agenda item approved at March 17, 2026 worksession (new hires).*

P-1-1A. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – NEW HIRES

Personnel Actions-New Hires be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-1B PERSONNEL ACTIONS – EXTRA PAY

Personnel Actions-Extra Pay be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-1C PERSONNEL ACTIONS – TRANSFERS

Personnel Actions- Transfers be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-2. APPROVE SUBSTITUTE LISTS

Approve Substitute Lists for the 2025-2026 school year.

Name	Position	Rate
Angelica Zamora Villalbos	Sub-custodian	\$16.00/hr.
Daneliz Urena	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Katie Armonaitis	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Jermel Jenkins	BB coach	
Susana Amorim	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Tammi Brown	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
John Zurka	Daily sub	\$170.00/per day
Constance Quintela	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Shaila Sultana	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Karen Wright Borkowski	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Jeniifer Ebere Okoro	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day

P-3A. ACCEPT LETTERS OF RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT

Accept letters of resignation/retirement from the following staff, with regrets:

Name	Position	Location	Eff. Date	Reason	Years of Service
<b>Retirements:</b>					
Maria Fiordilino	SE teacher	BMS	7/2026	Retirement	25 yrs.
Allan Kerr	F/T bus driver	Transportation Dept.	7/1/2026	Retirement	15 yrs.
Sharon Weinstein	Math teacher	BMS	7/1/2026	Retirement	25 yrs.
Dwayne Dabney	Head custodian	Washington	7/1/2026	Retirement	27 yrs.
Jane Williams-Minitelli	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade teacher	Hannah Caldwell	7/1/2026	Retirement	28 yrs.
Janet Whitehouse	Special Ed teacher	Jefferson	7/1/2026	Retirement	35 yrs.
<b>Resignations:</b>					
Brittany Langley	Speech Therapist	BMS/KMS	7/1/2026	Resignation	10 yrs.
Kerri Duplissis	Health/PE teacher	Battle Hill	7/1/2026	Resignation	12 yrs.
Innodet Glaude	PT bus driver	Transportation Dept.	4/15/2026	Resignation	1 yr.

P-3B. APPROVE LEAVES

Approve leaves for the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Eff. Dates	Reason
<b>Leaves:</b>				
Isabella Scocoza	Director of Instruction and Funded Program	Lehigh Avenue	3/30/2026-5/26/2026	Paid FMLA
Erin LaPolla Arpino	CST	Connecticut Farms	6/15/2026-6/22/2026 and 9/1/2026-12/3/2026	Maternity leave and Unpaid FMLA/NJFLA
Dana Liloia	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade teacher	Livingston	2/23/2026-3/30/2026 and 4/6/2026-6/30/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA, followed by FMLA/FLA
Jose Saravia	Custodian	BMS	2/17/2026-4/14/2026	Paid FMLA/FLA
Michelle Azevedo	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade teacher	Livingston	4/27/2026-11/6/2026	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA
Yaire Martinez	Paraprofessional	Hannah Caldwell	3/11/2026-6/22/2026	Unpaid maternity leave
<b>Leave Updates:</b>				
Cristina Manochio	Special Services - CST	BMS	12/9/2025-6/30/2026	Update to paid intermittent FMLA/FLA

Christie Mendes	OT	Franklin and Connecticut Farms	3/2/2026	Updated return date
Olga Korzen	4 <sup>th</sup> grade teacher	Connecticut Farms	3/12/2026	Updated return date
Melissa Osborne	SE teacher	BMS	4/20/2026	Updated return date
Anne Marie Caldarola	Art teacher	Hannah Caldwell	3/12/2026	Updated return date
Jazmine DeJesus	Paraprofessional	Jefferson	6/23/2026	Updated return date
Alicia Rodriguez	School Counselor	UHS	9/1/2026	Updated return date
<b>Intermittent Leaves:</b>				
Kenneth Kruse	Head custodian	BMS	2/20/2026-2/10/2027	Paid intermittent FMLA
Rocio Cota-Soler	CST-PT	Districtwide	2/25/2026-6/30/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA
Nenad Nedelkov	Custodian	KMS	1/21/2026-6/30/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA/FLA
Deinava Walker	Pre-K teacher	Livingston	3/4/2026-6/20/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA/FLA
Toni Ann Melillo	1 <sup>st</sup> grade teacher	Battle Hill	3/9/2026-6/30/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA/FLA
Lauren Whitford	Math coach	Districtwide	3/9/2026-6/22/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA/FLA
Yolanda Wright	Secretary	Battle Hill	3/23/2026-3/26/2027	Paid intermittent FMLA/FLA
Nikki Dowling	English teacher	KMS	3/24/2026-6/25/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA/FLA
Natalie Mauriello	Social worker	UHS	3/10/2026-4/6/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA/FLA

**P-4. APPROVE STUDENT TEACHERS AND INTERNSHIPS**

Approve student teachers and internships for the 2025-2026 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**P-5. APPROVE FULL-TIME RELEASE TO EMPLOYEE – UCEA - FRAZIER**

Approve to continue full-time release of employee, James Frazier, Jr., for an additional three-year term, expiring August 2028, to serve as President of the Union County Education Association (UCEA), with 100% of salary and healthcare benefits to be paid by the UCEA.

