

UNION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION MINUTES – MAY 13, 2014

Meeting held at James M. Caulfield Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue,
Union, New Jersey.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL: Mr. David Arminio, Dr. Guy Francis, Mr. Richard Galante, Ms.
Lois Jackson, Mr. Thomas Layden, Mr. Vito Nufrio, Mr. Angel
Salcedo and Mr. Francis R. Perkins, President

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL: Ms. Susana Cooley

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Perkins at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Jackson led the board members and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Perkins said that minutes would be adopted by the board at the regular
meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS:

All communication has been referred to the appropriate committees for
consideration.

Mr. Perkins said that although this is a worksession meeting, there are several
items on the agenda that will be voted on this evening and the meeting has been noticed
as an action section meeting. He said that the items that will be voted on are F-12, F-13,
O-4, O-5, P-22 and P-23.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

In the absence of Dr. Martin, there will be no Superintendent's Report at this
meeting.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON *RESOLUTIONS ON THE AGENDAS

None

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

Dr. Francis stated that the committee had met earlier in the evening and he presented the agenda items.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

UHS abbreviated schedule – Dr. Lishak said that this issue has been discussed previously by the Board. She said that she, Mr. Gibbons and Ms. Ahern met with the Executive Board of the Chamber of Commerce last week. Dr. Lishak said that the information regarding the proposed option for an abbreviated schedule that the district would like to offer at Union High School. She said that the Chamber of Commerce members were very receptive to the program proposal. Dr. Lishak said that at the meeting it was mentioned that a number of other districts have taken advantage of this program and this included the Union County Magnet School which has a number of students taking advantage of internships with the Chamber of Commerce and their members. She said that the Chamber of Commerce and its members were willing to partner with the district to set up internships both paid and unpaid.

Dr. Lishak said that the Chamber of Commerce did voice a number of concerns, not about the program itself, but about some of the things that they have noticed with those students who are interning with them as well as some of the business in town that hire students. She said that part of what they mentioned was that they are finding that students do not have the communication skills that they need in order to "make it" in the workforce; students do not understand the importance of punctuality, making eye contact when speaking to someone else; all of the things that a person should be aware of when you are in the workforce. Dr. Lishak said that these are generally life skills. She said that also discussed was the issue of students knowing how they should dress when they go to an interview in a professional setting and how to act professional. She said that this was a statement made about students in general. Dr. Lishak said that the Chamber of Commerce suggested that if, and when, this program goes into effect, they would like to partner with the district, have any student who participates in the program attend either a seminar or a workshop of what is expected when someone enters the workplace. She said that the Chamber of Commerce said that they would also be willing to interview students at the high school to prepare them for what it would be like to take part in an interview outside of the school district.

Dr. Lishak said that after the meeting, she discussed with Mr. Gibbons and Ms. Ahern the need for having all of the information regarding this program centralized in the Guidance Department. She said that there will be a link placed on the district's website where applications and internship opportunities are listed. Dr. Lishak said that she felt this was an extremely productive meeting. She said that in light of the fact that the upcoming school year will be the last year for HSPA testing and as the district is

going into PARCC testing, this would give the district a year to generate even more than 200 internships. Dr. Lishak said that she would like to present this program to start during the 2015-2016 school year which would give the district a year to arrange for all of the opportunities for students to take part in.

Mr. Salcedo asked Dr. Lishak if she knew if Dr. Martin ever had the opportunity to talk with the Township of Union to see if there would be any internships available. Dr. Lishak said that she did not know if Dr. Martin did this but she had the opportunity to speak to Mr. Manzella and she has set up a meeting with him for next week. She said that the Township already does a "Day in Government" with the students at Union High School and the students absolutely love it.

Mr. Arminio asked Dr. Lishak what she foresaw in a year from now as being the maximum number of students who might be involved in the abbreviated schedule program. Dr. Lishak said that in the current Junior Class there are approximately 200 students who would qualify. She said when you break down the number of students who might be interested and those students who were not taking any other academic courses nor had general interest in the program, she could not imagine that in the first year there would be more than 30 students who would take advantage of the abbreviated schedule. Dr. Lishak said that hopefully that number will grow depending on how successful the program is but she would assume that the first year of the program would only have a maximum of 30 students participating.

Mr. Nufrio said that the district should not limit itself to just one or two companies that are receptive to this program and opportunities should be categorized for students. Dr. Lishak said that students take interest surveys and based upon the number of different interests that they express, the district will reach out to businesses and organizations that students can tie into.

