

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA – January 21, 2025

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, January 21, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, Main Meeting Room, 1976 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to notice sent to each member.

Ms. Carbonell called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Ms. Dixiana Carbonell, Mr. Michael Cohan, Mrs. Guida Faria, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. Greg Nasta, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Elsie Conteh-Mackey (arrived 6:08 p.m.), Mr. Ronnie McDowell (arrived 6:08 p.m.)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Gerald Benaquista, Ms. Marissa McKenzie, Dr. Jose Rodriguez, Mrs. Yolanda Koon

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, 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 Mr. Cohan, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the Board go into Executive Session at 6:05 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 matters.

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: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Faria, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Mrs. Scott-Hayden,
Ms. Santana, Ms. Carbonell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 7:02 p.m.

MOTION TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION:

There being no further business before the Board it was moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the Board return to public session at 7:02 p.m.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

Moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the following minutes be adopted:

- 1. December 10, 2024 – worksession
- 2. December 10, 2024 – executive session
- 3. December 17, 2024 – special meeting
- 4. December 18, 2024 – regular meeting
- 5. December 18, 2024 – executive session #1 and #2

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Communications:

REQUEST FROM TOWNSHIP OF UNION EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Request from Township of Union Education Foundation requesting the use Jefferson School gym and cafeteria for their spring reception on May 15, 2025 from 3:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Certificate of Insurance to be provided.

UHS/NATIONAL SPANISH HONOR SOCIETY – INDUCTION OF STUDENTS

Induction of students to the Union High School/National Spanish Honor Society – April 1, 2025 – May 31, 2025.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – BARNES

Letter of resignation from Tyler Barnes, paraprofessional-Battle Hill Elementary School, effective January 27, 2025.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – MEERTENS

Letter of resignation from Kirra Meertens, paraprofessional-Burnet Middle School, effective December 10, 2024.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – NARDONE-SCAFIDDI

Letter of resignation from Lisa Nardone-Scafiddi, art teacher-Burnet Middle School, effective January 25, 2025.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – TEZNA

Letter of resignation from Paola Tezna, 2nd shift custodian-Union High School, effective January 20, 2025.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – MATTHEWS

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Thomas Matthews, principal-Burnet Middle School, effective March 1, 2025.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – SUMNER

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Gayle Sumner, school nurse-Jefferson Elementary School, effective July 1, 2025.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – GHIRETTI

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Robert Ghiretti, supervisor of social studies 6-12 and business 9-12, effective September 1, 2025.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – PAZDAN

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA from Nicole Pazdan, teacher-Kawameeh Middle School, February 24, 2025-June 25, 2025.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – DESROSIERS

Request for unpaid FMLA from John Desrosiers, security-Burnet Middle School, January 2, 2025-June 25, 2025.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – McGRATH

Request for unpaid FMLA from Brendan McGrath, English teacher-Burnet Middle School, March 31, 2025-June 13, 2025.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – BOYD

Request for unpaid sick leave from Glen Boyd, head custodian-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, January 25, 2025-April 1, 2025.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – TRAMUTA

Request for paid FMLA from Janette Tramuta, counselor-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, January 29, 2025-June 25, 2025

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – THOMAS

Request for unpaid medical leave update from Janelle Thomas, third grade teacher-Franklin Elementary School, new return date May 15, 2025.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – DiMAGGIO NODARSE

Request for unpaid FMLA leave update from Carolina DiMaggio Nodarse, ESL teacher-Washington Elementary School, new return date January 6, 2025.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – KOLAS

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA leave update from Alyssa Kolas, nurse-Livingston Elementary School, January 27, 2025-June 24, 2025.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – SANTIAGO

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Delfin Santiago, Vice Principal-Burnet Middle School, January 1, 2025-June 30, 2025.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – NICKELS

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Nicole Nickles, supervisor-PreK-districtwide, January 2, 2025-June 30, 2025.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – SMITH

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Natalie Smith, teacher-PreK-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School/Franklin Elementary School, January 2, 2025-January 2, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – RIBEIRO

Request for leave update from Maria Ribeiro, teacher assistant-Battle Hill Elementary School, new return date February 3, 2025.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – KARDOS

Request for paid FMLA/unpaid FMLA from Lisa Kardos, chemistry teacher-Union High School, February 10, 2025-March 15, 2025.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – COSTLEIGH

Request for intermittent paid FMLA/unpaid FMLA from Dale Costleigh, electrician-districtwide, January 23, 2025-January 23, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – HOYT

Request for paid medical leave from Mark Hoyt, principal-Battle Hill Elementary School, January 3, 2025-February 24, 2025.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE CORRECTION – SOUSA

Correction - Request for Air National Guard – Training Allocation paid leave from John Sousa, Chief Information & Technology Officer, January 21, 2025-March 6, 2025.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden expressed condolences to the families in our district – Daniel Stroup – electrician, Candance West – bus aide, Kathy Gilmartin – secretary Special Services, Loetia Ross - security - Connecticut Farms.

