

TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Kimberly Scott-Hayden
President



Michael Cohan
Vice President



Dicxiana Carbonell
Member



Elsie Conteh-Mackey
Member



Guida Faria
Member



Nancy Minneci
Member



Ronnie McDowell
Member

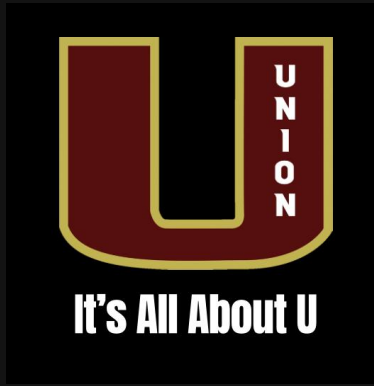


Gregory Nasta
Member



Chastity Santana
Member





Board Meeting Superintendent's Report

April 30, 2026

The mission of the Township of Union Public Schools (TUPS) is to empower and inspire Every Student, Every Day.

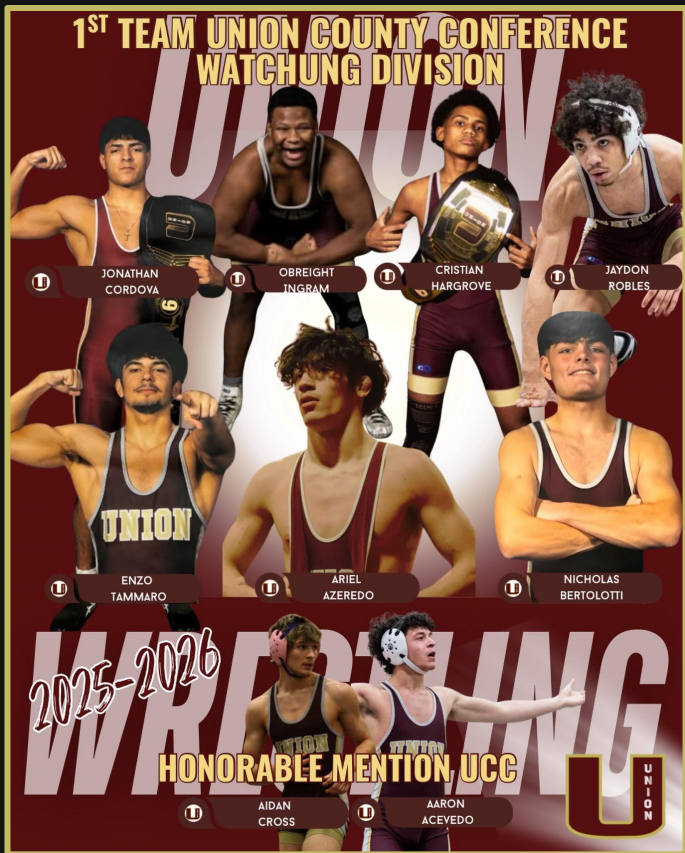
TUPS Talking Points



Enrollment (Including Out of District Students)

- 2024 - 2025 Enrollment (June 30th): 7,966
- 2025 - 2026 Enrollment (October 15th): 7,671
- 2025 - 2026 Enrollment (November 15th): 7,688
- 2025 - 2026 Enrollment (December 15th): 7,711
- 2025 - 2026 Enrollment (January 15th): 7,739
- 2025 - 2026 Enrollment (February 15th): 7,760
- 2025 - 2026 Enrollment (March 15th): 7770
- 2025 - 2026 Enrollment (April 30th): 7769

Wrestling State Qualifiers



Ariel Azeredo 144 lbs (38-6)

County Champion

2nd Place Districts

1st Place Regions (First one in 10 years)

State Qualifier

Nicholas Bertolotti 190 lbs (34-9)

2nd Place County

2nd Place District

2nd Place Region

State Qualifier

Obreight Ingram Heavyweight (33-12)

District Champion

3rd Place Region

State Qualifier

Honoring our Coaches



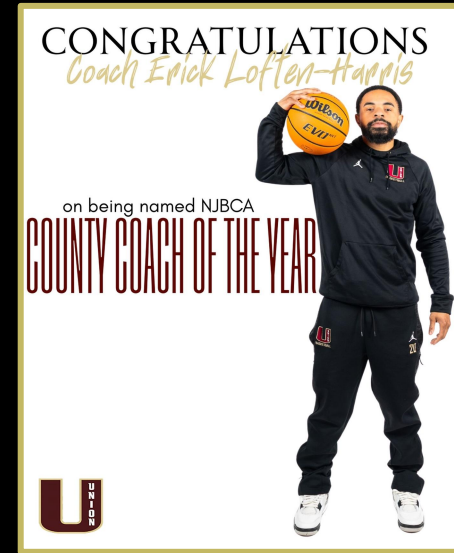
Dino Debellonia

Union County Coach of the Year

District Coach of the Year

Region Coach of the Year

NJ.com Coach of the Year for Union County



Erick Loften-Harris

Union County Coach of the Year

Coaches Association

Davison
Igbinosun
UHS
Class of
2022

A promotional poster for Davison Igbinosun's draft to the Buffalo Bills. The poster features two images of Igbinosun: one in a white Ohio State jersey with a yellow duck on his helmet, and another in a maroon Union University jersey. The background is a stylized cityscape with a large Buffalo Bills logo. At the top, logos for Ohio State, the Buffalo Bills, and Union University are displayed. The text "#2 IGBINOSUN" is written in a handwritten style. The word "DRAFTED" is written in large, white, brush-stroke letters across the center. Below it, "DAVISON IGBINOSUN" is written in a bold, white font. At the bottom left, there are three icons with text: a target for "DREAMED.", a football for "WORKED.", and a trophy for "EARNED.", followed by the slogan "NEXT STOP: BUFFALO". At the bottom right, a box displays "ROUND 2" and "PICK 62". The Buffalo Bills logo and slogan "WE ARE PROUD OF U" are at the bottom right.

