

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION MINUTES – NOVEMBER 12, 2019

NOTICE OF MEETING:

The worksession meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member. Action was taken.

Mrs. Minneci called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Sherry Higgins, Mr. Ronnie McDowell, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Dr. Kalisha Morgan, Mr. Vito Nufrio, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby, Mrs. Kim Ruiz, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Linda Richardson

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Mr. Gregory Tatum, Mr. Gerry Benaquista, Mrs. Annie Moses, Mrs. Kim Conti, Mr. Craig Wojcik, Mr. Barry Loessel, Mrs. Maureen Guilfoyle, Mrs. Sandra Paul

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Lester Taylor, Esq.

Student Liaisons: Joshua Tidwell, Pedro Torres, Faith Olayinka, Gianni Guido

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

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

Mrs. Higgins read the District’s mission statement.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS IN BOLD

Mr. Taylor stated based upon conversations in the Personnel Committee, agenda item P-2 will also be recommended for action this evening.

Ann Margaret Shannon stated I’m curious about an update on ESS. The schools have concerns with the ESS substitutes. Some substitutes come in and say they can’t do this and that – are we addressing this. I thought the substitutes would come in and do what substitutes do. Have you heard from the principals with any concerns? Has there been any discussions about ESS and are they doing what we expected them to do?

Mr. Taylor stated I would suggest on behalf of your membership have a meeting with the administration and point out specific examples. They can’t disclose any particular student matters here in public. I’m sure they will be happy to meet with you.

Mr. Monge stated it is not just a UTEA only issue. It is a parent issue as well. You voted that night – you voted to not have ESS provide paras but you voted for substitutes that were providing paras so that is the same thing. The issue that has been caused is that you have substitutes coming into classrooms that are not there permanently for kids that have IEPs that need stability and is causing issues. Over the last couple of weeks we talked to paras that said you have subs coming in and they don't want to mess around with the kids with IEPs. People coming in and not able to create a sustainable solution for a kid with an IEP. It is not a UTEA issue, maybe one, but it is also a parent issue, teacher issue and other paras that have to carry the weight of the substitute that might be there today but gone tomorrow.

Mr. Taylor stated thank you for that clarification. Has any parents or members of the community brought this to your attention? Mr. Tatum stated we had a few concerns and on an individual basis we have been working with parents who have expressed some of those issues. In retrospect there is a posting right now to hire more paras. I discussed earlier tonight about the fact that there was a need for additional paras beyond the ones that we had. Some of what people are saying have some validity because people are hired as substitute teachers but they also have been covering the shortage on paraprofessionals but when there is an issue with a classroom to be covered, then we use those ESS people that are former substitutes as substitutes for the classroom and we are addressing the issues.

Dr. Morgan stated you said you posted for paraprofessionals? Mr. Tatum stated yes. Dr. Morgan asked district or ESS? Mr. Tatum stated district. Dr. Morgan stated why? Mr. Tatum stated to replace those who decided to leave. The part-time people that decided to leave the district, those people that took other positions in the district and a number of people that were budgeted for and had to be replaced.

Mr. Monge stated you are creating a situation. Mr. Taylor stated Mr. Monge you were given an opportunity to ask your question. You asked it, you had a seat, the administration responded. Mr. Monge stated I want clarification – one sentence. Paraprofessionals that you are looking to hire, actually will not receive benefits, ESS temps that you are placing in those positions actually receive benefits. The economics are upside down for a solution that you were trying to solve.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes will be approved next week.

Communications:

Communications are part of personnel and will be voted on next week.

Superintendent's Report:

Mr. Tatum stated our football team is knocking it out of the park – there last win was 35-0. Next week we will have the JROTC recognition and other district highlights.

Tonight we have the student liaisons to give their reports:

Gianni Guido stated a senior at high school. I have one key issue. For the guidance counselor appointments we can only make them before or after school which is an issue. I'm trying to get my college applications in and I try to go before school and because of traffic I barely get to homeroom on time and after school kids have sports and stuff. I try to go first period and they say absolutely not, come back at the end of the day. It is prohibiting the whole idea. Why can't we go during our lunch period? That is an issue that I'm bringing up.

Mr. Nufrio stated I thought students were able to make appointments regardless of what time it is. Mr. Tatum stated maybe you can clarify. Gianni stated at the high school it is only before or after school. You can go any period but to make an appointment you have to go before homeroom or after school.

Faith Olayinka stated junior representative – I haven't gotten any major complaints this month. Someone mentioned about the water fountain – is it drinkable? Or do we have to go to the vending machines for water? Mr. Loessel stated the water fountains are drinkable. The reason why you see “non-drinkable water” in the bathrooms because the State gives us leeway where we don't have to test them. There is no lead in the water.

Pedro Torres stated sophomore representative. I like to mention the Juul problem. Throughout the school year, the problem hasn't deteriorated. I still see friends talking about how they see groups of kids in the bathroom smoking Juul. It hasn't improved whatsoever. I would think by now the district would do something.

