

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION MINUTES – October 11, 2022

NOTICE OF MEETING:

TO ALL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

The worksession meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member. Action was taken.

Mrs. Williams called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Dr. Guy Francis, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. John O’Shea, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Yocasta Brens-Watson (arrived 6:25 p.m.), Ms. Marissa McKenzie, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby (arrived 6:01 p.m.), Ms. Chastity Santana (arrived 6:05 p.m.)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Scott Taylor, Mr. Gerald Benaquista, Dr. Gretel Perez, Mrs. Yolanda Koon

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

Dr. Francis led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Regis-Darby arrived at meeting (6:01 p.m.).

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

Dr. Francis read the district’s mission statement.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the Board go into Executive Session at 6:03 p.m. to discuss the following subject matters without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b: HIB Hearing.

Please take notice that minutes will be taken of the discussion conducted during the executive session and the Board will disclose the minutes of the executive session when the disclosure will not result in unwarranted invasion of individual privacy or prejudice to the best interests of the Board of Education and provided that such disclosure does not violate federal, state or local statutes and does not fall within the attorney/client privilege. Action may be taken when the Board reconvenes in public session.

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Scott-Hayden,
Mrs. Williams

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 7:10 p.m.

Comments from Public on Resolutions:

None

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes will be approved next week.

Communications:

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – BOOKER

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Ronald Booker, head custodian-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, effective April 1, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – FLORES

Letter of resignation from Zoila Flores, cafeteria aide-Washington Elementary School, effective September 8, 2022.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – GARCIA

Letter of resignation from Emely Garcia, math teacher-Union High School, effective July 1, 2022.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – HERNANDEZ

Letter of resignation from Aida Hernandez, cafeteria aide-Battle Hill Elementary School, effective September 13, 2022.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – HIGGINS

Letter of resignation from Patrick Higgins, security guard-Kawameeh Middle School, effective October 13, 2022.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – HICKS

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Janice Hicks, part-time bus driver-Transportation Department, effective January 1, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – HOWELL

Letter of resignation from Kafi Howell, paraprofessional-Franklin Elementary School, effective October 28, 2022.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – KARLO

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Janet Karlo, café aide-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, effective September 12, 2022.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – REMY

Letter of resignation from Lisa Remy, teacher assistant-preschool, effective October 13, 2022.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – TERRY

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Virginia Terry, custodian-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, effective January 1, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – DOWLING

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Nickki Dowling, English teacher-Kawameeh Middle School, November 28, 2022-May 15, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – MELCHIONNA

Request for extension of paid medical leave from Antonella Melchionna, staff accountant-Central Office, October 3, 2022-November 7, 2022.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – PRICE

Request for paid medical leave update from Jacquelin Price, science teacher-Union High School, October 13, 2022-October 21, 2022.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – ROBSON

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Leane Robson, school counselor- Livingston Elementary School, November 14, 2022-March 2, 2023.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – WALTON

Request for intermittent leave FMLA/NJFLA from Janet Walton, school social worker-Jefferson School, September 1, 2022-June 30, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – KRUPA

Request for paid medical leave from Connie Krupa, special services accountant-Hamilton School, September 19, 2022-December 9, 2022.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Taylor will give an update on the State of the Schools and the student spotlight will be a Washington Elementary School student

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Scott-Hayden presented the Education/Student Discipline Committee agenda.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden stated E-7 will be moved to the Fiscal section of the agenda and will be reflected in next week's agenda and she will walk on E-8 – Affirm Report of HIB discussed in executive session.

DISCUSSION:

None

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution was moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, for adoption:

E-1. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent’s Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period September 21, 2022 to October 11, 2022, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

E-8. AFFIRM REPORT OF HIB

Affirm Report of HIB discussed in executive session.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked what were the changes to the calendar? Dr. Taylor stated we are adding half-days to the calendar for students only so we can provide professional development to staff.

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Mr. O’Shea presented the Fiscal and Planning Committee Agenda.

DISCUSSION:

None

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution was moved by Mr. O’Shea, seconded by Mrs. Scott-Hayden for adoption:

F-31. APPROVE ADDENDUM TO AGREEMENT - NORTH JERSEY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Approve Addendum to Agreement between the district and North Jersey Behavioral Health Services for the 2022-2023 school year, for an additional tuition amount of \$145,600.00, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked why wasn’t this previously budgeted into the special ed budget? Where is the money coming from? Mrs. Koon stated Kim Conti informed her that this was a needed service. This is a severely special needs student. The annual tuition is \$224,400 and this

student is 17 years old, very strong and having difficulties educating him. They need to provide additional behavioral services. These are the unexpected expenditures that by law we are entitled to educate this student. We have to show the State that we are doing our due diligence and exercise all options so that the State will take over this student. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated the State will never take accountability for this student and we will always have to put that money aside.

