

UNION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
PLANNING SESSION MINUTES
FEBRUARY 27, 2018

NOTICE OF MEETING:

The planning session meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member.

Mr. Nufrio called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Nufrio stated as far as the actual format, this is definitely a different format than all of the other meetings. Let's follow the actual guidelines and the order in which the particular agenda is prepared. Mr. Tatum will take the lead in terms of making his comments and addressing the various recommendations or suggestions that were sent to him.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. David Arminio, Dr. Guy Francis, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. Jeffrey Monge, Mr. Vito Nufrio, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby, Mrs. Linda Richardson, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Higgins (arrived at 7:40)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Paul Griggs, Esq.

Mr. Nufrio stated just as a note, Mrs. Higgins is stuck in traffic and arriving momentarily. Welcome back Mr. Benaquista.

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

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

Mr. Nufrio stated Mr. Griggs just as a point of order, looking at the agenda, I do not see any portion of the meeting that the public would have comments. Mr. Griggs stated you should have a public session – add it at the end. Mr. Nufrio stated it is not a voting meeting.

Mrs. Williams read the District's mission statement.

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE:

Mr. Tatum stated good evening and tonight you can see we have quite an elongated agenda. There are some items that we will have to get to. As we go through them I will try to in the interest of time highlight any of those areas that apply to our District goals which I intend on going over toward the end of the meeting. We will try to highlight anything that we can.

One of the things right off the top is vocational education. We have had discussions in the past about the possibility of bringing some vocational programs to the District. A couple of years ago we had a pilot program that was through a grant and that program proved to be successful. The grant ran out and we did not have the opportunity to continue that program.

With all the discussions we had the trend is starting to move back in the direction of some vocational programing and there has been some discussions about the possibility of utilizing one of our existing facilities as a vocational school – the Hamilton building. I think I will throw it out there and if anybody wants to talk about it I do know that we talked about adding that to part of our evening program and Mrs. Moses, Mr. Benaquista and I had kicked around some ideas of having some hands-on vocational activities for students during our evening program.

Mr. Nufrio stated I would like to take the lead on that since I believe it was at the agenda review prior to the last worksession meeting that Mrs. Minneci and I had an occasion to speak with Mr. Tatum and I said in light of all the attention that is being given by both the federal and state, there is a possibility that maybe there is some money that can be obtained. It is time that we joined at least those voices and be heard in terms of thinking about how to or where to implement any additional vocational programs. I did say to Mr. Tatum that we always talked about Hamilton and what would be the ultimate most viable way to utilizing that program. This could be the legacy that not only this Board but the legacy of Mr. Tatum as well to bring vocational programs back into the focus and make it a jewel for the District. We have a building. We often kicked around what to do, how to use it – we are currently using it to house supervisors and that is fine it is serving a purpose. But the building is pretty large and I said to Mr. Tatum perhaps at some point he and Mr. Brennan, along with whomever else is required to join in on that meeting, should look to see how we could possibly initiate some serious objectives – bring it to the Board, kick it around, see how we can best accomplish it and move forward with it. It is time that we joined the concept of that vocational ed is just as important as college prep. I mentioned a few times right here in this room and I believe also at the library that the numbers are astounding. The failures of the students that do go to college and do not actually graduate; the number of students that don't go to college and are simply left to fend for themselves or have their parents or they themselves pay for additional vocational education which we had one time right here. We had the representatives of Lincoln Tech and that about is about \$30,000. Once upon a time vocational ed was probably more in focus than college prep. Times have changed of course and certainly we want to see kids go to college. We want to give them all that they need to prepare for that but what about the six other children that don't go to college or even five – that is an astounding number and those that do go to college and actually don't finish. We boast, we pride ourselves in preparing kids for their future and how can we justify those children that walk out of here with a diploma and it sits in a closet or box or frame and they are working somewhere for minimum wage – hopefully not all – I'm sure there are quite a few that have to take a job because they don't have any other training. It is our obligation – the obligation of the

Board in conjunction with the Superintendent and his staff to see how we can best address those kids and get things done. I think it is some to stop talking about it and doing something. I proposed the possibility of Hamilton, perhaps that may not fly but I think it has merit in terms on how we can consider it given the amount of space that is there and the type of vocational curriculum that we can implement into that building. That was my thoughts when I presented it together with Mrs. Minneci at the agenda review. It was pretty much indicated then that we would put it on for the planning session as well. Let's not just look at it as a long range goal, let's think of it as a near range goal.

Mr. Monge stated I know we have had this conversation over the years and we talked about the plumbings and the lack thereof in New Jersey. The one thing that I would say whether it is Hamilton or someplace else, at the end of the day it doesn't matter, but I do think that we have to look at as we are going to hear later as it pertains to our budget. There is a lot of consideration that we will have to take on and take into consideration. As we go through this process of wanting more but asking for less. We have gone through this thing where people are having issues with taxes and things of that nature. The reality is we are at a wall and we go through this whole process and this is a general conversation that I'm trying to put out there. We go through this whole wish list of things, we are going to have to have a real conversation at it pertains to our budget and when it comes time for us to consider our budget and the little 2% that we get from the tax levy, we are going to have to make sure that we manage our expectations or to what Mr. Nufrio is saying we have to plan accordingly to make things happen.

As we know we are going through this demographic study and we are finding out that we have one side of Town that is overcrowded and the other side of Town that is not and that is the type of feedback that is coming back. We know the condition of our buildings and a lot of money needs to go into that. I think we are going to have to have some serious and hard conversations when we talk about things that we have merit to make it pencil out.

Mr. Tatum stated I think that one of things in light of finance – one of the things that we talked about was what we are looking at trying to get accomplished over the next five years or more with even the facilities plan – may require some type of alternate funding sources as well because our budget in and of itself may not be able to sustain the level of projects that are needed in the District as far as improving our facilities. One of the things that we also did when you talk about Hamilton School, for those of you that don't know, we did take a hard look at Hamilton School with the architects and we did look at some possibilities for that building. Vocational was not one of them but my goal has always been to turn Hamilton School into something no one else has in this District; something that it would be unique to Union and not necessarily something that you could find anywhere.

Mr. Nufrio stated also Mr. Monge's comment was with regards to whether it is there or somewhere else. Technically we don't have anywhere else because the high school already has its own allocations with the classrooms. I'm sure some space can be made but think of it this way, if we do get Hamilton and identify Hamilton as the vocational setting for our kids, imagine the space that we would free up at the high school at well which could also embellish current programs that are there. It is a matter of money no doubt but I am an optimist and I'm hoping that not only the federal government but the state government will see the light that has been off

for years. I often said and maybe you are tired of hearing it, but I will say it again, I was a principal at a vocational building which was solely dedicated for shops and I even suggested to Mr. Tatum that I would be glad to take him on a tour of that building because it is still dedicated for vocational purposes and I'm picturing Hamilton and I think I know Hamilton well enough I did this at the building a couple of years back when it was undergoing the modification that it needed to accommodate the supervisors. I said wow what a great place this would be for a vocational setting. But at the time we were handcuffed and shackled with money and we still are but let's look at all possible options even if it means and I hate to say the word, floating a bond because it is for the kids and if the state and federal government can assist us with that, that would be terrific. We can't just sit back and wait.

Mr. Monge stated the state and the feds seeing the light – the light needs to be seen here. We can't want more and expect to fund it out of thin air. We have this rhetoric all the time about taxes and all that other stuff when we have one of the lowest tax rates in the State; that is what it is – if anybody disagrees with that – let's speak now. The reality is to be able to have those visions for our kids we are going to have to stop the rhetoric and talk about what we need to be able to make ourselves the District that we are all striving for.

Mr. Tatum stated the next part is curriculum and particularly K-5 writing. I know there has been some discussion about this prior and I know there has been discussion in our meetings that we had and we were saying even at the secondary level it is not as great in writing and we would like to see more writing but part of it is we need a better program at the elementary level. I will make one comment and that is one of our District's goal is to continue to increase academic outcomes in language arts and mathematics with data analysis and personalized learning. That being the case a K-5 curriculum in writing in particular will enhance our ability to continue more effective outcomes in the long run because a baseline program designed to continue through the high school will certainly enhance the possibility that we will continue to achieve goals that center around writing and analysis of data.

