

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MINUTES – JANUARY 17, 2023  
7:00 p.m.

NOTICE OF MEETING:

TO ALL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Union High School Library, 2350 North Third Street, Union, New Jersey pursuant to notice sent to each member.

Ms. McKenzie called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Yocasta Brens-Watson, Ms. Dixiana Carbonell, Ms. Marissa McKenzie, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. John O’Shea (7:03 p.m.); Mrs. Regis-Darby (7:06 p.m.)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Scott Taylor, Mr. Gerald Benaquista, Dr. Gretel Perez, Mrs. Yolanda Koon

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

Mrs. Minneci led the Board and audience members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Mrs. Minneci read the district’s mission statement.

Comments from Public on Resolutions:

None

Approval of Minutes:

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

1. November 15, 2022 – worksession
2. November 15, 2022 – executive session
3. November 22, 2022 – regular meeting

4. November 22, 2022 - executive session

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Mrs. Minneci, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams,  
Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Ms. Carbonell

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. O'Shea arrived at 7:03 p.m.

Communications:

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – DAMO

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Thiana Damo, visual and performing arts teacher-Union High School, January 25, 2023-June 20, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – SILVA

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Cristina Silva, pre-k teacher-Franklin Elementary School, April 3, 2023-June 20, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – VILLANE

Request for extension of unpaid leave from Kimberly Villane, English teacher-Burnet Middle School, new return date March 1, 2023.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – WEBER

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA leave (concurrently) from Patty Weber, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher-Battle Hill Elementary School, December 1, 2022-June 20, 2023.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MANCINELLI

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA leave (concurrently) from Lynne Mancinelli, library media specialist-Washington Elementary School, December 15, 2022-June 20, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – YANICK

Request for paid medical leave from Joseph Yanick, paraprofessional-Jefferson School, December 8, 2022-January 13, 2023.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MASON

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA leave (concurrently) from Lisa Mason, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher-Washington Elementary School, December 21, 2022-June 20, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – PAUL

Request for paid medical leave from Sandra Paul, Director of Information and Technology-IT Department, February 27, 2023-May 28, 2023.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – SAAVEDRA**

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA leave (concurrently) from Angela Saavedra, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, January 3, 2023-June 20, 2023.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – KRUPA**

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA leave from Connie Krupa, accountant-Special Education Department, January 16, 2023-December 31, 2023.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – SIDERMAN**

Request for extension of unpaid leave from Jason Sideman, resource room teacher-Union High School, January 3, 2023-March 31, 2023.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE – LICKS**

Request for medical leave from Suzanne Licks, basic skills teacher-Livingston Elementary School, January 9, 2023-April 9, 2023.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE – VANDEWAL**

Request for medical leave from Gerard Vandewal, PE teacher-Burnet Middle School, January 12, 2023-February 17, 2023.

**LETTER OF RESIGNATION – DANIELS**

Letter of resignation from Deon Daniels, paraprofessional-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, effective December 23, 2022.

**LETTER OF RESIGNATION – MUNOZ**

Letter of resignation from Juan Munoz, math teacher-Union High School, effective February 6, 2023.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MORINO**

Request for intermittent leave from Ayako Morino, music teacher-Washington Elementary School, January 3, 2023-June 20, 2023.

**Superintendent's Report:**

Dr. Taylor introduced the principal of Franklin Elementary School, Kira Baskerville, who will speak about the spotlighted students.

Ms. Baskerville stated the students were selected based on perseverance. The students exhibited hard work, problem solving skills and responsibility for their own academic progress:

Sebastian La Rose – works hard and doesn't give up when activities and assignments become challenging. He asks questions, responds positively to feedback and applies new learning.

Benjamin Eustache – very conscientious, desires to learn and grow, works hard and accepts challenges with a positive attitude. He shows respect to his peers and always has kind words of expression and encouragement.

Mrs. Regis-Darby arrived at 7:06 p.m.

Elisha Agyarko – demonstrates perseverance in the classroom. He will not give up even when tasks become challenging, always trying new strategies, and asking questions to make sure he is successful.

Isaiah Adams – works hard towards his learning goals, is never afraid to ask questions and always works diligently.

She stated that each student has the key ingredient which will make you a success and she is honored to be their principal. She handed out certificates to each student.