Mrs. Koon stated Mrs. Scott-Hayden did mention E-7 will be moved to F-33 – it will be updated to read “Approve the Amended List for Athletic Student Activity” and will be reflected on the October 18th agenda.

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea, Mrs. Regis-Darby,
Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

DISCUSSION:

Dr. Taylor stated if you have any questions on the grant funded programs, Isabella Scocozza is here to answer questions.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated F-16 – who are we paying? Dr. Taylor stated Ms. Pugh and she is doing intensive work at Franklin.

Mrs. Minneci stated F-22 – Living Water Well – I had asked at the committee meeting last night how many homeless families we have. Dr. Taylor informed me today that there are 34 families/57 students that we service.

Isabella Scocozza stated as part of the McKinney-Vento funding through the district, the counseling outreach services will be an opportunity for a counselor to reach out to those families (19 elementary, 16 middle school and 21 high school students). The counselor would be responsible for reaching out to those families after hours, keeping track, being the liaison and primary contact for State and County initiatives; helping them with transportation, outreach programs, emergency counseling services, supplies, housing and providing resources to those families. They will design workshops – in person and virtual – to help those families and to provide parent resources and intervention to help them throughout the year.

Grievance/Negotiations Committee:

Mrs. Minneci presented the Grievance/Negotiations Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

None

Operations Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Minneci presented the Operations Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

Dr. Francis stated O-4 and O-5 – what is that about? Isabella Scocoza stated the recreation department reached out to the district to form a partnership for a Saturday inclusive program with special ed and general ed students at Hannah Caldwell. It is open to all students grades 2 through 8; 4 sessions for each cohort. We are looking to have 20 students in each session. The recreation department will provide some staffing – 4 aides, yoga instructor and supplies and they asked for us to do a posting for a phys ed, music and special ed teachers and that will be paid out of the ESSER funds. It will service a total of 60 students from January through March. We hope to expand in either a summer program and a school year as well. Dr. Taylor stated that we will be giving low-economic families first opportunity because the initial intent was for us to give parents respite – a 3-hour period of time of their own.

Ms. Scocoza stated it is an enrichment but also a recreation-based program. They will be doing phys ed activities, enrichment music program, yoga and mindfulness and crafts as well.

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

Ms. Santana presented the Personnel Committee agenda.

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

P-1A. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – NEW HIRES

Personnel Actions-New Hires be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-1B PERSONNEL ACTIONS – EXTRA PAY (*Agenda item VOTE FAILED at Worksession*)

Personnel Actions-Extra Pay be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-2. APPROVE SUBSTITUTE LISTS

Approve Substitute Lists for the 2022-2023 school year as follows:

Name	Position	Rate
Jason A. Johns	Sub-custodian	\$16.00/hr.
David D. Huff	Sub-custodian	\$16.00/hr.

P-3. ACCEPT LETTERS OF RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT

Accept letters of resignation/retirement from the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Eff. Date	Reason	Resignations/Retirements approvals are subject to contractual notice to be given accordingly.

Ronald Booker	Head custodian	Hannah Caldwell	4/1/2023	Retirement	
Zoila Flores	Cafeteria aide	Washington	9/8/2022	Resignation	
Emely Garcia	Math teacher	UHS	7/1/2022	Resignation	
Aida Hernandez	Cafeteria aide	Battle Hill	9/13/2022	Resignation	
Patrick Higgins	Security guard	KMS	10/13/2022	Resignation	
Janice Hicks	Part-time bus driver	Transportation	1/1/2023	Retirement	
Kafi Howell	Paraprofessional	Franklin	10/28/2022	Resignation	
Janet Karlo	Café Aide	Hannah Caldwell	9/12/2022	Retirement	
Lisa Remy	Teacher assistant	Preschool	10/13/2022	Resignation	
Virginia Terry	Custodian	Connecticut Farms	1/1/2023	Retirement	

P-4. APPROVE LEAVES

Approve leaves for the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Leave Dates	Leave Type	Notes
Nikki Dowling	English teacher	KMS	11/28/2022-5/15/2023	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	
Antonella Melchionna	Staff accountant	Central Office	10/3/2022-11/7/2022	Extension of paid medical leave	
Jacquelin Price	Science teacher	UHS	10/13/2022-10/21/2022	Update to paid medical leave	
Leane Robson	School counselor	Livingston	11/14/2022-3/2/2023	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	
Janet Walton	School social worker	Jefferson	9/1/2022-6/30/2023	Intermittent leave FMLA/NJFLA	
Connie Krupa	Special services accountant	Hamilton	9/19/2022-12/9/2022	Paid medical leave	

P-5. APPROVE STUDENT TEACHERS AND INTERNSHIPS

Approve student teachers and internships for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-6. APPROVE DISTRICT COMMUNICATION LIAISON – SPEKHARDT

Approve William Spekhardt as the communication liaison to local law enforcement agencies for the 2022-2023 school year, at no cost to the district.