Ms. Jackson asked if Dr. Lishak was aware of Workforce 2020 which basically is a change in evolution of corporations, how the workforce has evolved over the years and where corporations will be in the year 2020. She said that in industry today there are many tele-workers, shared office space options, etc. which those who will enter the workforce in the future will have to adapt to. Dr. Lishak said that the district is looking into areas that are technology based opportunities as well as the "brick and mortar" corporations.

Life Skills to Strategies for Success – Dr. Lishak said that the district already has an approved curriculum by the board which is "Life Skills" which is presented in the sixth grade. She said that she would like to change the name of the course from Life Skills to Strategies for Success and this course would be put back in the sixth grade cycle. Dr. Lishak said that the life skills cycle was taken out of the curriculum about three years ago and since then there have been a number of issues that have occurred

over those years and the district feels that it is not giving students the life skills that they need in terms of communication and conflict resolution. She said that some of the items that will be covered in the cycle course would be managing the middle school and how it is different; effective communication and listening skills; proactive conflict resolution; decision making and goal setting for the middle school and beyond; dealing with anger appropriately and other issues that students need to know in order to help them succeed for the rest of their secondary education and beyond. Dr. Lishak said that she had the opportunity to speak to Mr. Arminio during the Education Committee and he commented that this used to be done as part of the P.E. program in seventh grade. She said that as the district monitors the success of this program in the sixth grade, it may be that this program has to be continued in the seventh grade and beyond. Dr. Lishak said that the district needs to prepare students academically but it also has to prepare students in general life skills.

Mr. Arminio said that he recalled this type of curriculum being part of the seventh grade physical education classes and each Friday, seventh graders would attend a program in the auditorium to present a life skill. He thought that the reinstatement of this type of class was a good thing.

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Ms. Jackson stated that the committee met and she presented resolutions F-1 through F-11 which would be voted on at the regular meeting next week.

Mr. Arminio asked where the money came from for the expenses listed in resolution F-8. Mr. Vieira said that the money is generated from student activities for example proceeds from the play which is used for play expenditures.

Mr. Nufrio asked if the student activities budget was separately held for each school or is it a districtwide account. Mr. Vieira said that this is not part of the general fund budget; it is an agency account and it is held at the individual school level. He said that the students raise the money, make the deposits and then dispense the money. He said that the board has a policy that any expenditure over \$1,000 must be approved by the Board Secretary or the Business Administrator and the board of education. Mr. Nufrio asked if requests for these expenditures are submitted prior to doing the purchases if the expenditure is over \$1,000. Mr. Vieira said that was correct. Mr. Nufrio asked what happened if the expenditure was under \$1,000. Mr. Vieira said that the building principal and one of the secretaries in the school are authorized to sign checks for payment of these expenditures.

Moved by Ms. Jackson, seconded by Mr. Nufrio that the following resolutions be adopted:

F-12. AMEND AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIP AWARD – GERALDINE MINIERI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

That the Board amend amount of Geraldine Minieri Memorial Scholarship Fund Award from \$250 to \$125 to be awarded to a 2014 Union High School Graduating Senior in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-13 APPROVE ATTACHED LIST OF CONTRACTS AND/OR PURCHASES

That the Board approve attached list of contracts and/or purchases pursuant to the requirements of *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(21)* in accordance with the information appended to these minutes: (a) Anderson's- \$2090.65 – Senior Prom Favors – Union High School.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Nufrio, Mr. Salcedo and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION WAS CARRIED

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Layden said that the committee met and he reviewed the agenda items to be voted on at the regular meeting.

Mr. Nufrio wanted an explanation of what the electrical upgrade at Union High School entailed. Mr. Wiggins said that electrical panels and actual circuitry will be replaced. He said that the high school does not have enough power to handle air conditioning, computer labs, etc. Mr. Wiggins said that there will be new service installed at the high school which will be housed in another structure which will be built outside of the school. Mr. Nufrio asked if the state required that there be an architectural plan done for this project. Mr. Wiggins said that it did and there will also be quite a bit of engineering work that will have to be done on this project. Mr. Vieira said that the total budget for this project is \$1.8 million. Mr. Nufrio said that it is important that the public understands that this is a huge project. Mr. Wiggins said that the project will be started in the summer.

Mr. Arminio asked where all of the new panels will be located. Mr. Wiggins said that the panels and boxes along with the sub panels will be put inside the high school. He said that there will be a structure which will be built right outside near the cafeteria which will house the transformers.