Education Committee do you have any comments on the K-5 writing curriculum. Mr. Arminio asked when this is discussed would it be possible and would it be too expensive to divide language arts into two parts so that students can take a class of just writing and just reading or literature as separate entities? It must be 5-6 years ago I was suggesting that it be divided into two so the schools, especially the middle schools, having been there for 38 years, we need to stress writing as a standalone subject and literature as a standalone subject because now we have the double period.

Mr. Tatum stated one is when I came to this District some 15 years ago, they were separate classes, especially at the 5th grade level. There was a reading program and a language art program. In terms of the schedule, the 5th grade class was a block of time for approximately 90 minutes. The way it work was the first block was devoted to the reading part and the second part was devoted to the language arts aspect of it. The trend changed and then it became an integrated program where the reading and writing were blended. Once again we are going back to the other direction. It keeps revisiting itself because depending on the goals and objectives that we are trying to achieve. We don't have spelling anymore because it is part of the integrated program because that too was a separate consideration when I first came here but now they put it

all together. Now they are looking at the effectiveness of that. Am I saying that it is not possible – no I'm not. The whole idea is it depends on how these programs are actually designed and put together. When you are talking about a writing curriculum, we are looking at a program that is independent, supplemental to the regular program that is in place right now. That being the case, you can turn around and say we have a writing program that is separate and the language arts program is going to be devoted to bring in developing skills. It is hard to separate the two.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I just want to make it clear that being on the Education Committee and being the Chair and talking for months now about the K-5 writing curriculum – there is a need in the District for writing curriculum for K-5 and we have to separate it because the standards are different. The standards for reading is different from writing. We are not meeting the kids where they are in terms of their writing State standards. When you look at your report cards that you have here, you are giving the kids a grade in writing but yet they don't have a curriculum that follows the writing. I think we need to make it equal and put in a clear playing field for the children because they need to learn how to write and they need to meet those State standards in terms of writing and right now we don't have anything in place for them.

Mr. Tatum stated it goes back to a point that I was making Mrs. Darby – the fact that so many times things shift and what I'm hearing you say is our curriculum doesn't match our report cards because it was an integrated program and that is basically how it has been. I was here when they switched over to an integrated program. But now the trend is shifting back because the standards have changed and that is the point. It goes back to actually what you are saying as far as that is concerned. It looks like it is something that we have been discussing and do the Board members have any concern about that?

Mrs. Moses stated there are standards for the writing and for the reading piece. What we have done is we took the framework and you see the standards that they have to teach in writing and reading but teachers in past practice were mixing it up. We have a meeting because we are getting K-5 a new reading and writing series. We are putting back in the block for writing. We looked at all of the writing for the elementary students and we had a meeting today and we looked at the rubric and we set criteria for writing on a daily basis because there is a 5-day block for writing. The past they would work on a piece for 2-3 days but no more because you really have to learn to write cold for any test. You don't work on something all week because a test is a test and that is it. You don't practice over and over. We are going in that direction with that. That is back in place and because of the three levels – the three writing pieces that they have to write – the historical and the scientific piece – that will be totally incorporated into ELA because we have the framework and we know you have to incorporate the writing in the language arts and the science and social studies into ELA and that is going to be in that piece. STEM is every day. The creativities and activities are part of that subject and will be every day because the writing and the rubrics for all writing in all areas of language arts, social studies and science – the rubrics are the same. Kids are learning to write cross curriculum. We need that block based upon the type of writing. We do have to do that and we are working on that and we are bringing that back to the curriculum council meeting and then it will come to the Education Committee and we will present the findings on that. Thank you for that.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mrs. Moses when cross curricular concept was introduced the DOE brings to the table and they pose this on everyone to do this and that and they don't give you the guidelines so I'm glad to hear now that at least there are some guidelines. Mr. Tatum stated a lot of these guidelines are based on what people were doing anyway and that is what happens in these trends.

Reading and writing levels for high school – I think that connects right where we are talking about so do you want to have a brief discussion. In my mind and as I said before – if you are transitioning from elementary program, going into middle and then into high school, you want building blocks to that level and that being the case, I would think it would connect with the writing and reading at that level.

Mr. Monge stated I brought that up last week as it pertains to the amount of reading that the high school kids are doing. Mr. Tatum stated I do recall you saying that. One of the things about that and again and I think you might have mentioned about a novel approach a couple of years back but then we had some issues with the type of novels and then that shifted because of inappropriate literature but I think the whole idea that I'm seeing here is that there is a need I heard which was expressed by the parents that there be more writing and then there is a loss of reading so if we do develop an elementary program that feeds into the middle school and then into the high school, it would be routine as far as building blocks of learning.

Mr. Monge stated but it isn't there today. Mrs. Moses stated we are moving that right now and what they are doing in guidance and we are looking at all of the courses. Mr. Benaquista stated speaking about the high school – yearly or every couple of years we should be looking at the electives and the courses that we are offering because we need to make sure that those courses are constantly meeting the current kids' needs. We know that the kids change and the courses we had 10-15 years ago, they might not be interested in and they may be taking courses just to take them. Spending a lot of years at the high school, the one thing that was frustrating for me was the electives seniors ended up having to take just to make credits and they didn't want to be there. When you have kids taking courses that they really don't want to be part of, that is where other things may occur. They are not motivated, they are not engaged and when you don't have students engaged other things happen and every year we need to meet the needs of the kids that we have with us. If you don't reflect on the courses you are offering and get student input, if it is relative, then you don't know if you are meeting those kids' needs.

Mr. Monge stated I offered to take a review of the electives that we have but some of those from what I saw was stale and that goes back to the vocational side because there are vocational type electives that are there and I know we had created a program but some of these electives that are four years like the CAD program where you can get a drafters certification by the time you get out of high school and the engineering courses, there is only a three-year program there and I know that there has been some talks about trying to make a fourth year and my son is part of that program and I hear that there is a lot of interest there. A lot of kids don't even know about it and when they find out about it they are trying to change their electives and get into the class the last minute. I think you definitely have something with the CAD program and if you have three years of that engineering program, if you offer that fourth year, you have

two parallel electives that kids are taking together and it will be meaningful if they want to go out in the engineering field or even be a drafter. You can work right out of high school.

Mr. Tatum stated at the risk of starting a whole other discussion, I am going to throw out one possible term here and I have seen it put in place in high school before and that is sometimes you can actually have it where it is a schematic type of curriculum where a student comes in and have a set of electives that prepare them for a particular career outside of high school or segway into college. We are talking tonight about possibility of bringing in vocational in like we have cosmetology program at the high school but one of the courses can surround that. Your electives can be tied to that program so that the children can get that and take something that is really not part of what they want to do with themselves. We hear about surveys and stuff like that – those are all the common things that will give us the feedback to really be able to plan a program that is conducive to the needs of the children and their interests.

Mr. Monge stated the last point is that we need to see where the jobs are. Mr. Tatum stated exactly. The good news is that Mrs. Boakye is also working on my behalf with the Chamber of Commerce and I know they are doing some nice careers and I know Mr. Arminio is aware of that as a member. It is another bit of input that we will have in terms of what our needs are and tied to the interest of the students. We definitely have the manpower to try to get into this whole thing and it is all about doing the research at this stage of the game.

Mrs. Moses stated one of the electives that we are working with Kean University – if a student wants education courses for a student that wants to go into education and we are working with Kean and that program is coming in with a professional that is going to teach that course on our campus. We are in motion and we are working on that but it takes a while – not this year but the following year it should be in the high school. Ms. Ahern is working with the education department at Kean and we are getting that started. The relevance of electives that speak to the here and now and preparing kids for interest in science because a lot of times when they go to college, that they can get a job while they are in school and put them on the career path.

Mr. Tatum stated in the interest of time I am only going to do a few more of these. I think the parent curriculum information night will tie right into this whole idea of revising some of our curriculum here.

The expansion of the Google Classroom is ongoing. Mrs. Paul is spearheading that piece. It is tied with use of our technology in the classroom.

The establishment of measurable goals is something that Mrs. Moses and I had a conversation about today and part of the issue is how goals are established based upon how information is assessed and reported. We have to take a close look of how we tie the current assessment into establishing goals that are measurable. If you are talking about a particular percentage of students and stuff like and that is bonifiable but that is something that we do have to do some more work on.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked on those measurable goals – in terms of the SGO goals, how does that translate to measureable goals that we have for our students here? Mr. Tatum stated

our goals are broader based in terms of reducing testing in one area and increase it in other areas. SGO's are based upon assessments that the teachers do. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated and it is individualized. We will have access to those? Mrs. Moses stated no, those are teachers. The teachers do the measureable goals. The outcome is the target that we are looking at – the goals are at the top and then moving down and zoning in to what the kids need to know – the skills. Those are the outcome.