Mr. Nufrio asked don't the smoke alarms respond? Mr. Tatum stated the policy is the same as using tobacco products. Mr. Nufrio stated it doesn't set off the smoke alarm. Mr. Tatum stated no. Dr. Morgan stated my district is looking into vape detectors – they are very expensive.

Joshua Tidwell stated freshman representative – the only complaint which I feel is major to me is the maintenance in terms of the rest room at the high school. Due to the fact that sometimes there are no paper towels and on occasion there is no soap which is an issue – especially in the big gym and the boys' locker room. From personal experience, there hasn't been paper towels since the beginning of the school year and sometimes we go weeks without soap.

Mr. Loessel stated they stuff the toilets with paper towels and flood the bathrooms every day. Mr. Tatum stated we will have to do some tour of duty – a custodian or security to go into the bathrooms.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Regis-Darby reported on the committee meeting. We had three items on our agenda. The first one was presented by Nicole Nichols which is the Community Food Bank which was presented to the principals and us to get food for our Title I community members and I think more information will follow-up on that. It is a partnership with the Title I buildings and the Food Bank of New Jersey.

Unity Bank – to provide professional development for students who are taking financial literacy to do some collaboration with that piece financial literacy at Union High School and to present some kind of professional development to the students about the aspect of financial literacy.

We presented this about a month and a half ago which was the district’s after school programs. All programs will be implemented in January.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Regis-Darby, seconded by Mrs. Williams, for adoption:

E-3. APPROVE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Approve Settlement Agreement for F.B., in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

E-4. APPROVE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Approve Settlement Agreement for O.B., in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Regis-Darby presented the Education/Student Discipline Committee agenda

DISCUSSION:

None

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Mr. Nufrio presented the Fiscal and Planning Committee agenda.

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

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-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	3430/Athletics: Bowling	Just Fundraising Inc./D. Scheurmann – team apparel and misc. items	\$2,800.00 (estimate)
Union High School	3270/Athletics: Track Club	Run Rocket – strengthening equipment	\$2,800.00 (estimate)
Union High School	2078/field trips	Villani Bus Company – Washington DC field trip (Holocaust Museum)	\$5,100.00
Union High School	2083/Student Activities	Branch Brook Park – skate party	\$1,500.00
Union High School	2061/Cosmetology	Burmax – student kits for cosmetology class	\$1,500.78
Kawameeh Middle School	27/Library	Scholastic Book Fair	\$3,214.53
Kawameeh Middle School	26/Yearbook	Jostens – initial deposit for 2019-2020 year books	\$2,200.00
Kawameeh Middle School	26/Yearbook	Jostens- 2 nd deposit for 2019-2020 year books	\$2,200.00
Kawameeh Middle School	19/Principal	Forest Lodge – 1 st deposit for 8 th grade trip	\$1,600.00
Kawameeh Middle School	19/Principal	Forest Lodge – 2 nd deposit for 8 th grade trip	\$1,600.00
Kawameeh Middle School	19/Principal	Forest Lodge – remainder due for 8 th grade trip	\$8,500.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2228/English	Villani Bus – field trip to Philadelphia, PA	\$4,740.00

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated F-11 – we asked for the fundraisers to let the Board know what the fundraiser is for – I noticed some of the charity ones are just to a charity. Do we know what particular charity?

F-16 – there is an increase of \$50,000 can someone speak to the rationale of that?

F-7A – is that \$80,000 from September to now for the field trips?

Mrs. Conti stated F-16 – every year when we do the budget we project based on certain vendors – based on passed student needs. This year we have had an increased need based on IEPs. Our House – they provide community based supported instruction. The students go out into the community to gain vocational skills. This service – we have an increased need based on IEP team decisions.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked do you know what the original number for the budget line item? Mrs. Conti stated I don't have that handy. I can get back to you.

Mrs. Ruiz asked were these students already in our district and did they already have IEPs and when were those IEPs last reviewed? If the budget was prepared early this year or late last year, those students would have already been in our system and we should have already accounted for those students in this school year. Mrs. Conti stated actually no because the need came after the budget was determined. Mrs. Ruiz asked why didn't we anticipate the need if we had the child/children. Mrs. Conti stated we do the proposed budget in December 2018; for this year December 2019 – that doesn't account for anything that may come up over the summer, in late spring. That was one of the reasons for the big increase and it is hard for me to do this in public session. Some things come up after December 2018 that we really had no way of foreseeing.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated this can be amendments in IEPs, new students and also any kind of new goals that was written into new IEPs – so that is why the needs are there. O.K.

Mr. Nufrio stated unless it has changed, IEPs are a work in progress so throughout the year depending on what is embedded within the IEP can easily be changed. Hopefully reduced but that is not always the case. There may be additional services that are required as the CST observes. This can also transition into Mr. Tatum sat with the Fiscal Committee earlier in the absence of Mr. Vieira so I think it is important to make a simple generic comment.

