

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION MINUTES – DECEMBER 13, 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, December 13, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member. Action was taken.

Mrs. Williams called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Yocasta Brens-Watson, Ms. Marissa McKenzie, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. John O’Shea, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Dr. Guy Francis (arrived at 7:02 p.m.)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

Mrs. Minneci led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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.

Ms. McKenzie read the district’s mission statement.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mrs. Brens-Watson, seconded by Ms. McKenzie, that the Board go into Executive Session at 7:04 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: student discipline matter

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 8:27 p.m.

Comments from Public on Resolutions:

None

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes will be approved at next week’s Board meeting.

Communications:

Communications are part of personnel.

Superintendent’s Report:

The Superintendent will address the state of the schools and student spotlight.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

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

DISCUSSION:

None

Mrs. Scott-Hayden stated that E-5 will be added to the agenda for vote – to reinstate a student as per executive session.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Ms. McKenzie for adoption:

E-1A. AFFIRM SUPERINTENDENT’S DETERMINATION OF HIB

Affirm the Superintendent’s determination of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period November 16, 2022 to November 22, 2022, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-1. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent’s Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period November 23, 2022 to December 13, 2022, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

E-5. APPROVE REINSTATEMENT OF STUDENT INTO EDP PROGRAM

Approve reinstatement of student into EDP program, as discussed in executive session.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

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 resolutions were moved by Mr. O’Shea, seconded by Mrs. Brens-Watson, for adoption:

F-7. PRE-APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE STUDENT FIELD TRIPS

Pre-approve districtwide student field trip destinations and purposes pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.8 in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-19. APPROVE RATE ADJUSTMENT - ATC HEALTHCARE SERVICES – LPN SERVICES

Approve the following rate adjustment to ATC (Around the Clock) Healthcare Services Inc. for LPN services for a district student at the rate of \$57.00 for the 2022-2023 school year [Account #11-000-216-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Operations Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Minneci presented the Operations Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

None

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

Ms. McKenzie presented the Personnel Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

None

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Ms. McKenzie, seconded by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, for adoption:

P-1A. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – NEW HIRES

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

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Minneci presented the Residency Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Minneci stated that there was a hearing today and there will be a recommendation to exit the student because the parent admitted they didn’t live in Union.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked did the case come up because of the investigators or the equipment that we purchased and we have not had an update on that equipment. Is the equipment working or is it the investigators? Mrs. Minneci stated it came up because the child said where he lives and then it was verified through the system and then the investigators. Mr. Benaquista stated the system is more for verifications than residency.

Technology Committee:

Mrs. Brens-Watson gave an update from the Technology Committee meeting:

- Start Strong State Testing results – we have 60 days to report. Dr. Taylor to present at January meeting.
- Infrastructure E-Rate project is planned for the summer of 2023 - due to supply chain delays, the district is still waiting for a few switches.
- Change from Windstream telephone services to Lightpath – delay with Lightpath. Porting of telephone numbers will be done December 16, 2022
- Lincoln Tech interns - working with Lincoln Tech to accept three interns beginning in January 2023.
- IT office report - 415 IT tickets resolved for October – they are working hard
- Esports and Girls Who Code will be presenting at the December BOE and they are in the State finals - congratulations.

- Installation of security measures for BYOD will begin in the next several weeks. Working with Aspire engineer on security policies for the project.
- Expanding WiFi for larger bandwidth and more coverage in UHS; received Meraki Access Points for project.
- LiakIT! The results from the various standardized tests that the students are receiving go in there; looking at this data we will have a better understanding where instructional gaps are and a view of where our students are academically.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked when did the district receive the results for NJSLA? Dr. Perez stated I don't know the date, but the presentation has to be within 60 days. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated every district did not do well in math, it isn't something to hide, but to get everyone on board to fix the issues. Dr. Taylor stated the Department of Education was allegedly hiding data.

Mrs. Minneci stated this article states districts will receive individual student reports by December 12th.

Approval of Bills:

Bills will be approved next week.

Unfinished Business:

Dr. Francis stated the field at Rapkin is being redone by the Township; is it possible for them to fund and redo the football field? Also, we need to secure our fields from other people; maybe lock the fields. Dr. Taylor stated I'm not going to recommend that we lock the fields. I instructed our Facility Manager to put up more signs around the stadium.

Ms. McKenzie asked anyone can use it without asking? We don't want to be responsible if someone gets hurt. Dr. Taylor stated it is a tricky balance and we are partners with the community. Mrs. Koon stated maybe we should lock it up and may have the police come by.

Dr. Taylor stated after the Board reorganization meeting, the Board President can meet with me and Town officials so we can talk about this as a group.

New Business:

Mrs. Minneci stated she attended the restorative practice and spoke with students and Ms. Hajkowski; there is a lot of benefit to that and she was glad that we are involved in it.

Mr. O'Shea stated that he also attended and he was very impressed; there is a lot that can be done to help our students. They have great ideas and hopes that we can expand this program.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden stated she spoke with students and how it impacted them academically, socially and emotionally – to be better students. There were three young ladies that she met and how it has changed them for the better and she will follow the three students until June to see their progress. We need to be advocates for all students. She was impressed with the program and gave Ms. Hajkowski grant information and the phone number for Gail at Montclair High School. She also stated we need a buy in from all educators in the school and the

community for it to work and also align the wrap around services component because some of our parents need help.

Mrs. Brens-Watson stated the UHS musical – she is so proud of our students; they are so talented, and she is proud of our teachers. She also stated that BMS/KMS had inductions for the National Honor Society and no invitations were sent to Board members. We need to be consistent on what and how we do it. The kids in the middle school students need our support just as much as the high school students.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden stated when our students are being inducted and all the other good stuff, aren't we partnering with the TV station in Town so that we are televising it? Mrs. Williams stated with the plays, the TV production kids go out and tape the plays. Mrs. Brens-Watson stated it would be marvelous to have that partnership.

Ms. Santana stated that each of the Board members have a school, and we should always be getting invitations. We should always be represented and seen in the school.

She also stated that the Board needs to go into executive session.

Comments from the Public:

Kathleen Brunsmeyer stated what I spoke about in September; it is still not a standard. It is still not a policy in our district for sick students. We talk about social/emotional for everyone but we are not because if we are not worried about the health and physical well-being of our students and staff – you can't have a good day.

Ann Margaret Shannon stated people tonight have said nice things about the faculty and staff so thank you for acknowledging them. Maybe we can make a walking track around the outside of the football field.

Jill Hall stated the restorative practice program – Ms. Hajkowski is doing an amazing job. She has made this program her own but she is only one person. We have a need for professional development for the rest of the staff. The staff that have bought in are working very hard but there are a lot that are under educated about what it can be. Restorative practices are not available at this time to the EDP program and they are our most vulnerable and I bring as much as I can. When they transition back to the day program, to have the restorative program be a part of the contract that brings them back. We have work to do and there aren't enough of us. Your continued advocacy is greatly appreciated.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mrs. Regis-Darby, seconded by Mrs. Brens-Watson, that the Board go into Executive Session at 9:09 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: confidential attorney client privileged personnel, student, and litigation matters.

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

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 9:25 p.m.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mrs. Regis-Darby, that the meeting be adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

All present voting YES

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Yolanda Koon

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