Mrs. Higgins arrived at 7:40 p.m.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked is it reported to the State because if it is reported to the State than we will have access to it. Mrs. Moses stated yes. But the teachers' SGOs – no. We do look at a profile and the State measures all of that – from the teacher's best practice to their evaluation, to mine, to Gerry's, the principals – they measure all of that based upon and in connection with the SGL and then measuring that with students outcome.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I am asking because I want the public to be aware that all of this information is out there for them to find; especially in terms of whether or not our kids are meeting the measurable goals.

Mr. Nufiro stated it is more important to note because the report card that is usually put out there is at most times patently wrong because it really doesn't address the minor details. When that does become public, anyone can access it.

Mr. Tatum stated RTI programs that are being put in place. We had a discussion about this last week and how it is going to affect staff. Mrs. Moses stated on March 14th we are going to a State workshop in Monroe. RTI has to start from the top and that means with the building leader because it is all about scheduling and implementing and parallel learning that is going on. If a child can't do multiplication, and they are stuck, then they can't do the other operations. So RTI will focus on that. The scheduling and everything has to come to the Education Committee. RTI is really big in the State of New Jersey. RTI not only addresses academic but behaviors too. We need to limit the inappropriate behaviors and we want to increase the student learning time and focus on the areas of need.

RTI has a lot to do with scheduling. The old classroom with the bell ringing – it is going to look totally different once we put that in place. If you go on the website right now, the State, even with the technology, we won't have computer class as we see them right now. Next year will be totally different because they have the curriculum out already. It will show the kids how to research and how to look for real news, not fake news. We are teaching that kind of skill. Our technology piece for the digital learning and literacy has changed to an 8.2 so we adopted that in 2015 so now we have to readopt the new 8.2. That is where the happening is going to be with the social, emotional learning and it is all on the website. This stuff does have an effect on them and they are going to want to talk about some of the things that they are going to research. It is changing.

Mr. Tatum stated for the sake of timing. We are going to skip over to Mr. Benaquista to the part you want to do and then we will go back to this after Mr. Brennan too.

Mr. Benaquista stated under personnel on the agenda it says review assessment of departments. Mr. Nufrio stated that was mine Gerry. Basically that is something that we talked about in the past and I just wanted an update. Mr. Benaquista asked as far as the supervisors? Mr. Nufrio stated when I spoke with Mr. Tatum about this if you recall two years ago with the advent of the new director, new business administration and particularly focusing on those two departments – personnel we knew you were making strides and moving right along and I think you are pretty much there because you had some expansion of your duties especially. Mr. Benaquista stated absolutely but obviously we still want to keep moving forward with that and try to get even more ahead but as far as having the Director of Technology, we have been talking finance a lot tonight, but obviously down the road we will still need to look at expanding under Sandra further. Mr. Tatum stated we have made some strides in that area. Mr. Benaquista stated definitely by bringing in Mr. Wojick and he is definitely supporting it by the day-to-day stuff. We talked about it many times about the breakdown of personnel within that department and I think we need to revisit it and make sure that we have people in the right positions as well as supporting the lower level where she could be not running around as much.

I think when we first started technology in this District it was just thrown in and we created some positions and at the time it was working but now we have gotten so much larger as far as what is in our schools and going one-to-one in our high school and now at the middle schools. It is going to keep growing so we do have to revisit technology – how much it has grown. We have to work close with finance and make sure that the positions can be afforded but it is something that can use more resources.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated we also have to look into and we talked about this many times of future ready school and that requires a lot. It is an area that we should take a look at as we are looking at the technology department. Mr. Tatum stated we will be having a presentation on that at the next worksession and Craig will do that.

One of our goals this year is to also look at procedures and realign the processes between the business office and personnel office and we started doing those things. We have had meetings and talking about responsibilities to make those two offices run more efficiently. There is a disconnect between the two so that is one of the goals that we have in progress for this year.

Mr. Nufrio stated do you think by the August meeting we can have a real update. Mr. Tatum stated absolutely. Mr. Benaquista stated you were mentioning the offices up here with personnel and business – we finally I believe are back up to speed with the hires that vacated but I would definitely like to discuss a more collaboration on our two departments and how we can get things running much more efficiently. Mr. Tatum stated I know the incorporation of the young lady that took over for Arlene and I have seen evidence of that happening so that is good thing. Mr. Benaquista stated I would like to bring forth something.

Mr. Nufrio stated one of your many duties as of course Mrs. Moses has many as well is to really oversee personnel. Mr. Benaquista stated most people don't understand that personnel and I know it is looked at separate, but when you are talking all that stuff it is interconnected. That is why Mr. Brennan and myself really need to look at everything and how we can make things run

more efficiently, more accurately. Mr. Nufrio stated get the best for our dollars and that is important too so we can move forward with other things that we need those dollars for.

Mr. Monge stated the New Jersey SBA conference and I will get you a card Mr. Benaquista, but there was a presentation that was being done by one school district and they were actually said to share services and they were doing it through technology. Their argument was sometimes you need high level people, sometimes more than one Mrs. Paul, but at times you have a lot going on and sometimes it drops and then there may be some opportunities to share services and share a person and they were doing it through contracts with one district to another. They were able to share Mrs. Paul with another district but they were paying for it. It is something to think about and it is not going to work with everything but it may work with repairs for instance. I will give you the information because it was pretty interesting.

Mr. Benaquista stated I think a lot of districts get together on just parent informational sessions. They will get three or four districts together and they will put out a schedule for the year and rotate so instead of doing 12 months of parent conferences, you are doing three or four and they put it at times where parents from other towns can come. You are getting the collaboration amongst parents too which is healthy. The more involvement you have within your district the more successful you will be.

Mr. Monge stated training across the table. Mr. Nufrio stated Mr. Tatum I want permission to give this to Mrs. Paul. Mr. Wojcik was there. Do you have that? Mrs. Paul stated I actually do.

Mr. Tatum stated one last comment on personnel before we move forward – the goal we talked about this year which is making a connection between the business office and personnel is one minor aspect of the whole operation of personnel. The one thing that we are not talking about is the day-to-day human contact that we encounter - the supervision of staff members, there is a lot more that goes on – the record keeping and so forth. Those things have been more efficient and that will enable Gerry, myself and Mrs. Moses and Mrs. Boakye to be able to deal more with the human end of it as well and also bringing in resources that will help enhance.

Mr. Benaquista stated we all set goals and we all set personal goals. One of the goals that I came into this year being in my second year in this position was I had a goal of once a week for two hours to get out to a school. The year started and I was able to, me and Mrs. Moses, most of the time we are going together or all three of us sometimes but that goal obviously I'm not happy with it at this point of the year when I reflect because I haven't been able to get there and it bothers me. As Mr. Tatum was saying, the more we can get out, that is a good thing, but unfortunately the personnel issues that we deal with is a lot. It is going to take some time and it is going to take some professional development or what I look at it as the employees of this district are professionals and we have to make sure that we are always being professional in every situation – whether it is right or wrong. I think education is important with staff and I say this from top down – from up here to every school. When we get involved we want in the end to educate that person and it is very important the reflection of this district to be professional whether with a colleague or the way you are handling a situation. That takes away from our time to really deal with other issues. I am not pointing the finger at anywhere, it is everywhere that

we can get better and I always look at how can we get better and help this District to improve and all the stakeholders – it is a reflection of everyone. Whether you are on the sideline or you come to every meeting. You are working within this district, everyone should take pride in every single comment that gets out on us. If it is not positive, everyone should be upset with that. Your heart and soul should be in the best for this district. Sometimes that is a challenge but we are not going to stop trying to educate.

Mrs. Moses stated we do have collaborative meetings. Mr. Benaquista stated we do and we collaborate monthly and we are going to continue to do whatever we can to try to get people to understand that things happen and we are going to work on improving that. To Mr. Tatum's point it does take a lot in dealing with personnel.

Mrs. Minneci stated when I was a teacher, it always made you feel good when the Superintendent or Assistant came around and they knew you. Like you said, you try to get out a couple hours a week to get to the buildings and to get to know the people. There is nothing worse than seeing your superintendent or assistant and they have no clue who you are and you may have been there for 10 years. I think that is very important that you get out and do that.