OHIO STATE | BUFFALO BILLS | UNION

#2 IGBINOSUN

DRAFTED

DAVISON
IGBINOSUN

DREAMED.
WORKED.
EARNED.

NEXT STOP: BUFFALO

ROUND 2 | PICK 62

BUFFALO BILLS
WE ARE PROUD OF U

Top 25 of the Class of '26 at UHS

Jacklyn Cassandra
Valedictorian



It's All About U

The following are listed in alphabetical order.

Ava Soares
Salutatorian



Eli Matthieu Abaya



Xavier Aro



Mikayla Astudillo



Temiloluwa Bamigbe



Markens Desir



Charlotte Garland



Michael Giaimo



Kellyn Gomez Ozuna



Hannah Hipolito



Talia Johnson



Jacqueline Martinez



Giullana Muscavage



Sean Nnoli



Toluwanimi Ojo



Dubem Okafor



Emily Pasiecznik



Jochebed Quaye



Anaisa Rodriguez



Ethan Sumiquiab



Kacper Tarnowski



Elvin Teixeira



Kauri Townes



Dylan Yeager



TUPS BOE Student Liaison Kauri Townes





TUPS
BOE Student Liaison
Kauri Townes

A Brief Introduction

- I'm a current senior at UHS, ranked 9/599 out of our graduating class
- I'm in extracurriculars like Key Club, Marching Band, NHS, NFHS, Debate Club, Red Cross Club, Roots: Black Excellence, Stage Crew, Robotics, Jazz Band, Yearbook, Peer Ambassadors, & STEM Pathways
- I plan on majoring in chemical engineering
- I live with my mom, my older sister, and my cat, Stevie
- Fun Fact: I love to roller skate



Key Club - Overview

- Key Club focuses on volunteering around the community, inside and outside of school
 - Food Distributions (Golden Lodge), Garden Party, Kean Events
- Fundraising for our club includes:
 - Year-round candy selling in school
 - Holiday Festive Event
 - Friendship Bracelet Events
- To keep engagement with our 168 members we:
 - Include events around the school to introduce Key Club
 - Stay engaged around town in different areas
 - Promote members for each month



Key Club - DECON Success

Decon (The District Educational Conference) is a yearly celebration of community service that has been hosted since the beginning of NJ Key Club in 1947. At this celebration, Key Clubs are awarded for the service they have done for their community

Club Awards

- 1st Place T-Shirt Contest
- 1st Place District Service Project
- 1st Place Spirit Stick
- 2nd Place Club Website
- 2nd Place Club Video
- 3rd Place Non-Digital Poster
- 3rd Place Platinum Single Service (members)
- 3rd Place Major Emphasis



Individual Awards & Distinguishment

- Charter Champion: Kauri Townes
- Distinguished Officers
 - President Lauren Co
 - Vice President Hannah Hipilito
 - Treasurer Talia Johnson
 - Webmaster Sophia Inahuzo
 - Editor Eli Abaya
 - Secretary Hadassah Trindade
- Golden Member Award: Sophia Inahuzo
- Distinguished Lieutenant Governor: Bea Ascalon
- Scholarship Winners: Hannah Hipolito & Bea Ascalon



UNIFIED FLAG FOOTBALL

The Unified Flag Football team currently has 2 wins and 1 loss in their first ever season.

Below is their next home game. Come out and support them.

5/7 Home vs Watchung Hills
4pm

@UHS Memorial Field



43rd Annual Law Enforcement Torch Run

June 5th



Our athletes will be running the Torch Run with our local Law Enforcement from the Union Police Department to the Millburn/Union Line in support of the Special Olympics



UHS FLAG FOOTBALL

Played at the Jets facility in Florham Park
and beat Linden 12-6

Amiyah Louis Julis was awarded the
Gatorade player of the game with a pick 6 and won
\$1000 for our flag football team!



Softball

Ali Silvestre
earned her
100th hit and
Senior Day is
tomorrow
May 1st





Thank you
Kauri Townes
Class of 2026

TUPS was proud to welcome New Jersey Commissioner of Education, Dr. Lily Laux!





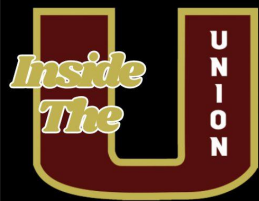
GRANTS

TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS GRANT LISTING

Name of Grant	Description of Grant/Impact	Funding Amount	Time Frame
NJ Clean Energy Program/Plumbing and Appliance Grant	Upgrade plumbing fixtures in all district schools to promote energy efficiency.	\$1,219,894	March 2023-September 2024
NJ Clean Energy Program/HVAC Grant	Install new HVAC system in Hannah Caldwell Elementary gym/cafeteria.	\$822,675	February 2023-August 1, 2024
Emergent and Capital Needs Grant	Install new door security notification systems in all schools starting at UHS.	\$181,495	Wire transfer received February 2023
Local Recreation Grant	Playground, security fencing, flooring installed at Battle Hill Elementary School.	\$84,000	January 2023-February 2024
School Climate Change Grant	Purchase of instructional supplies such as raised garden beds, soil, seedlings at all district schools.	\$6660	March 2023-August 2023
Rackspace Foundation Technology Grant	Purchase technology related supplies such as 3D printers, Drone equipment, CAD equipment, robotic kits, photography cameras for districtwide classes.	\$25,000	Check received on August 24, 2023 and funds can be used for the calendar year
Mark Schonwetter Holocaust Education Grant	Create a Holocaust Resource Library at Burnet and Kawameeh Middle Schools.	\$750	November 2022-June 2023
Mark Schonwetter Holocaust Education Grant	Create a Holocaust Resource Library at Union High School.	\$1000	November 2023-June 2024
School Based Mental Health	The district will partner with Kean	\$375,000	Year One is July 1,



