

In Memory of Jim Jeskey

June 25, 1934 – January 6, 2026



TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

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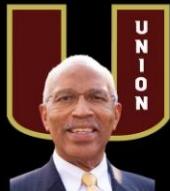
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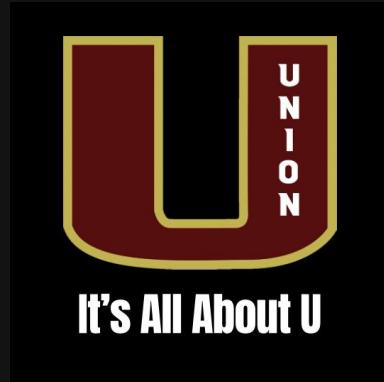


Gregory Nasta
Member



Chastity Santana
Member





Board Meeting Superintendent's Report

January 20, 2026

The mission of the Township of Union Public Schools (TUPS) is to empower and inspire Every Student, Every Day.

TUPS Talking Points



Enrollment (Including Out of District Students)

2024 - 2025 Enrollment (June 30th): 7,966

2025 - 2026 Enrollment (October 15th): 7,671

2025 - 2026 Enrollment (November 15th): 7,688

2025 - 2026 Enrollment (December 15th): 7,711

2025 - 2026 Enrollment (January 15th): 7,739

In New Jersey, January is School Board Recognition Month, a designated time to honor the vital, unpaid service of local school board members for overseeing public education, setting policy, and guiding districts through challenges, with proclamations from the Governor and state education bodies affirming their essential role for student success and community well-being.





JACKLYN CASSANDRA

We Are Proud Of 

UHS Class of 2026



HARVARD
UNIVERSITY



NEXT STOP:

INTEGRATED BIOLOGY/PRE-MED TRACK



TUPS
BOE Student Liaison
Jacklyn Cassandra

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME:

- ❖ My name is Jacklyn Cassandra
- ❖ I am involved in:
 - UHS PAC Stage Crew
 - National Honors Society
 - National Spanish Honors Society
 - Future Doctors of America



UHS SPORTS

Our boys basketball team currently holds a strong **12–1 record and is ranked 20th in the state on [nj.com](#).**

The girls basketball team has also had a successful season so far, with a **6–3 record**.

Our **bowling team** is also performing well this season, with a current **record of 5–3**.



UHS WRESTLING

The wrestling team is having an outstanding season with a 10-1 record.

This past weekend, our school proudly hosted the Union County Wrestling Tournament. Placing was: 10 of our Wrestlers and 6 placed in the top 3.

- 106 Cristian Hargrove 4th
- 120 Ethan Flores 4th
- 126 Jaydon Robles 1st
- 138 Ariel Azeredo 1st
- 144 Aidan Cross 3rd
- 150 Enzo Tammaro 2nd
- 165 Aaron Acevedo 5th
- 175 Jonathan Cordova 3rd
- 215 Nick Bertolotti 2nd
- Hwt Obreight Ingram 4th



Coach Antonio DeBellonia was voted Union County of the Year!

In addition, Ariel Azeredo reached a major milestone by earning his 100th high school career win.

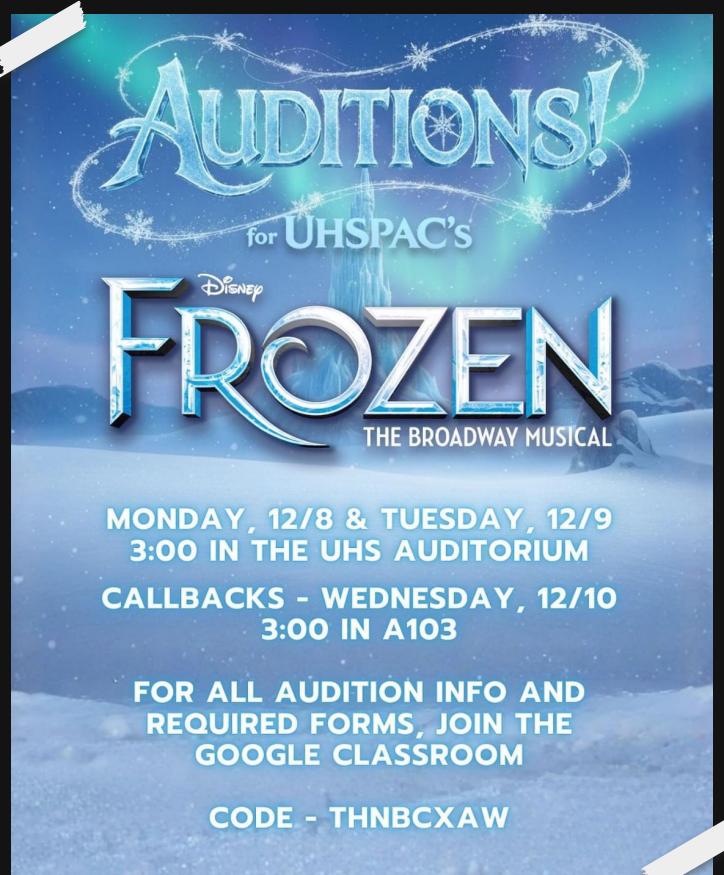


UHS PAC

Our spring musical this year will be
Frozen: The Broadway Musical.