Mr. Tatum stated one thing that I will say about the teachers in Union, they make sure that you know who they are and they will tell you who they are. Let's not also forget not only our teachers but our custodial staff appreciates a few minutes of your time. It is everyone.

Mrs. Minneci stated I worked for my district 39 years and I can recall the last superintendent I worked under and I was at Lowe's and he knew me in the school but it was nice that he knew me at Lowe's – it is a good feeling.

Mr. Tatum stated since we are talking about the efficiency of the business office and the personnel office, let's talk about whether we have any money now.

Mr. Benaquista left the meeting around 8:00 p.m.

FISCAL AND PLANNING:

Mr. Brennan stated good evening. I'm Greg Brennan the Business Administrator and I'm going to give an overview of the budget building process for the 18-19 school year.

I did meet with the Finance Chair, Mr. Monge, last night and gave him a copy of detailed spreadsheet for the budget and also the other committee members have that in their hands now.

It is a Districtwide budget. We asked all the supervisors and directors to submit a 3-tiered request system – the absolute needs of their department, their wants and their wishes and then we meet with each department. Mrs. Moses, myself, Mr. Tatum and Mr. Vieira and usually Mr. Benaquista is involved too but he has been out lately. We sit down and meet with each department – buildings and grounds, transportation, special education, curriculum, personnel, technology and athletics.

They basically give us their needs, wants and wish list but this year it is mostly needs. The Superintendent also meets with each building principal and also with Central Office Administration. We meet on an ongoing basis and this process starts back in October.

We have some challenges this year. We have budget challenges that we need to overcome. First of which is a big one – we have a shortfall in our revenue. We have had State aide which is 35% of our budget and it has been flat for the last 4-5 years so we don't have any increase on 35% of our budget. That starts eating away our surplus and our operating budget is \$130,000,000. As I said we had a decrease in excess surplus of a minus \$4.7 million. For those of you that don't know what surplus is – for example the 2015-16 school year – the unexpended funds for that year was \$6.5 million. The unexpended funds for the 2016-17 it went down to \$1.4 million. We have a huge gap there. What the surplus is used for is revenue in your budget. It skips a year so the 16-17 surplus becomes revenue for the 18-19 budget.

The tax levy increase of 2%. Our tax levy is \$87 million – 65% of the budget. Our tax levy which we have been taking for the last 2% of the \$87 million is only \$1.7 million. If you do the mathematics – divided the 1.7 by \$130 million and you come up to an overall increase on our operating budget is only 1.3% and that is a problem.

On the flipside of that our expenditure increases and I want to point out that 85% of our budget is salaries and benefits. This year the proposed increase in health benefits is 15.8% - \$3 million.

We are also and I don't want to reveal here because we are still in the process of negotiations but contract salary increases with the teacher's union. We also had special services increases of 5-8% per year for the last four years which equates to about \$7.2 million.

Then we have additional salaries – we have overtime, we have substitute issues and class coverages. We have to start controlling that better in this District.

We have had several budget meeting discussions that occurred with the Central Office Administration and as I said it is an ongoing process until our State aide figures come out and released by the Governor. The Governor's address is going to be March 13th and the earliest the State aide figures will come out is March 14th. We are hoping that we get a bump in that.

In balancing the budget, this year is going to be tough. Cuts will have to be made in areas where there is an overage of staffing and areas that are not required by State mandates. Also through attrition which results in salary breakage.

The important dates that are coming up in the near future – March 13th is the Governor's address, March 14th is the first day for State aide numbers to come out, March 20th at our Board meeting we will adopt the tentative budget, March 29th is the deadline for the proposed budget to be sent to the County office and then we are looking at April 26th after the budget is approved by the County Superintendent and the County BA that we will have a public hearing on the budget.

It is a work in progress. We are still going to be meeting – Mr. Tatum, myself, Mrs. Moses, the Finance Committee, Mr. Vieira and Mr. Benaquista – now that he is back and we are going to be fine tuning and we have been doing that for the last couple of weeks. We are making progress but we are getting there.

Presentation appended to minutes.

Mr. Nufrio stated some years back I had indicated that there is a lot of money that could be saved if the principals of each building do the proper inventory and I saw that at the beginning of your presentation. Hopefully that is being done thoroughly because rumors are bound and don't take much to rumors but you can't ignore them either is that it could be the same old assumptions. Hopefully that is not the case.

Mr. Tatum stated one of the things that we are talking to principals about is there is also a system to be able to share resources in the District as well. To spend money on the same thing year after year and not really utilize it is really a waste. Mrs. Moses did go back and meet with all the principals and that process is being taken care of.

Mr. Monge stated we had this conversation about inventory and as far as trying to put technology on it and I threw out the idea of centralizing it. Because if you are going to buy paper for the District and then you distribute it as needed because if you have situations where you may have a building buying more paper when another building has too much paper. If you had the idea of centralizing it and you are doing it through the computer and you say we need five reams of paper and they have it taken from the main office where it is. One is you have a potential savings. I have seen some of these areas and then two a cost savings.

Mr. Nufrio stated the flip side of that coin is it somehow contradicts the concept of site-based management which the principal is responsible to obtain, procure and give to the staff all that is required based upon the amount of money that the school/principal has received. I understand what you are saying. It used to be that way Jeff. It used to be that we had to requisition from central office and it became so annoying and difficult and you wouldn't get that paper for a couple of days and that presented problems.

Mr. Monge stated we did that with technology and I think it ends up being a thing of having to think out of the box here. We are not talking about small numbers here. We are going to have to figure out how to make ends meet here. I hear the same stories Mr. Nufrio. Mr. Nufrio stated some things can be done more easily. Mr. Monge stated purchasing things that you purchase every year even though you haven't used the stuff from last year or the year before. Mr. Nufrio stated in my years, there were closets full of paper and yet the building was still requisition paper.

Mr. Tatum stated I can tell you when I first took over being a principal, we were stockpiled for two years and I was able to put that money into other areas that was needed within the budget for the building. In terms of bulk ordering, there can be distribution problems but sometimes the more you buy the better price you get. I think that is something else that we can consider. Depending on how much is ordered it can be shipped to individual schools. There

could be a way. Mr. Nufrio stated if you could figure out a more expedient way of doing it of course. Mr. Brennan stated you can order a big quantity and then deliver it to the site. Mr. Tatum stated you are right, the principals need to go into their stockroom and know what is in there. Inventory is very important.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated obviously we are going into the 2018-19 with a tough, tight budget – what is the plans to acquire grants. Mr. Tatum stated that is one of the things that we have talked about and one of the grants that we have right here in the District is Title I and one of the plans I had talked about and I met with the person last week who oversees Title I and we talked about our Title I buildings support staff would probably be better served paid out of Title I funds and that is one particular area. The other thing is that I talked about before is the position of a Title I director which we actually have the funds to do that where \$45,000 of the salary is going to come from Title I. Unfortunately, our money is not being utilized properly because we have a person who only has two months of the school year to oversee that whole process. We are talking about a couple of millions of dollars that is not being utilized properly so that is one area where it helps in a situation like this.

I did talk to her about trying to pursue some additional grant money because that is an area that we want some of these initiatives that may help with some other things.

The other thing about going school wide and a school wide initiative would also enable us to cut down on supplies. We can use the money for supplies. It is being underutilized. You heard what Gerry said a few moments ago with how much time is spent. We truly need for a district this size – you need a person here that oversees that project and all the afterschool programs and that would be that person's responsibility. I will be revisiting that with the Personnel Committee.

Mr. Nufrio stated that is an excellent point that Mrs. Darby pointed out and we have talked about this in the past. I believe that Mrs. Darby who actually brought that to light. I added to it only in the sense that since you used the word “grant” – how about revisiting grant writer possibility so that we have someone who actually knows how to do it. Mr. Tatum stated I wanted the Title I person to be also the grant writer. Mr. Nufrio stated that would be amazing if you could get one to do both. Mr. Tatum stated that would be part of their job and that is what I'm hoping to do and to solicit grants as well. I think that it may be time to advertise that.

Mr. Monge stated can you go back a couple of slides about where you had some of the trends that you saw. One big thing that sticks out is that special services increases is actually outpacing our tax levy dollars. The money that is actually coming in – in addition to the previous budget is being outpaced by the increases in special services alone. I know we saw some trends that when we sat down yesterday just to let the committee know the idea was to try to get everybody there but I found out Friday and an option and I just came in and took the opportunity which is another issue that we discussed and I think there needs to be information provided to the Finance Committee for us to take a good look at things before coming here before the full Board.