Moved by Mr. Layden, seconded by Ms. Jackson that the following resolutions be adopted:

O-4. AWARD BID FOR PROPOSED AUDITORIUM HVAC UPGRADES AT WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – ENVIROCON, LLC

That the board award bid for proposed auditorium HVAC upgrades at Washington Elementary School (Project No. 13-050) to Envirocon, LLC, 490 Schooley's Mountain Road, Hackettstown, NJ 07840 for the total bid amount of \$474,134 which includes a \$53,900 contingency allowance in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

O-5. APPROVE USE OF JEFFERSON SCHOOL PARKING LOTS – UNION TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY ACTION ORGANIZATION

That the board approve use of Jefferson School parking lots by Union Township Community Action Organization, for Senior Pre-Prom Red Carpet Event on June 5, 2014 from 4 to 7 p.m.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Arminio asked if the air conditioner units that will be installed at Washington School will be located on the roof. Mr. Wiggins said that right now the air conditioning unit is located in the basement. He said that this unit has been inoperable for the past several years. Mr. Wiggins said that he believed six units would be installed on the roof and they will cover the air-conditioning and heat in the auditorium, the gymnasium and several offices. Mr. Arminio asked if the unit currently in the basement would be taken out. Mr. Wiggins said it would be. Mr. Arminio asked if the area be usable for something else. Mr. Wiggins said that some space in the basement will be gained because the boilers will also be replaced this summer and there will be space gained in the boiler room for storage and what not. Mr. Nufrio asked if the existing duct work would be used. Mr. Wiggins said that the bid price includes replacement of all duct work and all engineering work.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Nufrio, Mr. Salcedo and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION WAS CARRIED

DISCUSSION:

Request for waiver of rental by Union High School Performing Arts Company for use of Union High School Auditorium for Union for Union Celebrates Broadway II: A Summer Event – Mr. Perkins asked if any board member thought that this group should not be able to use the facility. There being no objections it was requested that a resolution be placed on next week's agenda for approval.

Mr. Damato asked Mr. Layden to talk about the installation of a garden at Connecticut Farms School which was discussed in committee. He said that there would be a resolution regarding the garden on next week's agenda. Mr. Layden said that the committee discuss this matter and the only concern that the committee had with this was to insure that there would be someone at Connecticut Farms that will be responsible for taking ownership of the garden so that it is properly maintained and it doesn't fall into disrepair.

Mr. Arminio asked if the money for this project was coming from the district's budget or from the Education Foundation. Mr. Layden said that the funds were coming from the Education Foundation. He said that initially the district will send a crew to the site to clear the area. Mr. Damato said that was correct. He said that there was a diagram submitted by Mrs. Lipstein that shows exactly what is being proposed. Mr. Arminio asked if this garden will replace the garden that was previously there. Mr. Damato said that the garden that was there was neglected and it needs to be rejuvenated. He said that raised planting beds will be installed which are easier to maintain and to work on. Mr. Damato said that "City Green" has done other work in the district. Mrs. Lipstein said that City Green installed a garden at Battle Hill School. She said that City Green has been working with the schools to develop curriculum and instructing teachers. Mrs. Lipstein said that she wanted to work with Mr. Wiggins to be sure that the beds will be mowed and maintained because that is how the previous garden went into disrepair. She said that the Education Foundation is working with the Connecticut Farms PTA and they are contributing \$100 toward the garden and there are PTA volunteers that will be working to maintain the garden throughout the year and in the summer depending on what is planted in the garden. Mrs. Lipstein said that Mrs. Moses has lined up teachers to work in the garden and Mrs. Moses is trying to make the garden an activity for the entire school. She said that the Foundation will also work with the children because most of the Foundation members are former teachers and they can come in to help work with the students.

Mrs. Lipstein said that the installation date by City Green will be June 19th with a rain date of June 25th. She said that City Green will install the beds and the students help to put the dirt into the beds. Mrs. Lipstein said that it is a very exciting day and it is great to watch the children take ownership of the garden. She said that she hoped that Mr. Wiggins would make sure that the garden does not become overgrown. Mrs. Lipstein said that Mr. Wiggins needs to take a look at the area so that he can assure the Foundation that the beds will be taken care of and work out any glitches. Mr. Damato asked if there was a contact person at City Green that Mr. Wiggins could get in touch with so that he can make sure that the distance between the beds is adequate enough to get the mowers through.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Mr. Galante said that the committee met earlier and he would be reviewing resolutions P-1 through P-12 and Mr. Nufrio will review resolutions P-13 through P-23.