P-7. APPROVE CHANGE OF SALARY CLASS #3 – EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 2022

Approve Change of Salary Class #3 (effective September 2022), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-8A. APPROVE RELEASE OF TREASURER OF SCHOOL MONIES

Approve release of Jennifer Semler as the Treasurer of School Monies, effective October 31, 2022.

P-8B. APPROVE TREASURER OF SCHOOL MONIES – TED GEORGIU

Approve Ted Georgiou as the Treasurer of School Monies, to replace Jennifer Semler, for the 2022-2023 school year, effective November 1, 2022, in the amount of \$4,900.00.

P-9. APPROVE DUTECHÉ AINE – ATTEND MUJC MEETINGS

Approve Duteché Aine, school social worker, to attend meetings at the Morris Union Jointure Commission (MUJC), at no cost to the district for the 2022-2023 school year.

P-10. APPROVE ATTENDANCE AT NJASBO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Approve Yolanda Koon and Fernanda Manochio to attend the following NJASBO professional development programs: (a) November 15 and November 17, 2022 – Fiscal Procurement and ESSER Funds Findings; (b) December 13 and December 14, 2022 – Pension Update; (c) January 19 and January 24, 2023 – Employment Issues; (d) February 2023 – programs TBD; (e) March 21 and March 23, 2022 – purchasing update; (f) April 18th and April 20, 2023 – Audit Review and Internal Controls.

P-11. APPROVE ASSISTANT BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR – MANOCHIO

Approve Fernanda Manochio as Assistant Business Administrator, for the 2022-2023 school year, at a contractual salary of \$118,000.

DISCUSSION:

The Board discussed having P-11 included for vote at the worksession.

Moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Regis-Darby, that P-11 be included for vote at the worksession.

Mrs. Minneci stated P-1B – she wanted to make the Board members aware there are some with no stipend and we have done that before with one or two but there are about 24 on there now. Dr. Francis stated since there are no numbers, we should not vote on it.

Dr. Taylor stated Gerry and I met with Ann Margaret Shannon because we are mindful of this.

Mrs. Minneci stated this month there are 24 clubs where teachers are volunteering. Dr. Francis stated I thought there was going to be limit on what clubs would be approved by the Board.

Mr. O’Shea stated down the road they will come and ask for a stipend, so that will need to be part of collective bargaining agreement.

Mrs. Minneci stated there is supposed to be some conversation between the organization and administration about clubs, it’s in the agreement. Mrs. Regis-Darby asked was that conversation had? If not, are they volunteering for these clubs then why would I question it. Mrs. Brens-Watson asked is it a question of equity – some are paid and some are not?

Dr. Taylor stated sometimes kids get together and ask a teacher to be part of the club and the teacher says yes and maybe it should be part of the CBA. Mrs. Minneci asked are there some clubs out there that are not being used and there is a stipend out there? Mr. O’Shea stated I would like to see how many clubs we are talking about – how many have stipends and have no activity. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated do a club audit. Dr. Taylor stated he would do a survey on the clubs and get back to the Board as soon as possible.

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams

NAY: Mrs. Minneci (P-1B-unpaid stipends only); Mr. O’Shea (P-1B), Mrs. Scott-Hayden (P-1B)

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Regis-Darby (P-1B), Mrs. Williams (P-1B)

P-1A, P-2 to P-11, inclusive
P-1B

MOTION CARRIED
MOTION FAILED

Policy Committee:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following policies were presented by Ms. Santana for First Reading:

POL-1. ABOLISH REGULATION 2432 – SCHOOL SPONSORED PUBLICATIONS
Abolish Regulation 2432 – School Sponsored Publications.

POL-2. REGULATION 3270 – INSTRUCTIONAL PLANS AND PLAN DOCUMENTS
(NEW)

Approve Regulation 3270 – Instructional Plans and Plan Documents, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

POL-3. POLICY 2415.04 – TITLE I – DISTRICTWIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Approve Policy 2415.04 – Title I – Districtwide Parent and Family Engagement, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

POL-4. POLICY 5512 – HARRASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

Policy 5512 – Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Minneci presented the Residency Committee agenda.

These are not re-registration students; they are students ineligible to be educated in our schools because they are not residents.

Dr. Taylor stated the number of students they did not re-register were sent letters three weeks ago. The deadline was last Friday to get all documents in. The students that remain unregistered will be investigated.

DISCUSSION:

None

Technology Committee:

Mrs. Brens-Watson stated the Chromebooks for middle school students will be distributed after the students return to school after the Start Strong state testing.

Lincoln Tech interns have been working with the IT team for the past six weeks and have completed their internship. Mrs. Paul is looking at the next set of interns that will come into the district.