One of the things and I know we are waiting for Mr. Vieira to come back and the last couple of years I have been looking at trends. We are seeing where the spikes have been and where potential savings can be and I understand from our ability as a Board, at least looking at the policy, is that we have an opportunity to request the department heads to come and discuss their proposed budgets. I would ask if we could have special services come in and present either to the Finance Committee or the full Board – I am open to either – and really talk about some of these challenges and how we can deal with them. I know the easiest thing I always hear – oh well we have to stop giving kids “A’s” we have to start thinking about those IEP’s – that is the easy thing to do. The hard thing to do is really look at how you can save money without hurting services. That is really what we really need to try to figure out. There is something wrong here. I don’t know if we are growing our special services kids by – I don’t even know is it double?

Mr. Tatum stated the good news is that as we speak a deep analysis of that particular budget is underway right now. We had a healthy discussion about that last week. I know that is going on. The second thing is regarding those things that have changed in terms of a need for a particular resources – particular programs that now have changed and may cause a bit of a reduction there. The other thing is and it something that came up when we went to the County Office and it popped out and it came from the County Business Administrator is that our actual in-District tuition now exceeds our out-of-district tuition and in many cases the average is the other way around. We talked about at one point the trends of bringing students back into the District and in some cases at a cost savings but what I think we are starting to see is that in most cases because of the resource that is required, bringing those children back unfortunately and having to adhere to all of the aspects of the IEP is costing us more than if the child was in an appropriate setting and then their day-to-day need was actually provided by that school as part of the tuition.

Mr. Monge stated we talked about that and this is business and there has to be a break even. Maybe it is not five kids but maybe 10-15 kids gets you to that break even and then the 16 plus actually starts saving the district money. But if you bring back two kids and in order to provide those services that you need, you need to actually spend more money than out-of-district then...Mr. Brennan stated it is all about efficiency. Mr. Tatum stated those are the things that we are looking at and working on.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated the special service cases that are automatic IDEA cases – it is just automatic but I think as a district you have to look at the role that AIS (Academic Intervention Services) and the role that RTI plays because if you do proactive AIS services, proactive push-in services, proactive RTI services which is Response to Intervention – then you are going to reduce your referral processes for special ed. I think you have to make that a number one priority so we can reduce the number of special services.

Mr. Nufrio stated this is all valuable information. Each individual on this Board I’m sure can offer some very valuable suggestions and advice but we also have to be mindful that we are not permitted to do any type of micro managing in terms of how these things are executed. That is the job of the superintendent and his staff. Perhaps all of this should be always addressed in committee. That is where you have the best opportunity to the administrator who is handling that committee – hey this is an idea perhaps you should kick around. The full board at some

point be relegated to approving, not approving or possibly doing something different but for purposes of expediency and no disrespect to you nor Mrs. Darby, but we are going to try to get through some more of this. Let's try to limit the amount of recommendations that we could make – again committee is where you can do it. Mr. Monge stated that was my issue that we should have had that committee meeting. We were on the schedule. It was supposed to be Finance Committee and then full Board and we were struggling to get proper presentation so that we can actually sit down and have a comprehensive discussion. What I got is what I got at 4:30 p.m. yesterday.

Dr. Francis stated Mr. Brennan with all things being the same – State aid is flat for this year and next year coming up, how much are we looking to be in the hole. Mr. Brennan stated the \$4.6 million in surplus. If everything stayed the same and nothing increased throughout the whole budget, you are looking at \$4.6 million reduction in revenue and we go out and get \$1.7 million so we have \$3.0 million shortage. Mr. Monge stated let's be fair here. I understand the process of balancing a budget. When you end up having a surplus, the reality is because you actually saved money – you were under budget and that is why you had a surplus and that surplus moves over as revenue two years down the road. The ideal situation is to be able to stick to your budget and if you didn't do that with surplus and that is where you can do some extra investing in the district and the like. But to bank on that as a revenue item on an annual basis, it is a moving target, you can't do it and you can't project how much surplus you are going to have in a given year. It is probably and my thought was that best practice should be that you should balance a budget first and foremost before looking at that surplus coming over from two years ago and trying to see how you can balance your budget and then pad your budget to be able to be conservative with those dollars that you end up having available from surplus two years prior.

Mr. Brennan stated again, it is a balancing act. Revenue is what it is. Mr. Monge stated I don't disagree, you are still trending the wrong way. Mr. Brennan stated our expenses are exceeding much more than \$1.7 million a year. Mr. Tatum stated there will be more on this at our next worksession. Hopefully we will have more to share with you.

Mr. Arminio stated point of order – the Facility Plan execution. I'm curious as to what that is? Mr. Tatum stated I believe it is the Long-Range Facility Plan. I don't know what you were going to say on that tonight. Mr. Monge stated last year we had a little bit of a disagreement. We took an approach that was we had a snapshot of projects that we thought we wanted to do at least as a placeholder and we said we would come back and revise that list as necessary based on the information that we got back. Ideally I would think that and we talk to the architect a couple of weeks ago and that we would have a list that is based on some due diligence and more realistic and not having it change so much and the fact that how much money do we have in the kitty? Not talking about the \$1 million in reserves. Mr. Brennan stated we have \$1.4 million in capital reserve down from \$6.7 million. Mr. Monge stated the comments I was making to Mr. Nufrio and this is for the whole Board is you spend that and then you are talking about your reserves if something happens. As we talk about going forward, we spent the money as we should have to put it into our buildings and now as it pertains to this Long Range Facility Plan that we have, we have to start going by that plan. We spent money. We were supposed to do as a District. Now they have given us direction and now we really have to prioritize it. We know we don't have all the money necessary and this goes to Mr. Tatum as far

as his team coming back and saying is it a referendum, or are we going to do it a little bit at a time or what – but that is where we are. I don't know what is coming out of Mr. Brennan's shop as it pertains to capital projects but I have said this a couple of different times that if it is not consistent with the Long Range Facility Plan and it didn't go through a comprehensive process that we talked about back in the summer, then I don't think that is the best way of approaching capital spending. Mr. Nufrio stated that is why your point earlier that is in committee. Most of those concepts need to be ironed out as much as possible so that when you do make a presentation eventually, this is going to be your budget presentation, so everything is understood so that the community understands that everything has been vetted and analyzed. We are not going to do it as a Board as a whole because we would be here forever but that is the purpose of the committees. Whatever needs to be done between now and then as far as committee work is concerned. Mr. Brennan stated I can call a special committee meeting. Mr. Nufrio stated if one of the committee members can't make the meeting, certainly the information can be shared, it can be telephone conferencing as well. Jeff works and fortunately he is self-employed so he can make some additional time. The rest of the Board is not in that position.

Mr. Monge stated what I have been asking for when we get the Secretary's Report it shows the budget that is the adjusted budget, what we have spent to date and what is projected to be spent for the rest of the fiscal year and then the difference is and what I have been trying to ask for and I got it one time, when we make these transfers it changes the original budget into a revised original budget so to me we have \$1 million for tables and that is what we voted on, I want to see how we are doing with that \$1 million budget throughout the year and what happens is we transfer \$200,000 from that in month two and that budget number becomes \$800,000 and then you lose sight of what we originally budgeted and what we actually spent in a given part of the year and you actually had a very good presentation that we saw one time and we were talking about simplifying it for the rest of the Board.

Mr. Nufrio stated as you said it is a moving target and that is why those things do occur. As long as the committee is fully informed, they can report to the Board so that everyone including the community understands in a simpler way and we would all like to know what is going on with the money and hopefully it is being spent carefully and properly.

Mr. Tatum stated I think the next part is part of what we just talked about. I just want to make sure that we didn't miss it. The "examination of special needs department/comprehensive plan" is something you are going to hear more about and I just spoke to Ms. Conti about that after the announcement of the budget has been completed when we have some real hard information for you and we will be talking a little bit more about that. I think he made it clear what our needs are.

Mr. Nufrio stated I guess again the focus on the purpose of the planning session is to identify the areas that must be addressed, should be addressed and hopefully at the next meeting in August or before possibly, say o.k. this is what we have done with these things so if we can move forward and I really don't want to schedule another planning session in the near future if we don't have to.

OPERATIONS:

Mr. Tatum stated one of the big topics right now is security in the school buildings in the District. Back when Jefferson School was built and I walked around with Mr. Damato and looked at the layout and we talked about the security in the building and this is not the building that I left when I was principal, it is a whole different route. We were able to put security in that building when it first opened up and it is still operating well to this day.