Mr. Tatum stated when we look at the increases in student population and the number of students that we have had overall; just yesterday we picked up six more students – all unanticipated and their needs were not necessarily special services but the ESL program. We have many needs that come to us. When you are doing the budget, you are sometimes projecting what happened in the previous year and sometimes you exceed that number in the year that you are actually in. You try to look within the constraints you have in regarding the money that is coming into the district but by the same token the money that we do spend on special services – I know Mrs. Conti is working within the budget we have allocated is quite substantial and I will leave it at that. We have to continue to supply services to our student population.

Mr. Nufrio stated are you prepared to address the other issue or wait for Mr. Vieira to return so that the Board is fully apprised of what we may be looking at over the horizon. Mr.

Tatum stated that is an issue that will be better served – I was a surrogate tonight. Mr. Nufrio stated I didn't want the Board to think that we talked about something that they should be privy to. Mr. Tatum stated these are the matters of the future projection. Mr. Taylor stated are these matters for public disclosure or executive. Mr. Tatum stated I think more executive session in my opinion. Mr. Nufrio stated eventually it will be public. Mr. Tatum stated absolutely but without the BA being here. Mr. Nufrio stated we will get an update from him.

Mr. Benaquista stated 7A is districtwide field trips and that is for all our schools – the running total – not just this month. The student cost has been \$25,978 and the district cost is \$58,492 for a total of \$80,600+. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated this is from the beginning of the school year to now. Mr. Benaquista stated it would be 19-20. The two fundraisers are from Washington, I'll have to find out from them. Most of them do have it and I do agree. We will make sure it is updated for next week.

Mrs. Ruiz stated F-11 – every month we vote to approve donations and fundraisers and I do remember a few months ago with the issue of the score board at the high school came up that project was bigger than just the score board – new bleachers etc. I recently learned that Ms. Ionta is sending out letters seeking donations but I don't recall us ever approving that letter or that type of fundraiser. Mr. Benaquista stated I think she is trying to find corporate sponsors to possibly provide a score board. She is putting out feelers to see if this is something a corporation would do. Before anything would get done, it would need to be Board approved. Mr. Nufrio stated it would go under the category of donations. Mr. Benaquista stated we can't put anything on if we don't know – for example Snapple – wants to donate our scoreboard, we have to find out if they are interested and then we would put a resolution to the Board saying Snapple is interested in providing this donation. She is trying to find someone who would be willing to donate money or provide a scoreboard.

Mrs. Ruiz stated the letter specifically requests donations. Mr. Benaquista stated can you forward that to me. Mrs. Ruiz stated my concern was this was not Board approved. Mr. Taylor stated to the extent we are talking about the actions of a particular employee and that employee to my knowledge has not be riced and we are discussing this in a public forum that you in your role as a Board member refer issues to the attention to the Chief School Administrator and that can be looked into and brought back to the Board's attention for update at the appropriate time.

Mr. Benaquista stated there was a resolution. Mr. Taylor stated whether in committee and/or in closed session. When was the resolution approved? Mrs. Ruiz stated I recall a resolution but I don't recall the specific type of fundraiser. Mr. Taylor stated what was the resolution for? Mr. Benaquista stated it was advertising fundraising – June 1, 2019-June 1, 2020 – UHS/Athletics to raise funds to buy football scoreboard and baseball bleachers. Mrs. Ruiz stated I remember that resolution but we never saw the specific fundraisers. We didn't approve an actual fundraiser. How did that happen? What I then saw recently was a fundraiser – the high school could technically fundraise in many different ways for that scoreboard and bleachers. Us approving that resolution to me, is not us approving a specific fundraiser. It is us approving going forward and fundraising but we didn't have a specific list of fundraisers like we have for all the different schools. That specific fundraiser I saw in the letter, we never voted on.

Mr. Taylor stated the question is there wasn't specificity in that agenda item passed by the Board, there was not questions for more specificity at that time, correct? Mrs. Ruiz stated I do remember asking something about that resolution. Mr. Taylor stated but it was still approved by the Board. What I'm suggesting now is that your question be taken under advisement with the administration, that the documents be gathered, the resolution be reviewed in connection with the letter that had gone out and they can report back in terms of what went on – whether in closed session setting because you are talking about the actions of the members of the staff and/or in a committee and/or Board session. The question is whether fundraisers have to be approved by the Board. The question is whether this resolution supports the type of fundraiser. Mrs. Ruiz stated the question is if we approve fundraisers every month, why is that fundraiser not required to be approved by the Board. Mr. Taylor stated it sounds like it was. Let's look at the letter, the resolution and bring back the information so we can have an intelligent conversation about it versus assumptions about what happened. It sounds like no one has the concrete data in front of them so that way the Board can get an intelligent responsive answer and if it was a mistake than you acknowledge it was a mistake or they can get the definitive answer and if the question maybe misplaced based upon what was approved than that can be identified as well but that way the public and the Board is not misled as to what assumptions are being made.