Mr. Arminio said on Nancy Mullen and Barbara Sherry who have submitted letters of resignation for retirement have both given many years of service to the district. He said that he hoped the central office recognizes it with some type of note to them and he will say something appropriate at the regular meeting as he has know both of them for many years.

Mr. Arminio asked if he was conflicted in voting on resolutions P-8 and P-10. Mr. Damato said that he was.

Moved by Mr. Nufrio, seconded by Mr. Layden that resolution P-22 be adopted:

P-22. APPROVE INDEPENDENT PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL AND SPEECH EVALUATIONS – KEAN UNIVERSITY CHILD STUDY INSTITUTE

That the board approve Kean University Child Study Institute, 1000 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey to provide Independent Psychological and Educational, Social and Speech evaluations at a rate of \$750 per evaluation, plus \$250 case manager fee and \$250 for a classroom observation at a rate not to exceed \$5,400 for the 2013-2014 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes. Additionally if required, court time will be billed at a rate of \$250 per hour. (Acct #11-000-219-320-01-19)

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Arminio said that the backup for this resolution was somewhat vague and Mrs. Conti is not present at the meeting. He wanted to know who was the Kean University Child Study Institute, who does the observations, are they staff members from the University, grad students or under-grad students and was this service put out for bid at the beginning of the school year. Mr. Damato said that this was not put out for bid. He said that the district contracts with Kean, Rutgers and other state institutions and they are exempt from bidding; if the district contracts with these institutions for services the district does not have to put it out for bid. He said that he knew Ms. Conti did a lot of work researching this and trying to get the best price for the district. Mr. Damato said that sometimes it is hard to get all of the services you need "under one roof". He said that Ms. Conti is sorry for not being able to be at the meeting tonight but she is having some dental problems. Mr. Damato said that the backup does not have detailed information but if Mr. Arminio would like to set up a meeting with Ms. Conti or talk to her by telephone.

Mr. Perkins said that the maximum fee on this resolution is \$5,400 and taking into consideration the magnitude of some of the other items and board members should be entitled to rely upon staff, certainly on an item like this, to assure that it is an appropriate

service. He said that he was prepared to vote on this item but he understood if someone else was not.

Dr. Francis asked about the court time fee that was listed in the resolution. He wanted to know if that amount was included in the \$5,400. Mr. Damato said that the purchase order to Kean University will be in an amount not to exceed \$5,400 unless further authorization is given by the board.

Mr. Nufrio asked if the language of the resolution needed to be amended. Mr. Damato said that if any additional charges come about, then the matter would have to come before the board again for authorization. Mr. Nufrio said that he would think that the legal fees would be in addition to the \$5,400. Mr. Perkins said he agreed with Mr. Nufrio. Mr. Damato said that he felt the board's interpretation needed to be that the fees would not exceed \$5,400 as of right now. Mr. Nufrio said that the \$5,400 was for the evaluation services. Mr. Perkins said that if court time is required, the board will have to consider those charges and who made the determination that court time was required. Mr. Damato said he thought that was a fairer interpretation. Mr. Nufrio said that usually that is done by the Director of Special Services. Mr. Perkins said, if necessary, Ms. Conti will come before the board to make such a request.

Mr. Arminio said that he just wanted to know who does the observations and since there are only a few weeks left in this school year, he could not see that the \$250 for court costs would be a problem.

Mr. Nufrio asked why this was approved at the beginning of the school year. Mrs. Ditri said that this was something that just came up and the service had to be done before the end of the school year.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Nufrio, Mr. Salcedo and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION WAS CARRIED

Moved by Mr. Nufrio, seconded by Mr. Layden that resolution P-23 be adopted:

P-23. REAPPOINT ALL EMPLOYEES FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board approve that all employees on the attached list be reappointed for the 2014-2015 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Dr. Francis, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Nufrio, Mr. Salcedo and Mr. Perkins
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: Mr. Arminio and Mr. Galante

MOTION WAS CARRIED

NEGOTIATION/GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Nufrio said that Grievance Committee did meet this evening. He said that one of the grievances heard was pretty much resolved in a mutual understanding and the second one needs further discussion in Executive Session.

POLICY COMMITTEE

Mr. Arminio said that the Policy Committee met last week to take another look at the Series 6000 policies which involve education. He said that every board member has received a copy of the changes. Mr. Arminio said that Mr. Damato has the changes indicated on the original policies. He said that all policies, including the library policy have been corrected. Mr. Arminio said that there is one policy that will not be voted on which concerns the Graduation Requirements. He said that this policy has been sent to Ms. Ahern, the Supervisor of Guidance and Mr. Benaquista, Vice Principal at Union High School to review. Mr. Arminio was not sure if the policy would be presented for vote at the regular meeting in May but it could be voted on in June as the meeting is before graduation. Mr. Damato said that the way Mr. Benaquista wrote the policy is exactly the way that the district is doing things now.