Ms. Carbonell read the following statement:

Good evening, everyone. I'd like to take a moment to thank you all for being here today. As we begin the public comment portion of this meeting, I want to remind everyone that we value your input and appreciate your time and effort in sharing your thoughts and concerns.

As Ms. Koon stated previously, I ask that all comments be respectful and constructive, and that we refrain from calling out, yelling, and disrespectful language.

Each speaker will be given three minutes to address the board. Please remember that while we are eager to hear your perspectives, we may be unable to engage in back-and-forth dialogue during this portion of the meeting. However, your comments will be carefully reviewed and taken into consideration by the board, and if feasible, the Superintendent or designee, will respond to questions in real time or provide a response at a later time.

With that said, I invite our first speaker to approach. Please state your name and address.

Comments from Public (on resolutions):

Susan Lipstein spoke about the Ed Foundation requesting use of Jefferson School in May and spoke about when the Ed Foundation was established. The first grant was given out in 2002 and over \$250,000 grants were given to the district.

Superintendent's Report:

Mrs. Koon introduced the district's auditors – Suplee, Clooney & Company. Mr. Korecky presented an overview of the district's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (appended to the minutes) to the Board and community. He indicated that there was one finding and their recommendation is that all student activity funds collected be deposited within a reasonable amount of time. All other items were fine.

He informed the Board and audience that the C-1 schedule (pages 88-98) is a detailed report – Comparative Statements of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance – Budget and Actual.

Board member asked what is a reasonable amount of time? Mr. Zimmerman advised 48 hour and that they were seeing two weeks to a month from date of receipt to deposit. The deposits must be in compliance with your policy.

Ms. Carbonell asked the Policy Committee to review student activity policy.

Dr. Benaquista presented the following in the Superintendent Report (presentation appended to minutes):

- Education: Instruction and Program
- Learning Walks/Walkthroughs
- Hannah Caldwell Elementary School Update
 - Continue to fix plumbing failures
 - Zone 1 by library is completed
 - 7 total Zones
 - Masonry work to continue zone by zone
 - HVAC – cleaning and encapsulation
 - Tentative date of completion June 1, 2025
- Realignment Update
- Resolutions
- HIB Incidents to Report (January 15-21, 2025) – 1 founded
- HIB Incidents Affirmed (December 19, 2024-January 14, 2025) – 6 founded, 5 not founded/inconclusive

The HIB Bi-Annual Report was reported by Dr. Benaquista and a copy is located under E-2 of the agenda and minutes.

Dr. Benaquista presented a resolution for approval to recognize January 2025 as School Board Recognition Month. Dr. Benaquista recognized the Board members for what they do and thanked them on behalf of the district and appreciates the time and energy that the Board members put in.

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

APPROVE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING JANUARY 2025 AS SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH

Approve the resolution recognizing January 2025 as School Board Recognition Month, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Faria updated the Board with the discussions at the Education Committee meeting.

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

E-1. *Agenda item reported at January 14, 2025 worksession (HIB Report-December 19, 2024-January 14, 2025)*

E-1A. *Agenda item affirmed at January 14, 2025 worksession (Determination of HIB-December 11, 2024-December 18, 2024)*

E-1-1. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period January 14, 2025 to January 21, 2025, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes *(no vote required; for reporting purposes only)*.

E-1-1A. AFFIRM SUPERINTENDENT'S DETERMINATION OF HIB

Affirm the Superintendent's determination of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the periods December 19, 2024 to January 14, 2025, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-2. APPROVE JANUARY REPORT – NJDOE – HIB

Approve the Township of Union Public Schools January report presented by the Superintendent as required by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB). The report provides the public with the information collected from September 2024 through December 2024, as well as the number of incidents per school building, status of investigations, HIB investigators, nature of the HIB reports and the discipline resulting from the report findings. The HIB report also includes all training of school district personnel, building programs and assemblies during the time period.

E-3. APPROVE CURRICULA

Approve the following curricula: Science – Grade K, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, respectively.