Personnel Spotlight - Keosha Walters – Franklin Elementary School teacher. She has built wonderful relationships with her students and honored to have her in our building. She is our kindergarten teacher, chairperson for P.R.I.D.E and F.A.S.T. (community-based programs). Ms. Walters received her bachelor's degree in anthropology from Rutgers University. She taught English abroad and then the banking field. After years in banking, she pursued teaching. She believes students learn best when they are safe, feel loved, feel heard, are free to express themselves and believes in the power of connection with her students and their families.

Dr. Taylor stated thank you for being here and the faculty that showed up after a long day.

Dr. Taylor presented the State of the Schools – a summary is below:

Aviel Hernandez and Kaiya Koonhow – students who founded and organized Union Hacks – a 16-hour competition in April creating computer codes and judged on the ability of their code and it is open to all Union resident students.

No Name Calling Week will be happening soon – it is like week of respect – recognize the hurt caused by unpleasant names based on weight, height, intelligence, sexual orientation and other things over which we don't have control.

Alissa Alcindor placed first in the 2023 Elizabeth Lady Minutemen Classic finishing 5-0; she also finished 3-0 in the Somerville Lady Pioneer Wrestling Jamboree.

Winter Season Sports Schedule – if you want to attend any school sports events; go to [unioncountyconferencenj.org/public/genie/278/school/21](http://unioncountyconferencenj.org/public/genie/278/school/21) for the schedules.

Standardized Assessment Results and Analysis – can show equity gaps, identify curriculum and instruction needs, cannot accurately measure intelligence and learning.

Three standardized assessments – Start Strong (grades 3-9), NJSLA (grades 4-12) and iReady (grades K-8).

Using the data to foster academic achievement:

- NJSLA and iReady are the more precise assessment tools.
- Start Strong and NJSLA scores have improved in almost all areas.
- Union outperformed its peer districts in NJSLA in almost all areas.
- The academic equity gap remains between Black, Hispanic, special education, English language learner students and their peers.
- All of our students, regardless of the demographic, struggle more with math and science than with English language arts.
- Special education, English language learner, and low-income students struggle more than their peers.

Comparison of results according to demographic identity showing the percent of students who need some or strong support for the following can be found on the district website:

- Start Strong Mathematics – 2021-2022 and 2022-2023
- Start Strong Science – 2021-2022 and 2022-2023
- Start Strong English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science 2022-2023
- NJSLA English Language Arts 2021-2022
- NJSLA Mathematics 2021-2022
- NJSLA Science 2021-2022
- NJSLA English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science 2021-2022
- NJSLA Math 2021-2022
- iReady and NJSLA English Language Arts
- iReady and NJSLA Mathematics

He stated that the 49% of the students are on free and reduced lunch.

Why it may be - Math and science curricula were written in such a way that students don't revisit skills like they do in English language arts. Our programs do not expose all students, including our special education and English language learner population, to the same level of rigor. There is a higher teacher turnover in math and science.

There is a data concerning the social, emotional learning and well-being – it is good for whole-child health. Many studies have shown there is a correlation between social, emotional well-being – a child's capacity to empathize with others, get along with others and how to regular their behaviors to academic performance.

Dr. Perez stated students don't just need academic support, we also need to support them in SEL and we need to equip our teachers with the tools to help support our students. She presented the following:

What we are doing – 2011 meta-analysis of 213 studies involving school-based universal SEL programs including over 270,000 students in K-12 revealed – 11 percentile-point gain on standardized achievement tests. Learn more at [bit.ly/3keObZC](https://bit.ly/3keObZC).

- Numerous after-school academic/SEL support programs,
- NJTSS audit,
- SEL activities via SILAS,
- Districtwide equity audit,
- Updating curricula and streamlining instructional programs.
- Created committee based on “Grading with Equity”,
- Changing the format of instructional plans,
- Revisiting the balance between live instruction and technology usage,
- Developing a “learning Walk” system to conduct walkthroughs,
- Prioritizing time for PD and well-run PLCs,
- Developing district-wide system to identify and provide direct intervention for struggling students and to analyze, reflect on, and act on data,
- Shift mindset and build capacity in order to increase growth and success,
- Ongoing PD for administrators in instructional leadership,
- Ongoing PD for instruction staff, and
- Providing more PD/PLC time for training and initiatives.

Dr. Taylor stated we know what the problems are, and we know what we have to do to resolve it. One is to maintain stability in the leadership team – consistency is vital and two to continue working and partnering with the UTEA and UTASA.