One of the concerns that we have heard over the last few weeks and I addressed at the last public board meeting was the fact that, in some cases and I did address this at a principals' meeting last Thursday, the current force that we have may need to be repurposed, repositioned in some of our buildings because the points that have been made have been well taken.

However, what we have been talking about and I mentioned that some of the things that came up in some of the emails, we have talked about and we do have a couple of retired police officers on the books as substitute security officers. What we are looking to do and Mr. Griggs is looking into this for us was to actually come up with an appropriate raise and title that is required by the State of New Jersey. The other thing is I took a look at this point the dollar amount and the fact that there is no benefit package that goes along with trying to accomplish this. Probably under \$200,000 will get us somebody in every building in the district at the rate that we are talking about. Most of the guys that have retired just want something to do and by the same token I look at it at a particular hourly rate times a number of days and the number I came up with is pretty reasonable. But again that is something I will be running by the Personnel Committee in the near future probably also in March and hopefully have an update on those dollars.

If we are able to reduce money in some other places in the budget, and save some salaries in Title I, maybe some of that money can be repurposed. I think in our elementary schools we have the greeters, and we talked about possibly repurposing some of that money. At one point my goal was to at least take the two people that we currently have on the books and have them almost do a tour of duty around the district on a daily basis. The long-term goal which should be a short-term goal is to have somebody in every school.

Mr. Nufrio stated maybe money available coming down the pike from Trenton but if there is it is certainly we need to look into to ensure that we can get some of that money to do what has to be done to effectively protect our kids and staff. Mr. Tatum stated we used to get something called a safe school grant. Mr. Brennan stated we still get it - \$25,000. Mr. Tatum stated I know what we have done with that money in previous years – security cameras but I don't know what all the particulars are in terms of what we can use that money for because I know we have been updating our security. We need to look into this.

Mrs. Minneci stated I know there is a special training and we pay for the officers and there is a special program where the State trains them to work in schools. Mr. Tatum stated I have had conversations with our Police Director Zieser and he explained to me if we are going to use them in that capacity and not as an employee of the District, they would have to meet his approval in terms of who we actually hire. Certain criteria that they would have to meet under the plan you are referring to. I have had conversations with him about that as well. I think we

have two different ways that we can possibly go and I think as far as the salary is concerned, I think we can come pretty close either way. I think the interest is out there.

Mr. Nufrio stated I think we can all agree – we believe to be excellent protection and security may not necessarily be so but it is a step in the right direction and let's hope that we can maybe accomplish that as one of the very first priorities.

Mr. Monge stated I know at least in Fiscal we had many goals and maybe that becomes one of the committee goals is to exploit various ideas being this is not the place to discuss.

Mr. Tatum stated I know as far as our police department is concerned, whenever we need them they are right there and they have nothing but good things to say about the support that they give our schools but I know it would be difficult on the Town to use those officers that are on duty during that time. Mr. Nufrio stated especially if they are in another location which is even more demanding and can't respond within a minute or two. Mr. Tatum stated we have a few police officers that work in our schools in education programs and that has even scaled down. This is something we need to undertake as a school district.

Mrs. Richardson stated I think we would do best with retired police officers. Mr. Tatum stated that is what we are talking about. Dan Zieser has to approve the retired officers because the criteria of how the State has written the proposal, he would have to be the one to approve; especially if they are allowed to carry a firearm. Mr. Nufrio stated which Florida just approved in the assembly and it is pending approval from the Senate and I couldn't believe my ears but they actually approved that teachers may have a firearm. Please don't read into that I am not suggesting that by any means. I'm just saying and Florida of course is where the incident occurred and certainly we just want to be as pre-empted as possible and that is what we are looking to do.

Mr. Monge stated as far as the facilities, one of the things Barry and I and Mr. Brennan were talking about what we did at the high school which really speaks to safety with the fire alarm system, carbon monoxide system. Mr. Brennan stated we have to emphasize those things instead of the lighting – it is really the safety that we provide. Mr. Monge stated the cameras – before what we had you could barely make out individuals. Mr. Tatum stated the recording time was expanded. Mr. Monge asked are those assessments done or being done as it pertains to our other facilities? I think that is actually part of the Long Range Facility Plan.

Mr. Loessel stated it is State law, we are required to have carbon monoxide detectors in every school so we are in the process of getting prices for that. We are going to try to do the best we can.

Mrs. Richardson asked who monitors the cameras? Are they hooked up to the police department? Mr. Tatum stated there is a regulation about that and it has something to do with the type of footage that is required. There is a new agreement out there but I do believe that we are working on something with the police department. Mr. Arminio stated the last time we talked about this it was supposed to be done in executive session. Mr. Griggs stated when you are talking about security.

Mr. Brennan stated shared services with the SRO. I talked to Mr. Manzella and we talked about extending the SRO Shared Services Agreement and he brought it to his attorney and they wrote up a new contract extending it for another two years and had Mr. Griggs review it and it will be on. Mr. Nufrio stated it expired? Mr. Brennan stated I think it had 17-18 on it. Mr. Griggs stated the new one is a one year extension. The new one is an amendment to the five year agreement. You have to pay for it by July.

Dr. Francis stated we had problems with equity and I'm not too happy to extend it. Mr. Tatum stated I don't think that is up for extension right now. Mr. Nufrio stated shared services - I don't think it expired yet - I think that is 2020. Mr. Brennan stated we had an issue with it - I'll get the contract out tomorrow. Mr. Nufrio stated it wasn't that we had an issue - we were inquiring as to the equity of it.

Mr. Monge stated the shared services agreement - we haven't figured out - we have been trying to speak to what is it right now. We have no reporting on either side and we can go ahead and have a do over. We have been trying to have a do over. We said let's forget about essentially the previous years and focus on the current year but we still haven't done so. Mr. Loessel stated we are working on it.

Mr. Nufrio stated it was too lengthy to present in one shot so maybe we can plan looking between now and June. Mr. Loessel stated I'm hoping so. Mr. Nufrio stated so we can put that one to bed. Mr. Monge stated Barry is trying to and with all due respect there has to be an accounting process and I don't know if a system is needed. I don't know what it is but right now there doesn't seem like there is an opportunity to produce it. Mr. Nufrio stated he said he'll work on it and so I'm willing to wait for you to bring it forward. Mr. Loessel stated the problem is how do you figure out if you drop off a truck. Mr. Nufrio stated sometimes you have to take a shot and say look this is what they give us and estimate it at this value and this is what we give and estimate it at this value.

Mr. Monge stated Mr. Griggs, in looking at those type of agreements in the past in one form or the other, normally there is an example - a starting point. Mr. Griggs stated typically the agreements are pretty clearly defined whether it be you can use our facilities for the recreation program for nothing and you agree to reimburse us for the cost of any custodial services which are there, including social security, tax, etc. and then the other side is we'll plow your school parking lots, the price is \$x/per hour - usually there is a lot more definition in those agreements to make sure that we are both getting the benefit of the bargain and yours is very general. It doesn't say very much at all. Just starting at the point where you are defining which services - is what I think you guys are doing or trying to. What service each is providing as a starting point. I would say what are we doing and define them and calculate - it will take some time and then look at what the Town is providing and trying to reconcile and be liberal in terms of whatever our exchange is. I do know it is a 10-year agreement which was put in place about two years ago. Mr. Nufrio stated I don't think it is 10. I think it was 2015. Mrs. Cappiello stated it is five years.

Mr. Monge stated this is the last I will say – we are not following the agreement so either we are able to sit down with Mr. Manzella and say let's draw a line here and let's talk about what we are going to have as a reporting requirement and at this point you have two more years and you have to have something because right now we have nothing. I think we have to figure something out because otherwise this is going to be on the agenda all the time.

Mr. Tatum stated food service survey to assess and we talked about this before to assess the company and quality of food and I think that is something that would come from you and we need to see that. Mr. Brennan stated o.k.

Mr. Tatum stated the update on Hamilton School plans – we heard a little bit about that before and one other thing is we are looking at the impact study and that is tied to the future use of Hamilton School.

POLICY:

Two quick things policy wise – residency and I don't know if there will be a policy update. Mrs. Williams stated I went over the NJSBA's residency policy and it addresses some of the stuff that I wanted to talk about tonight so we don't need to. We are done with that.

