

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION MINUTES – March 13, 2018

NOTICE OF MEETING:

The worksession meeting of the Township of Union Board of Education was held on Tuesday, March 13, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member. Action was taken.

Mr. Nufrio stated before the meeting is begun, I just was informed by the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds that this would be fire hazard because there are too many people in here. Unfortunately, by regulation it is 40-50 people so any numbers in excess of that would be a fire hazard. I would kindly ask those of you who want to voluntarily step out in the hallway that would be appreciated. I would have to make sure that we are in compliance.

Mr. Arminio stated I would like to make a point of personal privilege please and I think this would fall under that counselor. I think for safety sake and give everyone a chance to participate in a democratic process and it has been done and precedent said that the meeting has been moved over to the library. It has been done a number of times in the past. We postpone it for 15 minutes to give everyone a chance to go over to the library and I think that would be something. We certainly as Board members who have to deliberate certain items would be better able to concentrate and focus without dozens of people standing around us. I'm requesting a point of privilege. Mr. Monge stated I second that if that is a motion. Mr. Nufrio stated it is not ready for a motion so please adhere to the process.

We will begin the meeting, I'll call a recess. Before I call a recess we will entertain the motion to move the meeting and proceed from there. Is that o.k. Mr. Griggs? Mr. Griggs stated yes.

Mr. Nufrio stated for everyone to understand, the OPMA regulation requires a 48-hour notice of where the meeting is, when the meeting is and the time. As such unknown to me that we would have this type of a turnout it was certainly not in time to be able to make any change. We had two days that schools were closed last week. No one was available until Friday. If Friday we had some inclination that it was going to be this many, we would have taken that action. I just want that to be heard by everyone. We will start the meeting and Mr. Tereza you will have to tape this part. Mr. Tereza is taping the meeting for future airing. Tonight is the Town hall meeting being aired live. Mr. Tereza stated tomorrow at noon on TV 34.

Mr. Nufrio called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

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

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

None

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Mr. Gregory Tatum, Mr. Gerry Benaquista, Mr. Gregory Brennan, Mrs. Kim Conti, Mrs. Ann Hart, Mr. Craig Wojcik, Mr. Barry Loessel

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Paul Griggs, Esq.

Dr. Francis 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 before I call for a recess and before we call for the motion to be made, in addition to what Mr. Brennan indicated as we do at every meeting, I would ask that whether it is here or anywhere else that the respectful conduct on everyone’s part is expected and when someone is speaking please allow that individual to speak and do not conduct private discussions or chatter because whether it is here or even in the library, as Mr. Tereza indicated, that microphone is the only thing we have which will be able to allow the transcription to be done properly by Mrs. Cappiello as well as the recording of the meeting. I would kindly ask that is something that you would please comply with. Ask to be recognized by me and that is the order of the meeting and that is how exactly it will be conducted and everyone will be given an opportunity and of course with the proper conduct.

Mr. Arminio stated point of order – the Mission Statement. Mr. Nufrio stated we will read that at the library.

Mr. Arminio stated we should move to the library so that everyone can participate in the democratic process. Those in the hallway are all the way to the door and it is not fair that the young people that are here asking them to leave voluntarily or anyone to leave voluntarily who wants to participate and want to hear what is being said and to not allow them I think would be an injustice so we have to move the meeting to the library.

Moved by Mr. Arminio, seconded by Mr. Monge, that the worksession meeting be moved from the Administration Building to the Union High School Library.

Mr. Nufrio stated I would like to make one correction. I did not ask anyone to leave I just asked them to kindly step into the hallway.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Arminio stated what I started to say is keeping young people away from the democratic process and going down into the hallway and I know I have been there you can’t hear and the precedent has been set at least twice in this District. Once when there was a negotiations going on and there was about 200 teachers standing in the hallway and they moved it. They recessed the meeting, moved to the library from here and another time there was some

controversial situation and I was teaching and I don't know what it was but it was moved to the library because of the number of people. I am asking the Board to agree to move it so that everyone can be part of it and hear and at least be a little bit comfortable. Those people standing for 2-3 hours and sometimes we are here for more than 2-3 hours would be an injustice to them.

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

Mr. Nufrio stated thank you for the majority vote.

Meeting moved to Union High School Library – start time 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Arminio read the District's mission statement.

Mr. Nufrio stated before I proceed with the comments from the public, I took the liberty this morning after receiving yesterday a letter that was sent to me by Police Director Zieser who also forwarded it to Mr. Ardito today – a comment that Mr. Ardito will also read on his behalf when the comments from the public on resolutions in bold. I would like to take this opportunity and I drafted this letter and I was inspired by a letter I saw which was signed and sent by the Woodbridge High School principal and I have a few copies here if you care to have them but certainly I didn't have enough time to prepare enough for everyone here. The more important aspect is what we do as a Board. We certainly confine it to that. The letter that I drafted is addressed as a Board member to the students. If you give me the opportunity to read this, it reads as follows:

“Dear Students,

With the sole interest of addressing and preserving your safety and safeguards and that of the entire staff that are mandated by laws of governance and set down by the D.O.E., within the statutes and enforced by policies that address all aspects of leaving school grounds, the Resolution which will follow was drafted and will be proposed to the full Board for voting.

It is the Board's legal responsibility and obligation to do so. Your right to demonstrate or protest does have specific boundaries that are clearly detailed within this Resolution.

It is not intended to violate nor deter you from exercising your constitutional right to speak and assemble. Its sole purpose is to advise and guide you as we are expected to do so. As elected officials, who are entrusted with both your educational programs as-well-as the safety and well-being of yourselves and all who are employed by the district, we would be violating our mandates by supporting or condoning any action which would result in leaving school premises.

Additionally, you were advised, informed, and fully discussed last Tuesday, March 6, 2018, in a meeting with Town Officials, which included the Mayor Cavadas, Police Director Zieser, Mr. Tatum and Mr. Lowery, of all the hazards and risk factors involved in conducting a march from the high school premises to Town Hall.

As a parent, former educator, and Board Member, I implore you to reconsider proceeding with the proposed march. Your safety and well-being and that of any adults who may accompany you or dispatched to oversee you, are at stake. We live in very precarious and difficult times, with many unknown and dangerous possibilities that could occur as we all know too well.

We care about you, respect you, and want only the best for you. Perhaps, this could be viewed as an act of tough love, since we are in fact, your *In Loco Parentis* and of course for those of you who may not know what that means, it is the Latin term for “we are the parents at the location where you will be at schools etc” when you arrive each morning to our schools and throughout the school day.

I ask you, what sort of parental wisdom would we exhibit to permit or condone any desired actions which may possibly place you in harm’s way?

Finally, you were told by Town Officials and they assured me as well, that they would make every effort to attend any demonstration conducted on school premises and grounds. Therefore, your objectives to address our Town Officials in person would be well-achieved.

I urge you and implore you to consider all facts and aspects of proceeding with your announced march to Town Hall and hopefully come to a sound, mature, and safe conclusion. You are our children and we are legally bound to properly guide, advise and direct you.

Sincerely,
Vito Nufrio, President, U.B.O.E.”

Mr. Monge stated before we start I think it is very very extremely important for the public to know that this Board didn’t put that resolution together. I think it is very important to talk about the genesis of this resolution that was put on the agenda in a way that never has been put on before. Its concerns that I offered to Mr. Griggs our Board Attorney and I would like to offer his feedback on but I would like to comment.

Mr. Griggs stated I would suggest that you get the comments from the public. Mr. Monge stated I want the public to understand that this was Mr. Nufrio’s resolution and Mr. Nufrio is the conflicted member of this Board and he should not have put together such a resolution. Mr. Nufrio stated would you let him answer. Mr. Monge stated I am responding to

him. He is our attorney not your attorney. Mr. Nufrio stated he is the Board Attorney. Mr. Monge stated he is our attorney not your attorney. Mr. Nufrio stated I never said he was. Mr. Griggs stated we are here to hear the public. Mr. Monge stated (inaudible). Mr. Nufrio stated you are out of order. Mrs. Minneci stated can we just talk in a civil manner.

Mr. Griggs stated the Board of Education has proposed resolutions before, this is not the first time. Mr. Monge stated not like this. Mr. Griggs stated the statement you made was the first time so let me finish. I'm not going to get into an argument with you, you asked me a question I'm going to give you an answer. According to your Board policy, any member can propose a resolution. To answer the question, the resolution was proposed by Mr. Nufrio. I'm not going to get into a back and forth with you. You asked me a question, I'm giving you the answer. I would suggest strongly and my recommendation to the Chair is that we hear from the public. When a motion is made on this resolution, you have an opportunity to comment just as every Board of Education member and then you would vote on the motion. Mr. Monge stated I could pull the resolution. Mr. Nufrio stated I take personnel offense. Read the policy. I have the authority to present a resolution like anyone else. Secondly, I don't know why you are grandstanding. Mr. Griggs stated let's just move on the public is here to tell us how they feel.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS IN BOLD ONLY:

Linda Lewis stated normally I have a classroom voice – I am a former Board member. I also served as president. It is a good position but it is only good as your leadership. Your leadership sets the tone as to how the Board will perceive and in terms of the quality of the decisions.

I looked over this resolution and it is talking about a movement that is nationwide from Maine to Hawaii. I don't know why this District decided to do a resolution. I don't think other districts have done so. The spirit of this resolution does not exhibit cooperation either with the District Administrators or with the Board itself. The first two sections of it – there is a section where it says “Union Township” – it should say “Township of Union” but that is as an aside. The first two talks about how the Board does not condone it, support it and then it sort of chastises the Superintendent and principal and if you do you must follow this. To me it is very adversarial. I would love to see the District and the Board cooperate to allow the children to express themselves. This is nothing new and this is not the only district that will have this, experience it. As you know there has been activities developed statewide. I don't really see the need for this really seems to be conflicted. Thank you.

Susan Lipstein stated I want to pick up where Mr. Monge was stopped. This resolution you asked the attorney to develop it – it was your decision. Am I correct Mr. Nufrio? Mr. Nufrio stated I'm just letting you speak. Mrs. Lipstein stated o.k. I do have to get a question answered from you. Did you discuss this resolution with any other Board members? Mr. Nufrio stated we are not in an interrogatory. Mrs. Lipstein stated I think the public needs to know and I want to ask if you did not discuss it with other members of the Board which it appears since they are not raising their hands or giving any body language, I would like to know why you did not discuss this with your eight other Board members.

You sent me a letter when you got elected and at the end of this letter you say “there is a great deal that we can accomplish as a unified board” – very little as a divided Board with different goals and objectives. My plea to you is to work with all of your Board members and come up with a consensus document that is not this kind of document. Right now you gave a letter that is your opinion. The Police Department has a policy for peaceful demonstrations and I have seen it and I have worked with the Police Department. They know what they are doing. If we are saying our streets are not safe to walk on what are we really saying. I plan to be on that march. I have no fear of walking down on Morris Avenue. I don’t think the children should feel that either. This resolution needed to be discussed with all of your Board members and that is what the leadership that we expect from you.

Nick Ardito stated I’m the security director for the Township of Union Board of Education. This morning around 10 a.m. I received a telephone call from the Police Director and he asked me to check my email and he said please deliver that email to the Board and I did do that this morning. It reads as follows and I’m only the carrier of this and it was sent this morning, March 13, 2018 at 12:09 p.m. to Nicholas Ardito:

“Nick, The Union Police Department has a plan regarding the planned walkout on Wednesday March 14th. The most significant change is regarding the route. We have decided to have the marchers cross Morris Avenue at Cooke Drive. This would place the marchers walking in the same direction as the vehicular traffic. This would then give us better access to the line of march in case of an emergency. The lower parking lot, closest to Burke Parkway will be clear of parked cars the night before, to accommodate the participants. There will be no bathroom facilities available, so be advised of that.

While we firmly believe this plan of march to Town Hall is unsafe. The Union Police Department does NOT sanction this march in any way, shape or form. However, the Union Police Department will supply as much security as possible to ensure safe passage to and from Town Hall.

Nick, please read this into the record at tonight’s BOE meeting.”

I believe all of you are in possession of that letter.

Sienna Bokue stated Alyssa Alhadeff, Scott Beigel, Martin Duque, Nicholas Dworet, Aaron Feis, Jaime Guttenberg, Chris Hixon, Luke Hoyer, Cara Loughran, Gina Montalto, Joaquin Oliver, Alaina Petty, Meadow Pollack, Helena Ramsay, Alex Schachter, Carmen Schentrup, Peter Wang – as a parent you teach your children to look both ways when they cross the street. When you say good bye to them on their way to school you do not expect to say good bye to them for the last time.

I ask you to remember what this whole movement is about. One life – that is all that it takes to shatter the world is knowing 17 people and everyone before them and those who I pray will not follow – there will be children whose lives are lost senselessly. What will we do to stop this? I’m just one student but as one student I am one captain of the field hockey team, one

teammate, one award winning orator, Patrick Henry “give me liberty or give me death” medal by the American Legion, one or four perfect test scores, I’m a waitress, I’m a daughter, I’m a friend and I’m a student but I am not scared and I will not be scared. I will not stand ideal while I wait for those entrusted not only to educate me but protect me to act. I will be part of the change. While I urge you to support us and scrap this resolution, I cannot and will not hold my breath while I have the ability to breath. Thank you.