E-4. APPROVE ASSEMBLIES – FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Approve the following assemblies at Franklin Elementary School: (a) SEL Presentation-Corey Shares a Secret, presented by Nettie, Nana & Friends – Ronnette Smith-Powell and staff, March 18, 2025, 9:30 a.m. in auditorium, grades 2-4 (cost: \$1,299.00); (b) K-9 Public Safety Career Presentation, presented by NJ Department of Corrections, April 11, 2025, 9:30 a.m. in gym, grades K-4 (no cost).

E-5. APPROVE/ACCEPT GRANT FUNDS

Approve and accept the funds from the Mental Health Screening in Schools Grant for January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025, in the amount of \$73,340.00.

E-6. APPROVE/ACCEPT GRANT FUNDS

Approve and accept the funds from the School Based Mental Health Grant for January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025, in the amount of \$375,000.00.

E-7. *Agenda item adopted at January 14, 2025 worksession (Application NJDOE Grant Awards)*

E-8. APPROVE AND ACCEPT RESOLUTION FOR APPLICATION FOR LOCAL RECREATION IMPROVEMENT GRANT

Approve and accept resolution for application to the Local Recreation Improvement Grant provided by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJDCA) for the fiscal year 2025 to be submitted with the grant application, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-9. APPROVE UPDATED SCHOOL CALENDAR

Approve the updated school calendar, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-10. APPROVE TUITION, TRANSPORTATION, HOME INSTRUCTION CONTRACTS

Approve Tuition, Transportation and Home Instruction Contracts with Burlington County Special Services (Burlington County Alternative High School) for student (Tuition \$28,337.00; Transportation \$7,500.00; Home Instruction, if needed, \$65.00/hr.), in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

E-11. APPROVE NJDOE EQUIVALENCY APPLICATION

Approve the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) Equivalency Application for NJQSAC, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Carbonell mentioned that the district is challenged – capital improvement projects are underfunded. We need to be proactive to find additional funding sources.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Mr. Cohan indicated he and Mr. McDowell had conversations with Mrs. Koon. \$2.5 million will be going into the bank and another \$1.5 million in surplus will be for next years budget.

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

F-1. TREASURER’S REPORT

That the Treasurer’s Report dated December 31, 2024 be accepted.

F-2. SECRETARY'S REPORT

That the Secretary's Report dated December 31, 2024 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 December 31, 2024 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 December 31, 2024 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 DISTRICT WIDE TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES

Approve district wide 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 adopted at January 14, 2025 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 2024-2025 STATE CONTRACT APPROVED VENDORS

Approve the amended list of the 2024-2025 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/Department	Vendor/Description	Amount
Kawameeh Middle School	52/Administration	Charter Up – field trip for Young Women of Purpose Club – May 15, 2025	\$1,100.00 (not to exceed)
Kawameeh Middle School	35/Administration	Vanderhoof Transportation – remaining balance for art trip	\$1,100.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School/Athletics	3340/Girls Softball	BSN Sports – girls softball jackets	\$1,799.08 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2077/UHSPAC	11hour Design – graphic/scenic material for in the Heights	\$5,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2077/UHSPAC	Squeek Lights – lighting rental for in the Heights	\$10,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2001/Advanced Musical Theatre	Broadway Licensing – licensing and rental material for Diary of a Wimpy Kid	\$2,500.00 (not to exceed)
Livingston Elementary School	2013	Sterling Hill Mining Museum – 3 rd grade field trip	\$2,100.00
Union High School	2201/School ID Fines	Artmax – wristband purchase for missing ID's	\$1122.00

F-9B. APPROVE FUNDRAISERS

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

Event Name	Date	Purpose
PBSIS Rewards	February 12-13, 2025 December 12-13, 2025	Jefferson/PBSIS – to raise funds for PBSIS rewards
Snack Sales	February 1, 2025-June 30, 2025	Kawameeh/GSA – snack sales raise funds to purchase club t-shirts
Online Donation Program	February 1, 2025-June 30, 2025	Kawameeh/Union Middle School G&T – to raise funds for 7 th and 8 th grade G&T field trips
Cookie Dough - Online Fundraiser	February 1-28, 2025	UHS/Girls Basketball – to raise funds for camp/training, end of year celebration
Leading Edge – Blast Donation	January 22, 2025-May 28, 2025	UHS/Track – to raise funds for end of year party, sneakers, additional training gear
Program Ad Sales for into the Woods	January 22, 2025-April 6, 2025	UHS/UHSPAC – to raise funds for production costs
T-shirt/sweatshirt fundraiser	February 1-28, 2025	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – to raise funds for NSHS
Food Drive	April 1-30, 2025	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – to collect canned food for food drive
Latin Dance Night	March 1-31, 2025	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – to raise for NSHS
Double Good Popcorn Sales	February 18-February 22, 2025	UHS/Step Team – to raise funds for team related expenses and supplies