Mr. Tatum stated just remember in August we also made re-registration a number one for our goals as we continue to investigate a system and the process of streamlining the process of re-registration. Although we started a new process last year, there was a lot of issues so we will re-visit that this year and that may need to be another meeting.

Cyberbullying – someone sent this in and it is under HIB. One quick comment about cyberbullying and how it relates to the District – anytime there is an issue that happens outside of school that involves computers – if it creates any type of issue within the school – the school district takes jurisdiction over it. There have been cases where cyberbullying has been reported to administration in the various schools and if indeed there is an issue of some type of threat or altercation that may come about as a result of something that happened outside of the school, the school does get involved.

Mr. Griggs stated the challenge is always identifying the bullying. Historically you get your local police department involved but I have been involved in cases that are pretty bad and the police were unable to identify the person but they have to put more teeth into the law now so you can reach out and pull kids in provided that you can identify them if it impacts the operation of the school.

Mr. Tatum stated one of the things that happens with cyberbullying also crosses into other areas depending on the nature of the respective complaint. I recall one where there was a threat of a weapon or some harm that was going to be done to a child and then incorporated into search and seizure. It went beyond and also a student came to report it and then the police become involved and it is a snowball effect. Mr. Griggs stated you always get the police involved to investigate because they can go into the house.

Mrs. Higgins stated is that how the parents would know what resources they have. I am asking because I work for a large insurance company who has a legal plan and I'm lobbying them to get them to bring cyberbullying in not just for kids but adults as well. If that does happen do the parents know what the options are?

Mr. Tatum stated part of it is our policy which we do have and it speaks to this whole idea. I believe also there should be something in the student handbook and it speaks to the idea of cyberbullying code of conduct as required by the State of New Jersey. The case I'm referring to actually brought by a parent and immediately they put an investigation and this was a couple of years back. There are a lot of things that can happen. It is one of those things that really is a contingency depending on what the nature of it is and what direction it takes. In terms of where those resources are and sometimes I think there are external resources for things like that outside of the school district. Mr. Griggs stated the key is being able to identify who did it and what it is. Some students are very sophisticated in the internet and you can't find who sent it out. The frustration that we find is you go to the school district to try to address it and the school really can't do a thing. They don't know who it is and they don't know if it is on school grounds or not on school grounds and they go to the police and say please do whatever investigation you can do and they provide any information that they have. But that is the frustration of the whole thing.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mrs. Higgins in the interest of time because we are getting close to the time stipulated and we have about 10 minutes and I will take a second to ask Board members if they would express an interest in perhaps delaying the end time for 30 minutes so we can at least give the public an opportunity to speak but I would like you to go ahead with your presentation about technology as well.

TECHNOLOGY:

Mrs. Higgins stated I reached out to our technology liaison about everything that is going on technology wise in the schools and there were two things the Chromebook roll out at Kawameeh and Burnet are going well and the telephone lines – once April 20th comes we will be able to retire other phone lines at a cost of \$1,000 a month.

We have somethings listed under technology and I'm not sure what the issues are with them but if we go to elementary/5th grade – we did talk about rolling out the Chromebooks next year and using the carts. I just want to briefly say that if we talk about going down to the elementary school K-4 I'm o.k. with 4th grade but anything younger than that I'm not o.k. with because we want the kids to be able to write before they get Chromebooks.

That is all I have and I don't know if any other committee member has anything. Mr. Nufrio stated this session was not to provide details it was to focus on these issues. Anything that is not going to be discussed, it is still the Superintendent and his staff who will be at least focusing on these for discussion at the next meeting or possibly before that. As we accomplish things, you will report to us anyway.

Mr. Tatum stated one thing I do want to say at the very top about Genesis – we talked about this in prior meetings and really the discussion was what things do we have at our finger tips that Genesis can provide for us and one of the things that we talked about in one of our goals

in technology is to try to convert everything from registration to just general forms that parents need to fill out in an electronic format. I'm happy to announce that we actually had the meeting today. Genesis was here today. Mrs. Hart stated the registration – we are doing the parent online registration so that they can type it in before they come. They still have to come and show the documents that they live here and the same thing with re-registration.

With the forms, we started the Chromebook one, the military one, the insurance one. For September, I have already been collecting the different schools – I want everything to be centralized – no matter where you go to school. The same forms for every school. We are right on target to have all that ready. Most of the forms will be posted on Labor Day weekend and then the parents can't get their kids schedule until you fill out the forms. It will identify who filled them out and who didn't.

Most of the stuff that was on there when we went through it today with him – we knew about it and there may be advancements that would make it more for us to do it. There wasn't really anything that we don't do at all. We have things scheduled for staff that we are going to talk to them but that is a whole other system and more money.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated just on the parents webinars, I think that is a good idea because you will be able to reach more stakeholders if you can do webinars because you can host them at times. I think that is a good idea and I think that is one way we should move in the District. Mrs. Hart stated not live ones, then we can email them; that is a great idea. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated absolutely.

Mr. Monge stated we talked about that yesterday. One we were talking about the form for fundraising activities. We were trying to find out if there was one standard one and it seems there is one at the high school. Mr. Brennan is going to try to identify that is the one or see if there is another district that has a form and a process. My question was are you able to make electronic forms for things like that? Mrs. Hart stated we can make them but the forms I make in Genesis are for parents. If you want to do a fundraiser, it would be parents signing off.

Mr. Brennan stated we are looking for a fillable PDF. Mr. Monge stated yes but where would you house that. Mrs. Hart stated that would be my question. Mr. Monge stated that is my question so you can't take my question. Mrs. Hart stated my forms that I make are intended for parents to sign off on something. Mr. Monge stated that is something to have in consideration and we are talking about the procedure and if you go and have someone doing webinars, you have the form and you have instructions on how you fill this out and procedures for x, y and z. You just house it online. Mrs. Hart stated I can definitely make these forms and figure out how to do that.

Mr. Arminio stated the fundraising form might go where you sign up to use a facility. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated good idea. Mrs. Hart stated I can make the forms if we can figure out where to put it. It's only for people that work here so we can put it on the "H" drive.

The website is going to be on first. Everything is moved over and ready to go. The district site will be on the afternoon of the 1st and definitely by Friday you will see the new

website. The schools will go in after that. We are going to the online platform for the teachers. I have to notify them and get them all the directions. I will make phone calls and emails to all the staff saying this is going to happen.

Mr. Nufrio stated it is time to get a consensus from everyone – do we stretch the meeting a little longer or if any Board member has an obligation. It was scheduled from 7 to 9 and certainly you will be excused if you wish to leave. Does anyone object to stretching it for 20 minutes.

Mr. Monge stated old business. Mr. Tatum stated there is probably one more point to make. Mr. Nufrio stated I just want to make sure that the public has an opportunity to make comments. Everybody is o.k.

Mr. Tatum stated district email for all staff – that is in progress – moving over to Gmail. Mrs. Paul stated all elementary schools are done. On March 9th we are going to start with Burnet; after that Kawameeh and then we will be at UHS. There is a good chance that we should be finished before spring break. All the buildings will be moved over to Gmail.

Mr. Arminio stated with the email that we have now, when you attach something and try to send it, it often won't go and I don't know if it is the security measure. Mrs. Paul stated it can be. Mr. Brennan stated it could be a size limit. Mr. Arminio stated with the Gmail will it be easier to attach. Mrs. Paul stated yes.

I am going to give you guys access to Google Docs so that the Board members can collaborate on one Google document. You will have one document and everyone can contribute to the one document and that way you will have the most recent information and it can be timestamped, date stamped and person stamped so you can always find who made whatever changes. We will take care of this.

Mr. Nufrio stated comments to each other? Mrs. Paul stated only you guys will be able to see it. Mr. Nufrio stated we may be limited on how much we can communicate with each other. There is a four member rule maybe it needs a little more exploration. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated it is committee based documents. Mr. Nufrio stated that is fine.

Mr. Tatum stated a lot of what we have done already crosses over. I flipped back over to pre-k registration – we are doing early registration right now.

Mrs. Moses stated the freshman for the day – they do takeaway folders. I spoke with Nicole today. In the folders are the schedule, the Naviance access, ID and students who are new to the District will take their photo there, time management information.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated maybe we need to look at that process because I just took seven kids for freshman for the day and I have to say that Ms. Mueller is wonderful. She hosted and she was excellent. Unfortunately what you are saying didn't happen. We should take a look at that. Mrs. Moses stated o.k.

