

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – May 17, 2022

NOTICE OF MEETING:

TO ALL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Union High School Library, 2350 North Third Street, Union, New Jersey pursuant to notice sent to each member.

Mrs. Williams called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Ms. Marissa McKenzie, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. John O’Shea, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Yocasta Brens-Watson (8:18 p.m.), Dr. Guy Francis (7:04 p.m.), Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby (7:10 p.m.)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

Dr. Francis arrived at 7:04 p.m.

Pre-k students (via Zoom) led the Board and audience members 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.

Mr. O’Shea read the district’s mission statement.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mrs. Williams, seconded by Mr. O’Shea, that the Board go into Executive Session at 7:07 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: collective bargaining negotiations update, litigation update, personnel and confidential student 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

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, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,  
Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 7:55 p.m.

Comments from Public on Resolutions:

None

Approval of Minutes:

Moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Ms. McKenzie, that the following minutes be adopted:

1. March 8, 2022 – worksession
2. March 8, 2022 – executive session
3. March 22, 2022 – regular meeting
4. March 22, 2022 – executive session

AYE: 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

Communications:

**REQUEST FROM TOWNSHIP OF UNION EDUCATION FOUNDATION – LIVINGSTON SCHOOL PLAYGROUND**

Request from the Township of Union Education Foundation requesting the use of Livingston School playground on June 4, 2022 for a Family Fun Health Fundraising Program (10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.).

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION– PARKHURST**

Request for extension of unpaid non-FMLA/non-NJFLA child rearing leave from Jennifer Parkhurst, school counselor-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, through May 31, 2023.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – WOJCIK**

Request for extension of paid medical leave from Karen Wojcik, 12-month secretary-special services/Hamilton, new return date June 15, 2022.

**LETTER OF RESIGNATION – RESTREPO-AYALA**

Letter of resignation from Anya Restrepo-Ayala, Spanish teacher-Franklin Elementary School, effective June 30, 2022.

**LETTER OF RESIGNATION – FRICKE**

Letter of resignation from Britini Fricke, teacher-Franklin Elementary School, effective April 26, 2022.

**LETTER OF RETIREMENT – LEWIS**

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Mary Lewis, librarian media specialist-Kawameeh Middle School, effective July 1, 2022.

**LETTER OF RETIREMENT – MARSILLO**

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Aldo Marsillo, Assistant Transportation Manager-Transportation Department, effective August 31, 2022.

**LETTER OF RETIREMENT – PERDICOLOGOS**

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Anna Perdicologos, bus aide-Transportation Department, effective July 1, 2022.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – VICIDOMINI**

Request for extension of unpaid non-FMLA medical leave from Julia Vicidomini, 12-month secretary-UHS Attendance, May 3, 2022-May 31, 2022.

**REQUEST FROM DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY-FIRE DIVISION**

Request from Department of Public Safety Fire Division for a donation of a 16-passenger bus from the Board of Education, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – GRAUL**

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA leave from Kathleen Graul, 10-month secretary-Burnet Middle School, May 11, 2022-June 30, 2022.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – GEORGE**

Request for extension of unpaid FMLA from Sheren George, paraprofessional-Burnet Middle School, through May 31, 2022.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – STANDAL**

Request for update to current intermittent leave under FMLA; extension of consecutive FMLA followed by unpaid non-FMLA from Laura Standal, special education teacher-Washington Elementary School, through June 30, 2022.

**LETTER OF RESIGNATION – COHEN**

Letter of resignation from Amanda Cohen, science teacher-Kawameeh Middle School, effective June 3, 2022.

### Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Taylor stated we have a special guest tonight. Senator Cryan will introduce the Teachers of the Year; we have the Student Spotlight from Connecticut Farms, Livingston and Jefferson and the district Strategic Plan. I would like to honor the Teachers of the Year and Senator Joseph Cryan will introduce the Teachers of the Year.

Senator Cryan stated thank you for having me tonight and to celebrate the best. Think about when you were in school and your favorite teacher – who made an impact on you. Who was that? The encouragement you get, the difference that it makes in a young person's life, like the teachers we are fortunate enough to have in the Township of Union. Teachers that care and make a difference in a young person's life. Things are different today on how we report things, how we look at things and this phone and the things that go on it change the game every day. God bless you all from what you do and the difference you make. Thank you and there is no harder job, outside of being a mom, which is the hardest job in the world. Thank you all for what you do.