Mr. Perkins said that there is a requirement for graduation of twenty hours of community service over three years but that does not apply to this year's graduating class. Mr. Arminio said that was correct.

Mr. Arminio said that the policy regarding Social Media was still being worked on and hopefully that will be relisted for voting in June. He said that unfortunately, the committee may not be able to complete the review of the policy manual this year. Mr. Arminio said that there is still one section remaining and that is the Bylaws of the Board.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Mr. Perkins said that the bills would be approved for payment at next week's meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Arminio said that he attended the Union County Educational Services Commission meeting last week. He said that the special education students from the Westlake School will be opening a café which will be open to the public. Mr. Arminio said

that the café will be located at 330 South Avenue in Fanwood, New Jersey and the opening date is May 20th at 10 a.m. He said that he would be attending to represent Township of Union Schools to show support. Mr. Arminio said that special education students will be doing all of the food preparation, etc. and they will be supervised by staff members. He said that the café will be open 3-4 hours per day. Mr. Arminio said that this café will benefit two office buildings that are located nearby. He said that this is something that the district might want to look at.

Mr. Arminio said that he had a lengthy talk with Margery Lee, a long time teacher in the district, about Margaret Fekete, the person that gave the district the large endowment.

Mr. Arminio said that the Treasure Hunt that the district normally runs in the spring with the Chamber of Commerce has been postponed. He said that he would be attending a Chamber of Commerce on Thursday and he will get for information at that time.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ms. Lipstein said that she wanted to speak about the two discussion items that had to do with curriculum. She wanted to review what Dr. Lishak had said regarding the Life Skills course and she wanted to know if that will be part of the sixth grade cycles and would it be required for every student. Dr. Lishak said it would and it will now be called Strategies for Success. Ms. Lipstein asked what the course will cover. Dr. Lishak said that it will cover transition to the middle school, listening skills, effective communication, goal setting, etc. Ms. Lipstein asked if Dr. Lishak could e-mail her the information regarding this course. Dr. Lishak said she would.

Ms. Lipstein said that she was still grieving the fact that Dr. Martin has resigned. She said that Dr. Martin did a fabulous job in the district. Ms. Lipstein said that one of the things that Dr. Martin did see was that students did need to learn life skills, which he was incorporating as part of the Academy program and Dr. Martin was bringing people in to show students how to deal with people. She recommended that if this new curriculum was going to be put in the sixth grade cycle, that Dr. Lishak look at some of the things that Dr. Martin did do in the Academy. Ms. Lipstein asked if the curriculum had been written. Dr. Lishak said that the Curriculum Writing Team for this course will be approved at next month's meeting and the curriculum will be approved before the beginning of the school year. Ms. Lipstein asked if she could get a copy of the curriculum when it is written. Dr. Lishak said that the all of the curriculum will be on the district website once they are approved.

Ms. Lipstein also suggested that policies be put on the website. Mr. Arminio said that when the policy manual has been completed, the policies will be posted on the website. Ms. Lipstein said that the more transparent the district is, the better it will be for the whole community.

Ms. Lipstein said that the issue of the abbreviated schedule was brought up very generally in March and there was a meeting for parents and community which was not held at a very good hour and a lot of people did not know that the issue was being discussed. She said that the more communication and transparency that there is, the better. Ms. Lipstein said that at this time the board has not passed an abbreviated schedule. Dr. Lishak said that it was still in the proposal stage. Ms. Lipstein said that the segment that Dr. Lishak spoke about earlier might be called work-study or coop and the program would go into effect in 2015-2016. She said that Dr. Lishak was going to reach out to the Chamber of Commerce for assistance.

Ms. Lipstein suggested that all students at the high school be given a refresher course in interviewing skills, etc. Dr. Lishak said that the feedback that she received from the Chamber of Commerce was very valuable and individuals from that organization will be the ones that will be meeting with students. Ms. Lipstein suggested that students be interviewed to find out what they want in order to develop partnerships with companies to build the district's base. Dr. Lishak said that this is exactly what Mr. Nufrio had said. She said that students will take an interest survey and it will allow the district to see what fields students are interested in. Dr. Lishak said that she was not limiting opportunities to Union. Ms. Lipstein said that she has lots of questions about how the program will work and making sure that students are doing something productive.