Auditions were held on Monday, December 8th and Tuesday, December 9th in the UHS Auditorium, with callbacks taking place on Wednesday, December 10th.

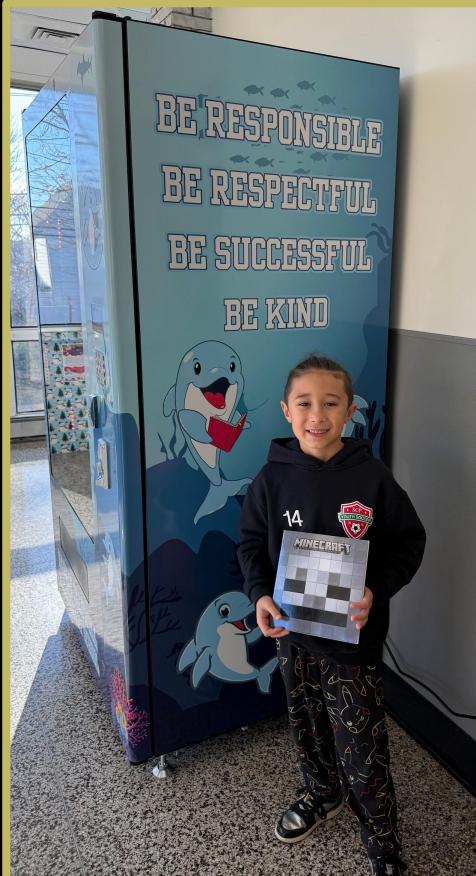
We are excited to bring this production to the stage later this spring.





Thank you
Jacklyn Cassandra
Class of 2026

Book Vending Machines



Several schools across the district have introduced book vending machines.

This initiative supports literacy growth, positive behavior, and student engagement. (PBSIS)

Funded through a state grant dedicated to literacy improvement.

News 12 - Attendance Letter

News 12

Task force created to take on chronic absenteeism in New Jersey schools.



TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

DR. GERRY BENAQUISTA, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
MARISSA MCKENZIE, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS
DR. JOSE RODRIGUEZ, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF STUDENT SERVICES
YOLANDA KOON, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR/BOARD SECRETARY
JOHN SOUSA, CHIEF INFORMATION & TECHNOLOGY OFFICER



Dear Township of Union Public Schools Community,

We hope you and your families are doing well. As we move through the school year, we want to take a moment to address something that has a significant impact on student success: school attendance, especially when students miss school due to family vacations during instructional time.

We understand that spending time with family is incredibly important. These moments create memories and strengthen bonds, and we truly value the role families play in our students' lives. At the same time, we must share how extended absences during the school year can affect students academically and socially.

When students miss multiple days of school, even for positive reasons like family trips, it becomes challenging for them to keep up with classwork, participate in hands-on learning, and stay connected to their peers. Instruction moves quickly, and being present allows students to fully engage in lessons, group activities, and the daily routines that support their growth. Regular attendance is directly linked to higher achievement, stronger social skills, and greater confidence in the classroom.

We also recognize that unavoidable circumstances arise. Illnesses, emergencies, and family needs can occur, and we understand that some absences cannot be prevented. Please continue to let the school know. In those moments, please know that we are here to support you and your child.

Our ask is simple: IF it is within your control, we kindly encourage you to limit family travel and other planned absences during the school year. By partnering with us to prioritize consistent attendance, you are helping ensure that your child remains on track academically and socially.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and for everything you do to support your child's education. Together, we can continue to strengthen our school community and help every student thrive.

