

**TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 21, 2017**

NOTICE OF MEETING:

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, November 21, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at Union High School Library, 2350 North Third Street, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member.

Mr. McDowell called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. David Arminio, Dr. Guy Francis, Mr. Ron McDowell, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. Jeffrey Monge, Mr. Vito Nufrio, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby, Mrs. Nancy Zuena

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Mr. Gregory Tatum, Mr. Gerry Benaquista, Mr. Gregory Brennan, Mrs. Kim Conti, Mrs. Ann Hart, Mr. Barry Loessel, Mrs. Sandra Paul

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Paul Griggs, Esq.

Mr. McDowell led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Brennan read the statement required under the "Open Public Meetings Act", a copy of which is on file in the office of the Board Secretary.

Dr. Francis read the District's mission statement.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Moved by Mr. Arminio, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the following minutes be adopted: (a) September 12, 2017 – worksession and executive session and (b) September 19, 2017 – regular meeting and executive session.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

COMMUNICATIONS:

LETTER FROM UNITED COMMUNITY CENTER INC.

Letter from United Community Center, Inc. requesting use of Hannah Caldwell School's auditorium for their annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration on Monday, January 15, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and audio system.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – CRUDER

Letter of resignation from Thomas Cruder, paraprofessional-Battle Hill Elementary School, effective November 13, 2017.

REQUEST FOR MATERNITY LEAVE – KAPLAN

Request for maternity leave followed by FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Nichole Kaplan, special education teacher-Franklin Elementary School, from December 19, 2017 with a return date of February 12, 2018.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT FMLA/NJFLA – MOTT

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Thomas Mott-special education teacher-Union High School, from October 29, 2017 to October 29, 2018.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – PERSKA

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Barbara Perska, ESL teacher-Washington Elementary School, effective January 1, 2018.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT FMLA/NJFLA – RAPKE

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Angela Rapke, 10-month secretary-Burnet Middle School from October 16, 2017 to October 16, 2018.

UPDATE TO CURRENT LEAVE - TORRES

Update to current maternity and FMLA/NJFLA leave from Paola Torres, teacher-Franklin Elementary School, new return date December 1, 2017.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – VEDOVA

Letter of resignation from Deirdre Vedova, ESL teacher-Union High School, effective December 15, 2017.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – DAPONTE

Letter of resignation from Anna DaPonte, part-time café aide-Washington Elementary School, effective November 16, 2017.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT FMLA – VEGLIA

Request for intermittent FMLA leave from Christine Veglia, AAP teacher-Burnet Middle School, from November 3, 2017 through November 3, 2018.

REQUEST FOR EXTENTION OF UNPAID LEAVE – VILLANE

Request for extension of unpaid maternity leave FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Kimberly Villane, language arts teacher-Burnet Middle school, now through November 30, 2017.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF LEAVE – HENDERSON

Request for extension of unpaid maternity non FMLA/NJFLA from Lisa Henderson, teacher-Burnet Middle School, return of February 1, 2018.

REQUEST FOR UNPAID LEAVE – BOGNER

Request for unpaid non FMLA medical leave from John Bogner, resource program in-class teacher-Hannah Caldwell, from November 14, 2017 with a return date of January 17, 2018.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – JONES

Letter of resignation from Robert Jones, part-time driver-transportation, effective December 1, 2017.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – ARDITO

Request for intermittent FMLA from Nicholas Ardito, Director of Security-districtwide, from November 7, 2017 to November 7, 2018.

REQUEST FOR PAID MEDICAL LEAVE – GINLACK

Request for paid medical leave from John Ginlack Jr., custodian-Battle Hill Elementary School, from October 16, 2017 to December 21, 2017.

REQUEST FOR PAID MEDICAL LEAVE – NICHOLS

Request for paid medical leave from Shirley Nichols, teacher-Livingston Elementary School, from October 17, 2017 to December 22, 2017.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF UNPAID LEAVE

Request for extension of unpaid FMLA followed by unpaid Non FMLA medical leave from Gary Marshall, custodian-2<sup>nd</sup> shift-Burnet Middle School, with a new tentative return date of January 2, 2018.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – O'BRIEN

Letter of resignation from Julie O'Brien, bookkeeper-Business Office, effective December 4, 2017.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Mr. Tatum stated I would like to save the best for last – student recognition but I will begin tonight with a statement and then I will move into the District's achievement on the PARCC this year.

I am responding to a recent newspaper article that discussed the theft at Union High School in June 2017. Questions have previously been raised and the ability of the Board of Education and Administration to respond has been limited as the matter involves school

personnel that cannot be discussed publicly - the preliminary investigation by the Union Police Department and the involvement of the Union County prosecutor. The following actions were taken by the school district in response to the theft.

The theft was immediately reported to the Union Township Police Department. The Department conducted a detailed investigation which resulted in the arrest of students who were involved in the theft. As I understand it after the students were arrested, the case was sent to the Union County prosecutor. At that point the Union Police Department was no longer involved.

In early August, the Board of Education directed its auditors to perform audit procedures of the high school student activity account and accounts in other schools. The auditors confirmed that the amount of \$26,222.26 was missing. This information was provided to the Union County prosecutor.

The Board of Education directed its attorney to request the Union County prosecutor to re-open the investigation to determine whether there was any fraudulent activity. In response, the Union County prosecutor determined to not reopen the investigation. The Board of Education and Administration has taken and will take action regarding personnel.

The Board of Education has communicated its request to the Union County prosecutor that restitution of the amount of money stolen to be included as part of any resolution of the criminal actions against the student's charged.

The Board has authorized a third party to undertake a forensic examination of equipment used to maintain the student activity account. To date the Administration has undertaken the following steps regarding the student activity accounts at Union High School and other schools in the District.

- Request the auditor examine and review the student activity accounts at each school and provide recommendations; it is my understanding that the recommendations will be set forth in the 2017-18 audit which should be completed soon
- Conduct meetings with principals, directors and school treasurer's which include the Board of Education auditors and administrators to discuss procedures, board policies, practices and any questions
- Bi-monthly meetings with staff to discuss student activity, account procedures, conduct training for school based treasurer's on quick books and acknowledge that the Board of Education policies were not followed with regard to depositing funds. This practice has been addressed in detail with staff and the Board of Education auditors.

Mr. Brennan at this time do you have any further comments regarding the training – this would be the time to make a statement. Mr. Brennan stated I would like to say to the public that the student activity account is totally separate and apart from the school budget. Student activity funds are raised for student activities in the school – such as field trips, prom, yearbook sale – things of that nature; so they are totally separate and apart from the school budget. The accounts reside in each school and as the policy states, the sole responsibility of these accounts reside with

the principal or their designee. I just want to make that clear – this is not money that is raised by the tax levy. This is money that is brought in through the schools.

Mr. Tatum you did a good job covering everything. We have had two training sessions for our principals and our treasurers in each respective school. The first was to hammer home the policy that has been in place and also the procedures for the student activity account which should have been followed and obviously not. The most important thing in that policy is depositing money in a timely manner. It says 48 hours but it should be done on a daily basis and obviously that was not done.

The second training station was with our auditors – we had two partners come in and address the principals and their treasurers within the school building and we had a very open discussion, questions, answers and we also had the principals and the directors of departments formulate and email questions and concerns regarding the student activity account and how to run those accounts and directly email myself and I would forward that to the auditors who are going to get back to us on that. We are addressing the issues.

Mr. Tatum stated that concludes our statement regarding the theft at Union High School.

Now I would like to give you an overview of the 2017 of the PARCC testing. Annually I get the opportunity to report the good results that our students have achieved and I think that over the past few weeks, materials have come out and maybe a bit misleading, but hopefully this will clarify exactly where the District is and how we are doing.

I want to start by saying that the results that you are about to see surely shows that the way in which the PARCC examine is administered and scored is not really a pass/fail basis, it is really on the level of achievement that a student attains as a result of taking the exam.