Operations Committee Resolutions:

Mr. Nufrio presented the Operations Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

None

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

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

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 2019-2020 school year in accordance with the information in the hands of each Board.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby,
Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Williams presented the Personnel Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

None

Policy Committee:

Mr. Benaquista stated some policies are being updated but they are not ready for the agenda. Mr. Nufrio stated we should look at our policies to make sure we are in compliance. Mr. Benaquista stated we voted last year for Strauss Esmay to redo all our policies. Right now it is with Mr. Taylor's firm policies are being reviewed. Hopefully sometime next year we will have the whole policy manual revised to current language. School Board does give us the updates. Mr. Taylor stated they offer a product similar to Strauss Esmay so you can pick one or the other to do the updates. They will give you monthly or quarterly updates that are legally required. All policies can be reviewed and tailored for local preferences and needs and the Policy Committee is currently embarking on a review of the entire manual. Mr. Nufrio stated those policies that are recommended not mandated. Mr. Taylor stated some are recommended and some are called critical policy which are mandatory.

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Williams presented the Residency Committee agenda.

Technology Committee:

Mr. Nufrio stated we met with Mrs. Paul, Mr. Wojcik and the new business items are the vetting process and procedure for all district software and online services done by the State of Massachusetts. Mrs. Paul stated Mr. Wojcik suggested it and I looked into it. One of the things that we have to come up with a vetting process in order to ensure that we are following certain guidelines for FERPA, COPPA and CEEPA. These are acts by the federal government regarding student privacy and student information and what is actually being put out there on certain services. The State of Massachusetts has a service; it is a free website and you can sign up. Mr. Wojcik and I are sitting down and thinking about going through a checklist of exactly what we can look at and making sure certain things are followed as guidelines as we purchase services for the district.

Mr. Nufrio stated the second thing was the investigation of replacement Chromebook devices for the high school. We touched upon that but that is still a work in progress and it is contingent about how big the wallet is.

The third is the teacher-technology team at the high school. Mr. Wojcik stated right now we have three teachers that are part of the teach-technology team at the high school. They provide access for the students and teachers during the school day if they have damage or

repairs, they will collect them. We are looking to create more opportunities for teachers on how to better improve instructional technology in the classroom and providing opportunities before and after school to increase student exposure. We are trying to create opportunities for the students to be able to make sure their devices are operational at all times.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked can you give us an example of what that operational upgrade would look like? Technology upgrades for the students so they can do other things on the platform off the Chromebooks. Mr. Wojcik stated for the teachers they can provide opportunities to show them other resources that are out there and available in their classrooms and for the students it is more about making sure that their devices are operational and working so that students that have damaged devices would bring them down to the library but right now they can bring them down 5th, 6th and 7th periods during the school day so we are going to extend that to before and after school on certain days that these teachers are available. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated so giving them additional tools so that they will be able to access things quicker so you can service whatever they need. Mr. Wojcik stated the quicker they get them repaired the faster they can get it back.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated Mrs. Paul you talk about Massachusetts – the COPPA – does that encrypts the student privacy data? Mrs. Paul stated no, it is called a vetting process. It is according to the company that you – an example is Genesis – the vetting process is this. Where is our data being stored? Is it locally in New Jersey or out of the state? Is it on their server? Or our servers? How will we do disaster recovery? It is all about that information to ensure that you are following the guidelines to make sure we protect our school district but we also protect the kids information because we want to make sure it stays within our state and a protected system. They updated their services, it included anti-virus so making sure those types of things are in place and we are aware that they are doing it also. We can feel more secure that our data is secure for our students and teachers.

Mr. Nufrio stated you also stated in the committee meeting that this is also to see if you can create your own. Mrs. Paul stated that is what we have been working together to try to figure out how we can create our own because using what we have here in Massachusetts, use whatever they have and use it as some sort of checklist.

Mr. Nufrio stated so whatever you possibly create, won't infringe on any patents or any protections. Mrs. Paul stated no it is just information and for us to have a record of it stating that we have done this to ensure that the process and procedures as we go through from building to building and that we have guidelines.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated it is not like you will be writing an algorithm to create. Mrs. Paul stated no. Mr. Wojcik stated we just want to know that a student's viable information is secure and we want to have a standard in place and make sure that those standards are met before we approve anything.

Mr. Nufrio stated you said it is not being done here in New Jersey. Mrs. Paul stated Massachusetts came up with this process but New Jersey does not have one. Mr. Nufrio stated we could actually be the forerunner in doing this.

Approval of Bills:

Bills will be approved next week.