Mr. Nufrio stated I would like to respond to the young lady and I’m fully aware. My letter which was from the heart and I just want you to believe that and it was what I wanted to express in person to the students and it was addressed to you. The tragedy which was one of many that have occurred in this country was primarily done within the buildings. To risk one life to conduct a demonstration where you are off the premises is what this is about. When you are on school premises you are our obligation and responsibility. Irrespective of what disciplinary action may or may not be taken and that is up to the administration and which will of course include Mr. Tatum but in no way was this resolution as I believe was quite clearly stated is to prohibit you from demonstrating. We are just asking to consider just confining it to the school grounds whether on the football field or inside that entirely would be a decision made by your high school principal in conjunction with Mr. Tatum. I believe you were also part of that meeting with the Town officials. I believe that was also expressed to you. As I said in my letter that the Town officials did say it would be very happy to come for you to address the Town committee officials and of course the Mayor. Your intent to march off the premises is what we have to address because we are bound to address that by statute. We are bound to be sure that you fully understand that leaving the premises is not something that we can condone. I surely condone freedom of speech, demonstration – I a product of the 60’s – I went to Washington DC in 1969 on the weekend when 500,000 people were there against the Vietnam War. I even shot footage for school but we were in college and college regulations are different. We also demonstrated on campus. Again the freedom to leave a class is still ours and certainly the higher education is not bound by the same statutes that you as students of the District of Union are. Having said that I just want to be sure that everybody understands that this is not about prohibiting your right to assemble or speak that is inherent – that is there and it is never going to change but we have to address the leaving of the school premises and that is primarily all that we are addressing. Within the resolution there are recommendations that were placed in there, they were extracted from the Department of Ed and NJSBA. Yes I am the one who was charged and challenged to produce something from the Board. Mr. Griggs stated I would suggest that we get more comments and move along.

Sienna Bokua stated as our in loco parentis as you put in the letter and the conduit of who is in this building, assessing risks as we are in this building, I am not a parent but my mother, if I was her I would be worried to send me out to school every day. It is not walking out of this building to walk up to Morris Ave which we accept that risk – all of us are aware of it, we are very aware of the risks on Morris Ave – you teach your kids to look both ways but if I was her I would stop sending me to school because there are so many issues just within in this building which I talked about at that meeting specifically because I know them a lot better than people that are not in the building day in and day out. If that is your stance than I want you to acknowledge that we get it. We understand that it is a safety issue and we are accepting that risk because we shouldn’t accept that risk when we leave our house.

Latanya Everet stated Mr. Nufrio I am going to correct you on one thing about higher ed, I'm in it, we got a letter today from our president because there is a walkout taking place and although these students are asking the same privilege to use their voices to be heard to march and stand with other students of the same age group, there are students at my school that were asking the same thing. We didn't go "no". A letter went to the administration and to the professors and it said please support your students. If they wish to walk out and wish to march and I'm in Manhattan and you don't march anywhere in Manhattan, support them. Allow them to leave their class without penalty. Allow them to come back and make up the assignment that was missed. These students are asking the same exact thing that is being asked of the students in higher ed. There is no difference. There is no strange correlation taking place that they can't handle it and the higher ed students can – that is not the case.

As the young lady mentioned, I send my kid out here to go to school and I send her out at seven in the morning and at some points when it is dark and I have to wonder whether or not she made it there and I don't know that until I get home at 7:30-8:00 in the evening because I don't get to chat with her during the day. Did you get to school safely – did you get home safely – no she had to get there and she had to get back and I had to trust in her and the skills that I provided for her and every parent in this room, we have supported our children. How many times do we look at them when they are younger – and the minute they start to talk and the first thing we say is "oh God please shut up, please stop talking" – we want them quiet. For once in our lifetime we are watching our young stand up for something very important. We are watching them have a voice. We have become so engrained in we are the adult, we are the smart ones, we know what is better – we don't always know what is better. We need to learn from them. You and I have sat across from each other on more than one occasion. If four years ago you were talking about a limited class schedule and letting kids out after fourth period, what is the difference of letting them out now to voice their concern.

Rachel Costa stated I am the valedictorian for the 2017-2018 senior class. I come here today with my peers in solidarity. For the thousands of victims of school shootings, it may not happen here but events like these have a ripple effect. Union High School is where I spend most of my time and I have attended Union Township schools all of my life. I have made lifetime relationships, it is where I learned and grown. It is imperative that I along with every single student in this building feel safe in the Union Township school. I don't feel safe in the Union Township schools. The debate is if we leave this premises and go on to a street we will not be safe. I assure you that I am not more safe in this building than I am outside. I'm probably less safe in here than outside. I sit every day in that corner until 3:45 p.m. and I look at these walls and I realize that if someone comes in here, I am not safe. We have staff and security here to protect us and I love them to death but they cannot protect me enough. No one can protect you enough until that point. I walk through the doors every single morning and I hope that I can make it through the day without getting hurt. Parents are afraid to send their kids to schools – Union High School and other Union schools. We live in constant fear. Parents and students worry when is it going to be us because we say in school we are safe. You go to school for safety and you learn and you grow but in reality this is no safer than the street outside. The fact that I come to school and my biggest worry should be having A's in all of my classes which I do but my biggest worry is being shot. That should not happen in a suburb in New Jersey that is not

acceptable. Today I saw a picture posted by NBC News on social media – 7,000 pairs of children’s shoes representing every child killed since Sandy Hook in 2011 have been placed on the lawn of the US Capital building – 7,000 – that is almost double our school population. There shouldn’t be one pair of shoes on that lawn.

This nation could not have another Parkland. American parents cannot have another Parkland. We as students cannot have another Parkland. We cannot sit idly by as we watch people like us getting fatally shot. The least we can do is peacefully walk to show the nation that we care. To show those grieving parents that their children’s lives meant something; that their children’s lives matter.

As small children we are told by all of the adults that we can be whatever we want to be when we are older; that we are going to change the world. We are told we can be astronauts, scientists and firefighters and policeman and maybe even the President of the United States. We are told that we can change the world so today I am taking you up on that offer. Today I am deciding to fulfill that promise from years before. Today we are changing the world. The only thing that I ask of you is to support us. Thank you.

Chasity Santana stated I am so proud to be from Union, New Jersey today and it is not for the adults in this room because obviously all of the adults in this room including me a lot of us like to talk – just for these children. Sitting here and going into a library and realizing that there isn’t enough room and seeing all of them as my children and that is why I am here.

Children – my children – what I would like to do is I like to look at the facts and a lot of times or what is in front of me and I like to use what is in front of me to strengthen my opinion or what I am about to say. The first thing that I saw and read from Mr. Nufrio as the Board of Education President was your rights to demonstrate or protest does have specific boundaries that are clearly detailed within this resolution. Children hear me know – your rights to demonstrate and protest have no boundaries.

The second thing that I saw or read – I learned to read in kindergarten. It is not intended to violate nor deter you from exercising your constitutional right to speak and assemble. Children this is exactly what it is to do.

Mr. Nufrio I’m sorry it is no disrespect but you just happened to be the one that signed it. But what I’m telling you children is when you have something that you know you want to stand for and you have people of power whoever it may be even if it is me, learn how to dissect it, learn how to read and learn how to read between the lines and then I heard security or somebody from security come in and say the police are going to help you – but you can’t use the bathroom and you can’t use the I don’t know whats. Children please learn that your voice; what they are going to do; they will try to stifle it. They will try to tell you – you know what Chastity, you are too passionate, you are too loud. You know what Chasity, I don’t know you are kind of crazy and they try to quiet me but do you know what I do, I get louder and I get crazier. I usually talk to my five minutes but I’m going to let other children speak but I am going to leave you with this.

The last thing I saw and I urge and implore you to consider all facts and aspects of proceeding with your announced march – that is what Mr. Nufrio said. You know what I'm going to say, I'm going to say exactly what he said – I urge you and implore you to consider all facts and all aspect of proceeding with your announced march to Town Hall and I will be there and I will march with you.

Mekhi Rivers stated I'm a student activist in the 12th grade. First off I would like to thank everyone for coming out; whether or not you support us or not. I understand and respect everyone's opinion. For the walk out we are not only honoring the victims' of the Parkland shooting in Florida but we are standing with them and all the victims, family and friends and students who are mourning til this day.

I was very disappointed with the leaders of the Town that came and spoke to us and focused on all the negatives that can occur during this march to Town Hall. They said that there was a disturbance to the Town and they can't change any laws on the local level.

While change does start on the local level; everything starts small. With anything in life you start small and you grow bigger. This walk out is to honor the 17 students, bring awareness to mental health, gun control and school safety. We as students have a voice. We as students should be heard and we as students should matter.

If the group who started this movement were not a minority, would the Town and the Board of Education look at this and go about this differently? Will we still be considered a disturbance. We should be using this as a learning experience and allowed to make history and be a part of history. Since we are taking a risk, I'm sorry. I'm sorry that Dr. Martin Luther King took a risk for me to talk to you right now. I'm sorry we are trying to make change. I'm sorry we are standing with the country. We are sorry for trying to be heard. But I'm not sorry for walking to Town Hall. Change starts here. It's not a riot – we said peaceful. Just peaceful educated students that want to bring awareness to honor those students.

Sir read the back of my shirt please – “enough is enough, Union High School is my safe place, what will you do to keep it that way”.

Sabrina Previous stated I am the senior class president so I represent everyone that is here tonight. In some aspects I know how uncomfortable it is to be the one who makes decisions. Obviously I am in a room full of educators but I feel as though what I am about to say next will be a lesson to you all.

Protest – another word is demonstration which is noun and it means the action or process of showing the existence or truth of something by giving proof or evidence. What we the students of UHS are doing is a peaceful demonstration. We will ensure that our actions will show the existence and truth to the problem of school safety. Our voices and our footsteps will be the evidence to the change that we hope to make. We are aware that no one will be at Town Hall when we get there and as pointed out by numerous adults which is pretty sad on the Union forum – it is pretty sad as a 12th grader I'm arguing with parents; however, that is besides the point. We are aware that change does not occur overnight. But you know, it starts somewhere

and it starts here at UHS. The lives of your students, as you said before being our parents, we are the future of this community. We are the future of this world. We are the future. Again we will not stay on UHS grounds. We will ensure that the thousands of people which I was at the meeting last Tuesday and Mr. Zieser did bring to our attention that thousands of people pass down Morris Ave so we will ensure that the thousands of people that are driving through Morris Ave will see what we are standing for and you will not see that on a UHS football field. We will be at Town Hall and we will walk there peacefully to demonstrate what we would like to be the next change. This issue is bigger than Union High School. This issue is bigger than Florida. This issue is bigger than our community. This issue is bigger than us; however, it doesn't mean a single student can't change it. Thank you.

Student of UHS stated I have been in the Union public schools since pre-k. I am currently a senior and heading to either Moorehouse College or Howard University on a full ride. To say that I am less than satisfied would be an understatement. To say that I am content would be a gross lie. Hear our voices. We were taught from a young age to voice our opinions even in the face of adversity. Keep pushing. Attempting to curtail our peaceful assembly is hypocritical and the values that Union has distilled in us since we were all young. What would this Town be making me if they told me to silence myself. I believe Mr. Zieser said since I was at the meeting with the Mayor and everybody – Mr. Zieser said four lives were lost crossing Morris Ave last year – and I'm sorry for those lives that were lost – but what about the 17 lives that were lost in Parkland. What about the people that were killed in the Las Vegas shootings. What about all these shootings that people are dying and you are worried about us crossing the street. You are telling us to stop voicing our opinions; to not walk to Town Hall because it is safety hazards. Safety hazards just sitting here – even if we were after school will you tell us not to cross Morris Ave because it is a safety hazard – but we are still going to do that.

One thing I have to say to you Mr. Nufrio, I urge you to amend your leadership style. A leader that no one agrees with is not a leader by any means. Martin Luther King said a genuine leader is not a search for consensus but a molder of consensus and that is all that is needed right now. Thank you.

Hasan Rivers stated (inaudible). This young man right here Mekhi Rivers – I am his mom. I am super duper proud of him. This young man received the humanitarian award for Martin Luther King. He was out of 2500 students he received the humanitarian award.

I don't have this lovely speech but when I seen the website – the word that stuck out to me was “disruptive”. From pre-school to senior, I have never had a disruptive moment with him in school – in all his school years. For that to be tied to him and he is one of the leaders in this march and disruptive was listed about four times – that the march would be disruptive – that was very disturbing to me. As opposed to the leaders in the Town coming to the schools when they heard about the walk out – so EMS came, fire came, the Mayor came, the Deputy Mayor came, several people came to the meeting so previous to that why wasn't there anything put into place in assembly. After the shooting, we had safety concerns – we understand them. We understand the kids are nervous, we understand what took place. Why wasn't that brought forth to the children. Why didn't they have a safe zone? This is their safe zone. When we send them to school every day – like one of the mom's said, she wants to know that her kid got here safely.