The goal every year is to reduce levels one and two and increase levels four and five. We will see that the middle level – level three – you have students moving in one direction and moving up in another direction. I don't want anyone to be confused about what you are about to see.

What you see on the first slide is the result of the language arts/literacy and you take a look at the Level 1 and Level 2 – you will see overall that we have a -5.7 and some people might look at that and say students are not doing well but what that means is those students that scored at Level 1 and 2 – we have had more students move in the plus direction which is a good thing and that is grade 3.

We also see a change in grade 3 in a number of students that have increased in Level 4 and 5 by an increase by 6.8. I will share each grade level results.

- In grade 4 – decrease of 9.8; but an increase in Level 4 and 5 of 9.8 as well.
- In grade 5 – decrease in Level 1 and 2 – 7.3; but an increase in Levels 4 and 5 – 14.5.
- In grade 6 – decrease of 2.0; but an increase of 6.4

- In grade 7 – decrease of 5.3; but an increase in 10.7.
- In grade 8 – decrease of 11.6 in Level 1 and 2 but an increase of 13.3
- In grade 9 – decrease of 10 but in increase in Levels 4 and 5 of 12.4
- In grade 10 – reduction of 9.9 but an increase of 5.8

The only area where we have an area that needs more work – there is an increase in grade 11 of 8.0% of students that fell into the Level 1 category but 0.2% of students moved over to Levels 4 and 5.

Just to be clear of what these levels actually mean – Level 1 is those students are not meeting expectations, Level 2 is meeting part of their expectations, Level 3 is right in the center – approaching, Level 4 is students are meeting expectations and Level 5 is where they are exceeding expectations. We have seen increases in the areas that we want to see in language arts.

In mathematics:

- In grade 3 – a reduction of 4.7% but an increase in Levels 4 and 5 of 9.9%
- In grade 4 – a reduction of 2.8 but an increase of 9.3%
- In grade 5 – an increase of 2.7 but a decrease of 4.7 – which indicates that grade 5 is nearing but we do need to give that some attention
- In grade 6 – an increase of 5.7 but an increase of 2.9
- In grade 7 – a reduction of 0.7 but an increase of those students that moved into achieving level of 8.2
- In grade 8 – a reduction of 8.7% but an increase of 6.0%
- Algebra I – a decrease of 7.7% and an increase of 8.4%
- Algebra II – a decrease of 2.1% and an increase of 2%
- Geometry – a decrease of 8.9 and an increase of 5.6

On the next slide, this is a slide on the English language arts percentages and if you take a look, the indicators show the Township of Union and also the State – you will notice the indicators of Levels 1 and 2 are going down which is a good sign and the State is actually down a tenth of a percent more than us.

- Grade 4 there is a decrease in 9.8% but the State is only 1.8%
- Grade 5 there is a decrease of 7.3% and the State average is 3.3
- Grade 6 we are right on the cusp because there is 2% decrease but a 2.3% at the State level
- Grade 7 there is a decrease of 5.3% - the State is 5%
- Grade 8 there is a decrease of 11.6% - the State is 5.5
- Grade 9 there is a 10% decrease – the State is 11
- Grade 10 there is a 9.9% decrease and the State is 8.8
- Grade 11 there was an increase of 8.0 and the State also had an increase of 3.7%

## In Levels of 4 and 5:

- Grade 3 – increase of 6.8% - State is 6.9%
- Grade 4 – increase of 9.8% - State is 4.8
- Grade 5 – increase of 14.5 – State is 7.4
- Grade 6 – increase of 6.4% - State is 4.5
- Grade 7 – increase of 10.7% - State is 7.6
- Grade 8 – increase of 13.3% - State is 7.5%
- Grade 9 – increase of 12.4% - State is 11.7
- Grade 10 – increase of 5.8% - State exceed us slightly with 9.7%
- Grade 11 – increase of 0.2% - State decreased by 2.6%

## In mathematics – Levels 1 and 2:

- Grade 3 – decrease of 4.7% - State is 4.4%
- Grade 4 – decrease of 2.8 – State is 3.5%
- Grade 5 – increase of 2.7 – State had a decrease of 2.5 – that is an area that we need to do some more work in
- Grade 6 – increase of 5.7% - State had a decrease of 0.2
- Grade 7 – decrease of 0.7% - State is 2.1
- Grade 8 – decrease of 8.7 – State is 3.8
- Algebra I – decrease of 7.7 – State is 4.8
- Algebra II – decrease of 2.1% - State had a 0.4 increase
- Geometry – decrease of 8.9% - State is 9.0

## Levels 4 and 5

- Grade 3 – increase of 9.9% - State is 7.5
- Grade 4 – increase of 9.3 – State is 6.7
- Grade 5 – decrease of 4.7 – State had an increase of 5.2
- Grade 6 – increase of 2.9 – State is 2.8
- Grade 7 – increase of 8.2 – State is 2.8
- Grade 8 – increase of 6.0 – State is 4.2
- Algebra I – increase of 8.4 – State is 5.4
- Algebra II – increase of 2.0 – State is 2.7
- Geometry – increase of 5.6 – State is 7.4

The next is the actual number of students that took the exam over the last few years and what we see is the number of students tested – English Language Arts:

- Grade 3 – increase of 3 students
- Grade 4 – increase of 54 students
- Grade 5 – increase of 14 students
- Grade 6 – increase of 33 students

- Grade 7 – increase of 25 students
- Grade 8 – increase of 59 students
- Grade 9 – increase of 66 students
- Grade 10 – decrease of 7 students
- Grade 11 – increase of 47 students

For a total increase of 294 students.

The last slide is a comparison of our students for mathematics:

- Grade 3 – stayed the same
- Grade 4 – increase of 54
- Grade 5 – increase of 16
- Grade 6 – increase of 32
- Grade 7 – increase of 33
- Grade 8 – increase of 42
- Algebra I – increase of 32
- Algebra II – increase of 22
- Geometry – decrease of 16

For a total increase of 215 students.

Presentation appended to minutes.

In closing I am happy to announce that the Township of Union Public Schools spring 2017 PARCC had 17 of 18 indicators listed for the District - language arts/literacy and mathematics. We met the academic achievement and targets and academic progress – the standard is between 40 and 59.5% which exceeds our annual target that was set prior to the administration of the PARCC.

Mrs. Moses stated our administrators and supervisors continue to work on our curriculum for mathematics and language arts. The levels of expectations that the State set forth for the State of New Jersey – we recognize and we acknowledge that once we did not have the option of not participating – the State does require that our students participates and our principals have put in action plans for our students that are at Levels 1 and 2 and our students that are at 3, 4 and 5. Our supervisors are charged with Levels 1 and 2 and moving students forward and providing them all the resources that they need. Our principals are charged with Levels 3, 4 and 5 – implementing the plan to ensure that every student in those levels get exactly what they need.

Our goal this year is to make sure that our students get the support they need through RTI – implementing the social, emotional learning piece and ensure that every child and every teacher receives the support that they need.

I am very proud of the teachers, the principals and the supervisors and we work very hard for every student. As we continue to move forward, we welcome all participation and engagement of parents, community members to help our students and to help our district to



elevate to every level that the State required us to achieve. We did meet all the targets that were set by the State of New Jersey – so we did anticipate the target getting higher. It is just like anything in life, we will strive harder to meet every target that is set by the State of New Jersey. I am very proud that in our academic areas we have met every target and that is something I am very proud of. When I look at other districts and what we are against because we are all competing. Our students are competing for jobs, for college, for everything that other students are competing for. We are preparing our children and we are collaborating with other districts. We are sharing information because we want to know what they are doing and they want to know what we are doing. We will continue to move and I thank the Board of Education for all the support and the students for coming to school and trying hard and thank you parents for your support.

Mr. Tatum stated I want to reiterate what Mrs. Moses said regarding our teachers and faculty and the diligence that they bring to our students daily. Now we will listen to some of the testimonials to the good things that go on in our District.