Grant	University to implement School Psychology Externs to work with our students at UHS, FES, HC and KMS. Additional funds are used for teen counseling suites, mental health professional development and human resource recruitment.	(Grant is 4 years total at \$375,000 plus \$50,000 for Year 5 and \$205,000 supplemental Award Received= \$1,380,000	2023-November 30, 2023 and so on
High Impact Tutoring Grant	Grant is used to alleviate student learning loss due to COVID. District will provide tutoring for students in grades 3 & 4 that are two grades below in ELA and Math at Huntington Learning Center. District will partner with Go Guardian Tutor Me to provide grades 3-12 on demand virtual tutoring.	\$614,000 \$49,120 additional 8% awarded to districts for compliance 2024-2025 school year	January 1, 2024-August 31, 2024 September 1, 2024-June 30, 2025
Mental Health Screening in Schools Supplemental Grant	As part of the SBMH Grant, eligible districts can apply for this funding. The purpose of the grant is to allow the district to implement a depression screener for students in grades 7-12 yearly.	\$73,340 Year 1 & 2 \$81,011 Year 3 & 4 (Grant is 4 years total \$308,702)	Year One is February 1, 2024-December 31, 2024
Emergent and Capital Needs Grant	Continuation of Security services for all district door alarms.	\$183,385	Year Two
Homeless ARP HCY II from the ERESC ARP HCY II Consortium	Transportation reimbursement from the Essex County MCK Homeless Consortium.	\$20,000 \$27,736	March 2024 May 2024
Rackspace Foundation Grant	Funding to support the Special Education Work Based Learning Program at UHS (technology supplies).	\$25,000	May 2024
Local Recreation Grant	Replace flooring at Washington	\$67,000	May 2024



	School and security fencing.		
Union County Middle School Gender and Sexuality Alliance Grant	\$1000 per middle school GSA advisor School Mural per middle school Lighthouse Collaborative LLC resources, parental events, professional development and student resources.	\$2000 stipend Resources for District	September 2024-August 31, 2025
Holocaust Grant	Creation of a Holocaust Lending Library at Union High School	\$1000	November 2024
Climate Literacy for Community Resilience Grant	Climate Change Curriculum Writing and Unit Plan Development Community Resilience Project (UHS Courtyard Development)	\$30,500	June 1, 2025-May 31, 2026
Esports Industry Career Exploration Grant	Esports in both middle schools (staffing and technology resources)	\$50,000	May 1, 2025-June 30, 2026
Expanding Access to Computer Science Grant	Create Cybersecurity Course for Grade 11 & 12th at UHS Purchase technology and PLTW curriculum and PD	\$62,716	May 1, 2025-October 31, 2026
NJDOE Menstrual Product Reimbursement Program	Reimburse the district for any menstrual products purchased in the 2024-2025 school year	\$295.34	2024-2025 school year (closed May 1, 2025)
Rackspace Technology Grant	Items purchased for the Work Based Learning Program: CNC Router, POS Registers, Commercial Refrigerator Purchase of V-Labs hands-on STEM activities for Grade 5.	\$35,000	2025-2026 School Year



21st Century Community Learning Center	After School Program for Burnet and Kawameeh MS	\$400,000 per year for 5 years Total of 2 million dollars	2025-2026 Year One
Funding for Optimal Universal Screeners Grant (FOCUS)	Literacy Universal Screener PD	\$20,930	2025-2026
Cell Phone Grant	To provide locked charging stations for Burnet Middle School to be compliant with the NJ mandate.	\$33,747	2025-2026
<p>PENDING APPROVAL as of 3/25</p> <p>School Climate Grant \$35,000</p> <p>High Impact Tutoring Grant \$320,000</p> <p>Local Recreation Grant \$75,000</p> <p>Rackspace Foundation Grant \$35,000</p> <p>IDEA Supplemental 21st CCLC \$35,000</p> <p>Water Fountain Grant \$200,000</p>			

To Date: \$7,252,605.34 (These are all competitive grants that TUPS were awarded. This does NOT include any ESEA Title funds the district receives yearly which is approximately \$1.5 million additional.)

UHS Concert Band, Marching Band, Swing Choir & Dance Team

Competed in the Worldstrides Heritage Music Festival in Boston, MA



Jaxxon Golden

Was selected by the competition judges to audition for a spot to perform at Carnegie Hall with a performance ensemble.

We can't wait to see
what you do
NEXT YEAR!



AROUND THE U

For more information on what is going on Around the U check out our social media and our [It's All About U Newsletter](#)

Good luck
TO ALL OF OUR
TEST-TAKERS
YOU ARE READY,
and we are all
ROOTING FOR YOU!

We believe in you!

Time to
LOCK IN on
CRASH OUT!

You've got this!

STAY CALM. DO YOUR BEST. SHINE BRIGHT.

APRIL 28
SCHOOL BUS DRIVER
APPRECIATION DAY

Happy
**BUS &
TRANSPORTATION
DRIVER DAY!**

Thank you
for safely guiding our
students each day and
being a friendly face that
starts and ends their
school journey.