Mr. Tatum asked any updates on PARCC? Same system as last year. Mrs. Moses stated fourth grade will not be participating in science this year because it is a benchmark but all other schools will be participating. Mr. Nufrio stated all the elementary schools know that about science. Mrs. Moses stated yes they do.

Mr. Monge asked how about calculators? We had some situations where some kids...Mrs. Moses stated they would like calculators and certain parts of the test they are allowed to have them. We are going for training on the 5th. Mr. Tatum stated it came up last year about distribution but I was told that there is an online calculator but is there something wrong with that. Mr. Monge stated some kids were able to open it and some kids were not. Then you have some kids that are taking the test and they are getting scored as a child of the district and that was an issue. Also the PSAT that you had an option of a calculator there and it ends up being bring a number two pencil and a calculator and I know there are some calculators in classrooms but not enough for all the kids. Our kids are going to be testing across the table and we need to make sure that they are prepared to be the best. Mrs. Minneci stated we should make sure they are working properly.

Mr. Nufrio stated since you are going to this workshop on the 5th so by the 13th you will be able to let us know. When does the PARCC testing begin? Mrs. Hart stated April 16th.

Mr. Tatum stated the last is the Mission Statement to be read in every school. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated that was mine. The mission statement is what you believe in and what you want your district to thrive on and what you want every kid in the district to live up to. I think you have to own it, believe it and they are not going to believe in it if they don't know what it is. We say it here all the time that we are accountable to that mission statement. Therefore I think everyone should be held accountable to that mission statement. Mr. Tatum stated in the daily announcement. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated yes. Mr. Nufrio stated that would be your decision as to how you can best address. I think it is a good idea. Mrs. Moses stated after the pledge allegiance and then they say the slogan for their school. They should have someone go on the PA to say the Mission Statement.

Mr. Monge stated the civics class – I think to the extent of what we have today, I don't know if it gets to your local level. I think in this country in general, I think there is such a disconnect between who is really responsible for that pothole outside your house to whatever. I don't know at what level do we actually teach our kids about local government. I think there is a disconnect and there is a lot of apathy there amongst adults. We see kids looking to empower themselves and try to make change to this country, it would be great for them to understand how you make change in your local town because the politics are local. I don't know what we do, if we do anything but it will be interesting to at least have a component. Mrs. Moses stated that is the purpose of doing blended learning and moving technology because eventually, years to come. The standards do speak to exactly what you are saying – learning is relevant, it is the here and now and why we need to learn about civics because we live it. We are moving in that direction. The teacher picks up a book and it is coming from a book but what you are talking about is coming from the real life and what they need to know. Look at our community, we have potholes – who do you think is responsible for that and that is when you go into it. It is inquiry of learning. We are moving in that direction but still we have to give a lot of PD to the teachers.

We are partnering with all the schools that are moving before us. There are some schools that don't even take \$500,000 and buy books. There is going to be point where we can't because you can't keep up with the technology so that is why we have that framework and that's why we teach the standards and the information is out there and that is why we have PLC. PLC's, SGO's – this is a road map to where we are going. When you have PLC teachers are doing research. I talk to the principals and the teachers, you have gone to college and you paid \$300 for a text and you never opened it but yet you learned the content of that course and that is where we are right now in the schools and that is where we are going and the writing is on the wall. In the next five years that is where we will be. You might be saying will we be buying social studies books for elementary, probably not. We are not going to spend \$700,000 on that because there are other things that we need to teach about – civics in Union, in New Jersey – we need to talk about what is relevant to them. They need to start doing research and that is why we are changing text – the computer class – the digital citizen learning so now they have to do the research. They are doing it but there is a lot more to do. Look for the fake news, the real news and how to look for that so it is way passed that and we are already there. I will share all this.

Mr. Nufrio stated with the Education Committee – should look into that and certainly the point is well taken. I remember back in the day when I had a civic class but hopefully some of these things are addressed in social studies and if not perhaps that needs to be looked into and implemented in some manner. Mrs. Moses stated social studies is project based. Mr. Tatum stated there use to be available resources from different organizations would tie into government.

Mr. Nufrio stated I have run into high school students and you ask him how many branches are there in government and they say it's a tree? No there are three branches.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Tatum stated I'm happy to announce that we covered actually all the goals so we don't have to go over them now.

Mr. Arminio stated for the new Board members, can you send them the District goals because they may never have seen them. I will have Julia copy this to everyone tomorrow because those are the ones we did in August. There are seven altogether – education, technology, re-registration, budget, personnel, districtwide website which was done at the last worksession and public relations which was also done at the last worksession. You will get a copy of it.

Mr. Monge stated in the summer time we don't have worksessions and we have come in and there is a lot that gets done in the summertime and I know we love to have our time off – I do too but there has to be a better way. Not only do we not have a worksession but we don't video tap the public session that we actually have in here and a lot of decisions are being made and the public is not able to see it. One, at minimum we should be videotaping our public sessions during the summer time and two we should consider that we have at least one worksession during the summertime.

Mr. Nufrio stated we have talked about it. Perhaps what is necessary here is for every Board member to send to me and Mr. Tatum and we will discuss it in length what your thoughts

are on that and we will make a decision and bring it to the meeting and put it on as a resolution and say this is what we are going to do from hereon.

Mr. Arminio stated just a reminder for the Board members, the Unsung Hero is coming up on March 14th and you are supposed to register by March 8th through the Business Administrator but you can get the address from Mrs. Moses. It is 5:30 p.m. – 6 p.m. it starts and by 7:30 p.m. you are done. I hope that we stay and watch the kid from Union. Let me read these two sentences “The Union County School Board’s Association will like to recognize a senior from each of the County’s high schools. The honorees are our schools’ Unsung Heroes – student who make outstanding contributions to their schools and communities but are often overlooked by traditional student recognition guidelines.” It will be at Rahway High School and we will see what it is like this year because next year we are hosting. Mr. Nufrio stated I believe it is in February’s Bulletin.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I just wanted to know if we had an Executive Session Agenda. Mr. Nufrio stated for tonight, no.

Mr. Nufrio stated all meetings should be like this where we actually speak about things that the kids will benefit from and perceive with intelligence and remarkable views that we will eventually bring to the table and make excellent recommendations.

Mrs. Higgins stated I just want to remind everyone - Peter Pan – it’s in two weekends – it will be absolutely fabulous. Mr. Nufrio stated I will be there.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC:

Mrs. Lipstein stated first of all I will hand out the invitation to come to our pizza tasting and that is from the Education Foundation Fund and mark your calendars for May 10th because we will be having our celebration for awarding grants and my suggestion to Mrs. Higgins about the Chromebooks for the younger children. My suggestion is to talk with Mrs. Moses about this and how it is integrated into the curriculum and that is most important. We get a tremendous number of requests for Chromebooks for the elementary school. I’m not a teacher but my daughter teaches kindergarten and they all have Chromebooks. They do their cursive writing and do all of that but there are many wonderful ways. If you come to our reception you will see even more. The last day to collect these applications is tomorrow.

The pre-k – I sent an email today because I’m still hoping that somewhere along the way we can pilot an all-day program for our working parents. Even with talking with the Y – there is a room that only has a morning pre-k – maybe they can do a program for the people who pay the tuition to do it or just do it because it is not going to be that expensive. I was fortunate enough when my children were in pre-k we had a wraparound program with the Y so they had the best of both worlds. It is a suggestion and I’m still hoping it will be talked about.

The vocational school is a very interesting idea but I wonder how many children you think would need it. I know you are just talking about it but if you do a survey to see approximately how many students you think would need it. I think the vo-tech today is so high-

tech and I can see it but to be honest my kids were at Hamilton School and I can't quite imagine it as a state-of-the-art vo-tech. Maybe you can do a bond and build but I don't know if it would be cost effective. I think it would be quite an expensive program and that is why I'm wondering how many students would actually be interested. If we do it we need to do it right.

Mr. Nufrio stated the only comment I have is it doesn't hurt to dream. Your comments are received. Mrs. Lipstein stated Irwin Yaeger came up to me and said my dream is to have a state-of-the-art science classroom at the high school. I then wrote a letter to Schering Plow and they donated money and we got it but if you dream it and you find the source – I just think it is going to be very difficult with the budget that we have to do what you want to do.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Regis-Darby, seconded by Mrs. Williams, that the meeting be adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Monge, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**GREGORY E. BRENNAN
BOARD SECRETARY**