

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, January 13, 2026 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. Scott-Hayden called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Ms. Dicxiana Carbonell, Mrs. Elsie Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Guida Faria, Mr. Ronnie McDowell, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. Greg Nasta, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. Michael Cohan

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Gerald Benaquista, Ms. Marissa McKenzie, Dr. Jose Rodriguez, Mrs. Yolanda Koon

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Lester Taylor, Esq.

Ms. Carbonell led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the district's mission statement.

Mrs. Koon read the statement required under the "Open Public Meetings Act" that adequate notice was published in The Union County Local Source, The Star Ledger and/or Tap into Union, posted in the Administration Building and the Clerk's Office of the Township; a copy of which is on file in the office of the Board Secretary.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes will be approved at next week's regular Board meeting.

Communications:

Communications are part of personnel and operations.

Comments from Public (on resolutions in **BOLD** and **ALL MATTERS**):

Mrs. Scott-Hayden - thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and that the Board values their input and appreciates their time. She reminded the audience that all comments are to be respectful and constructive, and to refrain from calling out and yelling. The Board is unable to engage in back-and-forth dialogue; however, your comments will be reviewed and considered, and if feasible, the Superintendent or designee will provide a response at a later date.

Kathleen Bruns Meyers – she wanted to give a shout out to the new principal. He comes to every classroom every day to say hello.

Superintendent's Report: January 20, 2026

The Superintendent Report will be at the Board's regular meeting.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mrs. Conteh-Mackey for adoption:

E-1. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period December 17, 2025 to January 13, 2026, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

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

Affirm the Superintendent's determination of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the periods December 10, 2025 to December 16, 2025, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,
Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden,

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

All other resolutions will be presented and voted on at the Board's regular meeting.

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mr. McDowell, seconded by Ms. Santana, for adoption:

F-7. APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE STUDENT FIELD TRIPS

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.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,
Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden,

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

All other resolutions will be presented and voted on at the Board's regular meeting.

Operations/Technology Committee Resolutions:

No resolutions are being approved this evening; resolutions will be presented and voted on at the next Board meeting.

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

No resolutions are being approved this evening; resolutions will be presented and voted on at the next Board meeting.

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Minneci reported on the following residency investigations:

R-1. REPORT OF STUDENTS VOLUNTARILY TRANSFERRED TO DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE

For informational purposes only (no vote required): The following residency investigations were completed and the listed students voluntarily transferred to the district of residence:

Student No.	School	Grade
#340612	Franklin Elementary School	4 th grade
#380812	Hannah Caldwell Elementary School	Kindergarten
#368014	Hannah Caldwell Elementary School	2 nd grade

Approval of Bills:

Bills will be approved at the next regular Board meeting.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Ms. Santana – informed the Board that the Union County wrestling tournament is being held in the district. It is a great event; please attend. Senior night is January 21st. Dr. Benaquista indicated that the team is doing exceptionally, only one loss and looking forward to future games.

Mrs. Faria – UHS Music Department – Jazz Band, Orchestra, Choir – did a beautiful job – congratulations to all involved.

Mrs. Minneci – boys' basketball is in the top 20 and having a great year with their new coach, congratulations to the team.

Mrs. Conteh-Mackey – congratulations to the student who was accepted into Harvard. Dr. Benaquista indicated that their new initiative is to try to send out congratulatory notes to all students accepted.

Mr. McDowell – he and other Board members went over to the school that is located in the Hamilton Building. He indicated that it was interesting to see what the teachers were teaching. They are doing a great job. Our district can learn from other sources.

He also indicated he went to the Jefferson School for karaoke night. The kids had a lot of fun. He indicated that we need to be aware of the songs that students are singing.

Mr. Nasta – he was at Hamilton today and they were very gracious hosts. The building is alive and they cleaned up the school very nicely.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden - she also was at Hamilton today and the bulletin board's are filled with all their work.

Dr. Benaquista indicated that he will be scheduling grade level leaders to go over and see what they are doing there.

Ms. Carbonell gave a shout out to the district leadership, Dr. Benaquista and Dr. Rodriguez for taking the lead on student absenteeism. The district is being proactive. Dr. Benaquista indicated that we care a lot about our students; thank you to leadership.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Ms. Carbonell, that the Board go into Executive Session at 7:25 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: personnel, legal update

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: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,
Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden,

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 8:30 p.m.

MOTION TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION:

There being no further business before the Board, it was moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the Board return to public session at 8:30 p.m.

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,
Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden,

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Faria, seconded by Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,
Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden,

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Yolanda Koon

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