I said this as a principal, as an Assistant Superintendent and I'm saying this as a Superintendent – we have a very good school district and a school district that is good and that has gotten better and can get even better but we have to start looking at what goes on in our schools and we have start highlighting the things that go on in our schools and highlight with a little more rigor than we do. Don't let anyone make you believe that you have a bad school district here because Mrs. Moses took light of something and it is information we can't release right now but I want you to take note of when some data comes out how Union did comparably to some of the other districts and I think you will be quite surprised with the results. Tune in very shortly and you will be hearing about that.

Mr. Arminio stated obviously the numbers are very good and it seems from what you said we are going in the right direction and maybe you can comment and dispel the rumor that was going around a couple of weeks ago that the high school was being taken over by the State because of the results of the PARCC test and I can't believe that I heard that going around Town but it was. If you could comment on that to dispel that rumor directly so people don't misinterpret and do not believe things that are sometimes said.

Mr. Tatum stated one thing that I would comment to your commentary Mr. Arminio as well as to the Board and everyone here tonight is as the Superintendent of Schools, I heard the same rumor. Normally in the real world when something like that is happening, the Superintendent is notified. I don't recall receiving anything from the State of New Jersey saying that any of our schools were being taken over. In fact, the last time I was in the State office and we talked about the programs that we were doing here, the County Superintendent looked at me and said how are you getting that all done. It was just the opposite of what you hear.

The education specialist has commented to us on more than one occasion about how our curriculum has improved. The results we talked about here are sent to us as a result of the performance of our students. If there was a time where any of our schools were being taken over, I will tell you that I would know about, you would know about it and whenever there is a takeover, it is not one school, it is the entire district. If you look at the results of where we truly

are, we are not even close to that. In fact, it is just the opposite. These days the State doesn't want to take over school districts, they expect us to take care of that because those districts that have been taken over by the State, going back some years, they haven't been any more successful than when it was locally controlled.

The numbers are the numbers and they speak for themselves and it speaks to our students and our community and our families because they are sending us the best children that they have and we are doing the best work that we can with the children that we have. They are showing progress. If every one of these numbers were in the minus column and saying you are not making progress than I could see that rumor having some possible validity but the numbers don't speak to that last year and they don't speak to them now. Let's say publicly that Union High School has moved up in the high school rankings twice in the last few years and that is data and I'm not making it up.

To quote an old friend of mine that I worked for many years ago, he coined the phrase that went like this – "don't believe what you hear, come and see for yourself". Those people who feel that we are not doing well, they need to come in and examine what we are doing here. We are doing some great things and we intend on getting better. We are not going in the other direction. We are moving forward. Mrs. Moses – all hands on deck – correct? Mrs. Moses stated absolutely.

Mr. Nufrio stated often I have complemented how Mr. Tatum's right hands have worked so diligently to get us where we are. Once again I complement both Mrs. Moses and Mr. Benaquista for what they have done and achieved in such a short time. I would like you to do one thing with your permission Mr. Tatum – since you are going to do a comparison with other districts, let's be sure to compare high schools that have the same number of students as ours as opposed to just comparing districts because I can tell you one neighboring district, the designated high school population is 145 kids.

Mrs. Moses stated you are absolutely right and when you compare, you have to compare likes and not differences. I'm not saying we are comparing ourselves to certain schools, we just want to know where they are because we know our children will meet them at the college door, at the job market – so we need to know what is out there, how they are doing, how are they rolling and the same thing for teachers. Teachers need to know what other teachers are doing because they too compete. It is not just about the students competing, we are all competing. I'm competing too; Mr. Benaquista is competing; this Board of Education is competing. We are a district and we are one. Our parents are with our children. We are the same parents and we all have the interest for their children. We are moving up. Our children are most important. It is what they believe in and it is the mindset that they have and it is the encouragement that we have to give them. To say negative things about their school is hurtful. We have to be mindful of what we say about the children's school. We are service to them.

Mr. Monge stated as it pertains to information that is out there, the public should know and parents should know, what time of the year it is because it is after that time of year and we heard all this information instead of knowing what the truth is versus what is false. The damage is already done in my eyes.

As it pertains to the PARCC and I have been on the other side and came many times when I was not on the Board and speaking about standardized test and I'm not necessarily a 100% fan but the future of the PARCC – just to let folks know – as its presence in states throughout the country has minimized. Even our governor elect Murphy is talking about removing the PARCC and that is something we need to think about in the future. While we can put some weight on the standardized test and they have a lot of flaws in it, especially in my opinion. One of the things we talked about as it pertains to the State, we have a school that is all inclusive. We have kids with IEPs; we take all of our kids from Union. Also being matched up in that bucket is a place like the Magnet which don't take a large number of kids with IEPs and they have very different demographics than Union. When you match up apples to apples I think those numbers will be more so. A lot of things that folks should know is when you take the PARCC test as a freshman like my son did, he actually met the score necessary for graduation. Think about a teenage boy or girl meeting that score for graduation and taking the PARCC the next year; how interested are they going to be to do better the next year. There are a lot of things that are in these numbers; there are a lot of asterisks that we need to take into consideration. With all that said, we are still heading in the right direction and doing well and contradicting all that we received.

Mr. Tatum stated you are correct that you were on the other side of the table at the time, there was a lot of uncertainty about this test and there was a lot panic in terms of what was at stake. The truth is we found a way again to showcase the ability of our children and teachers and they met those challenges and whatever comes before us moving forward we will be meeting those challenges as well because that is the kind of district that we have here.

We may have our share of differences in how we go about doing things but at the end of the day our duty is to get the job done and get the job done for children and that is the way it will be in this District as long as I stay in this seat. That is the direction this District will continue to go in. We will continue to follow the State challenges that they put before us and will continue to prevail.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated we are talking about the PARCC results but I want to be clear that a big kudos should go out to the teachers because when we think about the PARCC results we should be thinking about how the teacher is teaching to the standards and not to the test which is a big thing. This increase to happen especially for grades 3, 4, 8 and 10 – it is because the teachers are focusing on the standards. They are teaching the kids the standards and when you teach the kids the standards, you will see movement. I just wanted to make sure that we had a clarity that the teachers are doing what they are supposed to do, teaching to the standards and not to the test.

Mr. Tatum stated it is also about teacher's practice as well because as standards change so does the practice they engage in with students in terms of delivering those standards. We talk about rigor; we talk about all of the aspects of how we get students prepared for the challenges outside of school. I recall many years ago sitting here and addressing a group of parents by saying just the whole nature of the type of test we are talking about, using a computer, made a difference but now we are moving beyond that. Our teachers are engaging practices that enable

students to show the results that we are seeing. Overall it is something to be proud of. Do we have more work to do? Absolutely but we will continue to do what needs to be done to meet the challenges that each day brings before us and to make sure students have the certain skills to move forward.

Mr. Nuffrio stated if the State should some point go into a different direction and replace PARCC which typically happens every 10 years and having been 40 years in this business, I can tell you I have experienced this at least four times – it will probably be replaced by a different measuring stick. Unfortunately, PARCC did get a bad rap to begin with and bad reputation as well. It is a way of teaching students why the answer is what it is and not just what the answer is. When you teach a student at any level how they get the answer, they will remember that more than simply memorizing the answer. For years everything was objective – teach; answer and that is the way we measured students. It is definitely the wrong way. Subjective measurement is the way that you have lasting learning. Learning that will last for a number of years and can be applied in the future in whatever career they are going to pursue.

Whether they replace PARCC or not, I hope they still continue with the same intent and purpose and not just teach you 2x2 – everyone knows it is 4 but how do you get it. Am I a fan of testing? Somewhat as long as it is for the right reason.