DEDICATED CARING RELIABLE

You
DRIVE
THE DIFFERENCE!

We appreciate
all that you do!

IT'S ALL ABOUT U

#ItsAllAboutU #WeAreProudOfU

HELP US CELEBRATE
Decision Day
CLASS OF
2026
DRESS DOWN DAY ON FRIDAY, MAY 1ST

HELP US CELEBRATE OUR STUDENTS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS
AS THEY ANNOUNCE THEIR POST-GRADUATION PLANS.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO WEAR SOMETHING THAT
REPRESENTS YOUR OWN PATH (COLLEGE, TRADE SCHOOL,
OR MILITARY BRANCH).

Autism Awareness Around the U



Ms. Savarese's class brought a beautiful message of inclusion and acceptance to life at Connecticut Farms!

After reading *All My Stripes: A Story for Children with Autism* by Danielle Royer and Shaina Rudolph, students explored the story of a zebra who learns to embrace all of his "stripes" including autism as part of what makes him unique and special.

Inspired by the story, students brainstormed powerful words that promote diversity and autism acceptance. Each student then selected a meaningful word and wrote it on a flower, creating a vibrant display that spreads awareness, kindness, and understanding throughout the school.

A wonderful reminder that every "stripe" matters and that our differences make us stronger together.

Autism Awareness Around the U

Our Livingston Leaders had the opportunity to spend time working alongside our Autism classes and it was truly a meaningful experience for everyone involved.

From building connections to sharing smiles, these moments reflect what makes our school community so special. We are proud of our students for leading with kindness, understanding, and inclusion.



Jacklyn Cassandra Named to Top 20 Finalist for National Elks Scholarship



One essay asked applicants to define community. Cassandra reflected on her experience with the Union High School Performing Arts Center stage crew, sharing how it shaped her understanding of teamwork and leadership.

“Working behind the scenes taught me that every role matters and that strong communities are built through support and shared goals,” she said.

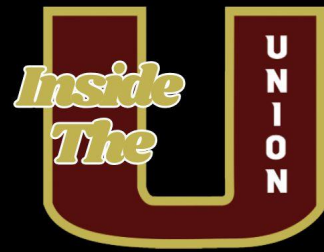
She was the only student from New Jersey to earn this scholarship, a point of pride for the organization.

The award will have a major impact—combined with other aid, Cassandra will now attend Harvard University tuition-free.



TUPS Attendance Initiative

Update for March 2026 District Average K-12th 94.224





Attendance Award
FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF MARCH WITH A

96.97%

**The 4th Graders at
Hannah Caldwell**

We Are Proud of U!





TUPS
TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attendance Award
FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER WITH A

98.839%

the 6th graders at Kawameech

We Are Proud of U!





TUPS
TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attendance Award
FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF OCTOBER WITH A

96.61%

**the 1st Graders at
Connecticut Farms**

We Are Proud of U!





TUPS
TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attendance Award
FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER WITH A

97.834%

the 6th graders at Kawameech

We Are Proud of U!





TUPS
TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attendance Award
FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF DECEMBER WITH A

95.293%

**the 3rd Graders at
Connecticut Farms**

We Are Proud of U!





TUPS
TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attendance Award
FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF JANUARY WITH A

97.24%

the 7th graders at Kawameech

We Are Proud of U!




TUPS
TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attendance Award
FOR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ATTENDING FOR
THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY WITH A

95.96%

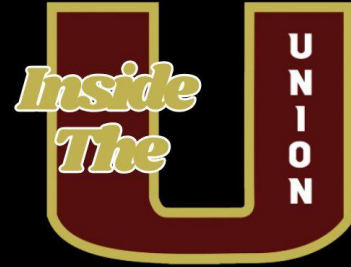
**The 3rd Graders at
Hannah Caldwell**

We Are Proud of U!



TUPS
TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying (HIB)



Incidents to Report

Period April 15th - April 30th

Met the Criteria – 5

HCES - 1 KMS -1 UHS - 3

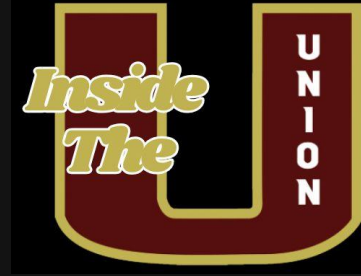
Unfounded - 1

UHS -1

Inconclusive - 5

LES - 1 UHS - 3 BMS - 1

Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying (HIB)



Incidents to Affirm

Period March 25th - April 14th

Met the Criteria - 3

UHS - 3

Unfounded - 1

UHS - 1

Inconclusive - 3

UHS - 2 BMS - 1

Union County District Highlights

UNION COUNTY DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

Daryl Palmieri
Interim Executive County Superintendent
Union County



3/9/2026

Welcome to the **Union County Highlights Newsletter** — a quick, upbeat look at the great work happening across our schools.

Each edition celebrates learning, leadership, and community, reflecting our shared commitment to helping every student grow.

Thank you to our educators, students, families, and partners for the everyday excellence and kindness you bring to our classrooms.

Have a highlight to share for a future issue? We'd love to include it.



Click on the image above for the full newsletter

TOWNSHIP OF UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS

UNION HIGH SCHOOL-



New York Giants Donate \$10,000 to Union High School Football Program

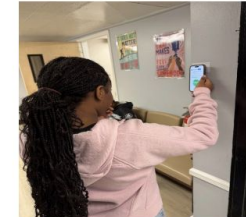
Union, NJ – The **New York Giants** recently demonstrated their continued commitment to youth athletics by donating **\$10,000** to the Union High School football program during a special visit to the school. A visit that also highlighted the organization's longstanding connection to Union through the prestigious **Lou Rettono High School Football Coach of the Week Award**.