HIB – data since December 20, 2022 – 12 cases – 5 founded – 7 not founded.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated the Board should have received the presentation prior to today so that the Board can review it prior to the meeting. The NJSLA – it seems you made a case for the students to opt-out but our students can’t do that because there is a financial commitment tied to those exams. iReady has fidelity issues but what are we doing in terms of interventions? What has been done to target those population of students?

Dr. Perez stated with our special education students, this is where the NJTSS audit came into place. We needed to see where we were in terms of intervention. The audit revealed that there was inconsistency with understanding and implementation of tiered strategies. There is a need to look at our I&RS process. We met with the individuals who are working with us with regards to NJTSS but they are assisting us in preparing a handbook on how to move forward and also meeting with the building administrators to help work with their staff and how to look at the data correctly and more effectively to target instruction. There is just so much we can do when we don’t have the staff in place in order to move certain things forward. While we have certain things in place, there are other factors that is out of the district hands that are impacting how we are able to move certain work forward.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated those subgroups have not gotten intervention. Dr. Perez stated what the audit says is we are not consistent on how we are looking at tiered intervention and tiered strategies. Dr. Taylor stated we do have our RTI program in place.

Dr. Perez stated we are piloting an instructional ELA coach at Burnet Middle School, who is working with our teachers in terms of where the gaps are for ELA. We are looking to see how her support is impacting instruction. She is also looking at data and then we are able to look at what the positive impact of having an individual working with teachers. I think this will help in the long run. We are looking at comparable districts and districts who have had success with ESL programs and see how they run these programs and what their structure is.

Ms. Carbonell asked any thought about subrogating the data by the factors that directly impact performance? Such as language – that deals with the decoding and comprehension content and technology – the medium to which the test is taken? Dr. Perez stated we looked at the data the way it was presented. Dr. Taylor stated I like that idea; we should talk about it more. The curriculum team breaks in down by grade levels which I didn't do and then provide the information to the principals.

Ms. Carbonell stated to see if there is a correlation between the literacy skills of the students levels and their overall performance in science and mathematics. The entire student population – usually literacy is very much aligned with student performance in other areas because of the technical language in the other areas. You mainly relied on the NJSLA and the iReady data points, but you showed that the iReady does not test the students in open ended questions and it is also adapted – where is the correlation in the iReady data that you are receiving and possible projections later on in student performance? Dr. Perez stated those two tests are looked at because of the similarities in terms of performance. iReady will give them a better indicator on how students will do on the NJSLs – that is why we looked at them together. They had multiple choice and because of how aligned it is to NJSLs.

Ms. Carbonell stated could it have been some outliers where our students can guess very well on the questions – longitudinal data that is reliable. Dr. Perez stated we can look at it more closely to give you a better answer.

Ms. Santana asked if the HIB data can be broken down by school? Dr. Taylor stated moving forward I will.

Ms. Santana stated what I can see is our students don't test well. Other than the prep classes, what are we doing to prepare students for the standardized testing? Dr. Perez stated iReady is given twice a year but part of our professional development is how are we assessing our students and how we are developing assessments. We need to provide teachers with that training.

Ms. McKenzie requested that Dr. Taylor prepare a comparative analysis of HIB on how we did last year at the same time period.

Mrs. Brens-Watson asked don't our teachers do prep time for those tests? Dr. Taylor stated I have not seen that prep for the test in class. Mrs. Brens-Watson stated I don't want children to spend classroom time only learning how to prep for a test; I want them to learn content in the curriculum. Dr. Taylor stated I don't want students to feel discouraged because they are prepping for a test. Critical thinking and creativity is more important.

#### Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

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

E-1. *Agenda item reported at January 10, 2023 worksession (Report of HIB)*

E-1A. *Agenda item approved at January 10, 2023 worksession (Affirm Determination of HIB)*

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

Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period January 11, 2023 to January 17, 2023, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

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

Affirm the Superintendent's determination of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period December 21, 2022 to January 10, 2023, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

#### E-2. APPROVE JANUARY REPORT – NJDOE – HIB

Approve the Township of Union Public Schools January report presented by Superintendent as required by the New Jersey Department of Education of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB). The report provides the public with the information collection from September 2022 through December 2022, as well as the number of incidents per school building, status of investigations, HIB investigators, nature of the HIB reports and the discipline resulting from the report findings. The HIB report also includes all training of school district personnel, building programs and assemblies during the time period.