Unfinished Business:

Mrs. Ruiz stated the Relay for Life is around the corner. Next, the budget, where are we as far as budget planning. I would like to avoid not getting a budget presented on the same day we have to approve it. Mr. Tatum stated what started tonight in the Finance Committee was the actual indication on where the budget is going. Mr. Vieira did develop a budget calendar and what I requested he do monthly is to provide updates to the entire Board and to discuss it in the committee exactly where we are budgetary. In his absence tonight, we talked about the state of the budget that we currently have projections moving forward but we will also be talking about as we begin the budgeting process – month-by-month where we are and what are concerns and needs are and what are our revenues.

Mrs. Ruiz asked in that budget calendar, is there a projected date for when the budget will be presented to the Board. Mr. Tatum stated in prior years, Mr. Brennan had opportunities for Board members to come in and review the budget. The budget calendar is done every year and we will send it to the Board members. But sometimes there is a mishap, a Governor's message where we have to alter the calendar.

Dr. Morgan stated in the spirit of transparency if there is something that is going to come like paraprofessionals or anything else, to put it out there early. Mr. Tatum stated that is the purpose of our meetings so there is no ambiguity on where we are. On the advice of counsel we will determine what information can go out and when. The Board will also be apprised on where we are. There is a public advertisement of the budget and public hearing. We will make sure that there are no surprises when we do the actual presentation.

New Business:

Mrs. Ruiz stated Livingston School – they are having their annual tricky tray – it a great event and fundraiser. It will be on May 1st at the Knights of Columbus. I encourage everyone to attend. They are also doing a clothing drive so they need to collect 100 bags of clothes. They also have a presentation on a proposed plan for drop off at the school which will be on Midland and Euclid. Having had my children at Livingston School, I think it is a great proposal. It will be parent drop off between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m. on Midland and Euclid. There will be cones and volunteers there to get the children so we won't have the bottlenecking and children crossing the street. The tentative start date is December 2nd but they do need volunteers to help with the drop off at the two locations. Union PD will be there and they will be giving out j-walking tickets if you don't cross at the crosswalk. If you want to walk your child to the building, you will have to park and walk to the designated crosswalks. They will be there for the first two weeks to enforce the rules.

The Harlem Wizard Basketball event is November 20th – districtwide fundraiser.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated recently the high school students took a survey – I want to know when those results will be published and when will it be available to the parents. Mr. Wojcik

stated it has been sent out. As far as the students go we had an incredible amount of responses. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated that is because you did it during class time. Mr. Wojcik stated that is correct. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated it took 135 minutes to do a survey – it could have taken 10 minutes. Mr. Wojcik stated this survey was done in homeroom; that must be a different survey. The parent and staff, we have out right now. The responses are relatively low but I keep sending out reminders. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated a good way is to have a robo-call because it is being sent to email and it is going to the spam and parents don't check it. With the robo-call you may get a different engagement of parents to do that one. When will the student one be available? Mr. Wojcik stated the student ones are in already but we have to put the information together. We have the data so I'll speak with Mrs. Moses and figure out when we want to post.

Mrs. Ruiz stated is there a way to put the survey on Genesis or the Union Township app because then they will see it versus an email that is going to get lost. Mr. Wojcik stated the reason for the email only is we can keep it "clean" – they call it "dirty data" if you leave it as an open link and then anybody can do it. When we do it direct to the parent, teacher or student, they can only respond one time. Mrs. Ruiz stated you can't do it on Genesis as a one-time form? Mr. Wojcik stated I can look into it. I will have to work with Mrs. Hart to see if we can do that. They are two completely different platforms and the way we can distribute is by link but that link, if somebody copied it they would be able to do it over and over again. I struggled to think of a way to work it otherwise but I am certainly open minded and I would like to get as many responses as possible.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated there is a way but it is time consuming – you can number it, it based on the students you have – putting like a ".1, .2" and register each student but that takes forever – you don't want to go there.

Mrs. Minneci stated I got an email today – I want to mention that the Alumni Dinner is November 25th at Galloping Hill Caterers. Mr. Arminio will be one of the honorees.

There are two things I want to bring up because I was a little concerned – one is that there were bake sales in the schools on election day and some of them were shut down – I believe. I know the one in the high school apparently was because they were too close to the voting booths. I was out there all day and I didn't know that they were too close. I went in and bought a piece of cake and a raffle ticket so it was sometime after that. I think it is something that has to be visited. Schools were closed. From what I understand it is a violation. Mrs. Ruiz asked what is the distance because at Livingston School they were right outside of the gym? Mrs. Minneci stated I guess nobody checked.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated also the light – I know they are on a timer and the time changed but it was really dark at Livingston. I think you need to readjust that one.