Mekhi has to text me every morning when he gets here. He is driving to school. When he leaves here, he has to text me. I need to know. This is all I have; this is all we have. We send them here and we want them to be safe. Like Sienna said, they are coming to school, they walk to school, they drive to school – they come on Morris Avenue, what is the big deal of them taking this march and doing it peacefully. Something that was brought forth peacefully was taken to such a negative content and then this is what bothered me a lot too. The teachers bear the burden because a lot of the teachers wanted to support the children; however, they felt uncomfortable after your resolution. It was intimidating. I am very active in the school. It was very intimidating to the teachers, administrators as well and they didn't want to put their jobs on the line. My son even said to me mom the teachers are so concerned but they want to help us but they are afraid. That is the form of bullying.

With this being said, I will be at the march tomorrow morning with all of you and I hope everyone else is coming as well.

Mr. Nufrio stated I just want to clarify the resolution was not constructed by my words. I wanted you to understand and everyone here and when this airs on Channel 34 I believe tomorrow at noon – the resolution is taken from extracts from the bulletins that we received from School Board's February and March regarding the walk outs. Also within that bulletin there is a link which brought us to the Department of Education's recommendations. All that you see there – they are not my words they are the words of the School Board and Department of Ed. Certainly the word "disruptive" – I would have to be a hypocrite to say that the demonstration is disruptive because I did that in 1969 when I was in college. All it says is it has to be on school grounds and that is what the wording is strictly from their recommendation. Vito Nufrio did not construct those words. I asked the Board Attorney to draft a resolution so it is in accordance with the language that was stipulated in those bulletins.

Mrs. Rivers stated I just hope that the burden is lifted off the teachers and the administrators and they are able to support the children as we send them to school. We pay our taxes here and we live here. Mr. Nufrio stated this is the United States of America and I'm proud to be an American citizens and I would never say to someone you can't speak. All the resolution speaks to is where it can be done by the Department of Ed regulations and by their recommendations. As a Board we have to at least uphold what those statutes which are laws expressly stated. You and everyone in this room and at home and anywhere else in this country, you have the right to do as you please when it comes to demonstration but we are obligated to inform as emphatically as possible that this places you at risk but having said that nobody is going to physically stop a student an adult from leaving the premises. That would not happen anywhere. Even if it was a normal course of events.

Mrs. Rivers stated clearly the verbiage was not fair. Mr. Nufrio stated but it is not our verbiage. Excuse me let's have some decorum. As I said the language does not emanate from me. It doesn't emanate from the attorney. It is strictly from those bulletins.

Jordan Everett stated I'm 18; ever since I was little I heard everyone around me – parents, teachers, girl scout leader – I mean something, I can change what is happening, I have a voice –

since turning 18 – I then have someone telling me that I don't have a voice and you don't want to hear from an 18-year old kid. For the first time ever I thought I had a voice with this march and I'm genuinely upset and speaking from my heart when I say that we are not upset that you are telling us that you think it is unsafe. We are upset that you are telling us that you won't support us in this march and you won't hear us – making a movement that was started by people my age and younger and you are not supporting us and it is hurting us and it is making it hard for us to do what we are trying to do which is to be heard for once and I don't think that is fair.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mr. Tereza when you present this for airing and Mr. Griggs I would like to suggest that the addresses of the students be deleted and simply indicate that they are Union High School students. Mr. Tereza stated we can't modify the tape – sorry.

David Alonzo stated it is not often that you hear students organizing themselves. It is not often that we take a stand for something like this. It upsets me that one of the first response is that I hear is that you are hindering something that we are trying to do and it more upsetting that it is something about safety. One of the first things that you should be wanting or trying to do is ensuring our safety. If we say we want to march down Morris Avenue, the first thing you should think of is how can we get them to do that; how can we get them safely there. It is nice for someone like me who doesn't get to speak a lot or get their voice heard almost self-restricting. To see my students do something like this and be able to take a part of it but it is even more upsetting when someone like me who doesn't get to do something like this often or speak in front of people often have to have a part of what they are trying to take it away from them. All I ask that next time students try to do something for change – take stand – trying to have their voices heard, the first thing you guys should be doing is trying to help them instead of trying to change what they are doing.

Laura Detjen stated I am just so proud of my former students and I know a lot of you are current or former teachers and don't forget us we are the ones that sit in the corner during the active shooter drill with Sienna in 7th grade – I sat in the corner in 8th grade with Rachel – that is what we have active shooter drills. We have lock downs. We are very conflicting. I respect your concern for the safety, I am loco parentis too. Teaching for 30+ years, my heart is with them, I listen to them every day. I am very conflicted. My heart is with them, my spirit will be with them, I bought their t-shirt, I'm wearing their t-shirt tomorrow but I also will be there for my students in the classroom who will not be going on the march in the middle school level. They lacked leadership so they led and I applaud them for leading. You have a vast resource of educators – we could have done better. I have numerous times spoken to PTAs about doing a be smart program for parents for gun safety. We have hot air balloons where we walk out; we have field day events where the kids go outside – we even practice an evacuation drill. We have supervised the kids in the drills, outside, walking away from school to another school, why couldn't we have been supported and not be conflicted and allowed to support them in their cause. I know the snow days happened and there wasn't enough time but please don't act like educators and parents didn't reach out to you and wanted to work together to try to find something better to support them. I will be at my job and my heart will be with my students that are in front of me but my spirit will also be with my former students marching tomorrow.

Mr. Nufrio stated I just want to make a comment on your comment. The fact is that the Personnel Committee which consist of four members including myself met with Mr. Tatum on this issue when we had the Planning Session which was the 27th and we expressed our concerns when we learned what was about to happen. Certainly I received no emails from anyone with regards to this other than what I casually looked at on the forum. At that meeting we collectively came to an understanding that demonstrations are perfectly fine and that even Mr. Tatum concurred as he did with the Town officials that the March to Town Hall was a deviation of the regulations but having said that certain as it was also expressed, you can't stop them. Physically the police are not going to stop them and I'm certainly not going to go out there and say no, you stay on the field. I will be out there as well. We have to at least recognize that along with the Board members who spoke with him in person back on the 27th that this issue was very carefully discussed. Subsequently Mr. Tatum attended a meeting which I also participated by phone because I was away with my wife celebrating her birthday and at 9 a.m. I was on the phone participating in that conference. Even at that conference, it is a matter of record, that Mr. Tatum along with me agreed that we can't consent to it – certainly we can't stop it physically. The resolution doesn't say if you do this – these are recommendations from the Department of Ed that we needed to at least apprise everyone about and I just wanted you to know.

Ms. Detjen stated I'm happy to hear that and I'm glad you are going to be there but it saddens me that a lot of people won't be there with them and you said nobody is going to be at Town Hall, I challenge all of you. If you have the time and on my lunch I will be there. Mr. Nufrio stated I didn't say that. I want to correct that. I didn't say that nobody will be at Town Hall. I don't believe you will find that in the record that I said that. All I said was the Town Officials would be happy to attend any demonstration on school grounds – that would achieve your end of addressing them in person. That is exactly what I said.

Ms. Watson stated when I first heard about this resolution being passed I frankly at first thought it was a joke. I started to look more into it and realized that this is serious. Somebody thought it was necessary to tell the students of Union that they don't have the right to voice their concerns; that they don't have the right to exercise their constitutional rights to voice their concerns. There has been much discussion about where the language of this resolution originated from – quite frankly at this point it is irrelevant. The question for me is why do we feel necessary to pass such a resolution that will be in contradiction with what someone stated here as being the purpose of the Board of Education which is to support the students' intellectual pursuits. You are denying them the opportunity to grow, to learn, to be active citizens and to be concerned citizens. All I hear everyday somebody says to me this generation is really free willy they don't care about anything. Here they are – they are telling you about their lives. This is their lives. Instead of trying to put ourselves in their way, let's open up the streets and let them pass through. Let them voice their concerns and be who they want to be. I can't imagine and I urge this Board to be on the right side of history because this is not just Union, this is the whole country and when we look back at this, I know because we have records of all sorts, somebody is going to look at this and say the Township of Union stood against the students who were looking for something no more than to have their voices be heard and to say to the leadership of this nation, not just you, but this entire nation, stop the killing – do something so that we can just be at school and be students and not have to worry about our lives. The concern about safety – people are saying they are not going to be safe on the streets, I say to you they are not safe in the

classroom. How many children are killed in the streets every day? Look at the number – the thousands of children that are getting killed in the classroom. Let's do the math people. I want my child out there. I want my child to know that I, their parent, is in support of their life. It matters to me. I urge this Board show these children that you care. It is not enough to say that we care. We have to show it and we show it with our actions and all they are asking for is the adults in the room to stand with them. It doesn't take that much. I don't know of any other county or town in the surrounding area that is passing this kind of resolution. I looked at South Orange, Maplewood and Livingston and their leadership is standing by their students. Nothing was ever gained by sitting safely and saying nothing.

Julia Carvelo stated I'm here to speak on how I feel about this. I have a younger brother that goes to the elementary school and I'm scared for him. Why should I be scared when he goes to school (inaudible) we are just getting out and we should be living a life and we shouldn't be dying because of these shooting. We should be able to go down the hallway. If my brother was to die because of these shooting, it would be really horrible because I know how it feels to raise him because I helped raise him and to have that taken away because we entrusted him to go to school and be safe – it is really scary because we are supposed to be safe here and many kids were killed in that Sandy shooting and those were little kids. They had a whole life ahead of them. They were not able to live that because of that one person. People who were killed in the Florida shooting, they were about to leave high school and have a family and they weren't given that because of that one shooter. Why should we do something here? If this is what happens or what has been happening in the world recently, people dying because mental disorders – I'm not saying people with mental disorders are the main cause but that is what they are saying it is and I don't feel that should be an excuse to what their actions but I feel that if we were to show people that we know and understand what is happening and do this march, people will know it is not just the surrounding areas that are scared, it is the whole population scared of this happening. I don't recall any of the shootings being anywhere near here but we don't know if that is going to happen because none of this is safe in my opinion because little kids are killed and that is my whole issue with this whole thing. If we were able to march to show people that we know what is happening and we understand that this is what might happen – it is just to let people know that we understand what is happening in the world and we understand that we are not that safe here. Yes there is security but weren't there security at the other schools? That didn't really stop it. Thank you.

Kim Nuez stated I sit in a different capacity I think in anyone on this side of the room at least and that I am a parent but I'm also an attorney. In my attorney side, I offered my services to the UHS Takes a Stand when it became obvious that they were receiving some resistance because I thought perhaps that they needed a legal advocate but you know what you don't. They have done a wonderful job on their own. They don't need me. They are well spoken, intelligent, poised, respectful, they are leaders. In that capacity, I do have some questions not necessarily the substance of the resolution, I don't think we need to get into that, but before I go back to my legal hat – as a parent I do question the concern that has been voiced about safety. I questioned it as a parent because as I parent I sat in front of a middle school here while I was waiting for my child to come out of school and I witnessed a security officer get in a vehicle, drive up the road against traffic, pick up the principal and go down the road. That individual who is in charge of the safety of the children in that school could have easily mowed down several children so the

safety concern for me starts at the school and it is not happening there. I witnessed it with my own eyes. If the Board would like further information, I can provide all of the details to the Board of that incident. Frankly, we walk up and down Morris Avenue every day and the students I see them coming out of school and going to the pizzeria, after school activities – they are all fine thank God.

With respect to the resolution Mr. Nufrio I understand that your statement was that those were not your words you pulled them from certain sites and I understand that. Mr. Nufrio stated not sites, the bulletins. Mrs. Nuez stated and you asked counsel to prepare the resolution but you did sign it. Mr. Nufrio stated it hasn't been passed. It was my idea to do that because I was asked to prepare something for the Board to have a statement and a position on the march. Mrs. Nuez asked may I ask who asked you? Mr. Nufrio stated the Town officials because their concern was that once they met with the students and the administrators that they obviously saw that they were going to do it anyway – that was stated as it was tonight. Their question of me as President, as spokesperson for the Board, was what is the Board's position on it. Therefore, having said that I then asked our attorney to reflect the bulletins from the Department of Ed and from the School Board Association's recommendations and it is simply on the agenda because I don't speak for all the members of the Board. It is a resolution proposed by me which will come up for voting after the comments are done. Mrs. Nuez stated obviously your signature indicates approval of whatever verbiage that you used in that resolution. Assuming you read the resolution. Mr. Nufrio stated of course. Mrs. Nuez stated my understanding is that you have a relative that is an employee of the District which would make you have a conflict of interest. Mr. Nufrio stated no, that is incorrect. Mrs. Nuez stated that is incorrect? So you don't have a daughter-in-law that works in the District? Mr. Nufrio stated I do but I'm not conflicted with matters of this only with matters of her contract and her immediate supervisors. Mrs. Nuez stated how do you know that? Mr. Nufrio stated because it is part of the statutes. Mrs. Nuez stated what statute? Mr. Nufrio stated I really don't want to engage in that – if it is something that you want to address to me personally I can certainly send you a response. Mrs. Nuez stated o.k. you engaged other people I thought I would have the same opportunity. That's o.k. My concern with the proposal of such a resolution regardless of what substance of the resolution is – is that you are in fact a conflicted member of the Board based on the definition in the statutes and as a conflicted member of the Board any action you take should be considered tainted and therefore necessarily invalidated by case law. I am going to put that out there. Obviously it is up for vote as you said Mr. Nufrio. Mr. Nufrio stated that is incorrect. Thank you anyway. Mrs. Nuez stated we can agree to disagree. Mr. Nufrio stated it is a matter of correctness – it is incorrect what you stated. My conflict does not in any way go into this territory or other territories. Mrs. Nuez stated or other territories either? Mr. Nufrio stated yes other aspects of Board business. Mrs. Nuez stated I'll say we disagree. (inaudible) Mr. Nufrio stated I hope to be. Mrs. Nuez stated I hope you have teachers (inaudible).