#### E-3. APPROVE LIST OF BOOKS – KAWAMEEH MIDDLE SCHOOL LIBRARY

Approve list of fiction, non-fiction and graphic novels/manga books for the Kawameeh Middle School Library, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

#### E-4. APPROVE UPDATED 2022-2023 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Approve updated 2022-2023 School Calendar, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

#### DISCUSSION:

None



AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Regis-Darby (E-3)

MOTION CARRIED

**Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:**

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mr. O'Shea, seconded by Mrs. Williams, for adoption:

**F-1. TREASURER'S REPORT**

That the Treasurer's Report dated December 31, 2022 be accepted.

**F-2. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

That the Secretary's Report dated December 31, 2022 be accepted.

**F-3. CERTIFY TREASURER'S AND SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a), I certify that as of December 31, 2022 no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments (contractual orders) which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district Board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8 and 18:22-8.1.

/s/ Yolanda Koon

Yolanda Koon, Board Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_ Dated

Pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.2(h), we certify that as of December 31, 2022 after review of the secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials that to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.2(d)3 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year. This certification is solely based on the information provided by the School Business Administrator and Board Secretary and is assumed by the Board to be correct.

**F-4. APPROVE APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS**

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

**F-5. APPROVE LIST OF CONTRACTS/PURCHASE ORDERS**

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

**F-6. APPROVE DISTRICT WIDE TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES**

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

**F-7. PRE-APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE STUDENT FIELD TRIPS**

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 LIST OF 2022-2023 STATE CONTRACT VENDORS**

Approve the amended list of the 2022-2023 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. APPROVED LIST OF CONTRACTS/PURCHASES (STUDENT ACTIVITY)**

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

School	Account/Department	Vendor/Description	Amount
Union High School	2077/theatre	11thourDesign – scenic design, construction etc. for High School Musical	\$6,804.53
Kawameeh Middle School	27/Library	Scholastic – bookfair invoice	\$3,123.32

**F-10. APPROVE 2022-2023 OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENT PLACEMENT LIST**

Approval be given to amend the 2022-2023 out-of-district student placement list, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-11. APPROVE FUNDRAISERS**

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

Event Name	Date	Purpose
Production T-Shirt Sale	January 30-March 26, 2023	UHSPAC – to raise funds for UHSPAC spring production
Program Advertisements and Patron Packages	January 23-March 20, 2023	UHSPAC – to raise funds for UHSPAC spring production
Store Fundraiser	January 19-March 19, 2023	UHS/Girls Basketball – to raise funds for girls basketball team
Clothing Sale	January 19-March 31, 2023	UHS/Cheerleading – to raise funds for end of year party, cheer camp, stunt clinic
Teacher Mural Raffle	January 23-March 31, 2023	UHS/National Art Honor Society – raise funds for scholarship fund
Valentine Flower Sale	February 1-15, 2023	UHS/National Art Honor Society – to raise funds for scholarship fund
Button Sale – Youth Art Month	February 27-March 31, 2023	UHS/National Art Honor Society – to raise funds for scholarship fund
T-shirt/sweatshirt sale	February 2023	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – to raise funds for club activities
Latin Dance Night	March 2023	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – to raise funds for club activities

Inductions	April 2023	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – to raise funds for club activities, including induction ceremony
Food Drive	April 2023	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – collect canned foods for food drive
Ms. UHS Showcase 2023	April 2023	UHS/Empowerment Group – to empower young women by building self esteem
Maureen Baldwin Counseling Scholarship – Dress Down Day	January 18, 2023	UHS/Senior Awards – to raise funds for scholarship award for a senior
Pink Out-Basketball	February 1-28, 2023	UHS/Girls Basketball – to raise funds for girls’ basketball team
T-shirt Fundraiser	January 18-June 30, 2023	UHS/Girls Basketball – to raise funds for girls’ basketball team
Bake Sale/Snack Sale	February 1, 2023 March 1, 2023 April 5, 2023	KMS/E-Sports – to raise funds for E-Sports Club (jerseys/equipment, etc.)
Movie Night	January 26, 2023	KMS/E-Sports – to raise funds for E-Sports Club (jerseys/equipment, etc.)