Bake Sale/Snack Sale	January 22, 2025-June 30, 2025	UHS/GSA – to raise funds for future events
Movie Day	January 22, 2025-June 30, 2025	UHS/GSA – to raise funds for future events
Snack Sale	January 22, 205-June 30, 2025	UHS/Karaoke – to raise funds during karaoke event
Talent Show	April 1, 2025-May 31, 2025	UHS/Cheerleading – to raise funds for cheerleading items
Talent Show	April 1, 2025-May 31, 2025	UHS/Freshmen Class – to raise funds for the freshmen class

F-9C. ACCEPT DONATIONS

Accept the following donations:

From	For Use By	\$/Item
Pepsico Beverage Sales	Union High School	\$647.93
		\$580.58
Shutterfly LLC	Jefferson School	\$1,589.64
	Washington Elementary School	\$2,062.81
	Union High School	\$1,168.34
	Union High School	\$3,317.65
	Connecticut Farms Elementary	\$1,537.64

F-10. APPROVE 2024-2025 OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENT PLACEMENT LIST

Approval be given to amend the 2024-2025 out-of-district student placement list (month of January), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-11. APPROVE CONTRACTS – COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Approve School Contracts with the State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, for educational services for students in the district for the 2024-2025 school year, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

F-12. APPROVE NJDOE-JOINT TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT

Approve the State of New Jersey – Department of Education (NJDOE) Student Transportation Unit – Joint Transportation Agreement with Delsea Regional High School District (host district) for transportation services for student to Creative Achievement, for the 2024-2025 school year (not to exceed \$19,768.00), in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

F-13. APPROVE STUDENT TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT – DCF - STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Approve Student Transportation Contracts with the State of New Jersey – Department of Children and Families for the 2024-2025 school year at a rate of \$75.00 per day (23 students at DCF Regional School, Union Campus, Scotch Plains, NJ), in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

F-14. APPROVE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AGREEMENT

Approve Transportation Services Agreement with Northern Region Educational Services Commission for the 2024-2025 school year for transportation for student to Essex Valley School (not to exceed \$18,533.57), in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

F-15. APPROVE ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS

Approve the acceptance of the following grant awards: (a) Child Assault Prevention – Grade 1 and Grade 5, grant awarded up to the amount of \$6,381.90, district contribution of \$2,735.10 (30% of projected cost for program – total cost \$9,117.00); and (b) K-8 CAP’s (Child Assault Prevention) Bullying Prevention Program, for Burnet Middle School, at no cost to the district.

F-16. ACCEPT ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT AND MANAGEMENT REPORT

Accept the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) and the Auditor’s Management Report, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (auditors will present report to the public at the regular meeting on January 21, 2025).

F-17. APPROVE CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP)

Approve the Corrective Action Plan for Single Audit Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2024, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-18. APPROVE PARTICIPATION IN COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM

Approve resolution and agreement authorizing the district to enter into the New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Alliance Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the County of Bergen (Lead Agency), 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 December 18 2024 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

Mr. Nasta left the meeting prior to vote.

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,
Mrs. Minneci, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Ms. Santana

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Grievance/Negotiations Committee:

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

G-1. APPROVE SIDEBAR AGREEMENT – UTEA

Approve Sidebar Agreement between the Township of Union Board of Education and the Union Township Education Association, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Scott-Hayden

MOTION CARRIED

Operations Committee Resolutions:

Mr. Nasta indicated that the O-3 will be tabled this evening and not voted on.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mr. Nasta, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, 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 and, if applicable, bus evacuation reports for the 2024-2025 school year, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

O-2. APPROVE SUBMISSION OF ANTICIPATED FACILITY REQUESTS

Approve submission of the Anticipated Facility Requests for Alternate Method of Compliance in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3 and/or 6.4 for toilet room facilities for early intervention, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms at Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, Franklin Elementary School and Washington Elementary School for the 2024-2025 school year, to the New Jersey Department of Education (Union County office), in accordance with the information in the hands of each Board member.