Mr. Tatum stated let's get to the exciting stuff right now. The Hannah Caldwell Student recognition – this is the second year in a row being here. They were here last year around this time with something very similar. In the spring of 2017, the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class of Miss DeSilva and Ms. Jenkins learned about the different types of poetry. The students then brainstormed and created their own poetry. Their poetry was then entered into a contest created by Creative Communications. We are happy to announce that 21 of Ms. DeSilva's students and 13 of Ms. Jenkins art students were selected to have their poems published in a book "A Celebration of Poets – Spring 2017 book".

Mr. Benaquista will come forward and I will ask the Board President and myself and the Principal Ms. DiGiovanni – let's recognize our students for this great achievement.

Ms. Jenkins stated our students are amazing and what is fabulous is the reason why we are all here. Look at yourselves; if we were a district that is not doing well, we wouldn't have this. There is a number of you here that see the future for your children and our district does too. Whether through math, writing or through the arts. I think our District needs to keep on keeping on and we have fabulous authors in every grade. I happen to have the privilege to teach 4<sup>th</sup> grade students the magic of poetry through the arts and a lot of districts are considering getting rid of the arts and doing other things but they don't understand that the arts is the reason why we have inspiration and passion and as a district that is what we are doing – we are inspiring thinkers not just people that can put numbers on paper and I think that is amazing. So congratulations parents, students and I have 13 wonderful 5<sup>th</sup> grade students – they were 4<sup>th</sup> grade with me when they did this so congratulations and I miss you terribly - Ashley Nyaku, Brianna Saiboo, Damian Koziol, Isabell Domingo, Jada Darkwah, Joshua Charles, Marque Saint Vil, Mia Blake, Nkechi Okafor, Oluwatimilehin Adegbeye, Owen Marshall, Truc Tran and Victor Pinho.

Mrs. DeSilva stated I am the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher at Hannah Caldwell and proud to say that my students worked really hard last year. Out of 21 students, all 21 students had their poems published. We actually had one student that had two poems published. Aidima DeBarros, Andres Franco-Escobar, Beatrice Manalo, Bernysce Uy, David Santana, Giselle Mervilus, Jacob Duong, Jalysa Clax, Jeisen Valiente, Mariana Santos, Nathan Pereira, Oscar Franco-Escobar, Paul Oyem, Rafaela Aguirre, Reed Flood, Rocco Paolino, Sahara Simon, Samad Alim, Toan Tran, Veronica Koziol and Zahmir Moore-Simmons.

Mr. Tatum stated congratulate all of you and keep up the good work. I have to recognize the supervisor of the arts program and music – Mr. Rago keep up the good work as well. Ms. DeSilva – two years in a row – that is a testament of what you do in that classroom and keep up the good work. Ms. DiGiovanni – you run a good show over there. It is something to be proud of. We thank you for all your hard work. You need to stop by and see her class. You can see some of her displays around Town and at the art festival at the high school every year. We are so fortunate to have her on the staff as well as all of those who work for us. Thank you everyone.

Mrs. DiGiovanni stated we are so proud of them and when Mrs. DeSilva said she was going to do this again, we never expected this again.

In the month of October:

**Student/ Staff Attendance**

<b>Student Totals</b>	<b>96.8%</b>
<b>Staff</b>	<b>94.8%</b>

**Monthly Highlights**

- American Education Week was November 13-17. Our schools participated by inviting parents into the schools to spend a lesson with the class.

**Student Recognition**

- Congratulations to UHS Marching Band for placing 2<sup>nd</sup> on Sunday 10/22 at the Tournament of Bands Chapter Ten Championship in Group 2A with a score of 90.14. They also received the caption awards for Best Overall Effect, Best Color Guard and Best Percussion.

**Upcoming Events**

- Next District Planning Committee Meeting will be on Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

**EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:**

Moved by Mrs. Regis-Darby, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the following resolutions be adopted:

E-1. AFFIRM SUPERINTENDENT'S RESOLUTION OF HIB

Affirm the Superintendent's resolution of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) conclusions for the period October 1, 2017 to October 31, 2017, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-2. *Approved at November 14, 2017 worksession (certify findings of NJDOE Office of Fiscal Accountability and Compliance Investigation in OFAC Case SIU-019-15 discussed at 10/17/17 Board meeting).*

E-3. APPROVE NONPUBLIC NCLB TITLE I AGREEMENT

Approve Nonpublic NCLB Title I Agreement with the Union County Educational Services Commission (UCESC) for the 2017-2018 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-4. *Approved at November 14, 2017 worksession (Stipulation of Settlement).*

E-5. *Approved at November 14, 2017 worksession (Professional Educational Services – bedside instruction).*

E-6. APPROVE WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STORE

Approve Washington Elementary School store to be run by Student Council Advisors and funds to be used for Student Council Activities.

E-7. APPROVE CURRICULUM GUIDES

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

- a. Public Relations – November 2017
- b. Business Ethics – November 2017
- c. United States History II – November 2017

E-8. APPROVE TEACHERS EMPLOYED THROUGH CHOP

Approve teachers employed through Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, 3401 Civic Center Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19104 (CHOP) to provide bedside instruction for District students on an "as needed" basis for the 2017-2018 school year, in the amount not to exceed \$2,500, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes (Acct. #7693-11-150-100-320-01-19).

E-9. APPROVE NJQSAC STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

Approve the NJQSAC Statement of Assurance for the 2017-2018 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby,  
Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:

Moved by Mr. Monge, seconded by Mr. Nufrio, that the following resolutions be adopted:

F-1. ACCEPT TREASURER'S REPORT

That the Treasurer's Report dated October 31, 2017 be accepted.

F-2. ACCEPT SECRETARY'S REPORT

That the Secretary's Report dated October 31, 2017 be accepted.

F-3. CERTIFY TREASURER'S AND SECRETARY'S REPORTS

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a), I certify that as of October 31, 2017 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/ Gregory E. Brennan

Gregory E. Brennan, Board Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

Pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.2(h), we certify that as of October 31, 2017 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 APROPRIATION TRANSFERS

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

F-5. APPROVE CONTRACTS/PURCHASE ORDERS

Approve the attached list of contracts and/or purchase orders 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

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. PRE-APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE STUDENT FIELD TRIP DESTINATIONS

Pre-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 2017-2018 STATE CONTRACT VENDORS

Approve the amended list of the 2017-2018 State Contract 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-9. APPROVE LIST OF CONTRACTS/PURCHASES

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
Union High School	2097/Senior Dues	Oak Hill Cap & Gowns	\$8,006.38
Union High School	2130/Athletics-wrestling	UCIAC – wrestling county matches	\$4,000.00 (approx.)
Union High School	2100/Athletics-football	NJSIAA – football playoff games	\$4,000.00 (approx.)
Union High School	2130/Athletics-wrestling	NJSIAA – wrestling matches	\$9,000.00 (approx.)
Union High School	3202/Athletics-hall of fame alumni	Art Xpress – 2018 inductees photos	\$1,500.00
Union High School	3240/Athletics-football club	Cherrydale Farms – football fundraiser	\$8,000.00 (approx.)
Kawameeh Middle School	26/Principal	Jostens Yearbook – 2018 yearbook sales	\$5,490.00
Kawameeh Middle School	19/Principal	Forest Lodge – 1 <sup>st</sup> deposit for 8 <sup>th</sup> grade trip	\$1,600.00
Kawameeh Middle School	19/Principal	Forest Lodge – 2 <sup>nd</sup> payment for 8 <sup>th</sup> grade trip	\$1,600.00
Kawameeh Middle School	19/Principal	Forest Lodge – final payment for 8 <sup>th</sup> grade trip	\$8,500.00 (approx.)
Union High School	77/Theater	Audio Incorporated – main audio rental for UHSPAC fall show Godspell	\$7,090.69 (approx.)
Union High School	77/Theater	World Stage – main lighting rental for UHSPAC fall show Godspell	\$6,300.00 (approx.)
Union High School	2033/Music	Pirylis – purchase of concession food and supplies for band competition on 10/22/17	\$1,290.30

F-10. APPROVE AMENDED OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENT PLACEMENT LIST