Dana Hazard stated unfortunately I can't be here tomorrow but I support you guys. My other question is how many people on this Board support the letter you put out. Mr. Nufrio stated the letter was personally from me. Mrs. Hazard stated it was only from you. Mr. Nufrio stated yes. Mrs. Hazard stated your whole Board. Mr. Nufrio stated I don't require permission to speak as a Board member. Mrs. Hazard stated can we get a show of hands? Mr. Nufrio stated we will do that when the resolution comes up after comments from the public. It is not about my

letter it is about the resolution. Mrs. Hazard stated it was about my question and I just wanted to ask that. Mrs. Minneci asked are you talking about the letter or the resolution? Mrs. Hazard stated the resolution. Mr. Nufrio stated you said letter and that is why I responded that way. Mrs. Hazard stated resolution excuse me.

I graduated from Union High School in the 80's. We had a walk out in 1981. Can't remember what it was for but I said to father and mother, big walk out – can I walk out and she said is everyone walking out? I said I think so. If everyone is walking out then you can walk out so we walked out and it was not peaceful like these children and doing a peaceful march. It was not peaceful, we ran out of that building and everyone was scattered everywhere and we met up on the avenue. Then all the seniors were forced to come back to school and if they did not return they would not be going to the prom. So my question tonight is, will there be any disciplinary action for these children if they walk out? Mr. Nufrio stated I anticipated someone asking that and it is a valid question and I can answer it. It is not the Board who will enact any disciplinary action. We are not here for that; we do not get involved in the everyday process of disciplinary process as I said earlier I believe that would be something that would come from the building principal in conjunction with the Superintendent. They do not need our approval for that nor can we direct them to do so. Mrs. Hazard stated I understand that. This has been going on because I got a phone call either last week or the week before that this was going to be happening. Mr. Nufrio stated I learned of it on the day before the 27th that there will be a march and somebody brought it to my attention from the social website. That is why the very next day we met with Mr. Tatum before the planning session which we held and we discussed that at length. Mrs. Hazard stated and nothing was said about what was going to happen? Mr. Nufrio stated Mr. Tatum is the Superintendent and it would be up to Mr. Tatum to discuss this at length with the building principal. Mrs. Hazard asked when? Afterwards? It should be done prior to you would think. If they are coming to you in peace? Mr. Nufrio stated the chronology was we spoke with him when I learned of it – the Personnel Committee met with Mr. Tatum. We left it in his hands to address the issue with the school principal. He can't answer for himself.

Mr. Tatum asked what would you like to know Mrs. Hazard? Mrs. Hazards asked will there be any discipline that will come to these children if they walk out? Mrs. Tatum stated let me just say to you that my position on this has been consistent throughout all the meetings I have been involved in. My number one concern for our children is that no one gets hurt and that is most important to me – more so than anything. That is what I expressed to Town Hall last week and that is what I expressed to students. I met with them on more than one occasion. I met with Mr. Lowery. At the end of the day, my position is very clear that concerning the fact that we have a resolution here concerning consent and what we would be required to do in the event that there is a protest, at this stage of the game Mr. Lowery and I have worked together and we are just concerned about children being safe and that is our position. I haven't talked about any disciplinary action. If there were to be any disciplinary action, any action at all would have to be consistent with the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct clearly states that if a student were to leave the building without permission there is an in-school suspension and that would be the maximum if we go in that direction because that is consistent with regulation policy. Mrs. Hazard stated so I'm asking you tonight to not have any disciplinary action against these children should they walk out.

Student at Howard University stated I am a junior biology major/chemistry minor at Howard University in Washington, DC. First of all I just want to say how proud I am of these students right here for doing this entire thing and organizing it and taking a stance to look at you guys right now and state how they feel. I know when I was in high school the only thing I cared about was going home. I just wanted to say how proud I am of you guys tonight.

I had no idea this was going on because I'm here on spring break and I don't leave in New Jersey any more. I was on Instagram and saw on my brother's timeline a protest and I wondered what that was about and I keep on scrolling by and teachers, they are really serious about this I wonder what is going on and it wasn't until I got home this past weekend that he told me about this march that is happening. Now that I'm here at this meeting tonight and I have heard the concerns of everybody I just want to draw the attention to and even though we are talking about an assembly tomorrow I would like just to draw the attention to the measures that the Board is taking to prevent an event such as the ones all across the country from happening at a Union Township Public School. When I was at UHS it was extremely easy to get inside and outside of the school at any point of time. If anyone wanted to sneak out, they could sneak out. If someone wanted to get their friend from Maplewood, Irvington – push the door and let them in – it's cool but sometimes the door would be open and we would just come in on the side doors. To me that is a huge hazard.

By show of hands, how many have children, grandchildren inside the Union Public School system – you guys in your heart of hearts – after watching news every single week is not something that is isolated – it is very current. How many of you feel safe sending your kids to school knowing that one student or one outside individual with a vendetta can come in and cause mayhem to the Town for years to come. Mr. Nufrio stated I am going to ask you to not ask for replies as is the process. This is not an interaction. Student stated I will just ask rhetorical questions. How many felt bad when the lives of thousands of people – they said there were 7,000 pairs of shoes left on the US Capital – how many felt pain when you saw that? Those many children were reduced to a pair of shoes or a name in a BBC article or a name on the CNN news feed. Even past this assembly that is happening tomorrow, things need to be put in place to make sure the lives of these kids who haven't really got to live life aren't cut short. I urge you guys to be proactive and not reactive. I have seen from you sir and I'm not sure of your name but every time somebody has tried to say something, you have really been deflective and you aren't taking responsibility for the things that you have done. I see this whole Board here and I'm glad that you are here tonight but I see you guys are not on a common ground. There is decent among the Board. Your Board is not connected and if your Board is not connected how can you help us. I liked when one of the students stated all the things that she is or stated all the things that she does in high school and I'm happy she did that because God forbid if we lost Sienna all of those positions would be gone and we would have to fill those positions and how because Sienna is amazing in those positions – I'm assuming – right so right now what I would like to say what I am and why you should hear our voices and why everybody else is important in this room. I am a student, an alumni of Union High School, I'm a resident assistant, I'm a United Nations Foundation Global Health Fellow, a student researcher, a member of Delta Sigma Sorority, positions in local organizations, I'm a future doctor, I'm an entrepreneur and an ambassador, my voice matters just like everyone else here does and I urge you to open with an open heart and not to the play.

Maria Ponseca stated I was this year's girls' cross country captain. I know I can run for miles but you can't run from this. I know what I can do. I can march tomorrow. I will whether I get punished or not. I just like to say something else that I can do – I can vote when I turn 18 and as I go to college I will still be a resident here in Union so in the next three elections, with this meeting in mind, I along with any Union High School student born after 2002 will vote accordingly.

Jasmine Biggs stated I just want to know how many of you have kids here – here or anywhere else. I'm pretty sure you as parents support your kids fully – 100%. My parents are right over there – both of them and they support me with everything I do. I play on an academy team for soccer since I was 4-5 years old, I have done martial arts since I was three years old. I am a black belt and going for my second degree this year. I take almost all honors classes right now at school and I'm a 9th grader – freshman year in high school. They support me in everything I do and most of you raised your hands to say that you are parents. I'm pretty sure you support your children 100% no matter what they do. You said before that when we come here you are “so called” our parents. If you support your own kids 100% and you supposedly call yourself our parents, then why can't you do the same for us. My teachers support us 100%. I love my teachers as almost a second family when I come here. They support us. You say you follow behind your art teachers and everything like that, so then why can't you support us like our teachers do to us. I don't understand that. You have your own kids, my parents have me. They support me. Why can't you be on the same level as them as a “so called” parent of students and support us.

Student in 10th grade stated I'm currently a sophomore at Union High School. Being a sophomore I don't have a lot of experience in Union High School – I have only been here for two years and for the first time and this is the first time that I can say that I'm proud to be a Union High School student. I never had senior leaders to actually voice their opinion and I have never voiced my opinion to the administration. I never voiced my opinion to anyone. I have always kept quiet but this protest and my senior leaders are showing is that we cannot be silent. This is not something that we just talk about for one day and immediately we forget about it. We can't do that because God forbid if it was one of your children or your child what are you going to do stand here silent like you are trying to do to us because I'm marching to Town Hall and when I march to Town Hall I'm going to speak and I'm going to voice my opinion on how I feel about this matter because I have lost someone to gun violence so I know what it is like to lose someone and God forbid anyone in this room lost someone, they would know how it feels. It is horrible to know that the last thing that I said to my cousin – I'll see you at Six Flags – El Toro King da Kohn but I didn't see them at the end of the day. I loved my cousin and I don't want anyone to experience that feeling. What I'm trying to say right now is that why are you trying to silence us. We are trying to voice our opinion and each time someone comes up here and you just say we are not trying to do this but we are trying to do this. To elaborate on what Mekhi said if Martin Luther King didn't have thousands of people marching behind him in Alabama, I wouldn't be here speaking right now. Basically what I'm trying to say is that if you say you are our parents, parents support their children. We are supposed to look up to our parents but some of these parents are looking up to us. If you are our parents, look up to us. Listen to our opinions. We are voicing our opinions and we refuse to be silent and we need to be heard.

Barbara Cedar stated I'm a grandparent, a great-grandparent and I will probably have a great granddaughter coming to school here in Union. My children have all come through Union. I am so impressed by all of you. I looked at the resolution and to me it sounds very punitive and it is also very restrictive. It seems to me that you are saying it is o.k. for you to protest but just here and just this time; that is not what protest is about. I think you are losing sight of your role. I think you are experiencing gold displacement because you are so caught up with rules and regulations – recommendations not even regulations. You are losing sight about what education is about. Education is about risk taking. Education is about world development. Education is about taking a stand on important issues and these kids are doing it. You should be so proud of your teachers who support them. I'm asking you nicely to vote against this resolution and show the same courage that they are showing.

Alana Boku stated I think Sienna would be really mad if she knew I was planning on coming up here but sitting there I really feel compelled to address you guys. I'm graduating from Rutgers – I'm a psychology and women's gender and studies major. I came from here. I was a student council president for four years, I played three sports and a captain on two and frankly this is embarrassing. Watching this and the structure of the meeting – I want to run for the Board of Ed. I spoke to you. We spoke at a debate the first year you were running. I don't want to run any more. This is the most important lesson they are going to learn. This is my fifth year at Rutgers. I took off two semesters because the pressure was very intense. I wholeheartedly say I do not take much from what I learned academically in my math class with Ms. Shannon and took pre-calc in college. I learned again. By far this is most important lesson that they can learn here and my sister has already taken a full semester in college and I just hope that at the end of this meeting this resolution isn't passed and I think it needs to be clarified to the students at the high school what their punishment will be before they do it. There are kids in plays that won't be in the play if they get suspended. I don't even want to guess how many AP classes that valedictorian has that she will miss if she has a suspension. Those are classes that she pays for and that gives her college credits. Everything comes around to we are concerned about the kids safety. When I was here and I was a junior, your daughters were seniors in school, and we were presenting a PowerPoint to the Board of Ed about having a pep rally. A pep rally is so unimportant compared to this. There were safety concerns and Mr. Benaquista was there. There were safety concerns – (inaudible) was the president and I was the vice president of the school and we got it. School spirit is important – this is far more important. I think the life lessons that these kids are going to take from here on out – it would really be sad if I go tomorrow and there are kids not out because they are scared. My sister had bought three shirts for teacher – she said she wanted one but was too scared of repercussion, my sister bought one, she donated one and my sister bought another one just in case the teacher wanted to buy one. They are nervous and scared. There is no clarification between students and teachers and what is going to happen. My mom had 600 t-shirts around this house and these kids are in here until 1 a.m. doing separating, organizing and they put a lot of thought and hardwork and I would hope that if we can work together you would put enough confidence in them that they took the time to think about safely crossing. They met with who they needed to. Have you sat on the Board and had this happen before. I have never seen so many people at a Board meeting before. You are so lucky this is happening. If the media gets a hold of this – you produced these students – Union produced these students – how lucky are we.