#### F-12. ACCEPT DONATIONS

Accept the following donations, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes:

From	For Use By	\$/Item
Shutterfly, LLC	Jefferson School	\$1,527.67
Douglas Michael Krueger Scholarship Fund	UHSPAC Productions and Scholarships	\$2,600.00

#### F-13. APPROVE PURCHASING MANUAL

Approve the updated 2022-2023 Purchasing Manual, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

#### F-14. APPROVE UPDATED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – ZETA NU LAMBDA EDUCATION FOUNDATION, INC.

Approve updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by and between the district and Zeta Nu Lambda Education Foundation, Inc. (aka P.A.C.E. Foundation) for the following workshops: (a) Adopt-A-Block-July 22, 2023, (b) Statewide Phone Bank Call Out (June 2023), (c) Food Pantry Volunteering (November 23, 2023), (d) Etiquette Development (January 28, 2023), and (e) Get Home Safe (May 13, 2023), in the amount of \$2,000.00, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

#### F-15. APPROVE RACHEL’S CHALLENGE

Approve Rachel’s Challenge to provide the “Hope and Connection: Fostering a Culture of Acceptance” programming to Kawameeh Middle School on March 3, 2023 and Burnet Middle School on March 14, 2023 at a cost of \$8,200.00 (to be paid by Title IV funds-Account Extension #8500), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-16. APPROVE McGRAW HILL - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Approve McGraw Hill to coordinate “Inspire Science” professional development for grade two teachers on February 17, 2023 at a cost of \$1,500.00 (to be paid by Title II funds-Account Extension #8434), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-17. APPROVE BEHAVIORAL MODIFICATION AND LIFE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM**

Approve “Making the Transition, Inc.” behavioral modification and life enrichment program for two (2) cohorts of Union High School students from January through June 2023 at a cost of \$4,500.00 (to be paid by Title IV Account #85001/20-281-100-300-01-20), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-18. *For informational purposes only – vote not required.* List of legal services for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-19. APPROVE CONTRACTS – COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

Approve School Contract with the State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, for educational services for students in the district for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

**F-20. APPROVE INSPIRED INSTRUCTION – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Approve Inspired Instruction, LLC to coordinate half-day professional development trainings at Union High School for all staff members for the 2022-2023 school year; the workshops will focus on the following topics: Teambuilding for Staff and Professional Learning Communities: Building Capacity for Success (at a cost of \$4,875.00 to be paid for using Title I Funds-Account Extension: 16669), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-21. APPROVE SPECIAL LABOR COUNSEL– APRUZZESE, McDERMOTT, MASTRO & MURPHY**

Approve a contract with Robert Clark, Esq. of the law firm of Apruzzese, McDermott, Mastro & Murphy as special labor counsel at an hourly rate of \$190.00, on an as needed basis, for the period of January 18, 2023 to June 30, 2023 (not to cumulatively exceed a fee of \$50,000.00). This contract was awarded in a non-fair and open manner.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: Mrs. Regis-Darby (F-21)

ABSTAIN:) None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Grievance/Negotiations Committee:**

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

**G-1. APPROVE AMENDED COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT – ACMTE**  
Approve amended Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the district and the Association of Custodial Maintenance and Transportation Employees (ACMTE) for the period of July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2026, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

**AYE:** Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

**NAY:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Operations Committee Resolutions:**

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution were moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Brens-Watson, for adoption:

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

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1 and P.L. 2009, Chapter 178, approve the following security drill and bus evacuation reports for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

**AYE:** Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

**NAY:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Personnel Committee Resolutions:**

Mrs. Scott-Hayden stated that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, P-1C-1 will be removed from P-1C.

Upon recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools and moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Mr. O’Shea, that P-1C-1 will be removed from P-1C.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

**AYE:** Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

**NAY:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION CARRIED**

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

**P-1A. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – NEW HIRES**

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

**P-1B PERSONNEL ACTIONS – EXTRA PAY**

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

**P-1C PERSONNEL ACTIONS – TRANSFERS**

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

**P-2. APPROVE SUBSTITUTE LISTS**

Approve Substitute Lists for the 2022-2023 school year.

Name	Position	Rate
Daiquan R. White	Sub-custodian	\$16.00/hr.