Warmly,

Township of Union Public Schools Administration
#AttendanceMatters

HIB Bi-Annual Report (September 2025 - December 2025)

HIB Bi-Annual Report



September - December 2025, Reporting Period 1
Township of Union School District

- Total Completed Reports: 37

- Status of investigations:

- Founded (met the criteria for HIB): 22
- Unfounded/Inconclusive: 15
- Total Reports by building:

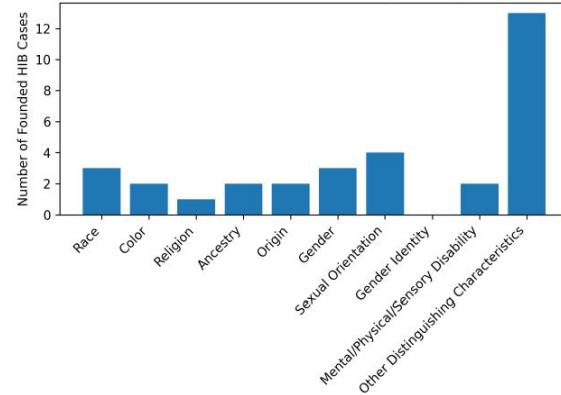
<u>School</u>	<u>Founded HIB</u>	<u>Unfounded/Inconclusive</u>	<u>Total</u>
Battle Hill	0	1	1
Burnet	9	0	9
Connecticut Farms	0	2	2
Franklin	0	0	0
Hannah Caldwell	0	2	2
Jefferson	1	1	2
Kawameeh	4	2	6
Livingston	0	0	0
Washington	0	0	0
UHS	8	7	15
Totals	22	15	37

- Nature of **Founded HIB** based on protected categories:

*some cases meet criteria for more than one protected category

Race	3	Origin	2	Gender Identity	0
Color	2	Gender	3	Mental, physical, or sensory disability	2
Religion	1	Sexual Orientation	4	Other distinguishing characteristics	13
Ancestry	2				

Nature of Founded HIB Cases (Period 1)



- Type and Nature of Support Services and/or Discipline Imposed

	HIB	Non	Total		HIB	Non	Total
Change of Environment	3	1	4	Out-of-School Suspension	1	0	1
Counseling Services	22	13	35	Parent Conference	5	2	7

Detention	3	1	4	Police notification	0	0	0
Educated	11	1	12	Warning	0	0	0
Group Counseling	3	0	3	Monitored	9	0	9
In-School Suspension	2	1	3	Other	6	0	6
Mediated	9	1	10				

List of Anti-Bullying Specialists by building

Tara Colandrea: Burnet	Kim Marano: Washington
Fatima DeCorte: Jefferson	Gihann Abreu, Connecticut Farms
Jill Hall/Ingrid Soares: UHS	Leane Robson, Livingston
Sharondra Walton: Franklin	Erin Jackson: Battle Hill
anette Tramuta: Hannah Caldwell	Madeline Yatsko, Kawameeh

Programs: Districtwide & Building Based:

Assemblies:	Student and Parent Supports:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UHS: "Power Back: Partnership for Change, Grade 11, addressing healthy relationships BMS "We're Not Buying It", Prevention Links KMS: Gian Paul Gonzalez, motivational speaker, take action in your life, be "all in" KMS: "Don't Get Vaped In": Prevention Links JES, LES, FES: "Ned Show": resilience, Kindness adventure JES, CFES: "Omega Man": kindness, respect, good decision making FES: "Holly Rock Game Show": encouraged team building and relationships, parent also attended LES: "Powerful Dave": bullying prevention LES: "Science Spectacular": character education WES: Prismatic Laser Light Show Assembly: 10/10/25 WES Stop Bullying Now: 12/12/25 	<p>Student and Parent Supports:</p> <p>Small groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social skills • New students • Grief • Self-management/coping skills • Self-esteem • Anti-bullying • Mindfulness/meditation • Lunch Bunches • Family Changes • Body Image • Girls Connection • Conflict Resolution • Parent/Family Communications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Newsletters/Chat & Coffee with the Counselor topics/social media and school messenger notifications ◆ Parent Lounge development with Google Sites ◆ Counselor's Corner digital resources ◆ NJSCI surveys

Integration into classrooms:	Programming/resources:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UHS "Safe Dates" with NJ4S, Grade 12 relational aggression and parter violence • Monthly Advisory/Classroom/Homeroom lessons • Elementary monthly: HIB, SEL, Social skills, mindfulness, calming techniques, upstander, digital citizenship, feelings and emotions, positive choices, personal values, conflict resolution, belonging and inclusion • Daily Announcements/Quote of the Day • Class meetings UHS • Health Class Integration/SAC BMS & KMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "ALL IN UHS" student focus group • Quote of the Day announcements • School Counselor Virtual Office • Counselor Google Classroom activities • School Counseling PLCS • Spirit Weeks • Santa In Blue • SILAS • Operation Gratitude: Letters and pictures to first responders, military and veterans