Ms. Stone said that she had several questions regarding the abbreviated schedule. She wanted to know who would be responsible for students in the program once they leave school; will there be transportation provided and will there be a cost for transportation. Ms. Stone said that she was a product of this type of program, she took advantage of internships and it did her well; however, there are a lot of concerns. She had concerns about transportation, responsibilities and who would be handling it all and how would it be developed. Ms. Stone said that she was an administrator in East Orange when they instituted a similar program and she had a lot of concerns about such a program. She said that there have also been concerns in other districts with regard to child labor laws and whether students can still participate in athletic and extracurricular activities. Dr. Lishak said that some of these things have been discussed. She said that if a student is going to take part in the abbreviated schedule, it would be the same as if the student was a vo-tech program; these students will be able to return to school to participate in extra-curricular activities. Dr. Lishak said that with regard to transportation, she was going to reach out to the Union County Magnet School to find out exactly what they are doing because they have had such a program for a number of years and they have had great success with it. She said that she wants to find out what made the program successful and what problems they may have faced so that they can be avoided. Dr. Lishak said that the district is in the early stages of developing this program and there are still many questions to be answered. She felt that it would take at least one year to plan this program and there will be additional parent meetings on the subject. Ms. Stone

said that the parent meetings definitely need to be spelled out because she was not aware of the meeting that took place at the high school. She said that meeting times should be reconsidered to make it convenient for parents.

Mr. Perkins urged individuals who had comments or questions with regard to this issue to e-mail Dr. Lishak or Mr. Tatum so that the district can build an archival file of comments from parents. He said that the advantage of doing it in writing is so that the district has a record of it and the district can refer back to the comments in the development of the program.

Mr. Nufrio said that the meeting that was referred to was well attended, even with not having the purpose clearly stated. He said that perhaps a meeting could be scheduled during the second or third marking period next year so that more parents can attend for information. Mr. Nufrio said at that time, any concerns that may still remain can be addressed and explored. He said that this is not a program that is being imposed on students; student participation will only take place with parental permission after full discussion with parent, student and guidance counselor. Mr. Nufrio said that there are plenty of reasons why a child could be denied for the program and that would be forthcoming from administrative staff, who that board relies on for their expertise, to determine whether or not a particular student can participate in such a program, irrespective of what the parents may want.

Mr. Capodice said that he wanted to make some comments regarding the Union High School abbreviated schedule. He said that he reached out to the Superintendent's Office with Association concerns. Mr. Capodice said that he recognized that the Board did not need the Association's consent to implement a program such as this but if and when the program comes to fruition, the Association requests that there be a representative be included in any meetings regarding how the program will develop as the Association does have some concerns about staffing and enrollment and how it will effect a program like this. He said that probably not in the first year, but as the program progresses there will be some impact. Mr. Perkins said that the district will ask for the Association's input.

Ms. Detjen said that at this time of year she was always pleased and excited to hear a seventh grader tell her that they have enrolled in French I for eighth grade and she has been lucky enough to always have had two level I eighth grade French classes. She said that it always saddens her when a seventh grader tells her that they would have loved to start French in eighth grade but are forced to delay world language because they are musically talented as well and must use their only elective slot for band or chorus. Ms. Detjen said that since block scheduling was introduced a few years ago, eighth graders only have the option of one full-year elective, which could be French, Spanish or German or chorus or band; they can't take two full-year electives as they had done in the past. She said that students have to choose but if they don't chose a language in eighth grade, then they have a full year of no language and it must be started up again in high school.

Ms. Detjen said that the current schedule lacks continuity and that hinders students' acquisition of a language. She said with the recent teacher cuts in the world language department, there will be one less French I and one less German I course available to students in the eighth grade, lessening their choices even more. Ms. Detjen said that she thought it was a shame that eighth graders were not allowed to take both an elective and a world language for a full year and she began to research other middle schools' courses of study and schedules. She said that there are twenty middle schools in Union County and most middle schools in the county offer a full year of world language to all of their students, not just some and not just those who are not musically talented. Ms. Detjen said that Union is one of only three middle school programs that do not offer a full year of world language to all of their students. She said that she found that middle schools that do offer a full year of world language and an elective as well do not have to forfeit an eighty-minute block of math and English but they alternate the eighty minute block on an A/B day or ABCD day schedule. Ms. Detjen secured samples of scheduled from Linden and Cranford. She said that the Cranford model incorporates eighty minutes for English, while math is a single period. Ms. Detjen said that she thought that students would benefit all around if the district could implement an A/B day schedule to alternate the eighty minute blocks of math and English instead of eighty minutes for each subject every day. She said that there would then be room for an elective and a world language in eighth grade and French and German could be restored to the sixth grade cycles; she said that all it would take would be a little creativity and care. Ms. Detjen asked the board to take a minute to consider these options for the highest quality education that the district can give all of its students.