Several members of the Giants organization spent time with student-athletes, offering both financial support and meaningful mentorship.

Giants rookie center **Markus Mbow** shared his inspiring journey from high school standout to collegiate athlete and ultimately to the NFL. He encouraged Union players to stay committed to their goals and trust the process, emphasizing that perseverance and discipline are key to long-term success.

Giants Head Strength and Conditioning Coach **Aaron Wellman** provided valuable training and health insights, stressing the importance of preparation, discipline, and recovery in building both athletic performance and character.

22



Burnet Middle School-

First in New Jersey to Pilot Innovative Cell Phone Management App

Union, NJ – Township of Union Public Schools is proud to announce that Burnet Middle School has become the first school in New Jersey to pilot **Doorman**, an innovative cell phone management application designed to support focused learning environments while maintaining student safety.

The proactive pilot reflects the district's continued commitment to implementing thoughtful, research-based strategies that enhance student engagement and well-being.

The **Doorman** app temporarily limits access to non-academic applications during the school day, helping reduce distractions in classrooms while still allowing students to communicate with families in emergency situations.

"This initiative represents a balanced, student-centered approach," said Dr. Gerry Benaquista, Superintendent of Schools. "We are taking proactive steps to ensure our classrooms remain environments where students can focus, engage deeply in learning, and build healthy digital habits."

The pilot also aligns with New Jersey's new school cell phone law, which takes effect July 1. By launching this program ahead of the statewide implementation date, the district is positioning itself at the forefront of efforts to reduce classroom distractions, improve academic outcomes, and support student mental health.

Research continues to demonstrate that reduced phone usage during instructional time can lead to improved concentration, stronger academic performance, and decreased anxiety among students. Through this initiative, Burnet Middle School is helping set a model for districts across the state seeking balanced, forward-thinking solutions.

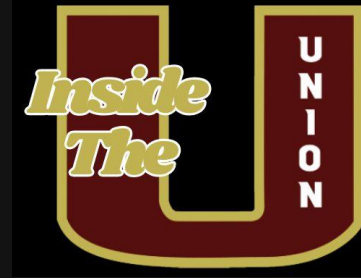
Chief Information & Technology Officer John Sousa noted that the pilot is designed to gather feedback from students, staff, and families to ensure successful implementation and scalability. "We are committed to being intentional and collaborative as we explore innovative tools that enhance the educational experience," Sousa said.

The Township of Union Public Schools views this pilot as an important first step, with the potential for future expansion based on outcomes and community input.

For additional information about the initiative, we encourage you to view the district's interview with Dr. Benaquista and Mr. Sousa discussing the program and its goals. <https://vimeo.com/1158448757>

24

TUPS 2026 Hall of Fame Inductees - May 7th



Christine A. Amalfe
 David Arminio
 Michael T. Bono
 Nija Charles
 Douglas DeLuca
 Elizabeth Duffy
 Grace Durling
 Steven Edwards
 Samuel Fortunato

Glenn A. Grant
 Dr. Theodore Jakubowski
 Dr. Michael Lodato
 Ronald Manzella
 Donald Ralph Marangi
 Andrew Meltzoff
 Linda Simensky
 Dr. Amy Simon
 Lawrence Edward Roberts

TUPS HALL OF FAME

HONORING THE PAST, INSPIRING THE FUTURE

Invites you to the
Induction Ceremony
 for the
Class of 2026

Thursday, May 7th 2026
 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
 Union Arts Center - DMK Theater
 1980 Morris Avenue
 Union, NJ 07083

We are thrilled to announce the revival of the TUPS Hall of Fame, after several years, honoring the remarkable individuals whose lasting impact continues to define our TUPS community.

Inductees

Christine A. Amalfe	Glenn A. Grant
David Arminio	Dr. Theodore Jakubowski
Michael T. Bono	Dr. Michael Lodato
Nija Charles	Ronald Manzella
Douglas DeLuca	Donald Ralph Marangi
Elizabeth Duffy	Andrew Meltzoff
Grace Durling	Linda Simensky
Steven Edwards	Dr. Amy Simon
Samuel Fortunato	Lawrence Edward Roberts

RSVP by April 7, 2026
Donation: \$50 per person
Checks payable to:
FUPL c/o Hall of Fame
Honorees are free, plus 1 guest.

Please note that we can accommodate only 130 guests.

Seating will be available on a first-come, first-served basis, so we encourage you to submit your RSVP early.

We kindly ask that you keep this in mind when responding so that we may welcome as many honorees and supporters as possible.

PLEASE RETURN PAYMENT TO:
 TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
 C/O KRISTIN NUNES
 855 LEHIGH AVENUE, SUITE 2
 UNION, NJ 07083

CHECKS PAYABLE TO: FUPL, C/O HALL OF FAME
 PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED WITH THE FORM BY APRIL 7, 2026

A COMMEMORATIVE JOURNAL WILL BE PUBLISHED FOR THE TUPS HALL OF FAME.
 PLACE YOUR CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE OR AD BELOW, OR EMAIL IT TO
 KRISTIN NUNES AT COMMUNICATION@TUPS.ORG

	INSIDE/BACK COVERS	\$250 EACH	
FULL PAGE	\$100	HALF PAGE	\$75
QUARTER PAGE	\$50	2-LINE LISTING (BUSINESS CARD)	\$25

PLEASE RETURN PAYMENT TO:
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 UNION, NJ 07083

CHECKS PAYABLE TO: FUPL C/O HALL OF FAME

PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED WITH THE FORM BY APRIL 7, 2026.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

TUPS HALL OF FAME

HONORING THE PAST, INSPIRING THE FUTURE

The No Surprise Act



The No Surprise Act (NSA)

- The “No Surprises Act” (NSA) was enacted on Dec. 27, 2020, as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (CAA), to increase health care transparency and protect consumers from surprise medical bills.