O-3. *Agenda item tabled – not voted on (Request from Township of Union Education Foundation requesting the use of Jefferson School gym-May 15, 2025)*

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Scott-Hayden mentioned that there are a lot of retirements/resignations and HR will be conducting exit meetings to find out why they are leaving. We look to recruit and hire the best.

Ms. Santana indicated that two termination of employments will be added to the agenda this evening.

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

P-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 2024-2025 school year.

Name	Position	Rate
Luis F. Giraldo Garzon	Sub-custodian	\$16.00/hr.
Marcia Gallegos	Sub-custodian	\$16.00/hr.
Evelyn Velez	Daily security sub	\$36.05/hr.
Derek Porter	Daily sub	\$140.00/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
Tyler Barnes	Paraprofessional	Battle Hill	1/27/2025	Resignation
Kirra Meertens	Paraprofessional	BMS	12/10/2024	Resignation
Lisa Nardone-Scaffiddi	Art teacher	BMS	1/25/2025	Resignation
Paola Tezna	2 nd shift custodian	UHS	1/20/2025	Resignation
Thomas Matthews	Principal	BMS	3/1/2025	Retirement
Gayle Sumner	School nurse	Jefferson	7/1/2025	Retirement

Robert Ghiretti	Supervisor of social studies 6-12 and business 9-12	Districtwide	9/1/2025	Retirement
-----------------	---	--------------	----------	------------

P-3B. APPROVE LEAVES

Approve leaves for the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Leave Dates	Leave Type
Delfin Santiago	Vice Principal	BMS	Intermittent 1/1/2025- 6/30/2025	Paid intermittent FMLA
Nicole Nickels	Supervisor-PreK	districtwide	Intermittent 1/2/2025- 6/30/2025	Paid intermittent FMLA
Natalie Smith	PreK teacher	Hannah Caldwell/ Franklin	Intermittent 1/2/2025- 1/2/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA
Janelle Thomas	3 rd grade teacher	Franklin	New return date 5/15/2025	Unpaid medical leave
Carolina DiMaggio Nodarse	ESL teacher	Washington	New return date 1/6/2025	Unpaid FMLA
Alyssa Kolas	Nurse	Livingston	Updated dates: 1/27/2025- 6/24/2025	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA
Nicole Pazdan	Teacher	KMS	2/24/2025- 6/25/2025	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/ NJFLA
John Desrosiers	Security	BMS	1/2/2025- 6/25/2025	Unpaid FMLA
Brendan McGrath	English teacher	BMS	3/31/2025- 6/13/2025	Unpaid FMLA
Glen Boyd	Head custodian	Connecticut Farms	1/25/2025- 4/1/2025	Unpaid sick leave
Janette Tramuta	Counselor	Hannah Caldwell	1/29/2025- 6/25/2025	Paid FMLA
Maria Ribeiro	Teacher assistant	Battle Hill	New return date 2/3/2025	
Lisa Kardos	Chemistry teacher	UHS	2/10/2025- 3/15/2025	Paid FMLA/unpaid FMLA
Dale Costleigh	Electrician	Districtwide	Intermittent 1/23/2025- 1/23/2026	Intermittent paid FMLA/unpaid FMLA
Mark Hoyt	Principal	Battle Hill	1/3/2025- 2/24/2025	Paid medical leave
John Sousa	Chief Information & Technology Officer	Districtwide	<u>Correction</u> 1/21/2025- 3/6/2025	Air National Guard-Training Allocation Paid Leave

P-4. APPROVE STUDENT TEACHERS AND INTERNSHIPS

Approve student teachers and internships for the 2024-2025 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-5. APPROVE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEE

Approve termination of Employee #8895, effective February 21, 2025.

P-6. APPROVE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEE

Approve termination of Employee #13175, effective February 21, 2025.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Policy Committee:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following policy was moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mrs. Scott-Hayden for final reading/adoption:

POL-1. POLICY 0164 – CONDUCT OF BOARD MEETING

Approve Policy 0164 – Conduct of Board Meeting, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Cohan indicated that going forward there will only be one opportunity in the beginning of the worksession meeting for the community to speak on resolutions and all matters.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Minneci reported on the following resolutions:

R-1. REPORT OF STUDENTS VOLUNTARILY TRANSFERRED TO DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE – RESIDENCY INVESTIGATION

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

Student No.	School
350926	Hannah Caldwell Elementary School – grade 2

R-2. REPORT OF STUDENTS VOLUNTARILY TRANSFERRED TO DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE – RESIDENCY HEARING