Mr. Perkins asked Ms. Detjen to leave the samples with Mrs. Ditri so that she can distribute copies to the board.

Ms. Vieira said that in light of what Dr. Lishak said about talking to business owners in the community and how they have expressed that students lack social and life skills, she felt that maybe students are not well rounded. She said that she presently has a student in the middle school that is musically talented, speaks three languages and she wants to learn French. Ms. Vieira said that our students are missing out on being well-rounded. She said that it is very important for students to have music instruction as it helps with math and many other things. Ms. Vieira said that she spoke four languages herself and speaking other languages has helped her when she was learning English in school. She said by denying students the ability to do both electives, the district is denying students an opportunity to become well-rounded. Ms. Vieira said she hoped the board reconsiders the decision and can come up with a solution or alternative for this so that students will have more exposure to world languages. She did not think it was fair that students will only have Spanish in sixth grade and they will not be able to select from more than one language. Ms. Vieira said that there are many students who already speak Spanish and they should be able to choose an alternative language. She said she thought Spanish was being taught at the elementary level and she has heard that there is a

possibility that students will be doing keyboarding. Ms. Vieira asked why students are not learning keyboarding during their technology classes. She said that students know how to keyboard now because it is a part of their lives. Ms. Vieira asked why students couldn't be learning something new rather than learning "keyboarding" in preparation of another test. She hoped that the board looks out for the best interest of the students and realize that students are not well-rounded and they do lack skills. Ms. Vieira thought that learning another language helped students become well-rounded and will prepare them even better for high school.

Mr. Nufrio said that Dr. Lishak stated earlier that the Chamber of Commerce commented that students lacked skills and he was certain that they were not just reflecting upon Union students. Dr. Lishak said the Chamber of Commerce commented that in general they are finding that students lack some skills. She said that it was stated at the meeting was that so many students are relying upon texting and computers and they are losing the ability to communicate face-to-face, the eye contact and communication skills. Mr. Nufrio said that students today are very much lacking in social skills.

Ms. Vieira said that she understood that these problems are not just present in our district, however, why should the district make the situation worse by taking away the extra classes to make them better or more well-rounded people. She thought that the district was missing an opportunity to improve our district.

Ms. Tartaglia, French teacher at Union High School, said that her first French teacher was Ms. Detjen and Ms. Detjen is the reason that she became a French teacher. She said that students who attend private schools such as Pingry and Oak Knoll, have many opportunities and these students are programmed to think at a higher level. Ms. Tartaglia said that she attended a private high school and no one asked her if she wanted to have four years of a foreign language; it was expected. She said she knew that we live in a time and a place where numbers and test scores matter and educators and administrators are called on the carpet to justify their existences. Ms. Tartaglia said she became a French teacher because it was something that she loved. She said that she has many English teachers come to her and say that students who also study French "get it better" because they are being taught grammar and face-to-face communication. Ms. Tartaglia said the public should not think that world languages are not important; they are a part of a symbiotic relationship that creates the total student.

Mr. Perkins said that the public needs to know that the board has requirements placed upon them as a public school district that are not placed upon private schools. He said that he attended a private high school and took four years of Latin and two years of German. Mr. Perkins said that there have been suggestions to put Latin in the public school curriculum. He said that the hardest thing that the board does is balancing the needs that the district has. Mr. Perkins said that there are many other issues such as

student safety that must also be considered by the board. He said that much discussion is had regarding math and language arts scores because somebody else has told us these are important to the district and to the students. Mr. Perkins said that the board does not have a lot of latitude regarding this issue. He said that the school district is a highly regulated industry and the board is not the regulator.

Mr. Perkins said that he was involved in a review of policy issues last week and he looked at the extracurricular activities. He said that the board has not forgotten about the Academies; he said that they may not be called "academies" but the board has not forgotten that they are part of something that is particularly good and the board will go back and revisit the idea. Mr. Perkins said that one of the things that the board is admonished to do is not to discriminate against any child based on race, religion, sexual orientation and socio-economic status. He said that there are some school districts who charge students to play sports or to participate in other extracurricular activities and he was not sure this was legal; in fact, he was pretty sure it was not. Mr. Perkins said that everyone should look at the Constitution of the State of New Jersey which imposes requirements upon school district, the principal one of which is to "provide a thorough and efficient education". He asked for the public's understanding and if someone feels that the board is not doing their job in the best interest of the children, conversation should be had about it.