We are working with Honeywell vendor for the integration of door access systems with the Sielox Class E911 system at UHS, KMS, BMS, Jefferson and central administration building.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Santana asked where does the charge go if a student's computer needs repair? Is the parent notified? Or is it just put on the account? Mrs. Brens-Watson stated families do get charged. Ms. Santana stated please let the parents know what the charges are for and also let the parents know that the money for lunches and money for repairs and everything else are separate.

Ms. Santana stated she spoke with the new person in charge of lunches – if you are free and reduced, you pay less money on your replacements. Mrs. Koon stated that is one of the benefits. Dr. Perez stated we need to make sure the changes are automatically reflected.

Approval of Bills:

Approval of the Bills will be at next week's meeting.

Unfinished Business:

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked if the NJSLA scores will be shared and asked if the students with the perfect scores be highlighted. Dr. Taylor stated Dr. Perez would give a presentation November meeting.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden stated if we get the audit for P-1B before the next meeting, can we walk it back on. Mr. Benaquista stated it will be on next week's meeting.

New Business:

Ms. Santana asked do we have a relationship with the police department for when school lets out at 3:00 p.m. because I was driving near Washington – it is a nasty show. There are school buses on the street, parked cars, parents walking – it is a death trap. Parents are just parking anywhere. Mr. Benaquista stated anything we can do this year and plans for the summer to utilize property; make any adaptations because we need better drop-offs and pick-up areas. I will speak with Mr. White and Mr. Spekhardt.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated the first person you reach out to for help is the parents. You need to send a letter to the parents for assistance and when they don't help, these are the consequences. Mr. Benaquista stated Mr. Kloc leaned on his PTA and they came up with some suggestions. I will suggest the letters to the parents with drop off information and no parking in certain areas.

Comments from the Public:

Catherine Lewis stated you walked on E-8 so you prevented anyone from making comments on it. You slide it in but I heard it. You voted to accept the HIB report that was discussed in executive session. You discussed in for 10 minutes about someone's life. I have a lot of feelings about that. A case as complicated, you couldn't sit on it for a week. Something that has no shred of physical evidence at all. We are supposed to be innocent until proven guilty and there is no physical evidence in place where there are cameras and documentation and electronic communication allegedly. I hope I'm wrong, but I know what I heard. Another thing, you didn't understand something so you all abstained. You voted down 6th and 7th period stipends. People have been working since September 1st with no break because you didn't understand a couple of clubs. I can't even believe what happened tonight.

Kristin Nunes stated I'm standing in for Cathy Sharp. We have situations going on in our building that are not enjoyable, and we have been covering a lot of people since this pandemic started and it is continuing. Not only are people not getting their stipends, they are missing their preps. We don't have the coverage that we need and now the demands on us are greater. We are told to put objectives on the board. I'm covering someone else's class. The morale around here needs to be picked up and we are trying our best as a union to keep everybody up but we need assistance. I know SEL is a big thing Dr. Taylor, but we don't want to hear about SEL anymore; we are trying to keep the boat floating. I am tired of keeping the boat floating. There are no

paras. We had people that wanted to have a Spanish teacher cover a whole building so they had 918 students to grade. This is insane and does not happen in the real world. Can we get a courtesy like we are really trying to work and putting objectives on the board may not be the most important thing right now. We are educating our children the best we can and they are our first priority.

Ann Margaret Shannon stated I know Mr. Kloc works with the parents and the parents came up with a cone and an orange vest but we do have to tell the parents because if they are not going to do it they will get a ticket. I do hope we get the police involved. The buildings are trying but the parents need to follow the rules. My new shirt says 4th grade basketball league started and we have games the next three Fridays at Hannah Caldwell from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. F-19 – the book club – who is the audience for the book club? Shame on me that I missed P-1B was in bold because this is the worksession. We are supposed to discuss stuff here and vote next week. Why was it all in bold? I didn't know there was anything to vote on. We have been talking for 20 years about these clubs. It is upsetting if these people don't get paid a 6th or 7th stipend. I hope you can get this on for next week. It is tough to work all day long; you want to get a little money, a little reward for it. Why was there no discussion and a vote? I tell you about those stipends is because the administrators pushed and pushed and fib and say next year you will get money. I have told, written, emailed administrators that is not true. You can't tell someone you are going to give them money next year when you haven't even talked to the UTEA about putting it in the contract. We have been asking for six years to put one sentence in the contract that says "every May, the administration will sit down with the UTEA" and weed through the clubs and get rid of clubs that aren't successful and bring in the new ones. We have to do it right. We had SAT elective classes so why do we need a club; I found out the SAT electives were dropped when the teachers left. It makes no sense so bring back the SAT elective classes.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Regis-Darby, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Yolanda Koon

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

