



**Superintendent's Report**  
**State of the Schools**  
**December 18, 2024**

## **A Small Glimpse**

**Meet our Staff - John Sousa  
jsousa@twpunionschools.org**

**John Sousa, Chief Information & Technology  
Officer (CITO)**

**Bachelor's of Science in Information Technology  
from NJIT and a Master's in Technology  
Management from Columbia University.**

**Over 10 years of experience in educational  
technology combined with over 15 years of  
relevant military and leadership experience.**

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**TUPS Transportation Costs  
OVER  
10 Million Dollars Annually**

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**\$116,820**

**\$92,707**

**\$63,000**

**\$52,020**

**\$97,710**

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**T & M Associates Presentation**

**Union Township Board of Education**  
**Bus Routing Optimization**

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**Dr. Jose Rodriguez**

**[Curriculum and Instruction Presentation](#)**

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**TUPS Security Vision**

**THE LAYER APPROACH OF SCHOOL SECURITY**

**Emergency Management**

**Staff Training**

**Exercises/Drills**

**Technology- Hardware Software**

**Positive School Culture**

**STONEGATE ASSOCIATES SECURITY AUDIT WHERE ARE WE GOING?**

- Emergency Management Plans**
- Cameras with AI Analytics**
- Panic Buttons**
- Security Vestibules**
- Access Control System**
- Weapon Detection System**
- Visitor Management System**
- Professional Developments**
- Security Tabletop Drills With Emergency Responders**
- Behavioral Threat Assessment**
- Ongoing Training**
- School Procedures/District Policy**
- Door Locking Systems**
- Enhanced Emergency Systems**
- Stop The Bleed Kits and Training**
- Facility Upgrades**

## 13 Things School Board Members Wish People Knew About Them

### 13 Things School Board Members Wish People Knew About Them

#### 1. We are the best trained elected officials in the state.

New Jersey requires school board members to take training courses that cover topics such as policy, school finance, student achievement, labor relations and school law.

These courses must be taken in the first, second and third years of a board member's first term in office. Then, in the first year of any re-elected or reappointed term, the board member must undergo training on recent developments in school law. No other elected officials in the state are required to take such training.

#### 2. We have to go through a criminal background check before taking office.

Again, this is a mandate that no other elected officials must go through. Before taking office, we undergo a criminal background check to ensure we haven't been convicted of crimes that would disqualify us for school board service.

#### 3. We have to adhere to a code of ethics.

The Code of Ethics for School Board Members says, among other things, that board members will not administer schools but see that they are well-run; that board members will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed would injure individuals or the schools; and that board members will make decisions based on the educational welfare of children. Here is the entire code of ethics: <https://www.state.nj.us/education/ethics/coe.htm>

#### 4. We are legally required to go into executive session when we discuss certain matters.

At a school board meeting, when the board adjourns to go into executive, or "closed" session, sometimes people don't understand the function of a such a session. They think that perhaps the board would just rather conduct its business out of the public eye. But there are solid legal reasons why boards have to do this: they are required to protect the privacy of employees and students when discussing certain matters. Examples of other topics that need to be kept confidential would include anticipated litigation and issues that involve attorney-client privilege, negotiations with labor unions; matters involving the purchase of property and issues dealing with security that could undermine safety if made public.

#### 5. We can't tell you the "real" reason that teacher was non-renewed... or that student got suspended.

One of the core values we observe— and a tenet of the Code of Ethics for School Board Members —is observing confidentiality.



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# IT'S ALL ABOUT U! December Edition

VOLUME 3

DECEMBER  
2024

## IT'S ALL ABOUT U!

Our Monthly Newsletter Focusing on the School Community



### HANNAH CALDWELL ELEMENTARY STUDENTS THRIVE IN TEMPORARY RELOCATION AT KEAN UNIVERSITY

The students and staff at Hannah Caldwell Elementary School has transitioned to their new location at Kean University. This transition, while unexpected, has been met with resilience and an overwhelming sense of community spirit as students, teachers, and families came together to make the best of the situation. Thanks to the partnership with Kean University, the district was able to quickly secure classrooms and facilities to ensure that students would continue their education in a safe, supportive environment. Kean University has generously opened its doors to the elementary school students, providing access to modern classrooms, technology and other resources to facilitate learning. The district and university have worked tirelessly to make the transition as smooth as possible. In addition to providing a safe space for our students to learn, the partnership with Kean University offers an exciting opportunity for college students pursuing degrees in education. As part of the collaboration, Kean University students will be able to gain valuable hands-on experience by working with elementary students and teachers through internships. These future educators will have the chance to assist in the classrooms, mentor students, and learn first-hand about the challenges and rewards of teaching. It is a mutually beneficial partnership that allows the district to support the next generation of teachers while also contributing to the continued success of our elementary students.