Approval be given to amend the 2017-2018 out-of-district student placement list, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-11. *Approved at November 14, 2017 worksession (Jack Segale Memorial Tract Fund).*



F-12. APPROVE DR. RICHARD DITURI –PSYCHIATRIC EVALUATIONS

Approve Dr. Richard DiTuri to provide psychiatric evaluations at the rate of \$900 per evaluation and school clearance evaluation at the rate of \$450 per evaluation for the 2017-2018 school year, not to exceed \$3,150 (Acct #11-000-219-320-01-19), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-13. APPROVE INCREASE TO P.O. #18-01221

Approve increase to P.O. #18-01221 with Cross County Clinical and to provide bilingual evaluation services for the 2017-2018 school year by \$4,250 to meet the District needs, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-14. APPROVE FUNDRAISERS

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

School/Club	Event	Date	Purpose
Kawameeh Middle School Student Council	Flip Give Fundraiser	2017-2018 school year	Raise money for programs at Kawameeh
Union High School/Athletics Basketball	St. Jude Fundraiser	December 15, 2017 basketball game	Proceeds of gate and food to go to St. Jude Hospital for Children’s Cancer
Union High School/Athletics football	Football Fundraiser – selling cookie dough from Cherrydale Farms	2017-2018 school year	Raise money for the football club
Union High School/Junior Class of 2019	Five Below – 10% Donation Flyer	December 8, 2017 to December 15, 2017	Raise funds for the Junior Class of 2019
Union High School/National Art Honor Society	Hand Crafted Holiday Ornaments Fundraiser	December 1 to December 22, 2017	Raise funds for Senior scholarships for National Art Honor Society and NAHS Fund
Union High School/Senior Class of 2018	Polar Express Night Fundraiser at Jefferson School (tentative)	Date to be determined	Raise funds for project graduation, senior trip and prom

F-15. APPROVE APPROPRIATION TRANSFER

Approve appropriation transfer in the amount of \$280,500 from Unreserved Capital Reserve to Media CTR HVAC UHS Capital Reserve 2017-2018 Project (Account #12-000-400-334-13-10-1808 x18762 - \$25,500 and Account #12-000-400-450-13-10-1808 x18763 - \$255,000).

F-16. APPROVE REIMBURSEMENT TO PARENT

Approve reimbursement to parent for transporting their special education students to and from private schools at a rate of (a) \$21.60 per day from June 5, 2017 through August 18, 2017 and (b) \$35.10 per day from September 7 through September 19, 2017, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

F-17. *For informational purposes only – vote not required.* List of legal services for the 2017-2018 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-18. *Approved at November 14, 2017 worksession (amending presenter-parent training session for Suicide Prevention and Awareness).*

F-19. APPROVE COUNSELING CENTERS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
Approve Counseling Centers for Human Development, Inc., Cranford, New Jersey to provide Comprehensive Mental Health Assessment related to District suicide policy at a rate of \$200 per assessment, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-20. APPROVE JERSEY BEHAVIORAL CARE  
Approve Jersey Behavioral Care, Union, New Jersey to provide Comprehensive Mental Health Assessment related to District suicide policy at a rate of \$120 per assessment, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Monge stated I want to get clarity on F-19 and F-20 – I just want to make sure that we are all on the same page. Essentially you have two rates but it is two additional options that the District will offer.

Mr. Benaquista stated yes, depending on where they go, the rates are different and we are working on a third as well. We are going to give as many options as we feel comfortable as to the level of that facility. We are going to give options closer to Union.

Mr. Monge stated providing comprehensive mental assessment which is appended to the suicide policy. I want to thank you guys for all the work you have done on this and you identified and Mr. Arminio as the head of the policy committee identified some improvements that could be made with the policy. You also looked at the professionals behind that policy so thank you.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Minneci (F-5 – P.O. 18-02139 and F-8-#40) MOTION CARRIED

GRIEVANCE/NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE:

Moved by Dr. Francis, seconded by Mrs. Regis-Darby, that the following be adopted:

G-1. APPROVE COLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS AGREEMENT  
Approve Collective Negotiations Agreement between the Part-Time Transportation Association and the Township of Union Board of Education (July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby,  
Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:

Moved by Mrs. Zuena, seconded by Mr. Nufrio, that the following resolutions be adopted:

O-1. APPROVE SECURITY DRILL AND BUS EVACUATION REPORTS

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1 and P.L. 2009, Chapter 178, approve the following security drill and bus evacuation reports for the 2017-2018 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-2. REPORT RECEIPT OF BIDS

Report receipt of eleven (11) bids for Media Center HVAC Upgrade – Union High School, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-3. APPROVE CHANGE ORDERS #5, 6, 7 AND 8

Approve Change Orders #5, 6, 7 and 8 - Ceiling, Lighting and Fire Alarm Replacement at Union High School from GPC Inc. (using contingency funds), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-4. APPROVE CREDIT CHANGE ORDER

Approve Credit Change Orders for the ceiling, lighting and fire alarm replacement project at Union High School as follows: (a) #009 in the amount of \$12,500 and (b) #010 in the amount of \$7,200, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-5. APPROVE AWARD OF BID – MEDIA CENTER HVAC UPGRADE

Approve award of bid for the Media Center HVAC Upgrade – Union High School to C. Dougherty & Co., Inc., in the amount of \$207,000, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-6. APPROVE PARETTE SOMJEN ARCHITECTS

Approve Parette Somjen Architects to perform traffic engineering study at Connecticut Farms Schools, at a flat rate of \$14,750, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-7. REPORT RECEIPT OF PROPOSALS

Report receipt of two (2) proposals for paraprofessional services from (a) ESS/Mission One, Cherry Hill, New Jersey and (b) Insight, Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

**O-8. APPROVE REQUEST FROM UNITED COMMUNITY CENTER**

Approve request from United Community Center, Inc. requesting use of Hannah Caldwell School's auditorium for their annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration on Monday, January 15, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and audio system, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**O-9. APPROVE SECURITY BENEFIT AS A 403(b) PLAN**

Approve Security Benefit as a 403(b) Plan, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Monge stated I mentioned this at the last meeting and I thought it was fair to mention it again as it pertains to O-3 which are change orders for ceiling, lighting and fire alarm replacements as well as O-4 for the same. We are not over budget. This is a budget that was approved and we are within budget and these are change orders that are being paid for through contingencies. Again, a lot of rumors as it pertains to us being over budget.

O-8 – I know we had an opinion as it pertains to approving this but what are we actually going to do as a Board. Is there a message or concern that we are going to offer as it pertains to making sure that our kids are not sitting there for hours upon hours?

Mr. McDowell stated I don't think we can as a Board. If you want to speak to someone as a parent but as a Board I don't think we can. Mr. Monge stated couldn't we offer a concern based on the fact that as parents and Board members.

Mrs. Moses stated we did reach out to the coordinator of the program and we did share the concerns of parents that came to the Board referencing students having to wait until it is said and done before they are recognized and the chairperson of the committee acknowledged that it is something that she is working on and that she knows that the day is honoring Dr. King and honoring the next generation and continuing the legacy of Dr. King.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby,  
Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:**

Moved by Mr. Arminio, seconded by Mrs. Zuena, that the following resolutions be adopted:

P-1. *Approved at November 14, 2017 worksession (personnel actions).*

**P-1A. PERSONNEL ACTIONS**

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

**P-2. APPROVE SUBSTITUTE LISTS**

Approve Substitute Lists for the 2017-2018 school year in accordance with the information in the hands of each Board.