Cindy Santiago stated Sienna told me to speak but I don't know what to say but currently I graduated high school last year – I attended the Academy of Performing Arts in Scotch Plains and I came here I was Varsity field hockey player, Varsity softball captain my senior year and currently I'm pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry at the College of New Jersey. I just wanted to read because I know a lot of students are concerned of what is going to happen if you get suspended or anything but I just want to read something from my TCNJ Admission – they stated “The College of New Jersey encourages civil discourse and respects the rights of students to participate in peaceful and lawful protest. Discipline resulting from such demonstration will not be held against students at TCNJ.” With that saying it is not just TCNJ. I read an article Drew, Rider, Rutgers and other schools in New Jersey are not taking into account this reprimanding if they do get any punishment for participating in this out of school boundaries it took into consideration because they realized that they are practicing their rights and such. Also he mentioned this and I do remember this. I remember 5th grade field day and that was 2010 and I'm pretty sure that we walked from C-5 all the way down and the teachers were with you and I'm pretty sure the same thing is happening here but a little different because you are only going in a straight line. I just wanted to put that out there. I'm honestly so proud of all them. Sienna said she was doing this and I was not surprised – always the talker and pushing for what she wants. I am very proud of them and I wish I could have been part of the planning but sadly I'm out of high school.

Alexander Biggs stated you guys have a long night tonight. There is a lot to digest. I think once you get home tonight you should sit down – in your favorite chair, table and you are going to marinate on what has been said here by the kids but by the parents. I'm not here to talk about the referendum but I would say this and I would like for us to be the first district to take steps in protecting our children. This has become an epidemic. I don't have to worry about ISIS come marching through the door, I have to worry about my own community, I have to worry about others, as you should too. I think there are steps that can be taken to protect our children and it should be in the budget. I think our children should be our most prized commodity. When we all get old and we are and rocking in the chair and turning to them for policy. What we do now will reflect on them in the future. I want to be nice and relaxed and go into the golden ages just like everybody else here. I don't want to look over my shoulder and say “what are they saying, what are they doing”. This young lady brought up the voting thing; I would be very nervous about that. You can laugh all you want but I would be very nervous about that because things are going to change. Things are going to change a lot faster than we can digest. What would be in our best interest would be to come up with a way we can protect our children. Honestly I don't think that when I was in high school I would ever be sitting here in front of a Board talking about this. It was always, I'll see you at 3 o'clock and we are going to handle it and then we go home. I could never fathom what is happening now. Our nation has changed, our communities have changed. If we look around, we are a diverse community. I went to high school in Orange – Orange High School. I use to hear about great things in Union Schools. I use to watch them on TV – basketball championship, football championships – I was jealous. I brought my family here and here we are. My daughter plays soccer for Union High School and I see a lot of great kids. Protect these kids – marching on Morris Avenue – that is not a big deal. Five-year old kids cross Morris Avenue every day. If you have four deaths in 10 years, there are more deaths in New York City. You need to set policies, referendums in what we can do moving

forward as a community to protect our children and educate our children – not to hold our children back. Sometimes I tell my daughter you are a little bit argumentative and outspoken – why would I want to change that. Ladies and gentlemen, go home tonight, have dinner, a glass a wine and think about what is being said here today because the decisions you make affects us all and if it is not the right decision I don't think that you are going to like it and (inaudible). I'm not here to threaten anybody but it is something that would benefit us all. Thank you.

Eva Vieira stated I came here tonight because I thought that it's really shameful and sad that we have to come to this. We have come this far. All these kids and parents have to come here before the Board to support them for doing something that is so truly important. I feel that the Board has completely missed a perfect opportunity to rise our kids and give them a voice and there isn't much that I could add to the passion that these kids have eloquently spoken here to you guys. But when I came in I saw this letter that is here from Mr. Nufrio and I remember in your past life you use to be a guidance counselor. Mr. Nufrio stated I was an administrator. Ms. Vieira but you were a guidance counselor were you not? Mr. Nufrio stated for a very short term. Ms. Vieira stated but you were and I believe it is in your background to guide and counsel young people to the best that they can be. In your letter here I was very taken aback and very sad to read that you are basically asking – you're saying what sort of parental wisdom would we exhibit permitting or condoning it – any desired actions which may possibly take place on our way. Are we supposed to tell our kids “no don't do anything” are they not going into harm's way in a lot of schools throughout the nation? Where they don't even come home? You say here in a very nice way – you are basically saying kids you really don't know what you are doing just step back and stay behind. It was very said to read this. When I was able to hear the speech that Mr. Lowery gave to the students a couple of weeks ago when they planned the walkout and I will be honest with you – you get chills hearing the way he spoke – it made me feel very hopeful and very good about the Principal of the school. He implored the kids you are going to do this but you are going to do it right and I was very happy to hear that and I thought that is a true educator. They planned it, they did it right and the powers of be don't want to condone it. It had to come to the point where it has to come to a vote and in this resolution, if it passes, the Board will not even condone the 17 minutes – sir I am a simple person and I wasn't even born in this country so English can be difficult for me but it does say here that the “Union Township Board of Education does not condone or approve of the 17-minute walk-out planned by the students for the following reasons” and they are here in plain English unless I'm wrong somebody please tell me.

Mr. Nufrio stated you are reading the resolution – that again is an extract from the Department of Ed. Ms. Vieira stated Mr. Nufrio with all due respect, part of your responsibility as the President is to assume the responsibility of what you put out. I am sorry you are not allowed to just pass that responsibility off to someone else. Mr. Nufrio stated I am not. Ms. Vieira stated you have sir. I have been sitting here listening and you have continued to accept that these aren't your words but you did put this out.

Mr. Nufrio stated the language was not my language. It simply extracts from the DOE. Ms. Vieira stated in a way it is a resolution that you proposed to be voted on where possibility you don't condone these 17 minutes that means that if this passes, nobody here will probably come and participate and join the students for 17 minutes. What Board members will go against something that the Board doesn't condone.

Mr. Nufrio stated we are not – we are to decide whether a 17-minute protest is o.k. or not o.k. We are saying it is o.k. Our position is simply this – it is o.k. and certainly I will speak with our attorney and I am going to call for a recess for a few minutes but it does continue to say that leaving the premises is not o.k. basically within the school grounds which is by statute which is law. Do they have a right - do we have the right – of course I condone protest – as I said earlier I was part of the biggest protest in the history of this country. Again it is not my language but I will take responsibility because I asked the attorney to draft it. I believe it was another Board member who brought that to my attention earlier today but since it was already drafted I simply said I will further explain why I drafted the letter. I understand what you are saying and I will have a few minutes of a discussion with the Board attorney subsequent to the completion of everybody's comments. Ms. Vieira stated would you be a position now to tell me or us what it is that you do not condone? Mr. Nufrio stated simply the march off the premises. Ms. Vieira stated everything else you condone. You do realize that it is not what it says here. Mr. Nufrio stated I understand what you are saying and I will easily disclose this right now.

Vice President Mrs. Minneci happened to call me this morning and we had a discussion about it and then we had a discussion with Mr. Griggs as well. The resolution is already drafted and put on the agenda and there is no way you can pull something back like that.

When I say it can't be taken back, I mean once it is electronically placed by law we have to or I can do anything to modify it or even pull it. Having said that, my reason for the letter is sort of an addition to an addendum to that to specify, clarify. We don't oppose the demonstration. It certainly can be done on the school grounds, football field as it was suggested by Mr. Tatum when he did discuss this matter with Mr. Lowery and I believe the children as well but the point is that we as a Board we are restricted to adhere to the law. The law says specifically children once they go on school premises are to remain on school premises. I understand what everybody has been saying and that is also part of my analysis for now. The point is if that resolution is misleading, it was not intended to do so and that was my point for presenting the letter as I did.

Ms. Vieira stated my biggest concern is it is really misleading. It doesn't take much for me to read here how the walkout is disruptive. Mr. Nufrio stated those are the words from the DOE. Ms. Vieira stated it doesn't matter.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mr. Griggs when formulating this draft, did you extract this language. Mr. Griggs stated I looked at the memo from the National School Boards Association, I looked at the distribution from the Department of Education and also School Boards Association and I did not verbatim pull stuff out. I generally pulled stuff out from those distributions. Ms. Vieira asked did anyone else read it before it was posted? Mr. Nufrio stated I did look at it. Ms. Vieira stated you did read so the responsibility falls on your shoulders. Mr. Nufrio stated I was comfortable with and I'm not shrugging that I'm just saying the intent of the information is not being addressed. Ms. Vieira stated but that is not what is on paper sir. Intent is one thing; what is written is another.

Paul Lagardy stated I actually don't have any notes down because when I came here I actually was going to be a listener. I was going to be a listener because like everyone here I was on the Union forum today and I heard how many people say that these kids all they wanted was some free time and they wanted to take some time off and have some fun and most of them didn't know what they were walking out for. From listening to the students here, I know that is a big lie. I also heard people saying why don't they protest off hours or on the weekend or whatever. This is not the kind of words that these kids need. It looks like this disagreement is over where the protest will be. It is not so much the protest but where the protest will be.

My son was at Battle Hill for five years and every year he walked to Union High School – from kindergarten to fourth grade – he walked every year to the high school for fire drills. These kids are seniors, 15, 16, 17, 18 years old – I think they can walk from the high school to the Town Hall.

One thing that I have to complement you on is the type of staff, administrators and teachers and the students that you have – you should be proud of the kids that you have here. These kids are our future. Kids I want you to be leaders and no followers.

Paul Casey stated in 1903 400 children textile workers marched from the coal mines of Pennsylvania to the home of President Theodore Roosevelt in New York to demand child labor laws for respecting the rights of youth. In 1957 the Little Rock Nine enrolled in an all-white school in the segregated south facing daily taunting and ridicule in order to pave the way for equal access to education to all black students. In 1960 six-year old Ruby Bridges; in 1963 in Alabama children walked down from school across the City of Birmingham in an effort to fight for civil rights and segregation. In 2013 more than 100 children went to the Capital to lobby on behalf of themselves and their families to push for immigration. They participated in rallies, marches and peaceful actions in Washington and in their home states. Now in 2018 led by the students at Margery Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida – young people all over the country are leading us to say never again. Never again for gun violence in our schools and they have proven already that they can make change. Let's celebrate and support and thank the students of Union High School. With two children in Union Public Schools, I am proud that they have these young men and women to look up to. At critical moments in our nation's history is America's children who have changed the hearts and minds of the public through social activism. There are over 100 hundred years of documented history of young people leading the change and making progress in their efforts to make change. As I shared, kids have fought in one battle for child labor laws, civil rights and equal access to education and now they are doing that – the torch is being passed to them to end the violence in our school. Sabrina, Sienna and all the others that stood here before you and spoke should be applauded and supported. I would like to remind everybody that civil liberties are the state of being subject only to laws established for the good of the community especially the freedom of action and speech. Their individual rights are protected by law from unjust governmental or other interference. That is what is trying to happen tonight. Speaking of civil liberties, I think it is important to remind everyone what the ACLU of New Jersey said to school districts in New Jersey. "Instead of resorting to discipline, we hope your district embraces moments like these affirmatively as an opportunity for students to learn firsthand about civic engagement, no matter the cause or at the center. Public schools are essential in educating your people about the democracy that includes the role enacting it.

Students' actions during this political moment and the lessons they learn will stay with them throughout their lives. In recent days we have asked ourselves what lessons should students take from this moment and as adults what is our responsibility to them. Those answers are ever evolving but ultimately we hold these principles. We want to foster civic participation in the next generation and we strive to encourage young people to stand up against injustice. We hope you will share these goals too." That was from the ACLU of New Jersey to schools in New Jersey. Instead of being supported our students are looking to be punished by this Board President. I am also one of the founders of Parents for Change. I made a really big mistake earlier this year – I supported Vito Nufrio for Board of Education. As many people here said, we will make a change in three years. One of the things mentioned here tonight is there is guidance from the Department of Education/School Board Association – I have language here that says "school officials will allow students to participate in the March 14th walkout may wish to state clearly that it is a one-time authorization" so this Board and this District does have the authority to give it a one-time authorization for these students. With that said, I heard someone speaking a few minutes ago and in your response you seem to waffle a bit on whether the words in the resolution were yours, or whose they were, or whether you really believe them. Waffling is something that we can get into another time but I would encourage the Board of Education at this time vote to remove this resolution from the agenda.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mr. Griggs I would urge you to chime in on certain aspects. It is protocol to ask the Board attorney to chime in when the process isn't being followed.

Ms. Lops stated I have two kids in the system right now. I have a daughter that graduated this high school. I only wanted to share one thing and it is not a question. If we are telling our kids to stop the bullying and be their own, to do this, come up to the plate and then we tell them you can do something about it but you have to do it at home, don't go out, don't tell anybody else, just do it at home. What are they doing if they stay in the high school, who is going to see them? We are telling them to be themselves and get out there and do something and then you tell them don't go stay here. It is contradictory, I'm sorry.

Mr. Nufrio stated certainly your comments were heard but there is a process and certainly at this time what I would like to do is call for a recess so that I can consult with Mr. Griggs and Mr. Tatum to review this matter. Mr. Arminio stated we have to vote on the recess.

Mr. Griggs stated you didn't vote on the recess in the other place, you voted to move the meeting. Mr. Arminio stated now he is calling for a recess and we have to vote on it; that is part of Robert's Rule. Mr. Griggs stated he has the authority to call a recess as the Board President. Mr. Arminio asked can you show me that? Mr. Griggs stated I can't show you here. Mr. Monge stated we have all these people here we can't leave them to go on a recess. I don't need a recess.