### TUPS RECEIVES HOLOCAUST GRANT TO SUPPORT OUR LIBRARY

The Township of Union Public Schools is proud to announce that we were awarded the Mark Schonwetter Holocaust Education Foundation Award in the amount of \$1000. The grant will further expand its Holocaust Resource Lending Library at UHS. The grant, which was received last year also, has already made a significant impact on the high school's educational offerings, allowing students to explore important literature and historical accounts of the Holocaust. This new funding will enable the library continues to grow, providing more valuable resources for students and fostering a deeper understanding of this pivotal moment in history.

#### STAY IN TOUCH

[TUPS Website](#)

[TUPS Instagram](#)

[District Athletic Schedule](#)



Would you like to have your department/school featured in our next issue? Click [here to submit](mailto:iscocozza@twpunionschools.org) or email [iscocozza@twpunionschools.org](mailto:iscocozza@twpunionschools.org)



## A Small Glimpse

# Who Do I Contact for the Following Concerns:

	<b>Classroom Practice: Grades, Curriculum, Content, Class Attendance, etc.</b>	<b>Student Scheduling</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Harassment, Intimidation &amp; Bullying (HIB)</b>	<b>Special Education</b>	<b>Athletics</b>
Level 1	Teacher	School Counselor	Teacher	Building Anti-Bullying Specialist	Teacher/CST	Coach
Level 2	Building Administrator	Building Administrator	Building Administrator	Building Administrator	Building Administrator	Athletic Director
Level 3	Assistant Superintendent of Student Services	Supervisor of Counseling	Assistant Superintendent of Student Services	Supervisor of Counseling/Anti-Bullying Coordinator	Supervisor of Special Services	Superintendent
Level 4	Superintendent	Assistant Superintendent of Student Services	Superintendent	Assistant Superintendent of Student Services	Director of Special Services	
Level 5		Superintendent	Board of Education (hearing)	Superintendent	Assistant Superintendent of Student Services	
Level 6				Board of Education (hearing)	Superintendent	
	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Residency/Enrollment</b>	<b>Food Service</b>	<b>Buildings &amp; Grounds</b>	<b>Safety &amp; Security</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Level 1	Transportation Manager	Residency Office	Pomptonian Representative/Food Service Coordinator	Building Custodian	Building Administrator	Staff Member's immediate supervisor
Level 2	Assistant Superintendent of Business Operations	Assistant Superintendent of Business Operations	Building Administrator	Building Administrator	Manager of Security	Director of Personnel
Level 3	Superintendent	Superintendent	School Business Administrator	Buildings & Grounds Dept.	Assistant Superintendent of Business Operations	Assistant Superintendent of Business Operations
Level 4		Board of Education (hearing)	Superintendent	Assistant Superintendent of Business Operations	Superintendent	Superintendent
Level 5				Superintendent		
Level 6						

# Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) December 10, 2024 – December 18, 2024

## HIB Incidents to Report

	<b>Founded</b>	<b>Not Founded/ Inconclusive</b>	
December 10, 2024 to December 18, 2024	5	2	
	UHS (2), BMS (3)	UHS (1), BMS (1)	

# Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) November 20, 2024 – December 9, 2024

## HIB Incidents Affirmed Cases

	<b>Founded</b>	<b>Not Founded/ Inconclusive</b>	
November 20, 2024 to December 9, 2024	11	6	
	UHS 5 KMS 1 BMS 4 JES 1	UHS 2 HCES 1 JES 3	