**P-3. ACCEPT LETTERS OF RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT**

Accept letters of resignation/retirement from the following staff:

**Resignations**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Eff. Date</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Notes/Corrections</u>
Cruder, Thomas	Paraprofessional	Battle Hill	11/13/17	Resignation	
Vedova, Deirdre	Teacher-ESL	Union High School	12/15/17 Sooner release if granted.	Resignation	She will remain for 60 days however requesting a sooner release if granted.
DaAponte, Anna	Part Time Café Aide	Wash	11/16/17	Resignation	
Jones, Robert	P/T Bus Driver	Transportation	12/1/17	Resignation	

**Retirements**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Effective Date: (Noted on letter)</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Date of Hire Not including leave of absences. (May include Substituting history)</u>	<u>Attendance to BOE meeting</u>
Perska, Barbara	ESL Teacher	Wash Elem.	1/1/18	Retirement	11/23/1992	TBD

**P-4. APPROVE LEAVES**

Approve leaves for the following staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Leave Dates</u>	<u>Leave Type Regarding updated info only.</u>	<u>Notes/Corrections</u>
Kaplan, Nichole	Special Education Teacher	Franklin Elem.	12/19/17-2/9/18 Return of 2/12/18	Paid Maternity And Unpaid FMLA/NJLA (Concurrently)	

Mott, Thomas	Special Education Teacher	UHS	10/29/17-10/29/18 (Intermittent)	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (Concurrently)	Not to exceed 12 weeks in a 12 month period.
Rapke, Angela	10 Month Secretary	BMS	10/16/17-10/16/18	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (Concurrently)	Not to exceed 12 weeks in a 12 month period.
Torres, Paola	Elem. Teacher	Franklin Elem Teacher	Update to Return 12/1/17	Update to return date of current Paid Maternity and unpaid FMLA/NJFLA	Original Return was 1/1/18 Now 12/1/17
Veglia, Christine	AAP Teacher	Burnet Middle School	11/3/17-11/3/18	Intermittent unpaid FMLA	Not to exceed 12 weeks in a 12 month period.
Villane, Kimberly	Language Arts Teacher	Burnet Middle School	Extension through 11/30/17 Return of 12/1/17	Extension of unpaid Maternity FMLA/NJFLA (Concurrently)	Not to exceed 12 weeks in a 12 month period.
Henderson, Lisa	Teacher of Mathematics	Burnet Middle School	Extension through 1/31/18 Return of 2/1/18	Extension of unpaid Maternity FMLA/NJFLA (Concurrently) Followed by unpaid Maternity Non FMLA/NJFLA	FMLA/NJFLA exhausted after 12 initial weeks.
Ardito, Nicholas	Director of Security	DW	11/7/17-11/7/18	Intermittent FMLA Leave	Up to 12 weeks in a 12-month period.
Bogner, John	Resource Program in Class Teacher	HC	11/14/17-1/16/18 Return of 1/17/18	Unpaid Non FMLA Medical Leave Unpaid	Unpaid Non FMLA FMLA Requirements not met. Unpaid
Ginlack, Jr., John	Custodian	BH	10/16/17-12/21/17	Paid Medical Leave	Non FMLA use of available sick days
Nichols, Shirley	Elementary Teacher	Livingston	10/17/17-12/22/17	Paid Medical Leave	Non FMLA use of available sick days

Marshall, Gary	Custodian-2 <sup>nd</sup> Shift	Burnet Middle School	Extension through 12/31/17 Tentative return of 1/2/18	Unpaid FMLA followed by unpaid Non FMLA medical leave	Original leave began 6/5/17 FMLA entitlement is initial unpaid 12 weeks. Non FMLA to follow
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**P-5. APPROVE STAFF MEMBERS FUNDED IN FULL THROUGH ESEA FY18 TITLE IIA GRANT**

Approve the following staff member whose salary is funded in full through the District’s ESEA FY18 Title IIA grant: Kelly Piano – Jefferson School - \$72,961 – Title IIA (CSR) Math, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**P-6. APPROVE APPOINTMENT OF LATESHA JENKINS – SUPERVISOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES**

Approve the appointment of Latesha Jenkins, as a 12-month districtwide Supervisor of Special Services at a contract salary of \$96,000, effective December 1, 2017.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated P-6 – I know at one of our meetings we recommended that we have some parents come in and sit in during the process. I just want to know if it was done and what was the feedback from the parents. Can you give the public a little feedback?

Mr. Benaquista stated it was an excellent suggestion and it was definitely all positive. The parents involved after the interviews came by my office and said thank you it was a wonderful process. I can also say that the Director of Special Services can speak up and she also enjoyed the process and said it was excellent to involve parents. This is not just the first time but it seems like more and more of our interviews we are doing more of a committee setting involving at the school level like when we hired our administrator/vice principal at Burnet Middle School – the principal chose to have a committee as well of parents and students. In this committee we did have parents. It is something that we will probably move forward with and when we can have more community involvement within our interviews. It was a great thing and very successful.

Mr. Tatum stated when we did a revamp of the personnel policy, we added a resolution that gives us an option of a variety of ways in which we deal with selecting the committee. Depending on what the position is, we have a variety of ways. Mr. Benaquista stated it was a regular ed supervisor, teachers, special ed, parents. Mrs. Conti stated the supervisors of special services were part of the panel; general education supervisor, two parents and there was someone else to be there but their schedule did not permit so we did proceed and selected a candidate that was sent to central office. Mr. Tatum stated the feedback was very positive and the selection that the committee made was a good selection and she will serve us quite well. We successfully met the timeline which was prior to December 1<sup>st</sup> and the transition can be made and we can start to move forward.

Mr. Nufrio stated with regard to P-6 for informational purposes only – the 12-month position was what it was formerly and this was to fill the former position Ms. Baskerville had

who then became Vice Principal – to fill a vacancy that was vacated by Mr. Harrelll who became the Principal; so that we don't have any rumors going around that we are adding and padding the administrative staff. Mr. Tatum stated the numbers are exactly the same. Mr. Nufrio stated I already see a cost savings attached to this.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

POLICY COMMITTEE:

Moved by Mr. Arminio, seconded by Mr. Nufrio, that the following policy be adopted:

POL-1.POLICY FILE CODE 5141.5

Policy File Code 5141.5 – Student Suicide Prevention and Crisis Intervention, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (final reading).

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESIDENCY COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:

Moved by Mrs. Zuena, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the following resolutions be adopted:

R-1. APPROVE LIST OF STUDENTS REMOVED FROM ROLLS

Approval be given to amend the list of students removed from the rolls [four (4) students exited from October 1st through October 31st, 2017 (3 from elementary and 1 from secondary) or a total of nine (9) students for the 2017-2018 school year] who are not domiciled in this school district and one (1) student who will be allowed to complete the 2017-2018 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

R-2. APPROVE REMOVAL OF STUDENT

Approval to remove student #230352 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.

R-3. APPROVE REMOVAL OF STUDENT

Approval to remove student #280303 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.



R-4. APPROVE REMOVAL OF STUDENT

Approval to remove student #281298 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.

R-5. APPROVE REMOVAL OF STUDENT

Approval to remove student #280812 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Nufrio asked can you give an update to the residents of this Town of the number we have removed because of residency problems. Mrs. Zuena stated in the residency check-in this summer, which I don't know if we have that exact number, there have been nine kids since the school year started.

Mr. Nufrio stated I asked that because several weeks ago many residents were asking questions with regards to what are we doing about residency policies and I said that we were doing what we can. We have investigators who are working diligently to uncover those students that may be attending schools and they don't reside legitimately in Union. Mr. Tatum stated people come into the central office and see the dynamics that goes on in that office during the course of the day and one of them is the residency officers in and out and many time I have phone conversations and they are in that office almost daily and that is for the purpose of investigations and hearings that we have. Mr. Nufrio stated the process is not a simple one as I explained to those that questioned it and it is very entailed and the law has quite a number of provisos for the parents, guardians to seek out and to try to defend their position. It is a very time consuming process which could result in a stalemate sometimes.

Mrs. Minneci stated I am assuming those nine re-registered in the summer and somehow were able to get caught when school starts. Where there is a will there is a way. Mr. Tatum stated it could be nine additional as well. It could be nine different cases since school started. Mrs. Minneci stated right they might have re-registered this summer and gotten through.