Ms. Coleman was present at the meeting to echo the passion about world languages. She recognized that the board had a very difficult job but the community is now voicing its opinion that they want world languages to be kept up. Ms. Coleman said if the community did not voice its opinion, perhaps students would choose a typing class or some other technology class, but the parents are passionately asking the board to consider keeping French, Spanish and German as a choice for students to take in the next school year. She said that her daughter was presently at Jefferson School and she recently found out that part of the family heritage was French and she was very excited about taking French. Ms. Coleman said when she tells her daughter that she can't take French in sixth grade, she will cry. She said that her daughter has already planned a trip to Paris and she is very passionate about it. Ms. Coleman said that she came to the meeting to speak on her daughter's behalf because if someone that young is that passionate, there have to be others who are just as passionate. She asked the board to seriously consider putting the languages back in the sixth grade.

Ms. Vieira said that most decrees and important legislation in the world is written in French because French is one of the most precise languages in the world. She said that this is why it is important for students to learn French.

Mr. Nufrio said that the board is always looking at ways to cut the budget. He said that the members of the community that are present should be writing letters to Trenton to let them know how the State impacts students every time they propose a budget cut.

Mr. Nufrio said that it is up to the board to balance the budget and unfortunately some things have to suffer. He said that this was reality. Mr. Nufrio said it was not just about what the board would like to do, it is what can the board afford to do. Mr. Perkins said that there is a fiscal crisis that not only effects Union but it is across the board and who knows what will happen next year.

Mr. Johnson said that in his household only English is spoken but languages are very important. He said that he knew the board was doing its best but Union County goes from Elizabeth to Summit. Mr. Johnson said that Union was in the middle and the parents in Union are trying to get their children prepared to enter the real world and deal with what is out there. He said that technology is making the world smaller. Mr. Johnson said that children today have great computer skills and maybe students can learn keyboarding in the computer class. He said that a large population in Union do already speak Spanish and they have a big advantage over his son. Mr. Johnson said that because his son love soccer, he watches soccer games on the Spanish Channel on television to learn the language. He said that he wants to open the world to his children and he felt that world languages can open up a child's mind. Mr. Johnson said that Germany has the strongest economy in Europe and maybe some students want to go into business; if they work for a company and have dual languages, they can communicate with others in the world as well as in the United States. He said that he knew it was tough for the board to decide about budget cuts. Mr. Perkins stated that there is technology available such an I-Phone that translates in conversation into many different languages.

Mr. Perkins said that he appreciated Mr. Johnson's comments. Mr. Johnson said that the board was talking earlier about lack of skill in face-to-face contact by students and he did not need an I-Phone. He said that the most important thing is the interaction between people.

Mr. Perkins said that would be the last comment from the public for this evening. Ms. Lipstein said that it was only 8:30 and the board never did that before. She said that there were members of the public present who had comments. Ms. Lipstein said that if Mr. Perkins is telling the public that they cannot speak, she wanted it on the record that Mr. Perkins was stopping the public from speaking. She said that the board never stopped a meeting at 8:30. Ms. Lipstein thanked all the parents present for coming to the meeting because the board needs to know that the parents are here and the board needs to be held accountable. She said it was a dialogue that cannot stop. Ms. Lipstein that parents filled the room and needed to keep filling it. She said that the public cannot be stopped because Mr. Perkins decides to stop the meeting.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Moved by Mr. Galante, seconded by Ms. Jackson that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of *N.J.S.A. 10:4-2b*. The Board will disclose the discussion

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

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Nufrio, Mr. Salcedo and Mr. Perkins
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

BOARD RETURNED TO PUBLIC SESSION

Moved by Mr. Galante seconded by Mr. Nufrio that Gregory Tatum be appointed to serve as Acting Superintendent for the period May 14 to June 6, 2014 and that Noreen Lishak be named Acting Superintendent from June 7 through June 30, 2014 and that both participate in graduation on Friday, June 27 be approved.

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Nufrio, Mr. Salcedo and Mr. Perkins
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: Mr. Arminio MOTION WAS CARRIED

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no further business before the board, it was moved by Mr. Arminio, seconded by Mr. Salcedo that the meeting be adjourned. All present voting yes.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES J. DAMATO
BOARD SECRETARY