Mrs. Minneci stated I'm all for fundraising for the kids but that was an issue. The other thing which I found out was that a PTA list was distributed and was used for campaigning to the parents – emails were sent out. Is that an issue? Mr. Taylor stated I can look into it but the PTA is a private organization versus a district organization. I'm not sure of what control the district has about the dissemination of that information. I'm not aware. Mrs. Minneci stated these were

things that were brought to my attention. Mr. Taylor stated the PTA is a private group so how they share or don't share their information is their business. The activities in the building on election day presuming that the use of the facilities forms were properly filled out I don't know what organization had a bake sale when school is not in session but that perhaps can be reviewed by the administration and reported back to the Board.

Mr. Nufrio stated they are a separate entity but they are under the auspices of the State as well because there are regulations that need to be followed by the PTA organization. Whether it is private or not there are some regulations that they have to abide by. I would think with regards to the election, that wouldn't make a difference. They are still subject to the same rules and regulations. Mr. Taylor stated I will look into whether they are a private organization or a district sponsored sanctioned organization. What information is sent out by email is separate from who can have access to the information. Once we figure out public or private or covered by the district, then we can get to how they use an email or what information they are disseminating whether for PTA events or campaign election events. If they are not sanctioned or governed by the district, how they conduct themselves on an electoral process maybe their business as long as they are complying with the elect laws as it pertains to the governing of a school election on school process. It sounds like the complaint or issue was brought to the attention of the Board President. The Board President on behalf of the school district is trying to maintain the integrity of the electoral process so there are fair elections in Union Township that I think is a reasonable issue.

Comments from the Public:

Alexander Balaban stated I wanted to commend the district for aggressively pursuing the non-residency issues. That is good news to the taxpayers. I see five students were removed from the rolls this month. When you post that they were dis-enrolled, is that after the whole due process? Does the district actually recover any tuitions? This is what I would like to see on the agenda because that would be better news for the taxpayers. It would set an example to the folks out there – they are actually committing fraud against the taxpayers of the Township of Union and it's the parents teaching the kids that you can get away with stuff and some of the kids pursue that as a lifetime career. If you pursue that and try to recoup the tuition because the tuition is astronomical right now.

The medical evaluations you do in conjunction with IEPs. It seems to me that you do an ala carte process rather than creating contracts with medical providers that are both providers – either for mental status evaluations, psychological evaluations, speech and language, audiology or what have you. If you would negotiate with them and go with the Medicare Part B reimbursement schedule, you may be paying only \$200 for an evaluation versus \$1,000. Maybe seek agreements with both providers. I know they will be more amiable to do this. There are a lot of medical groups out there that would be very pleased to do that.

Jeffrey Monge stated Mr. Balaban I mentioned that a few times. It is a good point as it pertains to the ala carte approach that we have here. Every year that I have been coming here, you come up with a budget for special services and every year there are increases to all of these individuals providers that we have. The issue is that you don't even have an opportunity to do

any bidding. There isn't a competitive process here. We just have folks on here and every year they get increases. There are no questions as it pertains to that.

F-16 – that is above the bid threshold. I know there was ESS was above the bid threshold requirement and we never done that. This is something that is going to be on the agenda for voting next week but it was above the bid threshold when it was approved the first time. They were contracted at \$90,000. That is something you should take into consideration when you go into next week on this contract.

Kathryn Brunsmeier stated F-11-I reached out to one of the supervisors for Washington School for the student council and that is for Make-A-Wish Foundation.

F-12 – I see that the Livingston School PTA donated money for licenses for Chromebooks – are those above and beyond what comes with the Chromebooks? Mr. Wojcik stated the license allows the device to be managed by the district.

Email – if someone tries to contact a district employee through the district employee list, it never gets to an employee. I had a parent say she emailed me but I never got it. I had people tell me that the app doesn't work when you try to go into the app to email through the app. I don't know if this has been brought to your attention.

Anything we can do to get parent access to Google Classroom would be so helpful because my child has it and teachers tell me it is on Google Classroom and I can't look unless I get him to get me on. So if we as a parent can have some kind of parent way to get on that would be fabulous.

I would still like to get an answer on if we collected any of the funds from outstanding un-recouped money from last year's lunch balances. I never got the answer from Mr. Brennan.

Fundraising – at the football game they are fundraising with the bracelets for the football player – does any fundraising have to be approved through the Board? Or can they can approval after the fact? If it is not school sponsored, they can do it on their own.

Ann Margaret Shannon stated I'm not a special ed expert but I do have many friends that are in special ed and with all the services that we have we do extend to the kids during the day, I find from my friends that this CBI, they go to Shop Rite or wherever, I find it is amazing so I hope we are able to afford what we need to do for our kids. I know the teachers that are involved really like it too

E-2 – the clubs – I know money is tight and you guys have been very gracious by speaking to me about clubs – Mr. Tatum and Mr. Benaquista – but we have a list of clubs. I'm just curious about the procedure on how those clubs got on board. Mr. Benaquista stated these are unpaid volunteers. Mr. Tatum stated I saw something today, a procedure that came out of the high school. We will investigate and when we talk on Friday we will talk about this. I see a process that is being proposed and yet it is not something tied to this. Ms. Shannon stated I just want everybody to be on the same page.