Mr. Nufrio stated I still stand on that request at the December meeting if we can give an actual number. Mrs. Zuena stated I will get that information.

Mr. Monge stated I think Mr. Tatum is correct – I know it was under 20.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby,  
Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Moved by Mr. Monge, seconded by Mr. Nufrio, that the Board concur with the bills listed in the permanent bound register appended to the minutes and be ordered for payment.

## DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby,  
Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. Arminio stated just a reminder for the third month in a row – Relay for Life is June 2<sup>nd</sup> and it will be here quickly. We have had a couple of meetings. We just met with the Township officials so we are going to start coordinating efforts with the Town. More details to come in future months.

Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at Union High School, the VFW will conduct an oratorical contest open to all high school students. The contest will center around the constitution. The student will be given one of the amendments and then talk for 10 minutes on how that amendment affects them in their daily lives. It is an outstanding contest.

December 8 – December 10<sup>th</sup> - Godspell is coming to Union High School.

The fall athletic teams – the Boys' Cross Country – John Mobisa – he was the Union County Champion. It is the first time that we had a winner from Union High School in 54 years. It has been dominated by couple of the schools in Union County over the last 25-30 years. Kudos to John and we will be hearing a lot about him in the winter and spring track events.

Girls' volleyball team went 23-4 for the season – an outstanding record and they were the Union County Mountain Division champions.

The girls' soccer team had a great season. They lost in a very close game in the Group IV Soccer Semi-Finals and they had a final ranking of 19 for the entire state of New Jersey. Congratulations!

Gymnastics – the best record that they had in seven years. They finished fifth in the County Tournament and they had three athletes qualify for the State Tournament. They raised over \$1,000 for breast cancer.

Last night at Galloping Hill, the Union High School Athletic Hall of Fame inducted the class of 2017. There were 12 athletes inducted and you can go online and look at the inductees. Not only was this group of inductees gifted athletes where they played for Union High School, they were also high achievers in life. One of the individuals was a bronze medalist in the Vietnam war – he has also lived in 20 countries. He is a medical doctor and an unbelievable life experience. Another one went to Harvard and then to Oxford and he is a head of a program out in Seattle in child psychology – among many others that this group of athletes were all high

achievers in life. I have a copy of the programs if anyone wants to read the bios of inductees and maybe we can have it posted online.

I would like to point out that three other Board members attended the function. They purchased tickets on their own because they believe that supporting the school district is important and even though two of them lost their seats in the recent election they still believe in the activities of our District. I thank you Nancy, Ronnie and Dr. Francis for attending the function last night. Linda Ionta runs this whole thing and she did an outstanding job in organizing it. It takes two years to get this going.

The Board of Education gives absolutely no support to the Athletic Hall of Fame it is completely from private donations and tickets sold. If you look in the high school gymnasium, you will see the plaque where all of the inductees – when we first started this in 2013 and then in 2015 and 2017. Congratulations for those inducted.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked I would like to get an update on the FRS – if anyone attended the Future Ready School presentation that happened last week. Mrs. Moses stated it is continuing this week – so they will come back on Tuesday.

Mrs. Minneci stated I would like to make a brief statement about a former Board member who passed – Mr. Layden. I didn't have the pleasure working with him on this Board but he was a member of the Library Trustee Board and I worked with Mr. Layden closely there and I just wanted to acknowledge his family and all the work that he did here on this Board and many other committees. I just wanted to make that statement. Mr. Monge stated maybe we can have a moment of silence. (moment of silence)

Mr. McDowell stated Tom Layden, thank you very much.

Mr. Monge stated I want to give a repeat performance on the technology committee update as it pertains to the work that is going on at Burnet and Kawameeh in preparation of the Chrome Books that we will get in January.

There was a concern about kids that may lose their Chrome Books. We are in the motion of trying to expand on the forms that we have to speak directly to that. If you lose a Chrome Book, you will be able to check one out at the library just like those kids that don't take them home.

I want to repeat from last week and it pertains to rumors on taxes and Mr. Brennan expressed this. Our taxes have not gone up \$6 million. They have gone up approximately \$1.7 million which is the State tax levy ceiling and we are below that. We actually had an opportunity to read an article about Bayonne and the gist of it is not having a good handle on the finances on the district and saying we are running out of money and the reality is they carried balances in their books and they went out and made decisions to cut jobs and other cuts in preparation for this cliff that never really happened and they are getting themselves in trouble. Historically we have been in that situation. We were carrying balances and we corrected that practice here in this District. One of the things that I would like to ask Mr. Brennan, we always

want for our kids in our District, if we didn't take that minimum \$1.7 million – what would happen to our budget?

Mr. Tatum stated first of all you would see reductions in service for children because when we talk about the \$1.7 – what we are talking about is the cost of living. We are talking about maintaining the programs that we have. There has been a lot of discussion over the course of the year and I attend the County roundtable once a month where I do interact with the other superintendents in the County and some of the same concerns that we have in Union are all around the County as well as around the State. The escalating costs in different areas and the lack of additional funding, the flat state aide; as well as the 2% on the tax levy. You are talking about something that we don't want to talk about in terms of being able to be prepared for our students and also having the right staff in front and maintaining the appropriate programs.

Mr. Monge stated that \$1.7 represents what percentage of our total budget. Mr. Brennan stated it equates to 1.3%. Our tax levy is \$87 million and our operating budget is \$131 million and the difference between those two numbers is flat state federal aid. Mr. Monge stated we are identified as an underfunded district and we have one of the lowest school tax rates if not the State definitely the County. Don't believe the hype.

The other thing I want to inform folks about is on November 27<sup>th</sup> at Kawameeh Middle School will be the kick-off meeting for the Union Special Education Parent Advisory Group (SEPAG). We will have some special guests. The Superintendent is going to be there, as well as Mrs. Moses, Mr. Benaquista, Mrs. Conti and Mr. Seugling. We will have a special guest speaker – Mr. Boran. It is a State mandated group to be able to act as a parent-advocate for our kids with special needs.

Mr. Nufrio stated that does not include what could have been an additional \$1 million bank cap which for years the Board sought fit to pass that on and it became part of the increase yearly for those years that the bank cap was approved. These past two years, last year as President and the year before Mr. Arminio was President, the Fiscal Committee opposed the further bank cap thus saving the taxpayer probably about \$60-70 each – each year in additional taxes that would have had to be passed on to each homeowner; so I wanted to point that out. We have not had a bank cap in two years and we certainly don't expect to have one next year.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

None

#### COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Mr. Nufrio asked to step down for a few minutes and read a statement that he indicated last week and he passed on reading at the worksession.

Mr. Nufrio stated fellow residents and voters of the Township of Union, I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to the thousands of you who placed your confidence and trust in me on Election Day so that I may, by your kind support, continue to serve our school district for three more years. I began my Board of Ed service in April, 2011, and vowed to provide an independent voice to the decision-making processes of our Board. I am proud to say that I never

wavered nor failed to fulfill my promise. I am and always will be committed to the children of our community, and only to them.

Together, with my running mates Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell, and other esteemed Board Members, much was accomplished to re-set the Board's priorities so as to create a climate of transparency and honest, business practices that successfully channeled and dedicated our tax dollars for the sole purpose of enhancing the educational and professional services for our children. This of course was not embraced by the Pay-to-Play inside and outside individuals who previously controlled the budgetary practices of the school district. They squandered millions of tax dollars to benefit the outside entities (Pay to Play beneficiaries) to advance their personal and political agendas.

Our campaign platform was bombarded with intentional distortions of facts and truths and, outright lies and deception. Our opponents were led by a former, disgruntled and twice defeated Board member whose "strings" were pulled and controlled by a higher authority in the local political arena. In January, my running mates may be replaced by two new Board members who will take an official oath that they will faithfully discharge their duties as members of the board of education. I hope they have the courage to reject the control and manipulation of their supporters and benefactors.