Effective for plan years beginning on or after Jan. 1, 2022, the NSA provides federal protections against surprise medical billing by limiting out-of-network cost sharing and prohibiting “balance billing” in many of the circumstances in which surprise medical bills arose most frequently

Overview

- **Patient Protection from Surprise Bills**
 - The Act protects patients from unexpected out-of-network medical bills by limiting their costs to normal in-network charges.
- **Shifted Financial Responsibility**
 - Financial disputes now occur between health plans and providers, relieving patients but exposing employers to payment disagreements.
- **Scope and Impact of the Act**
 - The law covers emergency, certain non-emergency, and air ambulance services but does not fix prices, adding uncertainty.
- **Employer Challenges**
 - Employers face increased financial unpredictability and administrative complexity due to new payment dispute processes.

Scenarios

- **Emergency Services Coverage**
 - NSA applies to emergency services regardless of network status, including ER visits and surgeries.
- **Non-Emergency Out-of-Network Providers**
 - NSA covers non-emergency care at in-network facilities when providers like anesthesiologists are out-of-network.
- **Air Ambulance Services**
 - Air ambulance transports are included due to historically high surprise billing in these situations.
- **Financial Impact on School Districts**
 - Claims may start as ordinary expenses but can become costly due to arbitration, impacting budgets.

The Qualifying Payment Amount (QPA)

- **Definition and Purpose**
- QPA sets the benchmark payment amount based on typical in-network rates for services in a geographic area.
- **Calculation Methodology**
- QPA is calculated using median contracted rates from a base year, adjusted for inflation to ensure fairness.
- **Controversies and Challenges**
- Providers often dispute QPA's accuracy, arguing it undervalues specialized and hospital-based services in arbitration.
- **Role in Dispute Resolution**
- QPA serves as a starting point in payment disputes, not a cap, leading to possible higher negotiated amounts.

Provider Negotiations Window and IDR Process

- **30-Day Negotiation Period**

- The No Surprises Act mandates a 30-day open negotiation period for payment disputes before arbitration can begin.

- **Independent Dispute Resolution (IDR)**

- If negotiations fail, the IDR process allows binding arbitration where an arbitrator chooses one payment offer without compromise.

- **Service-by-Service Arbitration**

- Arbitrations occur on a service-by-service basis, potentially generating multiple disputes from a single patient encounter.

- **Cost and Administrative Impact**

- The IDR process creates cost uncertainty and administrative burdens for employer groups due to potential claim reprocessing.

Arbitration Outcomes, Fees and Claim Volatility

- **Provider Wins and Higher Payments**
 - Providers often prevail 88% in disputes securing payments above original QPA amounts influenced by multiple factors favoring reimbursement.
- **Arbitration Fees and Costs**
 - IDR process incurs administrative and arbitration fees borne by the losing party, increasing total claim costs.
- **Claim Volatility and Financial Impact**
 - Delayed settlements and added fees cause claim volatility, disrupting financial projections and requiring Board oversight.
- **Strategic Risk Management**
 - Understanding arbitration dynamics is critical for risk discussions, setting expectations, and evaluating stop-loss coverage.

IMPACT

- **2024-2025 Union BOE had \$551,000 in NSA claims.**
- **2025-2026 Union BOE YTD has \$2.9 million in NSA claims.**
- No way to budget for these “Surprise” claims
- No way of knowing how many are in existence.

- **Going Forward**
- Contracted Out of Network Repricing vendor The Phia Group effective July 1, 2026 will handle negotiating a lower payment on NSA claims.
- The Phia Group going forward will work to have prearranged agreements with out of network providers to avoid NSA claim billing.

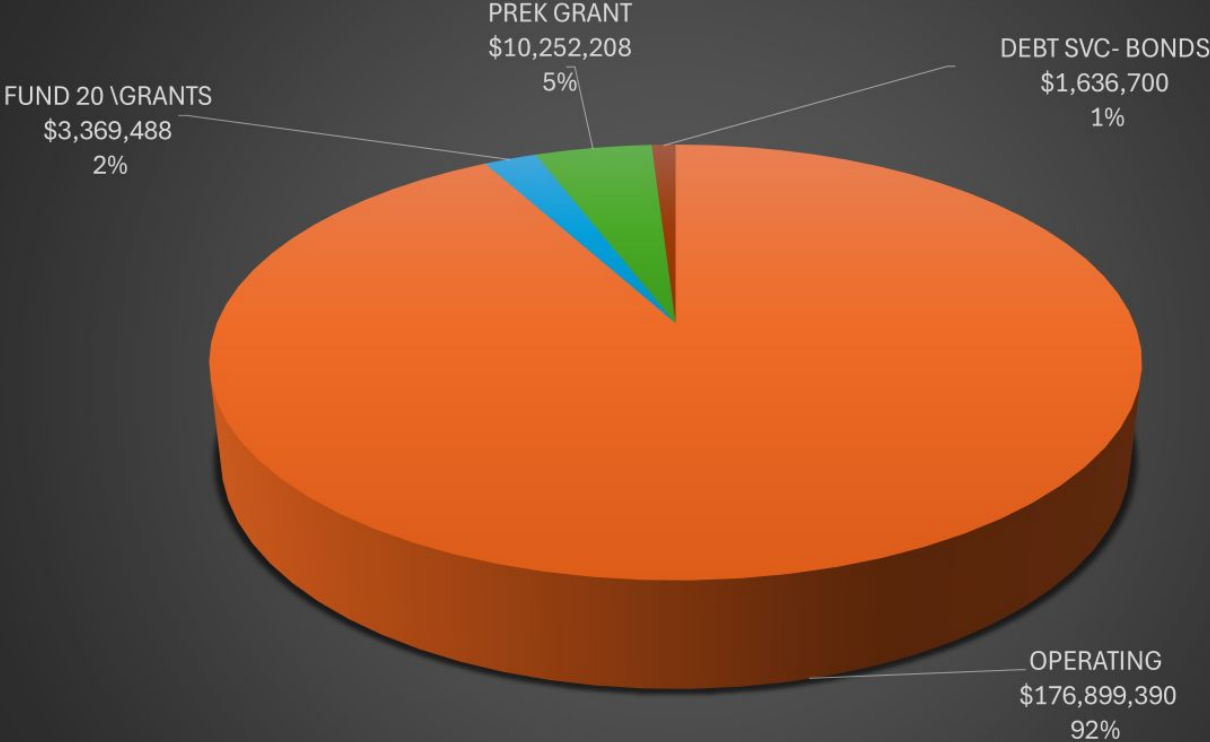
THANK YOU!