Mr. Nufrio stated we had a situation like this in the past and if it is a volunteer situation, it is not an issue. Mr. Tatum stated it is an unwritten rule and it becomes an issue in year two. Ms. Shannon stated what has happened in the past was we do this for one year and then we will pay you next year. But we need a procedure that states we can't give people who are volunteering the false impression that something is going to change.

Dr. Francis stated I was part of negotiations before and this was supposed to be hammered out a long time ago. You don't know what you are approving. We talked about clubs that you may have one or two students. It made no sense to have that club but yet someone is getting paid a stipend. I think it goes into a problem that I see is we talk about a lot of stuff but we never follow through with anything. I'm recommending when I come on the Board I want to keep a rolling type of agenda where we can revisit what we spoke about and make sure we get things accomplished. We talk about it and we forget about it. This should have been taken care of when we signed that agreement – when we ratified the teacher contract. Mr. Tatum stated technically it was – we have an approved list; that was the last piece and we sat and we approved those paid clubs. Mr. Benaquista stated based on those discussions, we did create a format that every agenda minute sign in, need to be upload and confirmed by the building principal, as well as my office so there is no more clubs with two people and a stipend being paid. There was a process put in place that they have to confirm that the meetings are happening, the kids are coming before the payment is released. Mr. Tatum asked didn't we say it was a minimum amount of students. Mr. Benaquista stated because we talked about this in the past, we are making sure we hold people accountable for the club payments that they get.

Dr. Francis stated at this point in time we should have a list. Mr. Benaquista stated we do have a list. Mr. Tatum stated it is in the contract – those are the only clubs that can be paid. The next step – it is a volunteer issue and this cannot go on the list, because it would have to be approved by the UTEA. They have a particular set of clubs that they bargained for and they get paid for. This may not make it to the point where it is paying club. The next round maybe there are some to be dropped and some to be added but that will be amended by virtue of the Board and UTEA come to an agreement.

Mrs. Lopes asked are we still paying the principal at the high school that is no longer there? The lunch money – I know I owe money from last year because my son didn't use the money because I just found it when I went to clean up his room. I went to the school to pay and they said everything is forgiven, you don't have to pay anything. How do I know how much I owe? There are other parents that don't know that they owe money – we send the money and the kids didn't give it in. How do we know how much we owe so we don't owe the district? I think there should be a way of you sending something home to let the parents know – through Genesis or whatever – a letter, a phone call. I know I owe money but I don't know how to pay it because when I went to the school, the new food vendor erased all the debt. I went home but I keep hearing about money owed. The parents don't know; how can we find out how much money we owe?

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated last month I asked about parents are saying that they go to pay their debt for the previous school lunch and someone is telling them that the debt has been erased. Where did we get the money to erase that balance because that is what is being told?

Dr. Morgan stated is there any way that the system from Pomptonian can be linked with Genesis so when parents log on to see their grade, they see money is owed. I know it can be done because I do it in my school. Mr. Wojcik stated I have to talk to Mrs. Hart about that. Dr. Morgan stated it can be done. Just use it, it is there.

Mrs. Minneci stated we will look into that and see where that information is coming from and figure it out. Mrs. Lopes stated you don't know if it was forgiven. Mr. Tatum stated if it was it is news to us. It has never been forgiven by the district. I think that is a private conversation that we can have. I would like to know who is giving out that information to do that without this Board or Superintendent and the Business Administrator knowing about it.

Mrs. Minneci stated we will find out that information.

Cathy Sharpe stated I heard somebody say that there has been an improvement in the substitute situation. I guess I'm getting false information from people within the school because I'm getting calls from special area teachers that they are being used over and over again to cover classes. To me this is unfair to these teachers but first they are not getting to teach the curriculum that they are supposed to teach for the year. This is not a onetime thing – it is a constant. The teacher is getting hurt, the student is not getting the computer class or gym or whatever these teachers are being pulled upon. How can we say it is improving when the same thing is still going on and I thought that was the idea of the service that we could get subs into the building because the kids are the ones who are suffering and they look forward to their music, art, computer and these are things that are being taken away from them. To me it does not seem fair. We hired a service and that was supposed to take care of a lot of the problems. I don't see it being taken care of. I would appreciate if somebody could check in to see why they can't provide us with substitutes.

Mr. Tatum stated I'm perplexed on why you are telling me that you have been hearing this from special area teachers while we are just hearing this tonight that they are not getting mandated classes which are required by the State of New Jersey. I'm remised to even hear that. I would think that if something like that was truly going on that would be something that would be reported to us immediately. Ms. Shannon stated I'm not sure if it is phys ed but I know a music teacher. Ms. Sharpe stated if we have two phys ed teachers, they will pull one and leave the other one there. They cancelled computer. They cancelled music. They cancelled art. I don't know why you are not hearing this.