Mr. Arminio stated right here that it says "madam, moderator or president I move to recess for 10 minutes". If you move something, that it has to be seconded and voted on. Mr. Griggs stated I agree. Mr. Arminio stated a recess has to be voted on.

Moved by Mr. Nufrio, seconded by Mrs. Minneci that the Board go into recess for ten minutes so the Board President, Superintendent, Board Attorney and Board Secretary can consult at 9:35 p.m.

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I don't need a recess. Mr. Monge stated I don't need any recess either. You have all these folks here.

Mr. Arminio stated I think at this time these students and these parents have been here for two hours listening to each other and I think that they deserve an answer from the Board of Education. Dr. Francis stated I agree as well with Mr. Arminio, Mrs. Regis-Darby and Mr. Monge.

Mr. Nufrio stated let me define the motion – it is to go into recess for ten minutes it is not a lengthy period of time and it will be resumed in probably less than ten.

AYE: Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

NAY: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Monge, Mrs. Regis-Darby

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Cappiello stated the vote is 5-4. Mr. Nufrio stated we will resume in ten minutes.

The Board returned from recess at 9:50 a.m.

Mr. Nufrio stated we are back in session and I thank you for patience and indulgence. It was necessary and I think you will appreciate the fact that I did consult with the Superintendent, the Board Attorney and Board Secretary when necessary with Board members, depending on the issue. Based on the students comments and there were many and applaud you for showing and it is difficult to sit at that table to talk in front of any body and you guys should be commended for that. Certainly I appreciate it as an educator that students get that courage and I do feel for those students who became emotional. I cried too when I saw what happened in Florida. Children are what I absolutely want to protect at all times both as I did in the profession, as a Board member, as a father of three children – they are all adults, as students indicated that they went to school with my twin daughters. With reflection on that, I did guide them as we could both my wife and I and certainly protect them as much as we could. There were times that you let the students take a step where they haven't taken one before. But also we are right there with them to hold them and to protect them and possibly cushion the fall that may occur. Having said that in light of all that and in light of the fact that I had the thought this morning to draft a letter and I think the letter based on my own personal feelings which I said was a letter from the heart – based on that I think that is a sufficient and very sincere letter to exactly my thoughts on the march. Not the demonstration but the march. In light of the fact that the resolution also presents curious wording and I certainly agree with that as I did this morning with Mrs. Minneci who called me as soon as she got off the plane from Florida, with that I am going to and I am authorized to do and I know everybody here doesn't like to hear the word authorize but somebody has to run the show and somebody has to run it properly. I'm not talking about tomorrow, I'm talking about here.

I am at this point removing the resolution with the clear understanding that it was only intended to really address leaving the school premise – not the building, the school grounds and that was the absolute honest reaction that I could possibly have and comment on that because your safety and well-being is still my concern and I believe of all that is in this room this evening and at home and I'm sure they share the same sentiment. I saw many other comments on social media that also presented their views on leaving school grounds as you may have seen I'm sure. Having said that I'm formally removing the resolution and now I'm going to turn the floor to Mr. Tatum so he can have a few words for you as well.

Item removed from agenda (resolution concerning UHS walk-out of March 14, 2018).

Mr. Tatum stated thank you Mr. President and once again good evening everyone. Tonight as a result of what we discussed and the information that has been provided. I would like to say on the premise that all the meetings that I had with all of you is that of course safety is always a paramount issue. There have been some changes in terms of what we can expect tomorrow. One of those changes happens to be that there will be a planned route based upon the letter that was written from our Police Director. That being the case that does necessitate a change; you know that my position has been very clear that again I just want you to be safe. I don't want anyone to get hurt. When I spoke with Sienna, I spoke very candidly about the fact that was my biggest issue.

In consideration for any type of student discipline – your first line of discipline and authority is your building principal, Mr. Lowery. Tomorrow morning I will confer with him regarding any disciplinary issues that he may choose to institute, if any at all. It is his prerogative and he will have my support in whatever decision he does make – pro or con. I will say that I am going to ask you to be safe, I am going to ask you to organize yourselves appropriately and represent yourself and your families well tomorrow and hopefully this will be a situation where it will provide a lesson for all of us as a teaching moment and certainly it would be one that we will be able to walk away saying that our voices have been heard. I am going to say once again that I think at this stage of the game your voices have been heard tonight. The respect is due to everyone that came here this evening and certainly is a day that we really have to be careful and I expect that you will follow that route exactly the way that it has been established by the police department. Again I will be talking to Mr. Lowery in the morning – an early morning call that I will make to him so that you will be apprised of any other issues prior to whatever happens. As you know, you had two plans. One plan was that you were thinking about the field and the second plan was marching down to Town Hall. You made us wait a couple of days if you recall in your decision making and when you came back it was that you were going to do your march. With date, we had our meetings and so forth. Obviously your decision had been made, the resolution has been pulled and we will move forward tomorrow and I will say it for the last time – be safe out there.

Mr. Nufrio stated if anything else can be said about the resolution, although I can't be repeating the same words – I never intended to prohibit you from demonstrating. I guess one thing we can learn from this is you brought us all together and it allowed you the students to have an experience which I'm sure you will remember for the rest of your lives. I welcome the fact that students are free to express even if it means sitting in front of a bunch of people to

address an issue that is somewhat difficult even to resolve but to echo Mr. Tatum – please be very safe, be very controlled and I trust you with your maturity and I think the Board feels the same way. You have shown the maturity tonight. Please continue that tomorrow and also for the rest of the year. I compliment all of you once again especially the seniors that are going to move on to bigger and better things. For the rest of you that are underclassmen, this is a learning experience for you but you are always welcome to come here. We meet here on the third Tuesday of every month. If you have an issue that you want to present to the Board, that is the forum to do it. Thank you again.

All students left meeting (10:00 p.m. – 10:20 p.m.).

Meeting reconvened at 10:20 p.m.

Mr. Nufrio stated this meeting will continue.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes will be approved next week.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Communications are part of personnel.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Mr. Tatum stated coming up next week we will have an employee next week recognized from Aramark. The presentation I promised last month on the Future Ready Schools. The ROTC recognition will be next week too. Also I will give the highlights of the month. If all goes well we will do that and a whole lot more.

Mr. Nufrio stated I believe there was a request – under Operations there are discussion items and the spirit of accommodating the guests that are here this evening, I think all the chairs have approved that it be placed before their presentations.

The discussion item is number two – the New Jersey Indian Lions Club for use of high school or middle school for musical night on May 19, 2018 and requesting waiver of fees. Since the chair is Mrs. Richardson would you kindly take the floor.

Mrs. Richardson stated the New Jersey Indians Lions Club want to use the middle school or high school for May 19, 2018 and they will have people from India coming. A representative from the New Jersey Indians Lions Club stated that it will be attended by 200-300 people – and they will receive free healthcare camps. They also do seminars on breast cancer, blood pressure, diabetes, medications you should take and precautions. They give information and they have 2-3 camps per year. This is the first time they are doing a musical night – usually it is only health care. The money they raise helps do more seminars and camps. They live in this Town since 1988 and our children graduated from Union High. They feel they should be doing this in their hometown.

Mr. Nufrio stated this is very unique. In all that you and your husband have said. It is the first time I have heard of any individuals to take on the responsibility of helping those who are coming into this country. I am foreign born myself and I only had family to rely on. What you guys are doing is to be commended. This is not on the agenda for voting but with your recommendation as chair – unless there is any objection from the rest of the Board.

Mrs. Richardson stated I sent the request to Diane and she sent it to Ginger and she said the dates are open. Mr. Arminio stated at high school or middle school. Mrs. Richardson stated at either location. I think he would prefer the high school. Mr. Nufrio stated if you desire to put this on as a resolution on the agenda for the Board's consideration.

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I want to give you an update from the committee – reports of the educational access and opportunity transition advisory committee which are the plans for education and recommendation by the Lieutenant Governor so we have a hand out and copies can be given out to Board members if they want to see the recommendations.

We also talked about the start times for grades K-4 – moving to 8:25 a.m. to 3:05 p.m. Breakfast starts at 8 a.m. so nothing of that changes and we want to put it on the agenda for next month.

Computer class change title – everybody knows it is not the traditional anymore. We are going with the State standard that we have currently – the computer literacy application program.

The theater project at Connecticut Farms Schools – 2018 – I will have Mr. Arminio speak about that.

Good news, next year we are going to be hosting the Unsung Heroes and also tomorrow night we are going to be attending the award ceremony for the Unsung Heroes. I'm going, Mrs. Moses, Mr. Tatum and Mr. Arminio.

The districtwide design challenge for the STEM – finally we have the full support of the district's PTA so each school will have it and there is flyer.

Saturday academy for grades 5-8 – date to be determined – we do not have a start date yet but we will be working with the Superintendent.

Mr. Arminio stated last year we voted to approve the theater project – we sent flyers to all the schools – they did not get any takers because it was so late – I think it went out the beginning of June. This year they reapplied and went through the proper channels and asked for waiver of fees but none were given and the total cost ended up being over \$20,000 for using Connecticut Farms for teaching kids how to act on stage – teaching them drama, singing and performing on stage. They would have had it during the summer for 18 days from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. each night. The students would practice 3-4 days a week and at the end they would put on a play and that would have been two nights. I think it was 20 nights in total. Through the process they were told that they needed two custodians who would be paid overtime because it is during the

summer and two during the play itself and they would need two security guards, a policeman and other things that added up to \$20,000. Basically they pulled the whole project saying we can't do it. I don't know where they are now and if they are trying to modify it and use other arrangements. One of the things that they want to do is to use the YMCA for the practice and just use Connecticut Farms for the play presentation. I don't know where they are now in the application process. The theater project is a Union based group. They put on plays at Unity Bank and other locations. They also use the Bergdorf Theater in South Orange to put on plays and they are trying to establish a home here in Union. The director is from Union and lives in Union. So that is where it is right now. I don't know where their application project is right now.

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

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Mr. Monge stated we had a meeting yesterday with Mr. Brennan, Mr. Vieira, Mr. Benaquista, Mrs. Moses, Mrs. Conti and myself. We had a financial presentation with Mrs. Conti to make sure that at least I had a better understanding so I can tell the other Board members of where she was in her budget and what is the driving factors in the increases that are really outpacing our tax levy. Obviously we are not here to tell her what to do but ultimately there are a couple of things that we saw that were driving factors. One were increases – increase in students – we always throw around that \$100,000 a kid and when we talk about special services and when we looked at one particular year and looked at the difference of 15 kids going up – doing the back of the napkin math and it was about \$92,000 per kid. There is definitely a lot of truth as it pertains to that.

The other thing that we saw was the numbers really drive the budget. In the previous year we had a situation where we cut the budget number and lost sight on how that affected the amount of kids that we needed to service. The biggest thing that we talked about was the kids that are out-of-district and the cost related to that and then the cost related to in-district and try to look at feasible ways to be able to bring them back to the District but again feasible ways. You can't just bring one child back and have a class with one child in it and assume that is not going to be more money than having them outside in an appropriate setting. I think it was a prudent conversation. We talked about a number of line items that potentially we can take a second look at and hoping to see how we can manage those types of expenses going forward.

The other thing that we ended up doing – my famous spreadsheet of historical versus actuals and just identified a couple of line items that were out of whack based on historical numbers and one in particular was custodial services line and just bring attention to what I looked at – of the \$600,000 that we have and it is not appropriated yet, about \$480,000 of that is going towards salaries. They are not appropriated but salaries is the most projectable thing that we have and that is something at this late stage of the year is something to consider as it pertains to that. Hopefully my feedback and you guys do the magic that you do with it but I think that we are almost there as it pertains to balancing the budget. My biggest concern is looking at making sure that we are right on our financial line and really taking a close look at trying to – not what jives – I know the State approves additional dollars. Mr. Brennan stated it should come out tomorrow – our State aid – the Governor's address is today. Mr. Monge stated as an

underfunded district, we get our fair share and add that to our revenue lines but if any year that we need revenue – it is this year. I hope everybody is paying attention to the numbers that are coming to us and that we act accordingly.

The other thing that we talked about was our capital projects. We have about \$1.1 million in capital projects line and it is listed here on F-16 – the \$1.1 million – the consideration that I say it to Mr. Brennan and I say it to you Mr. Tatum is one is to making sure that we are looking at the most important projects in the District. We have a Long Range Facility Plan and I am available and maybe we can get the other members of the committee and Mr. Nufrio to sit down and hear the architects and to see if we have the right projects on here. Mr. Brennan stated I will get that tomorrow.

Mr. Monge stated I also offer consideration that as we talk about if there is any contingency dollars that are left over at the end of this budget year, that we park some back into capital projects because if we use \$1.1 million, we are going to be down to about \$400,000 and then we are looking at our reserves and reserves are not to be touched, only for emergency based. Please take that under consideration and I will try to make myself available if you can make that possible.

Other than that I think everything else we already talked about in committee. One thing that we talked about is F-11 and not a huge criticism but for the most part all of the approved fundraising has an appropriate purpose and only two we asked to go back and get more information but I think that is still a work in progress and that is something we should be considering.