I have resolutions here for each teacher being recognized tonight. Each one recognizes each teacher and it is signed by the Senate President and the Speaker of the General Assembly. Here is one sentence from the resolution "That his or her invaluable contribution to the quality of education include use of their time of effective instructional techniques, extraordinary capability to establish a productive classroom climate and repour with students and the remarkable ability to instill a love of learning in their pupils." In legislature we took a moment to recognize your efforts but in the end they are words on a piece of paper can't say thanks enough for the encouragement and change that you do each and every day for young people in this community.

Dr. Taylor introduced the teachers of the year:

- Nicole McGuire – Battle Hill Elementary School
- Laura Cococcia – Burnet Middle School
- Colleen Cannon – Connecticut Farms Elementary School
- Kayla Gunther – Franklin Elementary School
- Laure Coco – Hannah Caldwell Elementary School
- Kelly Piano – Jefferson Elementary School
- Diana Fasano – Kawameeh Middle School
- Maria Sibilia – Livingston Elementary School
- Joe Daly – Union High School
- Debra Mills – Washington Elementary School

Dr. Taylor thanked Senator Cryan for coming to the Board meeting. He gave his assistant a shout out – Mrs. Watson with the bags and gifts for the teachers.

Dr. Taylor stated he would read the following quotes from nominators who nominated the individuals. We had a committee of people from each of our schools and we met; it was quite a review process:

Mrs. McGuire is a wonderful teacher as well as a caring human being. She treats her colleagues with respect and loves her students.

Laura Cococcia has been a model educator for the 15 years I have been in district. Her consistency with high evaluations and student performance are second to none.

Colleen Cannon is always upbeat and determined to provide a meaning experience to the students. She is always willing to lend a helping hand and is the most creative person I know. She is an asset to the district.

Kayla Gunther is innovative in her instruction and keeps her class engaged through projects and interactive lessons. Mrs. Gunther has a heart for service as was shown through her pajama drive that she ran back in November/December.

Laure Coco is so positive, regardless of what's going on. She's got unending kindness and compassion for other kids and the cranky grownups too.

Kelly Piano is not only an amazing teacher, she is an amazing leader. She goes above and beyond on every aspect of her career. She is truly one of the most hard-working individuals I've ever met and deserves this recognition.

Diana Gunther is an exemplary special education teacher who goes above and beyond, not only for her special education students, but for all students in her classes. She is caring and compassionate and supportive in a way that ensures success for her students.

Maria Sibilina works tirelessly for our building, emails us regularly on ways she can help. She emails us to recognize students who are especially helpful and respectful so we can acknowledge them. I believe she has also applied for several grants to help our building.

Joe Daly is a perfect example of an employee who goes above and beyond for his students, the district and the community as well. He has brought so many new features to Union High School while also volunteering his time with the golf team during season, with the Future Educators Club that he meets with throughout the school year, and his Peer Tutoring after school program that he runs three times a week for students.

Debra Mills radiates passion and a zest for learning that is reflective in her work. She is always researching and employing instructional methods that will intrigue and inspire our children.

Mrs. Brens-Watson arrived at 8:18 p.m.

Principal Ben Kloc – student spotlight Sidi Diallo (Livingston). Principal Kloc stated he wanted to thank the Board of Education, Dr. Taylor and his Central Office team for giving him the opportunity to share our spotlight student from Livingston School this evening.

Our spotlight student from Livingston is a fourth-grade student named Sidi Diallo. Sidi is a hardworking student who loves to help out any way he can. For example, this year Sidi took the initiative to walk our kindergarten bus students to the bus line area at the end of each school day. He always makes sure that the kindergarten students are okay, asks them how their day was and holds their hands to ensure they get there safely. He also took the initiative to walk them from the bus to their classroom each morning, making sure to greet any faculty member he comes in contact with along the way.

Sidi is not only a wonderful helper throughout the building, he is also a well rounded student who is filled with kindness and always has a smile on his face. We are lucky to have Sidi in our school and represent all of us at Livingston School

Principal Osborne – student spotlight – Juliana Caixeiro and Esteban Hurtado (Connecticut Farms). Principal Osborne stated there are so many great students in our building. To choose one or two was a difficult task. I sent a survey out to my staff to find out who they would choose as a spotlight student. We have incredible teachers. I chose these two because they truly emulate what we at Connecticut Farm’s School truly desire for all of our students to have – qualities that make us the best people.