District Wide Events:	Building Activities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with Hello week- (9/115-9/19) activities to create a culture of inclusion • Week Of Respect (10/6-10/10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Bulletin Boards ◦ Chains of Kindness ◦ Respect Room: BMS ◦ Dissolving Stereotypes ◦ Tik Tok/Media positivity station • Red Ribbon Week (10/27-10/31): Programs educating students about the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco by creating an understanding of the consequences of poor decisions and the importance of good health, trivia, parent info • School Violence Awareness Week (10/20-10/24): programs included daily goals to help make schools safe, peaceful places for all students and staff, conflict resolution, posted tips • Unity Day (10/16): Wearing orange to promote kindness, acceptance, and inclusion with activities • World Kindness Day (11/13) • American Education Week (11/17-11/21) • National Stop Bullying Day 10/14/25 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UHS: Suicide Prevention Info Tables 10/15 • Appreciation Station UHS, letters to students and staff 12/8-12/15 • Student Recognition Programs: (Blue Knight Nickels, PBSIS various schools, Washington Wages, PBSIS various schools, BMS School Store & Newspaper, BMS Bucks, Battle Hill Bucks, Student of the Month, Spirit weeks, pride Awards) • KMS Poster contest: "What's My Anti-Drug" • Peer leadership: KMS, WES • BMS PBIS Store, drawings • CF: Girls on the Run Program, focusing on empowering, connection and kindness • JES: Caught being a Leader, Leader of the Month, Kindness Tree • BH: SEL Student of the Month • Students Change Hunger food drive (WES/BH) • FR: RCA House System, Election Day • Alex's Lemonade Stand: BH and WES • WES: Caught Being Kind awards

HIB Bi-Annual Report Trainings Districtwide/ Building Based

- **Trainings**
- Individual School Staff Trainings at faculty meetings (dates from ABS)
- Individual School Student and Parent presentations (dates from ABS)
- Hibster platform Admin and ABS training: 8/25/25

School	Date	School	Date	School	Date	School
UHS	11/12/25	JEFF	12/22/25	FR	10/15/25	WES 12/18/25
BMS	10/27/25	BH	12/23/25	HC	11/20/2025	
KMS	JANUARY	CF	12/17/25	LES	11/25/25	

• Professional Development Opportunities:

- Use of SILAS platform for SEL resources, 9/3/25
- NJSCI platform survey: staff, students, parents/caregivers
- Counseling PLCS (all levels)
- PBIS Committee planning meetings to formulate school-wide positive behavior supports (taking place in PBIS schools)
- NJ State Bar Association: Role of the School Climate Team, Trauma Sensitive Schools, Elementary Conflict Resolution, Restorative Justice, Elementary Peer Mediation
- Combating absenteeism/Counseling Trends: Prevention Links: 11/4/25
- Prevention Links, Collective Impact, Advancing Student aMental Health and Recovery: 12/11/25, Dr. Andrew Finch
- ASAP County meetings
- ULead, AI in Education (9/3/25)
- Legal One Trainings: Understanding Bullying in our Schools, NJ Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, Establishing HIB Systems, Protocols and capacity Training

TUPS Attendance Initiative

Update for December 2025 District Average 93.83 K-12th



Attendance Award

FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF DECEMBER WITH A

95.293%

the 3rd Graders at
Connecticut Farms

We Are Proud of U!



TUPS

TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Attendance Award

FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER WITH A

98.83%

the 6th graders at Kawamech

We Are Proud of U!



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TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attendance Award

FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF OCTOBER WITH A

96.61%

the 1st Graders at
Connecticut Farms

We Are Proud of U!



TUPS

TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attendance Award

FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER WITH A

97.834%

the 6th graders at Kawamech

We Are Proud of U!



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TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Attendance Campaign in Portuguese
with Cristina Goncalves,
Burnet Administrative Assistant
Coming soon: Spanish & Creole**



Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying (HIB)



Incidents to Report

Period January 14th - January 20th

Met the Criteria - 4

KMS 2 BMS 1 JES 1

Unfounded - 5

UHS 3 JES 1 HCES 1

Inconclusive - 0

Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying (HIB)



Incidents to Affirm

Period December 17th - January 13th

Met the Criteria - 6

JES 2 BMS 3 UHS 1

Unfounded - 1

JES 1

Inconclusive - 0

ParentSquare Update



It's All About U



The ParentSquare app is available in both iOS or Android stores. Downloading the mobile app is the easiest way to receive all Posts, Events, Sign Up Requests, Photos and Files.

[iOS App - Apple Store](#)

[Android App - Google Play Store](#)



ParentSquare Campaign in Portuguese with Cristina Goncalves, Burnet Administrative Assistant
Coming soon: Spanish & Creole



We have 45% of Parents/Guardians that have downloaded the App to date.
As a district we have 100% contactability on ParentSquare at all of our schools.



It's All About U

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