**A Small Glimpse**

**What's Coming!**

**TUPS BOE Reorganization January 7, 2024**

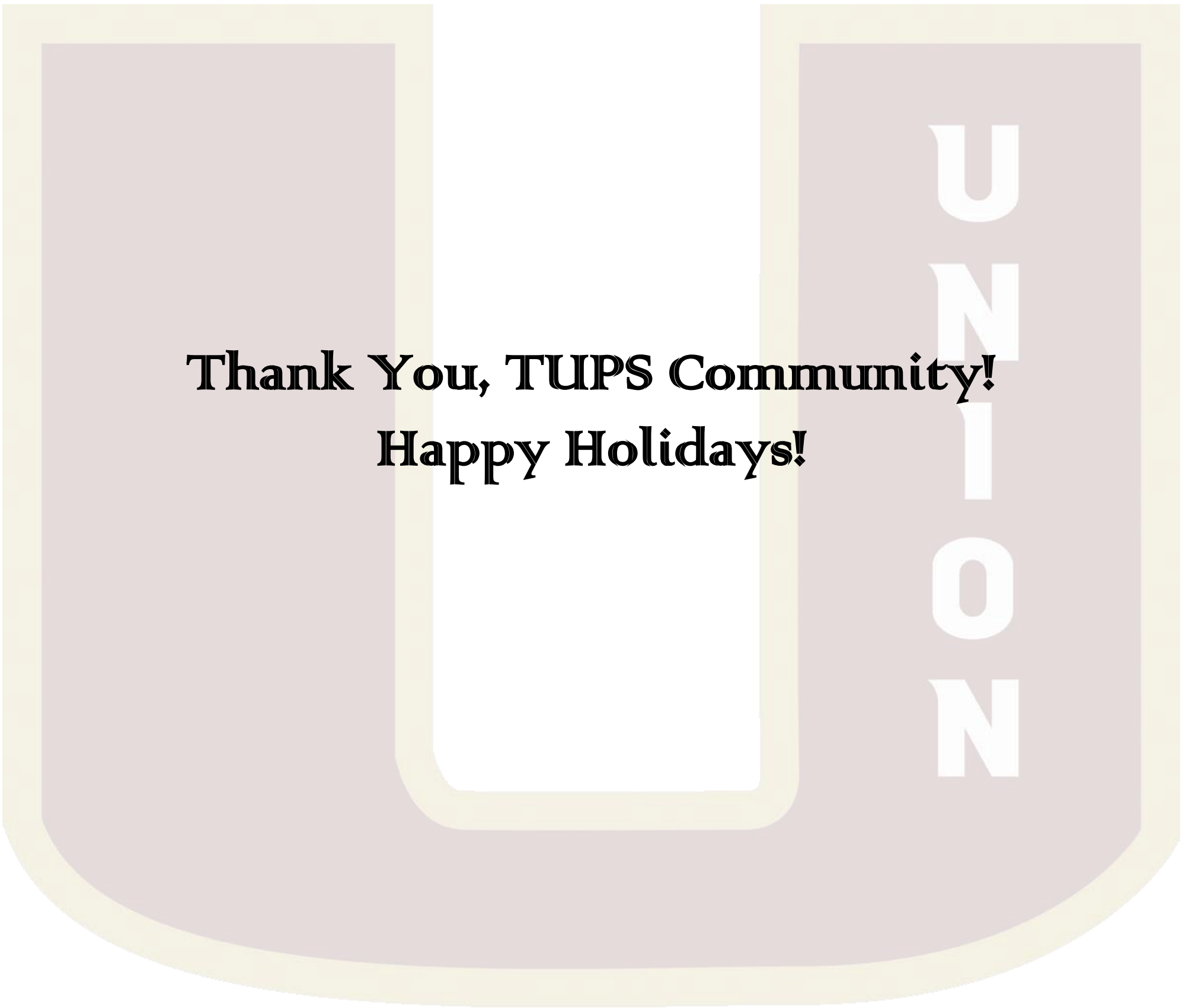
**Thank You, Madam President Chastity Santana, Madam Vice  
President Dixiana Carbonell, and BOE Members**

**National Honor Society Recognition**

**2024 Union High School Fall Sports Season Student Recognition**

**NJSLA Award Nights**

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**Thank You, TUPS Community!**  
**Happy Holidays!**

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