Juliana Caixeiro for her hard work and dedication towards showing progress in and outside of the classroom. Juliana has been at Connecticut Farms for two years now, when she first got here she struggled with transitioning and adjusting to her new school. Juliana is now able to transition well, complete all assignments, greet people on her own and most importantly engage in group activities and discussions with her peers. Juliana is a sweet young girl and although some days are harder than others, she deserves credit for all of her great accomplishments and her determination to make every day better than the last.

Esteban Hurtado not only is a strong student academically, but he exhibits kindness and a positive attitude on a daily basis. He is creative and hardworking. He has been integral in the development of our 4<sup>th</sup> grade G&T project and has contributed much to the group. Esteban uses his skills as a bilingual student to help and support other students in his class by explaining directions and activities to them.

Esteban was my pre-k student; now that he is in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade I still see the same kind and respectful student that he was when he was 4 years old. Always willing to help others.

Thank you for letting us have this opportunity.

Interim Principal Piano - student Emenike Clouden – Jefferson School. Emenike is the type of student that every teacher dreams of having. He is kind, friendly, social, intelligent and very helpful. He gives 110% with every assignment that he completes. He works well independently and in groups and always shares his input with his group. He is the type of student that others want to work with in groups. He has patience and takes on the leadership role when working with others. He is dependable, reliable and just a pleasure to have in class. He also received Jefferson’s Leader Award for teamwork. He was nominated because he volunteered to help other classmates to organize and clean out their desks so they could be

prepared and have all their supplies for learning. We are so proud of Emenike's leadership skills and we will miss him but we will wish him the best next year in middle school.

Dr. Taylor presented the State of the Schools, and the summary is below:

Union's Journey to Excellence – Strategic Plan 2022-2025 – he put together a steering committee that helped to identify the four goals. We worked with 59 residents – teachers, students, board members and came together in February to figure out the actions that had to be put in place and then we wrote the plan.

- Phase 1 – identifying the goals
- Phase 2 – creating the action steps
- Phase 3 – writing the plan

Why a plan? Our district needs a strategy to go world class – no coordination means no forward movement; stakeholders should be decisionmakers. Everything the district does should have a purpose – evaluations; professional development; financing; school/district/board goals.

The first goal is academic growth. The second goal is developing partnerships with the community. The third goal is equity – very important foundational issue if we are going to do right for every single child and adult – regardless of race, ethnicity, learning ability, sexual orientation and sexual identity. The final goal has to do with the whole child – focus on mental well-being, social emotional well-being, ability to relate to other people and feel confident and good about themselves so they become successfully independent, responsible individuals when they become adults.

The plan is about 24 pages, span of three years, it will be on the website tomorrow morning. I will send it out in a message and an email.

One of the most important rolls that is in the plan has to do with equity; what will be involved in fostering equal opportunity for students so that they become successful on an individual level as possible.

We are going to hire a Dean of Restorative Practice. It is a position that was created and approved by the Board. This is the individual that is going to help us, starting at the high school level, to do two things – build community among students and adults and work more closely with the students that are not fitting in. The ones that unfortunately act out and we have to place out via suspension to restore them to the community.

Why it is tied into equity because the data is very clear. The majority of students that are suspended in school and out of school are predominately black, Hispanic and special education. Restorative practices can help us do better by those students instead of just distancing them from their peers and community. We will be working with a professor out of Rutgers who is going to guide me and thanks to Mrs. Scott-Hayden, we will tap into the education association for professional development.

The second piece has to do with what our hidden biases are. I'm talking about things that we bring to the workplace/classroom that can influence the way we relate to others. I'm not just talking about just as it relates to race or ethnicity, I'm also talking about students with disabilities, physical and competent, students who identify by different gender and those who affiliate with different sexual orientations. When we uncover our hidden biases, what the research shows is that we build better relationships and we treat our students and each other that much more lovingly and caringly. It creates a healthier community.

The third, fourth and fifth pieces are tied together – we will be bringing in somebody from the outside to conduct an equity of access audit. Dr. Perez's previous position was assistant superintendent of access and equity, and she has worked with people that we can bring in to take stock on how we are working with students and making sure we are being sensitive to all cultural identities. I'm not just talking about one particular group of students. If we don't confront the reality in a careful and strategic way, we are not going to move forward as a community.

We will continue to work on diversifying our faculty and support staff. We are looking to hire a consultant to help us with those efforts. What we have done has not been good enough. We need to do better and bring in a more diverse pool of candidates. We will also take another look at the gifted and talented programs. We want to maintain the engagement and rigor that we are applying but we also want to make sure we are providing access to all kids.