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

Accept letters of resignation/retirement from the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Eff. Date	Reason	<b>Approvals are subject to contractual notice to be given accordingly.</b>
Deon Daniels	Paraprofessional	Hannah Caldwell	12/23/2022	Resignation	
Juan Munoz	Math teacher	UHS	2/6/2023	Resignation	

**P-4. APPROVE LEAVES**

Approve leaves for the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Leave Dates	Leave Type	Notes
Thiana Damo	Visual and Performing Arts Teacher	UHS	1/25/2023-6/20/2023	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/ NJFLA (concurrently)	

Cristina Silva	Pre-K Teacher	Franklin	4/3/2023-6/20/2023	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	
Kimberly Villane	English Teacher	Burnet	New return date 3/1/2023	Extension of unpaid leave	
Patty Weber	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher	Battle Hill	12/1/2022-6/20/2023	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	
Lynne Mancinelli	Library Media Specialist	Washington	12/15/2022-6/20/2023	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	
Joseph Yanick	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Paraprofessional	Jefferson	12/8/2022-1/13/2023	Paid medical leave	
Lisa Mason	4 <sup>th</sup> grade Teacher	Washington	12/21/2022-6/20/2023	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	
Sandra Paul	Director of Info and Technology	IT Department	2/27/2023-5/28/2023	Paid medical leave	
Angela Saavedra	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade Teacher	Hannah Caldwell	1/3/2023-6/20/2023	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	
Connie Krupa	Accountant – special services department	Hamilton	1/16/2023-12/31/2023	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA	
Jason Siderman	Resource Room Teacher	UHS	1/3/2023-3/31/2023	Extension of unpaid leave	
Suzanne Licks	Basic Skills Teacher	Livingston	1/9/2023-4/9/2023	Medical leave	
Gerard Vandewal	PE Teacher	Burnet	1/12/2023-2/17/2023	Medical leave	
Ayako Morino	Music Teacher	Washington	1/3/2023-6/20/2023	Intermittent leave	

**P-5. APPROVE STUDENT TEACHERS AND INTERNSHIPS**

Approve student teachers and internships for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**P-6. APPROVE PUBLIC AGENCY COMPLIANCE OFFICER – KOON**

Approve Yolanda Koon as Public Agency Compliance Officer (PACO) for the year 2023, at no cost to the district.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

**Residency Committee Resolutions:**

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

**R-1. APPROVE LIST OF STUDENTS REMOVED FROM ROLLS**

Approval be given to amend the list of students removed from the rolls [three (3) students exited the month of December 2022-January 2023 (3 from elementary) or a total of seventeen (17) students for the 2022-2023 school year] who are not domiciled in this school district, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

**R-2. APPROVE TO REMOVE STUDENT**

Approval to remove student #361013 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 TO REMOVE STUDENT**

Approval to remove student #360538 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 TO REMOVE STUDENT**

Approval to remove student #341350 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:**

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

**Technology Committee:**

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution was moved by Mrs. Brens-Watson, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, for adoption:

**T-1. APPROVE RECYCLING OF EQUIPMENT**

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

**DISCUSSION:**

None



AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Bills:

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

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,

Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Unfinished Business:

Mrs. Brens-Watson stated that the Board should bring back Zoom meetings so that the community can participate. We have parents and families that want to be part of the meetings. Face Book is not enough; you can’t ask questions. This is a question of equity and access.

She also stated that the new Board member should have an orientation to avoid any confusion and navigate the Board meetings. We should not be replying to all on emails or text messages.

New Business:

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked if someone could take a look at the area of the rock because it needs more lighting.

Mrs. Brens-Watson stated the area near the high school parking lot is one way, but cars go both ways. Dr. Taylor stated he will be having a meeting with the safety committee on Friday and will bring these items up.

Comments from the Public:

Victoria Magarino read the following statement:

“I am a current member of the junior class at Union High School. I am a member of a very unfortunate group of students who did not receive our PSAT test scores. Although the majority of my counterparts received their scores in November, myself and over 25 others have yet to receive our own respective scores. I’m sure you can imagine how detrimental this can be to our further preparation for the upcoming SAT assessments. My issue is that there has been

no advocating done for students like myself, who have been left stranded by school officials and Board members alike.

Attempts at virtual communication have fallen short to say the least, so I am here tonight to address the issue publicly. On January 11<sup>th</sup>, a letter was sent out to parents of the district, detailing the recent incidents related to College Board. After reading this address, I can confidently say that this letter was clearly written to dismiss the issue and frankly is a blatant lie. The letter mentions that the College Board had issued a statement to high schools throughout the nation, including our very own UHS, stating that some of the answer sheets returned to them would not be scored. The letter goes on to claim that College Board determined those tests using old booklets are invalid, will not be scored, and affected students will not be offered a retake of the PSAT during this school year. After hearing this infuriating news, I decide a call with College Board would be the easiest way to solve this issue. In a recent discussion with the College Board, occurring on January 13<sup>th</sup>, we discussed the letter that was sent to parents. I asked the simple question: Is this letter true? A member of College Board stated that the letter sent out was “inaccurate information”.