Mr. Tatum stated all I'm asking is that you are bringing it up in this forum, when it is a situation like that, we need to hear it from you immediately. I want to hear it when you guys show up unannounced. Tell me those things then so I can get on it. I think this is an issue where a child are not getting a particular – I don't hear from principals or anyone or parents for that matter. I heard from parents that there are some individual coverage issues – absolutely. I have worked with parents to get it done. But when you tell me that children are not getting mandated

programs, I think as an employee of the district, I think anyone who is associated with this should be reporting that immediately. It is something that truly needs to be taken care of. A phys ed teacher should not be covering an academic class – that is for a substitute. If that is what you are saying is happening I think we need to get some more information so we can handle it if that is really happening. I say “if” because I have not heard that – this is the first time.

Ms. Sharpe stated I’m surprised you haven’t heard from the principals. Mr. Tatum stated your members are calling you and they are our employees and we are supposed to be all on the same page here and I’m surprised I haven’t heard from anyone. Again no disrespect to you or anyone in this room but we tend to use this forum as a vice to get things done when I think you know us well enough that if there is an issue and you call us, we are going to try to take care of it and investigate it and make sure it is being done in the appropriate way. You and I have worked together too long for you to be able to refute why I’m saying because when you bring it to us we try to take care of it – that in and of itself is a problem for me. I don’t want children not to be able to get their classes. If it happens on occasion when they are out Christmas shopping and they don’t come to work and then we don’t have people covering classes – that happens but if you are telling me that is an issue that needs to be addressed, I don’t want to hear it here.

Suehay Monge stated just want to touch on two things that the liaison said – one is about juuling and the other about the maintenance at the high school. My son came in today to say he can’t use the bathrooms in the morning because the toilets are stuffed with paper. My question is what are we doing to keep that maintenance going on throughout the day. It is expected to happen but what are we doing to maintain the bathrooms throughout the day? As far as the juuling situation, the same thing, kids coming home saying they shut down certain bathrooms because they can smell kids smoking, marijuana, vaping and I know Mrs. Hall has done so much in trying to do outreach to the parents and kids but it is not enough. I don’t know how much these vaping sensors or alarms cost but maybe it is something worth looking into.

Google classroom – there is a way for parents to get on – reach out to your teacher and she can send you an invite and then you can get on.

In regard to the emails – you said PTA membership was used. Mrs. Minneci stated I saw a message that came from a PTA member list and it was a message. I didn’t get one but I saw it. It was generated from a PTA list from one of the schools and it was a message about getting out to vote and who to vote for. I don’t know how many schools were effected. Mrs. Monge stated that sounds very vague but can we add to this complaint that I received text messages that I can assume were from the Code Red from the Town on another group saying to vote for them. I’m not sure where you are really going with that. Just for clarity – please be very careful when you accuse because it can be done the other way and if you have no solid proof as to what you are saying, then it is just a complaint with no validity. Mrs. Minneci stated my goal was just to say it so we stay protected as a Board. Mrs. Monge stated point taken and I’m letting you know then to add to that it can be assumed that text messages were coming to personal phones and assuming they were coming from Code Red – which is the Town – which is where your brother works. It can go both ways – just for clarity.

Steven Lee stated I know there was a question about specifying what charities but I think another question to add to that is there a current policy that whomever decides which charity it is, how is that vetted? Are you utilizing assessments such as going onto charity navigator, guide star or any kind of assessment tool to ensure that the moneys fundraised by the children are going to a legitimate and good organization that will utilize those funds for their intended purpose. That might be something to look at proactively and to mitigate any risk or liability to the school district.

Chasity Santana stated PTA is my baby and I just want to throw this out there. Every local school is its own 501(3)(c) and the only reason as a PTA there can be no type of campaigning is because of the finance codes. For us to stay a 501(3)(c) we cannot intermingle with any type of campaign. Can we give voter registration, education – absolutely but we cannot advocate for one person over another because of the finance code – as an independent 501(3)(c). Now is there a national PTA and a state PTA, yes there are but every single local is its own individual 501(3)(c). So as a state we can give advice and say we want you to go out and meet the candidates but it is the locals responsibility as an individual 501(3)(c) to actually do anything. We can't as a state we can ask, we can guide, we can put different things into effect but it is an individual so that is why it is so important as a local that we don't go out there and start campaigning for one over another because of the finance codes that have to do with the 501(3)(c).

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mr. McDowell, seconded by Dr. Morgan, that the Board go into Executive Session at 8:51 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.

- Pending or anticipated litigation, contract negotiation and matters falling under the attorney-client privilege. Ionta/Lowery v BOE

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. Higgins, Mr. McDowell, Dr. Morgan, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Regis-Darby,
Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Minneci

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Ruiz, seconded by Dr. Morgan, that the meeting be adjourned at 9:07 p.m. All present voting YES MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

MANUEL E. VIEIRA
BOARD SECRETARY