I want to thank Mr. Brennan on going back to F-25 – the new copiers and he was able to get other quotes so we got three quotes and we had the best opportunity here on our agenda.

It is still very important that next week we are going to be approving resolutions for the tax levy – that 2% number that we have available to us and then there is also include a bank cap number of \$321,359. The last two years we did not take it. For two years we didn't take that \$2 million – we were sitting on a bunch of money and here we are now asking for more money. Now we are actually put out that money and it is in our buildings and now we are at the point where we need money.

Mr. Monge presented the Fiscal and Planning Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Arminio asked was it last year you showed us the slides? Mr. Brennan stated that will be at the budget hearing.

Mrs. Richardson asked did they change the dates on when the budget is due to the County. Mr. Brennan stated it is due to the County on March 21st. That is why we were able to adjust our meeting back to 20th. Mrs. Richardson stated Mr. Brennan can you repeat how much money we are saving with the copiers each month. Mr. Brennan stated it is approximately \$14,000 a year for five years and we are getting new copiers, 14 additional HP printers – Atlantic

Business Machines will also provide all the toner cartridges, maintain and manage all the printers, copiers so it will relieve our tech team from having to do that. We also have software package called paper cut which is going to cut down on the paper we use in the District because we can set parameters on how much is printed. If a print job is going to be 100 pages, it goes to a copier not a printer and also we only pay for the copies or pages that we use. Currently we are paying for 1.2 million copies no matter what we use per month. It is a good deal.

Mr. Nufrio stated O-5? Mrs. Richardson stated I just wanted him to repeat how much we are savings since we are in finance.

Discussion Item(s):

1. UCStep Initiative 2018 Proposal, in accordance with the information in the hands of each Board member.

Mr. Brennan stated there is a discussion item. Mrs. Cappiello stated everyone has a copy in their packet. Mr. Monge asked if you can give us an overview on this? Mrs. Cappiello stated I can't – I got it from Julia.

Mr. Tatum stated I gather it is something that we can put it on next week as a resolution. I think there are different activities and fundraisers. The dates need to be considered. Mr. Nufrio stated obviously there is some miscommunication. Evidently this was not placed in the packet that we reviewed last week. Neither of us recall it. I guess the Board members are urged to review it and be prepared for some decision for next week. Mr. Tatum stated the resolution would need to be modified. Mr. Arminio stated do you think this Patricia Bridges might be able to attend to the meeting. Mr. Tatum stated she definitely could clarify any concerns. Can you see Mr. Brennan if she is available. In the meantime any clarification that we need to get. Mrs. Cappiello asked is it more a fundraiser and I would just list it under the fundraiser? Mrs. Regis-Darby stated there are a lot of different fundraisers and also a lot of different activities that go along with it and there are conflicts with dates. Mr. Nufrio stated I can assume the committee didn't discuss this event. Mr. Monge stated it was hard to understand.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Richardson stated O-5-exterior wall study – the committee decided to recommend it. Mr. Nufrio stated it is out for vote. Mrs. Richardson stated didn't we want to get another. Mr. Monge stated what she is saying is we talked about trying to get at least one more bid because if you recall this is the one that was \$4,500 and it was a lump sum contract and then it had hourly numbers. So it should be a fixed number and then they came back at \$12,000

I think Barry said this and this is a public document so we actually had a construction manager guy take a look at it and give me an honest opinion and he said based on the scope that they had in there, it is probably on the high side but it is likely more than the \$4,500. I guess it is probably not the best presentation that we go from \$4,500 and then the sticker shock of the \$12,000. The hope was that we would get one more bid from our other architects. Mr. Brennan stated I already reached out to them. Mr. Monge stated in the hope that we can make a decision next week and not vote on it tonight.

Mr. Nufrio stated my understanding in the agenda review was that you already had gone out and gotten an estimate. Mr. Brennan stated another estimate, no, from the previous meeting we wanted to go out and get a fixed cost and Barry got the fixed rate cost from EI and it went up to \$12,000.

Mr. Loessel stated his price is the same, it is the boring that added on to the moneys. They have to bore holes in the back so they can find out why the wall is sinking into the ground. Mr. Nufrio stated the original number of \$4,500 was the same but because of the additional borings it climbed up. Mr. Loessel stated they added all that together. Mr. Monge stated what we had was an hourly schedule and what would have happened it wouldn't have been the \$4,500 based upon the work that they are talking about. Hourly it would have gotten up to a number closer to the \$12,000 and that is why they put that as a fixed price.

Mr. Nufrio stated are we o.k. with this? Mr. Loessel stated we are going to reach out to other architect and bring him in to see what he would charge. Mr. Nufrio stated we have another architect so that would be the right thing to do. Mrs. Richardson stated with our budget restrictions this year, we don't want to come up with the additional money. Mr. Nufrio stated so we will pull the original resolution until the next time. Mr. Monge stated don't be surprised that the next bid is going to be similar. I think it is going to be in that range. Mrs. Richardson stated but it would be a true number.

Mr. Nufrio stated so the motion is to pull it or does that need to be seconded? Mr. Griggs stated just pull it – remove it from the agenda.

Mrs. Richardson stated there is a discussion item - from The Max of New Providence and Springfield/Union for use of Union High School Parking Lot and Track for the Max Challenge on Saturday, April 21, 2018 from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to raise money for Hope for Lauren Foundation. I didn't know anything about this discussion item until I saw it on the agenda so I don't have anything to report on it. My understanding is that this has been done in the past.

Mrs. Williams stated one of our members had a 14-year old daughter who committed suicide and suffered from depression and mental illness so they have been trying to raise money for the family and to create awareness for mental illness and depression and help prevent teen suicide. That is why they decided to do this as a fundraiser for the family in honor of Lauren, the young lady. Mr. Arminio asked what would the money be used for research? Mrs. Williams stated awareness, mental health screenings and various things.

Mr. Nufrio stated it is not a voting item. Are you recommending that this remain on the agenda for next week or are you asking for additional information? Mrs. Richardson stated I think I'm asking for additional information on the date availability. Mr. Monge stated wouldn't this go through School Dude. I thought the process was to go through School Dude and then come back. Mr. Tatum stated I think the availability would be pretty good. Mr. Loessel stated this particular race is going to be the same as the Mayor's Race. They already got approval from the Township because they are going to be running on the streets. They use the same route as the 5K. Mr. Arminio stated the 5K is on a Sunday now. Mr. Loessel stated it is similar because they

already got the approval from the Town. They are also talking about having food trucks out there and they need to have insurance.

Mr. Tatum stated what I'm hearing is they need to use our parking lot and track and it is also something that is happening town wide. Mr. Loessel stated it will be like the 5K. Mr. Tatum stated so we checked the availability with your office and do we know it is available? Mr. Loessel stated we know it is available but we are trying to get the insurances because they will have food trucks and each food truck needs a Certificate of Insurance. Mr. Tatum stated it would be great that we get this done by next week only because April 21st would be pushing it. Mr. Loessel stated Ginger was working on this today. Mr. Loessel stated the problem is the food trucks and the insurance. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated maybe we can get a list of all the food trucks. Mr. Loessel stated we are working on it and trying to get all that information.

Mr. Nufrio stated it is limited to the parking lot and the track and not to other streets. Mr. Loessel stated there is a whole plan and running it like the Mayor's 5K Race – so they will be using the streets.

Mrs. Williams stated if there is additional information you need from Sarah I can speak with her. Mr. Nufrio stated you can have a consult with Mr. Loessel and see what else is needed.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

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

P-1. PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Personnel Actions be approved in accordance with the information in the hands of each Board member.

P-2. APPROVE SUBSTITUTE LISTS

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

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Griggs stated you wanted to add another resignation – Mr. Jeter. Mr. Tatum stated yes. The back-up letter is with Mr. Benaquista. Mr. Griggs stated Michael Jeter. Mr. Nufrio stated effective when so it is on the record. Mr. Griggs stated it is probably immediate. Mr. Tatum stated first he said 60 days and then he said April. We have the class covered as of right now. Sometimes we have a P-1A but I don't want to forget to do this next week.

Mr. Griggs stated so approve it next week retroactively so then you will have an accurate date.

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

Mrs. Williams presented the remainder of the Personnel Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Arminio stated I would like to start my comment about Mr. Sarano. Forty-two years in the District. He is the longest active teacher in the District. He started at Kawameeh as a science teacher in 1974. He has coached cross-country and track since 1975 and stopped coaching last year. He is a marvelous science teacher – absolutely fantastic. We are certainly going to have a hard time trying to replace him or not able to replace and just have someone else take his position. We are going to really miss him.

RESIDENCY COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Williams presented the Residency Committee resolutions.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Nufrio asked was the date corrected from last Thursday? Mr. Brennan stated it is 2018 and it is correct.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Higgins stated just a couple of updates. I met with Sandra Paul. The distribution of the Chromebooks in the middle school is going well. She also reached out to three vendors on risk management as to security breach. She is currently developing a procedure for technology security and a policy on that.

The lightpath project is moving forward – UHS, Livingston, Battle Hill, Kawameeh, Burnet and Hamilton – have already been completed. Engineers are coming by to splice the fiber and she does speak another language – this is all very technical but everything is moving along.

There will be a parent webinar on Google Classroom and it will be a workshop at the high school on March 22nd from 6-7 p.m.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Approval of bills will be next week.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. Arminio stated the plays at Burnet and Kawameeh were wonderful and don't forget Peter Pan.

I don't know counsel so help me if I can broach this but when are we going to vote on approving the Contract with the teachers? Mr. Griggs stated you can ask the question but I can only tell you that there still remains some information needed from the Administration. Mr. Arminio asked have we gone over the salary guides and approved them? Mr. Griggs stated I think we have to talk about that in executive session. Mr. Arminio stated it has been quite some time and if I'm not mistaken didn't the Association ratify already? Mr. Griggs stated sure but what they ratified I can't discuss it publicly. I'm trying to be as cryptic as possible. We have

had this discussion before. Mr. Arminio stated how are we going to discuss it so that we come to some kind of resolution to the situation. Mr. Griggs stated we had some discussion earlier this evening with the Superintendent about this. We talked about it earlier in Personnel. Believe me, it is not forgotten.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Monge stated just to offer some consideration Mr. Nufrio as it obtains to our committees. I was in Operations and I'm not the Chair but the Chair had to run out to go to another committee. The other person that was in the Fiscal Committee - Mrs. Williams you were in another committee so she couldn't come in so I was the only person in Finance until she came back half way and we have members that don't have a lot of assignments and we have some members that have more than enough assignments and they are overlapping. Just something to offer some consideration.

Mr. Nufrio stated the only comment on that Mr. Monge this onetime situation that I had to accommodate and as such I can't speak further on the matter but I assure you that it was a onetime situation.

Mr. Monge stated I think it is still conflicting. Mr. Nufrio stated but you are addressing what happened today and the committee stand as I assign but there is always the possibility of a change. Mr. Monge stated I would ask for that consideration. Thank you. Mr. Nufrio stated your welcome.

Dr. Francis stated I would like to make a statement regarding a lot of stuff that happens in terms of being informed. It seems that myself, Nellis, Mr. Monge and Mr. Arminio is not being informed about things that are going on. There is a lot of – it comes out to be the Personnel Committee is acting like it is the full Board which it is not. It seems that a lot of stuff that is being done by yourself, Mr. President, along with the Board attorney, is as if that's acting as if the both of you is the Board. The Board is everyone. The full nine members of the Board and I think as you as being President, if you are going to show leadership, you still need to reach out and let us know because we didn't know about this resolution until the last minute thing and some other stuff that goes on that we know because we speak with other people it involves. They let us know what is going on and they always bring it back to you. I will be explicit. You do things and we talked to Greg and Greg comes back and tells us that he asks you if you have informed the full Board. You continue to do things as if you are the Board itself. A board is not one person nor is it you and the attorney and that is in violation in part D, I think, of our actual policy. I will give you the policy number later which says that you should be informing all of us and keep us abreast of what is going on and stop doing this, to me, it seems like "I'm the Board President and I get to do what I want because I'm assigned the duties as President to be able to do what I want to do" and that is not the case and you need to inform everyone on the Board. Not just you, Mrs. Minneci, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams – because you guys are the Personnel Committee. If you guys are complicit with that meaning you, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Minneci and Mrs. Williams, then make it known and that is all I got to say.

Mr. Nufrio stated I would like to reply to that. In the past, you were a member of the Personnel Committee and as you very well know and recall, some issues revolving the Personnel

Committee are still in the talking stages with the Superintendent. As such, until Mr. Tatum is prepared to render an opinion or make a recommendation, those matters cannot be disclosed unless they are just general information matters which I do my very best to info everyone and I do it through Mrs. Cappiello, Mr. Brennan and sometimes I even ask Mr. Griggs to do so. I don't know what you are referring to that we kept secretly from you and I just want to point out this.