TUPS FINAL FY27 PROPOSED BUDGET

Dr. Gerry Benaquista, Superintendent
Mrs. Yolanda Koon, School Business Administrator
April 30, 2026



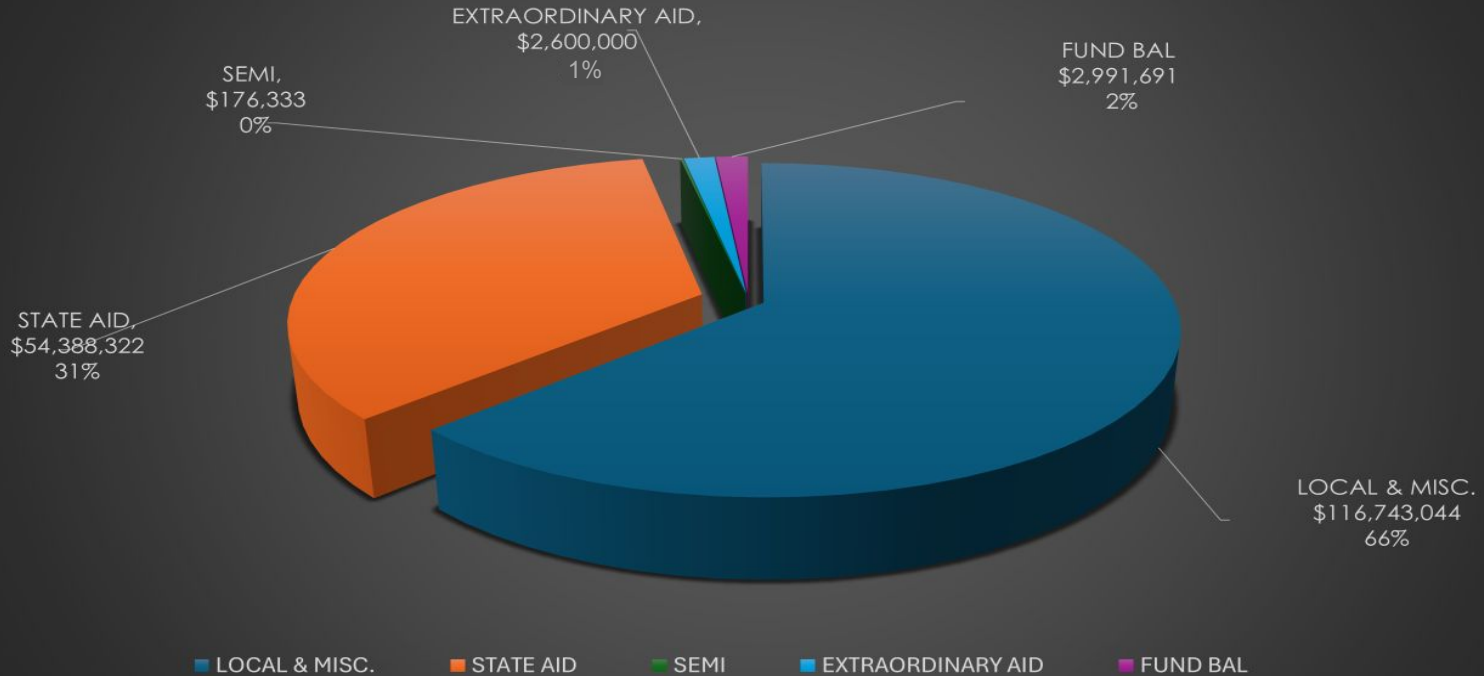
FY 27 GRAND TOTAL REVENUES SOURCES - \$192,157,786