For informational purposes only (no vote required): The following residency investigation and hearing were completed and the listed student voluntarily transferred to the district of residence:

Student No.	School
361372	Washington Elementary School-grade 1 – special education

For informational purposes only (no vote required): The following totals are as of the December 18, 2024 Board meeting (2024-2025 school year):

Students Removed:	7
Students Voluntarily Transferred:	8

Approval of Bills:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the Board concur with the bills listed in the permanent bound register appended to these minutes and be ordered for payment.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Mr. Nasta - thanked Anthony Cirella and the groundsman for cleaning off the snow and ice. He also congratulated former student Davison Igbinosun, who plays for Ohio State, and Buckeyes beat Notre Dame in the College Football Playoff Championship.

Mrs. Faria – attended UHS musical – The Heights. It was a great musical, congratulations to the students. She also attended Always Connected and it was presented that most HIBS are due to social media. She encourages parents to participate in these sessions. There will be a blood drive at Battle Hill on February 6th.

Mrs. Conteh-Mackey – she and Mr. Nasta attended meetings with the Superintendent, security and IT. She indicated that the Operations Committee now includes security and IT. Discussions included: upgrades to door access, security camera upgrades, commitment to parents to keep student safe. Our buildings and grounds are working hard for our schools. The operations committee did walkthroughs and there is a lot to be done. She asked that parents and community communicate anything they see.

Ms. Santana – attended the County wrestling tournament at UHS – our boys did great.

Ms. Carbonell – It is Black History Month; we celebrated a great man – Martin L. King. A famous quote of MLK – “If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving.” To President Trump – it is time to reunite the country.

The district needs community support, ideas and engagement – she challenged the community to work with us to move the district forward.

Mrs. Minneci – Battle Hill Elementary School pasta dinner – February 7th – to raise funds for scholarships.

Mr. Cohan – in the NEA publication, one of our teachers, Nick Ferroni, wrote an article “Should I Stay or Should I Go?” A copy is appended to the minutes.

Comments from the Public:

Sol Atencio – commends SEPAG on transitioning training with case managers. There are future sessions in February. She mentioned a research opportunity – it is a study for kids with autism sponsored by the Kessler Foundation. She'll email information to Dr. Benaquista, Dr. Rodriguez and the Education Committee.

Virginia Jefferies – she has concerns with F-3, POL-1 and the Board meeting locations. She asked how long will you use this location? She also spoke about various accounts in the audit where she indicated the account is incomplete, not in the original budget, where were the funds transferred, one account was exhausted, where were they used or moved to. She asked what buildings need HVAC and what vendors were used? POL-1 – she asked what is the reasoning for the two different agendas? She indicated that there is no role for the attorney – only consultation. Ms. Carbonell indicated if she needs guidance or clarification, she can call on him. She asked the fiscal committee to look into her questions.

Luisa Biase – we are starting on a more positive note this year. She expressed her concern regarding moving forward with the realignment plan because of all the money going to HCES this year. Jefferson School – her children learned so much there – social emotional – need to use that information for middle school

Ann Margaret Shannon – labor management committee – we are just getting started. Looking forward to Central Office including us. She is glad that BT's have been brought back in

instead of outsourcing. She also mentioned that UHS could use one person to do the financial activities for the school because student activity is a full-time job.

Susan Lipstein – the Ed Foundation has money to give to the teachers of Union. She has made a request to meet with Dr. Benaquista. Burnet Middle School had an issue and they took care of that issue. BMS has issues but even if school is being phased out, you still need to address the issues.

Michelle Zatta – she indicated that she has been asking for the information on the NJ Standardized Testing. She held up poster boards of where Union students are compared to the State averages for the last four years. There is a learning loss since COVID. Reduction in librarians and Spanish teachers. There are data points that need to be shared with the parents. Regarding the realignment, there are disparaging information with different schools.

Mrs. Faria – NJSLA Scores – there is a great video that relates to your child.

Mrs. Carbonell – we have to look at different ways to read – teachers can go to First Books and create accounts for each student.

Mr. Cohan – CIA presented to the Education Committee. We will be using the information to improve instruction.

Kathleen Bruns Meyers – she reads two books a day to her class, and they love it. Congratulations to all the athletes on Saturday. She received an email from her former student thanking her for attending the wrestling match.

Ms. Santana volunteered to read in Ms. Bruns Meyers class.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mr. Nasta, that the meeting be adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Yolanda Koon

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