**P-6. APPROVE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEE - #10391**

Approve termination of Employee #10391, effective March 25, 2026.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,  
Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Policy Committee:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and the Policy Committee, the following policies were moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mr. Nasta, for final reading and adoption:

POLICIES:

*POL-1. Policy 0142.1 – Nepotism (M) – agenda item tabled to April meeting.*

**POL-2. POLICY 1220 – EMPLOYMENT OF CHIEF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR**

Approve Policy 1220 – Employment of Chief School Administrator (M), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**POL-3. POLICY 1552 – SEXUAL HARASSMENT – STAFF (NEW)**

Approve Policy 1552 – Sexual Harassment - Staff (M), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

REGULATIONS:

**REG-1. REGULATION 1552 – SEXUAL HARASSMENT – STAFF (NEW)**

Approve Regulation 1552 – Sexual Harassment - Staff, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

BEING ABOLISHED:

**1. ABOLISH - POLICY 3362 – SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Abolish Policy 3362 – Sexual Harassment (M).

**2. ABOLISH – POLICY 4352 – SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Abolish Policy 4352 – Sexual Harassment (M).

**3. ABOLISH – REGULATION 3362 – SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Abolish Regulation 3362 – Sexual Harassment of Teaching Staff Members Complaint Procedure

**4. ABOLISH – REGULATION 4352 – SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Abolish Regulation 4352 – Sexual Harassment of Support Staff Members Complaint Procedure.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Santana informed all in attendance that the policies/regulations that have been abolished are now incorporated into the new policy/regulation.

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,  
Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. McDowell reported on the following resolution:

R-1. REPORT OF STUDENTS TRANSFERRED TO DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE FOLLOWING RESIDENCY INVESTIGATIONS

*For informational purposes only (no vote required):* The following residency investigations were completed, and the listed students were transferred to the appropriate district of residence:

Student No.	School	Grade
#370064	Hannah Caldwell Elementary School	1st

*For informational purposes only (no vote required):* The following totals are as of the February 24, 2026 Board meeting (2025-2026 school year):

	Total	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Students Removed:	0	0	0	0
Students Voluntarily Transferred	12	5	1	6

Approval of Bills:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, and moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mr. McDowell, that the Board concurs with the bills listed in the permanent bound register appended to these minutes and be ordered for payment.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,  
Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan,

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Unfinished Business:

Ms. Santana spoke about the UHS wrestling team and highlighted Coach Dino Debellonia and Coach Loften Harris. She indicated great things are happening in Union.

Mr. McDowell informed the attendees that reconfiguring Jefferson to a K-5 school will create a savings on transportation, it will be a neighborhood school so that kids do not have to

take a bus, 5<sup>th</sup> graders will receive extra school time/instruction time. He also indicated that a past reorganization committee came up with this idea about 7 years ago.

Mr. Cohan attended the steam fair and was impressed by the students and their knowledge. He also attended the St. Patrick's Day Parade and said it was a great time marching.

#### New Business:

Ms. Carbonell indicated that we will work together to lessen the impact of the budget cuts and find our way through this. She mentioned that 167 districts were affected. She also indicated that she is proud to recognize Delilah Halley as the district's Unsung Hero. She also attended the St. Patrick's Day parade, and she is proud of the JROTC. She thanked all who attended.

#### Comments from Public:

Susan Lipstein - Township of Union Education Foundation raises money for grants for our district schools and has donated thousands of dollars. The Ed Foundation is selling raffle tickets and tickets for the annual buffet dinner. The Ed Foundation accepts all donations – big and small.

Xavier - Franklin school is failing his daughter who is in grade 4. There has been no intervention despite communication with teacher, principal, and social worker, no follow-up, and no grades on Genesis.

Dolly Cobb - Asked for copy of an HIB report on her student. Superintendent indicated that they will follow-up with the principal.

Virginia Jeffries - Concerns with a walk on resolution at the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting and indicated walk on resolutions are in violation of OPMA. Also indicated there is no policy concerning walking on resolutions.

Shanaira Davis – understands the financial challenges but she has concerns with Jefferson going to a K-5 – large class size; repurposing of Franklin is a disruption and there is no clear plan where students will go. She asked, “why Franklin?” “Why not implement in 2027-2028?” “How are we going to do this?”

Stacy Sanchez – 28 years teaching and her own students had great opportunities here. Franklin students are a gift. She asked, “Why this school?” “Are they the forgotten school?” These kids matter and must get the quality education they deserve. She asked the Board to think about the kids and to let the teachers and parents know before sending out an email.

Latesha Easterly – deep concerns about changing Franklin to a pre-k center. Forcing them to transfer and the separation will create anxiety. She asked, “How will this benefit the students?” She asked that the Board reconsider this decision.

Asiah Lemon – asked how this will be affecting special education.

Lynn Cornacchia – verbally announced her disagreement with the change to the pre-k center. This will micromanage the pre-k and you will need to transport the students. You need a community not a pre-k center – you will be segregating them from other students.

Trish Gomes – asked about how the class size will impact the middle school. Asked if the quality of education will remain the same. Suggested culling administration instead of staff.

Christian Restrepo – thank you for negotiating the contract. There are difficult budget decisions; teachers are the backbone. Teachers are asked to do many things but not compensated; there is a high turnover of teachers.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Faria, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,  
Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mr. Cohan

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

*Yolanda Koon*

YOLANDA KOON  
BOARD SECRETARY