■ OPERATING ■ FUND 20 \GRANTS ■ PRE-K AID ■ DEBT SVC- BONDS

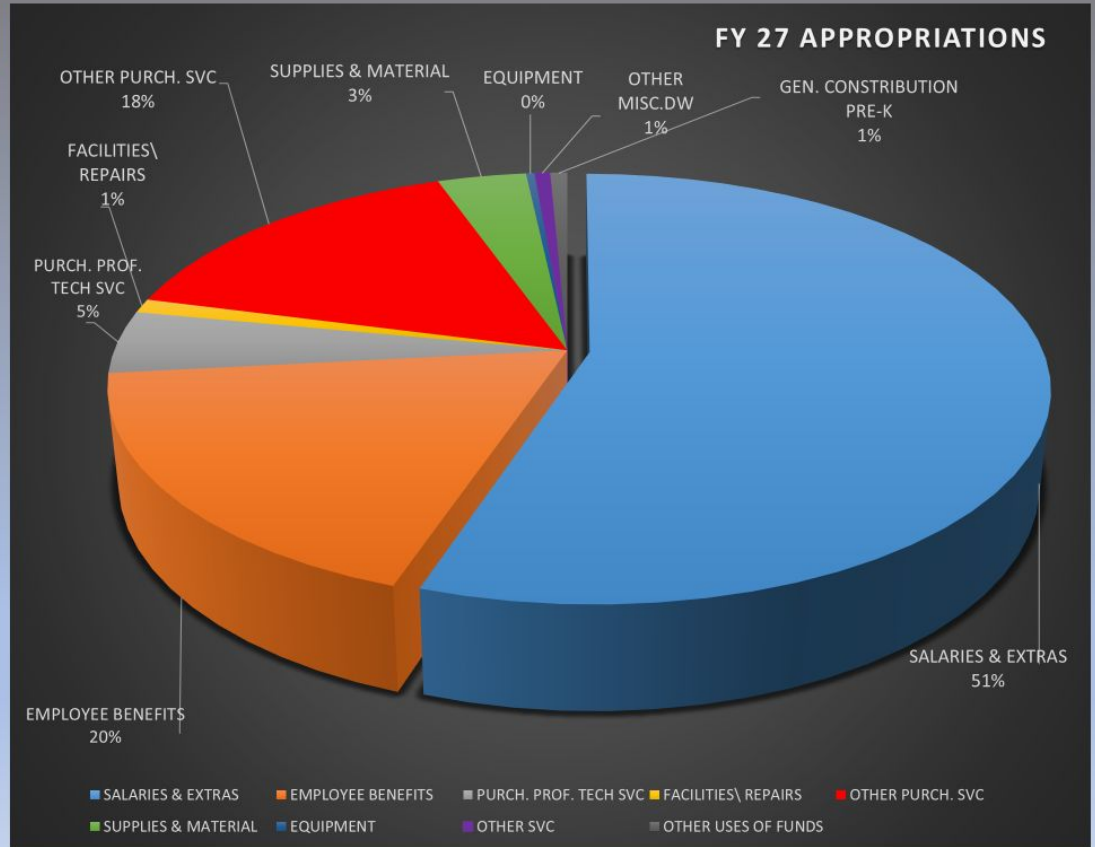
FY27 TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES

FY27 TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES - \$176,899,390



FY27 OPERATING APPROPRIATIONS

CATEGORIES	AMOUNT(S)
SALARIES \ EXTRA	\$ 89,112,792
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$ 37,293,428
PURCH. PROF & TECH (Legal, Morris, etc.)	\$ 8,798,251
REPAIRS	\$ 1,390,636
PURCH. SVC (Tuition, Transportation, etc.)	\$ 32,155,692
SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$ 5,111,994
EQUIPMENT	\$ 595,132
OTHER OBJECTS (Judgements, DW Misc...,etc.)	\$ 1,167,947
GEN Contribution to Special Education Pre-K	\$ 1,273,518
TOTAL	\$ 176,899,390



HOW DID WE GET HERE?



It's All About U

HOW DID WE GET HERE ????

REVENUE CHALLENGE

- * FY26 Lost in State Aid 1,734,137
- * FY27 Lost in State Aid 1,682,113
- * Other Revenue Challenges:
 - Tax Levy Cap of 2%
 - Fund Balance \ Surplus

EXPENDITURES INCREASES

- * Health Care Cost increase 5,000,000
- * Annual Increase in Salaries 3,000,000
- * Other Cost Drivers:
 - Transportation
 - Tuition- Special Education
 - Inflation

Estimated Cuts \ Reductions to Balance Preliminary Budget

Transportation	\$ 2,000,000.00
Salaries \ Health	6,925,994.61
Misc. \ Judgement, PERS	925,995.00
Shortfall	\$ 9,851,989.61

ACTION ITEMS RECOMMENDED



It's All About U

TUPS will transition to K-5 in all Elementary Schools including Jefferson Elementary School

TUPS will repurpose Franklin Elementary School to the TUPS Pre-K Center

Transportation - Anticipating Savings

Re-Evaluate Central Office Registration

Re-Negotiate\Refinance(Leases)

Reduction in staff

Evaluation TUPS Programs

Re-Evaluate Technology Software

Evaluate shared service (related services)

Evaluate after school sport programs/activities

Update our TUPS boundaries lines

WHAT CHANGED !!!

(From Preliminary to FINAL)

Estimated Cuts \ Reductions to Balance Preliminary Budget

Transportation	\$ 2,000,000.00
Salaries \ Health	6,925,994.61
Misc. \ Judgement, PERS	<u>925,995.00</u>
Shortfall	<u>\$ 9,851,989.61</u>

REVENUE SIDE

- INCREASE- HEALTH ADJUSTMENT \$1.4M

EXPENSE SIDE


- TRANSPORTATION \$2.1M
- PERSONNEL \$5.1M
- HEALTH\MISC. \$1.2M

THANK





It's All About U

 www.tups.org

 ParentSquare			 Township of Union Public Schools
 StudentSquare 6-12 Grade			 Tupschools
@ communication@tups.org			 Unionhs_athletics
			 Tupschools

TUPS Board of Education



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