The four hundred plus mail-in ballots that were submitted (a most unusual, excessive and quite frankly, very questionable, additional ballots) ultimately changed the outcome of the election posted at the close of Tuesday's election. The outcome had Mr. McDowell and me as the victors, with Mrs. Zuena not far behind. It is unfortunate that the challengers' campaign resorted to nefarious tactics, very expensive mailers (actual amount will be disclosed eventually), and, a small army of paid workers, both city and private, to gain seats to a non-paid position on the Board—as the authorities often say, "just follow the money trail to get at the truth".

As members of the Board of Education and me as the senior member, the only gain and benefit my colleagues and I have experienced has been the satisfaction of improving our school district and the educational services that we provide to our children. There has not been any other agenda for the past three years—we were able to focus only on the children—now, the successes going forward are in serious jeopardy.

Our platform was clear and direct, "Keep Politics Out of Our Schools" and out of our board processes. This was met with obvious resistance since it contradicted their true intent and purpose - to regain control our \$135 million school budget tax dollars - and that is the absolute truth.

My colleagues' presence on the Board and their voices will resonate and be heard loudly. If the review of ballots should not prove successful, I pray that the new members will perform with integrity and conviction as we continue in our mission and mandate to foster transparency and honest, open processes to safeguard our students, our schools and our precious tax dollars. There is a great deal we can accomplish as a unified Board—very little as a divided Board with very different goals and objectives. The children must always come first and take precedence over all else. Thank you.

Jill Hall stated my best wishes and happy holidays for all of you. Over the past 15 years or so I have had the opportunity to participate in quite a few committees revolving around looking at the grading policy for the District. Most recent we were able to get a policy through that I was very pleased with. I felt that we came up with some really good stuff. The committee included a supervisor, teachers, counselors and so forth. I have the policy here and I hope this is just a rumor but I have been led to understand that my interpretation of what was determined by that policy may not have been accurate. What I'm asking the Board and I know this is more for questions than for comment is that we continue the dialogue with regard to the grading policy.

I have long been a fan of the less than zero policy which is not having any zeros be used and that opinion is backed by significant amount of data and I have copies of that for you, including a recent article from the National School Boards Association that discusses the purposes of grading and clearly states that the use of the zero is actually more for discipline than getting an accurate view of the ability of our kids.

Moving forward we always come back and revisit this and we need to continue talking about this as we move forward into all of these things we are discussing and future schools and being more creative and making sure that we reach all of our students. We also need to take a look at the way they are being graded.

With the permission of the Superintendent, I would like to distribute this. There are three articles that I would ask for you to look at. I know it continues to be a controversial topic – even the NEA and the NJEA cannot seem to come to any type of real agreement as to whether zero should be used or if they should be used and how they should be used. I would ask that you continue to discuss how this is being done. It becomes something as a bone of contention but I think we should continue to bring these conversations to the table for the betterment of our kids.

Mr. Kemps stated listening to everyone involved about the excellent experience they had having parents involved in the process of interviewing candidates but with that process wouldn't it be a great idea to have a committee including parents to review coaches going forward after every season. I think someone brought that up at one time but I don't know if anything was done about it. I would hope that we would want to review coaches after every season. I think it would be something that would help.

Listening to Mr. Arminio singing praises of the teams and how well they did; I would hope we would address some of the other sports so that the students involved are getting the best coaching possible. I'll bring this up again – five years of a losing softball program – wouldn't it be nice to have a softball program we could be proud of and I think that needs to be addressed. Union in last place every year is embarrassing.

Another topic I would like to ask about is fundraising. What is the process of fundraising for sports teams. I have in front of me the Board of Education File Code 1314 and just to paraphrase – students shall not solicit contributions of any kind for school related activities without prior approval of the Superintendent or its designee. The schools as part of the

community will participate in fund drives as approved by the Board. Are all activities approved by the Board?

Mr. Brennan stated yes they are. Mr. Kemps asked was the last spring's softball fundraiser approved by the Board? Mr. Griggs stated I don't think they know the answer to that question tonight. The Board of Education members cannot be involved in post-season evaluations, review of coaches, volunteers – it is illegal. The only person in this room who can be involved is the Superintendent of schools. Mr. Kemps stated I was asking for the parents. Mr. Griggs stated they cannot be involved. Nobody can be involved in it with the exception of the Superintendent. He addresses personnel. If a parent has an issue with regard to an employee, volunteer – you can address it to the Superintendent.

Mr. Kemp stated according File Code 3543 – an account shall be submitted monthly to the Board Secretary and shall include a listing of all receipts and disbursements. Both balances shall be reconciled with the bank balance, cancelled checks and bank statements shall be retained for examination as part of the annual audit required by law and code. Is this being done? Mr. Brennan stated yes it is. Mr. Kemp stated do you have a monthly reconciliation of that funds? Mr. Brennan stated yes. Mr. Kemp stated can that be made available? Mr. Griggs stated you can put in OPRA request and we will make that determination. Mr. Kemps stated it also says disbursements must be made by check signed by the building principal and supported by a claim, bill or written order and the check shall have two or more authorized signatures. All disbursements shall be recorded chronologically, showing date, vendor and check number – I'm assuming that is all being done. Mr. Griggs stated yes.

Ron Flood stated it is my first time here and it is good to be a part of Union. I have three children that go to school there. I want to feel that I can still be involved in their educational process as well as their athletic experiences. My kids take a lot of pride of being part of Union and so do I. I volunteer a lot on my time. I coach a youth sports team here in Town. I do take pride in looking forward to building a future of sports teams. I want to make sure that there is accountability on each level as the kids get older as far as the expectations from the coaching staff for various sports, whether it is fall, winter, spring sports. I would like to see something clearly defined so the parents can feel comfortable knowing what the kids are involved in. If there maybe something that can be put together – for example the winter sports are approaching, somewhere in October they can have an open forum where the coaching staff can explain their agenda and their expectations. What the coaches expect from the players and for the parents can look forward to and what the kids are getting out of their sports experience here. My kids do pretty well academically but when you are looking for scholarships you look for as many as you can and as much as you can. I would like to see something going forward as parents may want to know the integrity and intensity that the coaches may have for building a good program and keeping a good program so that we can hear accolades as far as each sport. This is something I would like to see.

Mr. Tatum stated I think you will have noticed over the course of the last three years, we have taken apart a number of areas that needed refinement. One of the areas that we are currently looking at and Mr. Kemp referred to a few moment ago is that he thought there was something going on regarding the evaluations of the coaches and as you mentioned the

expectations and that is something that we are working on. Some work was done in the summer time and we are looking at revising the evaluation process and the idea is to get that to our Personnel Committee. We did have a more inclusive selection process with the administrator. We did put together a sports committee to review applicants for a coaching position. It is something that is in place right now. I know that the President was one of the members of that committee as well as the Athletic Director and the Principal and other professionals that are involved in the sports program.

When you assume responsibility of taking a district that has needs, we certainly are trying to attend to those needs at some level of priority. We are at the point right now that we are getting academics straightened out and we will be getting to the sports program and the need to have other programs put in place – summer, after school, enrichment programs and there are a lot of things going on here. Of course we want to be an inclusive district so certainly that is something that we don't take lightly. Union has a great reputation for producing athletes as well as scholars and I think we are at a point now that we sifted through a lot of issues and more priority can be given there moving forward.

**MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Moved by Mrs. Zuena, seconded by Mr. Arminio, that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss the following subject matters without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-2b.

- Pending or anticipated litigation, contract negotiation and matters falling under the attorney-client privilege.

The Board will disclose the discussion conducted during the executive session, with notice to the public, 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.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby,  
Mrs. Zuena, Mr. McDowell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Dr. Francis

**MOTION CARRIED**

The Board returned to public session at 10:00 p.m.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mr. Nufrio, seconded by Mr. Monge, that the meeting be adjourned at 10:00 p.m. All present voting  
YES      **MOTION CARRIED**

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,**

**GREGORY E. BRENNAN  
BOARD SECRETARY**