So what happened? Miscommunication? Genuine error? Or another relaying theme of trying to dismiss important issues and sweeping real problems that your students are facing under the rug. I’ve sat down with our Test Administrator already, and she stated that College board did not have a reason as to why scores were not released. If this is the case, then why was the original letter sent out to parents in the first place, since it gave “explanations” as to why scores were not released? This letter was a measly attempt at trying to provide reason for missing test scores and ultimately was leading many of those affected in the wrong direction, leaving them hopeless and lost when it came to their upcoming SAT preparations. Why are students such as myself not being given legitimate answers? Why does there seem to be no honest communication between parents/students and staff? This lack of transparency makes it very difficult for students to be advocated for by board members, counselors and others alike. All these questions must be answered and students such as myself and others facing this issue demand it. After all, the least that can be done is to provide closure about our PSAT scores, rather than just providing feeble excuses.”

Barbara LaMorte invited the Board and community to the Caldwell Parsonage on Sunday. This is in conjunction with a program called F.A.S.T. – Families and Students Together – a function of the UTEA. The historical society partnered with the UTEA to do these programs. It is opened to everyone but in particular Franklin Elementary School and Jefferson School. Everyone who comes will receive a gift from the UTEA.

Mr. Arminio mentioned at the worksession about the situation with the Union County Commissioners reconsidering changing the Union County seal that does show the Caldwell

Parsonage. We have no update but we hope that you help us plead our case. It is an important part of the history of our Town, County, State and country – as we look forward to the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of that event in 2026.

Ann Margaret Shannon stated president of the UTEA. Thank you for recognizing the students and educators at Franklin Elementary School. Ms. Walters is the chair of the F.A.S.T. committee and it is a wonderful committee from the UTEA that finances many activities for the students and families throughout the Town. I am very proud of the services that are provided.

Luisa Bias mentioned she does agree that Zoom needs to be brought back so everyone can attend. She stated she is happy that she sees the changes in the high school but now you have to delve into other things – curriculum, rigor. The cell phone usage and vaping are out of control. She is happy with the UHS administration but instead of running in and out of the bathroom, they need to be leading our teachers to better education. Her sophomore told her that the bathroom is like a war zone in there. This is unacceptable. The children are getting caught vaping in the bathroom so the bathrooms are closed except for one for the bathroom and that is not acceptable. We need a plan of action for the vaping.

Jill Hall stated happy to hear Dr. Perez and the balance between live teaching versus technology. I hear continuously from students that they often feel that they are still on virtual sitting in their classrooms. They are tired of Chromebooks. If we can get back to engagement and live teaching. A teacher in Kawameeh had an unconventional way but it was all about relationships and his students always outscored all the other English teachers in the standardized tests. It was the way he cultivated that sentiment that they were capable and competent and they believed it and achieved it. If we can get back to engagement, I think some of our other problems will be resolved.

Mrs. Bridges is beginning her first presentation for the parent academy on Thursday – “Post COVID Parenting”. I have one coming up in February and the topic will be “Pulled In” and addressing the current concerns about the constant connection to social media, internet and what it is doing to rewire students’ brains and how it is so detrimental. On February 23<sup>rd</sup> – “Past Sobriety Speaks” is coming to talk about the vaping issue. We want to do a parent forum where the administrators will come in with the parents and students together. The vaping is the tip of the iceberg of how those kids are feeling. There are multi-tiered layers that need to be addressed.

#### MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the Board go into Executive Session at 8:29 p.m. to discuss the following subject matters without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b: litigation update, student matter and matters falling under the attorney-client privilege.

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

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

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 9:40 p.m.

Moved by Mrs. Brens-Watson, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the following resolution be adopted:

**AFFIRM REPORT OF HIB**

Affirm report of HIB, as discussed in executive session.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Ms. Santana,

NAY: Mr. O'Shea

ABSTAIN: Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Scott-Hayden  
Mrs. Williams

MOTION CARRIED

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Regis-Darby, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the meeting be adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,

Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

*Yolanda Koon*

YOLANDA KOON

BOARD SECRETARY