Last year I was not in Personnel Committee, I was not in many other committees that I had been on previously. I didn't once complain that there were issues or personnel matters that I was not made privy to because I understood what the Personnel Committee is obligated to do and not to do. My answer to you is when the Superintendent has arrived at a matter which will be put on the Personnel agenda, that is the disclosure that is to follow. Certainly whatever we discuss in Personnel, just as the Education Committee or perhaps the Finance Committee, Operation albeit, they are always brought to the forefront at worksession. I don't know what it is exactly you are referring to.

Mr. Tatum stated I think I understand what Dr. Francis is talking about. When we had the discussion in personnel regarding what happened tonight – the student march or whatever the case may be – what had happened was informally in conversation a question arose as to whether or not discussion that we had was something that was discussed with the entire Board. My premise is that when someone approaches me, certainly not a confidential matter as you are referring to and certainly we are not referring to anything along those lines because that is indeed discussed with the entire Board in executive session, but I think that sometimes we have discussions that may crossover into even an operational issue and I think that may be what (inaudible) in terms of a Board member approached me about A, B, C and D and they are not aware of it and my first question is well haven't you been informed about this because I'm just making an assumption that there is some line of communication among everyone on the Board so that is the best example I can give.

Dr. Francis stated it doesn't happen. It is like you came up with this resolution and I'm finding out about the resolution over the weekend and I didn't know that you met with Town Hall and spoke with them regarding this and all this stuff. A good President would inform the whole Board of what is going on.

Mr. Nufrio stated Dr. Francis, first of all I didn't physically meet with any one. Dr. Francis stated you were on the phone Vito – what is wrong with emails. Mr. Nufrio stated let me finish please. It still had not been determined what course was going to be taken. Dr. Francis stated it doesn't matter. Mr. Nufrio stated it does matter. Dr. Francis stated it doesn't – just inform us. Mr. Nufrio stated I'm not going to argue with you. Mr. Monge stated you stated tonight that the Township was what caused you to want to put together a resolution. You didn't even speak to the Board. That went out and everybody is looking at us and saying “how can you guys do that?” So when you go and do that, it ends up reflecting on us and a couple of times you said the Board and it is not the Board, you did that.

Mr. Nufrio stated it was a resolution. Mr. Monge stated it is a resolution that was a statement. It was a proclamation of Vito Nufrio that was on the agenda that historically and we

will talk about this at a different time because it is late, historically and Mr. Griggs you noted an example of the past, your example of the past and I wish you would have done your homework on that because the reality is that when we did the thing about immigration and the kids, the reality is I'm the one that brought it to the President at that time, Mr. McDowell, and I said can you please consider this for an agenda item. He went and it got on as a discussion item that was discussed and it was an attachment – it wasn't the first thing. We didn't even know if it is a voting item or not; it wasn't part of a committee – so a committee couldn't even discuss it. It was an attachment, it was under Education and Student Discipline, and it was discussed and the next week it was voted on so that is a process. What happened was we got blindsided as a Board with that thing coming out with zero discussion.

Mr. Nufrio stated I still stand by my right to present a resolution that does not necessitate discussion and that is every members right. I stand by that and certainly it was not a doctrine or a mandate to anyone. It was simply an aftermath of what discussions had occurred between the Personnel Committee, Mr. Tatum and ultimately the request of my being part of the meeting that they held at Town Hall which originally I was even hesitant to do because I was out of town and the reception was not at all good but once I determined I could possibly participate without too much interruption or loss of signal. As such we are talking about last Tuesday and basically the resolution was not drafted until actually Friday which was basically at my request to put something together in response to what is the Board's position. Again it was not to reflect that everybody was in agreement, it was to absolutely state all the facts and again once it was pointed out, there may have been some miscommunication in that. I did what was natural and that is to pull it and that is the primary reason why I pulled it. But you as a Board member, I as a Board member can present a resolution. The time sequence was horrible. We were closed two days last week – Wednesday and Thursday for the snow. Friday was when the resolution was put together and I did discuss it with Mr. Tatum and the Board attorney at the agenda review meeting. Mr. Monge asked can I ask you a question. Mr. Nufrio stated can I finish.

Mr. Nufrio stated I did discuss with him at length and basically I said this is a resolution that will be presented on the agenda and at that time it will be for the Board's consideration and that is basically what happened. The school being closed for two days, the timeframe mandated that we do something to at least advise and apprise everyone of what the statutes are. It was not intended, and I must have said it 15 times tonight too, to prohibit any demonstration of any sort. We as Board members are obligated by the mandates that the Department of Education, not the ACLU or any other agency dictates. We are mandated as elected officials to uphold those statutes and laws and I still maintain that is our very first mandate along with all other mandates that we are expected to follow.

Mr. Arminio stated you are absolutely right. Every Board member is allowed to make a resolution no doubt. However, when a Board member wants to at a meeting make a resolution, it is done during new business. It is not placed on the agenda before it is presented to the whole Board during new business and then seconded and then discussed. Whether we agree or disagree, I am just commenting on the actual process that it has to be presented in the appropriate way as new business, not as a lead proclamation.

Mr. Nufrio stated Mr. Griggs can you comment on that? I'm really exhausted on trying to emphasize what the Board President may or may not do. Mr. Griggs stated I don't think it necessarily has to be under new business. I think it can be in the beginning of the agenda. Mr. Arminio asked how would I then, as a Board member, and he says any Board member can present a resolution – how then would I get mine at the beginning of the agenda before everything else. Mr. Griggs stated you would request the President to put it on the agenda in the beginning. Mr. Arminio stated o.k. thank you. Mr. Griggs stated that is to me how you would do it. I understand what you say absolutely. Mr. Arminio stated I thought it would be done during new business. Mr. Griggs stated I hear what you are saying. Jeff has his hand up.

Mr. Monge stated it is very late, so I'm not going to get into detail right now. I'll elaborate and maybe I'll do it next week. Mr. Nufrio that resolution and I talked with Mr. Griggs, I read what you kept on quoting tonight of where it was extracted from and people are assuming that this was a cut and paste. In fact, if you read it, it is really trying to push that we have the rule but this is a great learning opportunity so what was extracted from that was bastardized. Nothing talked about what superintendents and principals should do and shouldn't do and what would happen. That is why I didn't get an opportunity to talk and I could have read everything you have here and I wasn't able to talk but for you to continue tonight over and over again talking about statutes and all – you were wrong with all due respect. I am going to tell you and we will go through it, you and Mr. Griggs, this situation put us all in a very precarious situation because Mr. Nufrio, while he is the President and I have statutes and I have advisory opinions that I can provide you, while he is the President and he can cause for resolutions on the agenda, he is a conflicted member and as a conflicted member – you can shake your head all you want. Mr. Griggs stated I didn't shake my head. Mr. Monge stated he did. Mr. Nufrio stated conflicted member does not apply. Mr. Monge stated as a conflicted member and the language that was in that resolution that spoke about us as if we administered school versus policy, planning, appraisal, approving a budget – puts you in that situation. Not only you, but Mrs. Minneci and Mrs. Higgins were placed in that same situation and we all as Board members would have had an ethics violation by approving a resolution that spoke about administering of schools. It was wrong and including it being a principle. I can give you all this information. I won't say any more. I can read it but it is 11:30 at night and I'll save it.

Mrs. Minneci stated can I say something about this whole thing – I'm not talking about the resolution. I think this whole situation arrived on our doorstep kind of like spur of the moment – we really didn't have time to plan it through. I'm not talking about us. I'm talking about the principal, the superintendent – there were a lot of things that were overlooked. Permission slips is one. They are our responsibility while they are in school whether in the building or on the property. Once they leave and by accident trips and falls and breaks their wrist or stubs their toe or whatever it is going to come back on us. I have no problem with demonstrating and if they were going to leave, our process was flawed. We should have had permission slips so that we are not be held responsible if something happens to them. I'm not talking about the resolution, I'm just talking about the whole situation in itself.

Mr. Monge stated Mrs. Minneci there are some districts and my son is walking right, I spent a lot of times as it pertains and there were folks that took different approaches but no

approach was necessarily the right approach. The biggest thing was the safety of our kids and the language really spoke about taking advantage of this as a teachable moment.

Mrs. Minneci stated I understand but my concern is once they are off our property we are liable. If you go on a field trip you have to have a permission slip. The kids come from Central Five, they walk over here, they have to have a permission slip that is my only thing.

Mr. Tatum stated Mrs. Minneci the one thing that I would comment on there and I agree with you 100% that I would say during school sponsored activities that you are speaking about for certain activities, would absolutely but I think where we got hung up to be honest with you with all the discussions that we have had or lack of discussion was exactly what our position was and where we stood. I can tell you this much. With all the meetings that we had, we walked out even last Tuesday, we walked out not 100% clear on what we were doing. When the resolution came out on Friday and it hit the Board agenda, that is when I started to receive phone calls of what is going on. My response was, we had a meeting and I was telling folks what had transpired. The bottom line is I think that we were in conflict because we had not taken a position as an administration nor as a Board in terms of what – because everything you are talking about, I know my colleagues in other districts actually had an opportunity to plan those things out and in some cases they offered permission slips and in other districts they are trying to do punishments and there is a wide variety of it but I think in the sense where the administration stood and I have to say this in all fairness – in looking at the resolution I would be honest with you, there was some hesitancy in terms of all things that we would have to do as an administration should we have gone ahead and said we would give consent to this. The sad thing about it is because this was so disconnected there was never a position of consent on the part of the high school principal nor on the part of the Superintendent's office because at the end of the day we were trying to work with everyone to come up with a plan.

Mrs. Minneci stated we sat in the meeting and we all agreed at one point that we didn't want them to for security. Mr. Tatum stated she is absolutely correct. If I may, one thing I agree with you about this. My position has been the same throughout this entire ordeal. I said it at Town Hall, I said it tonight, I said it when I met with the students, I said it when I met with the Personnel Committee that safety was the issue and yes was I concerned about our students walking down the street without the appropriate things – absolutely. Because of the concern of someone possibly getting hurt but by the same token I think what you are referring to as far as the whole plan of action, given this situation again, naturally you are right, we would have to take a stand and say parents you want your child to participate, here is the permission slip and here is what you need to do. I think that is something that everyone in this room would have to sit down and confirm on.

Mrs. Minneci stated it was a whole flawed process from the beginning – the whole situation. I think it was partly because of the timeframe because we didn't have a chance or you guys didn't have a chance to really work it out. I will be the first one to be out there. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated the 18 year olds would be able to sign themselves out. Mrs. Minneci stated that is a school process and that is something they have to do.

Mr. Monge stated the disconnect is that it wasn't our event, it was going to happen anyway. Mrs. Minneci stated I understand that. Mr. Monge stated we are trying to control something and it is not ours. Mr. Nufrio stated it is during school time. Mr. Monge stated these kids were going to go out so the thing is when we were trying to do with that resolution was to control what they were going to do anyway. The thing is then that resolution spoke to things that the principal should be doing and what the Superintendent should be doing and if they don't do it and that is where we all get ourselves in trouble because people are conflicted and as Board members we are not supposed to be administering the school. We are supposed to be creating policy, planning, appraisal and approving budgets and now it is twenty to twelve.

Mrs. Richardson stated I just think if some parents are concerned about their children walking down Morris Avenue to Town Hall, they will probably won't send them to school tomorrow. Mrs. Minneci stated my main concern was if they are not participating, what is the plan? Mr. Tatum stated and that absolutely needs to be worked on.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Cathy Sharpe stated I want to thank Mr. Arminio for bringing up negotiations. It gave me pathway. I want to let everyone know that the Association ratified the Memorandum of Agreement by an overwhelming 86% of the vote. To me that shows that both sides presented a good memorandum to the membership.

My problem now is members are saying to me what happens now. I don't have an answer for them because we signed off on that memorandum in December; at the end of December we sent the Board the salary guides which is the way it is done all the time. This is the middle of March and as co-chair and Mr. D'Avanza is co-chair and neither one of us have received a word from the Board. We want to get this over. We should have been using this contract in September and we are in March already. I am asking you to please get your team together and if there are problems will somebody communicate them to us so we can do something about it. If at all possible, if you can do it sooner than later I would love to see it on the agenda for next week. I think I'm pushing it but I would love to see it. I'm tired of telling my members that we are waiting for the Board because they want to know what the Board is doing. This might not be your top priority but to your faculty and staff, it is a high priority. Their salary has been sitting in your bank since September and I think we have been very patient and at 11:45 at night, I'm not that patient any more so please let's get this thing settled sooner than later.

Wendy Horedo stated was HIB discussed at all today or next week? Mr. Brennan stated next week. Mr. Monge asked do you have a question. Mrs. Horedo stated Mr. Tatum are you aware that my son was assaulted by two students. Mr. Tatum asked you have a meeting with me on Friday correct? Mrs. Horedo stated I might wait until after. Mr. Tatum stated I'm actually collecting all the date on that and I will move it forward. Mrs. Horedo stated I did request to see the HIB report that was sent to you and I was told I'm not allowed to see it and I'm not sure why because my son was the victim. Mr. Tatum stated you should get a copy of the HIB. Mrs. Horedo stated it is very vague what I got. Mr. Tatum stated you and I will speak.

Mrs. Richardson stepped out of the meeting.

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 11:45 p.m.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**GREGORY E. BRENNAN
BOARD SECRETARY**