Dr. Perez stated being an effective leader is having the opportunity to not just share ideas but be involved in a collaborative group to discuss problem solving on a common theme. We decided to focus on CAR – Connective Action Roadmap and it helps us foster that foundation when it comes to our building our professional learning community, curriculum writing, as well as shared leadership. The reason we are moving forward with CAR as opposed to another curriculum writing process, is because the district already started working with CAR and the district was awarded a grant to have teachers work over a three-year period (K-6 curriculum). So rather than starting new and moving forward with a different process, we decided to continue those efforts and build on what the teachers have been doing to hone in on what are the best instructional practices are and help teachers refine their pedagogy.

We will next look at our grading system and how districts across the nation are grading their students. How students take tests – is it better to have students assessed more on their performance of the mastery of the standards as opposed to the overall assessment of their progress. We wanted to see what we are doing in our district. The district started a book club this year and reading a book entitled “Grading With Equity”. It will help us look at what we are doing in a better way. Really understand what has been in practice and what are the pitfalls when it comes to grading? This is where we want to focus in year one. In order for us to do that we will be developing a committee of various stakeholders and overseen by the C&I directors and myself. We really need to look at how we are assessing our students and across the departments. We would have three goals – one is collaborating on an agreed upon system. To ensure that teachers that teach the same course and grade level, are assessing students similarly. The second goal is setting guidelines – updating grades in the teacher's gradebook. It affords parents the opportunity to really address their child's performance early on and/or throughout the marking period as opposed to the end of the marking period. The last item to look at the impact



of the 0-100% scale on our students that may not be able to achieve anything higher than a 60-65%.

Next component is common assessments created for subjects being updated. So in addition to updating our curriculum and reviewing our grading system, we will also be looking at common assessments. The reason is we really want to understand how we are developing these assessments. One of the goals for next year, this won't happen right away because teachers will be writing curriculum at the beginning of the year, we will move forward with this mid-year with the subject areas, as well as courses that are being updated in year one. That will give teachers an opportunity to better understand what goes into curriculum writing, and what are the best practices and what they look like. How to use resources and then we can begin that conversation and move towards developing assessments for the subject areas that we will be rewriting. That will move into year two and three with the ultimate goal of having many, if not all of our courses, having common assessments by year three.

The last part is the handbook for the students. We are looking at ways to develop programs for mentorships and internships for students. Not just developing partnerships with outside community stakeholders but also developing a handbook that outlines for our students the opportunities of ways to connect with their peers and individuals that are outside of the school. We want to support them with opportunities to making connections that will build their career and what they are going to do as they move into higher education or secondary education.

Dr. Taylor stated to look at a way we can retain students in our high school that we are losing to magnet schools and other schools and find a way to get the kids the sense of small school-ness. We are a high school of 2300 that is an asset but it can also be a detriment in some cases. By year of the plan, start developing academies that are career themed in the high school. One wing of the high school can be focused on allied health, another performing arts, another engineering/STEM related subjects. I think it is time for Union High School to start building those academies.

A friend of mine who a professional development director for the division of civil rights for the State reached out to us and asked if we would be interested in engaging some of our athletes in a focus group discussion about how they are treated by their peers – in terms of bias and discrimination. I believe 12 students who got involved. The Director was over the moon and sent me the following email:

“I wanted to write to let you know how wonderful the staff and students were at today's focus group. Linda Ionta was so welcoming and so was the security guard at the front desk. The students were amazing; so forthcoming and bright. They shared a lot of very important information with us about their experiences in athletics as they travel to games outside the district. Some of it was disheartening and will really help to inform us on how to direct our lessons for coaches to use with their athletes. We are writing up a report and will share it with you once it's completed.”

We were the only focus group, at this point, that engaged with the division of civil rights in this important discussion. I am extremely proud of our students and Linda Ionta.

HIB – only one case has been reported and founded.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I'm happy that the district is finally going to look at the assessment practices. Also the guidelines on how grades are outdated and inconsistent and looking at equity and the impact is really a big role in student achievements. I'm not a fan of teachers writing curriculum. There are curriculum writers. I think teachers do their curriculum but their job is to make adjustments to curriculum. I think you need to look at that piece.

#### Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

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

E-1. *Agenda item reported on May 10, 2022 worksession (Report of HIB – April 27-May 10, 2022.*

E-1A. *Agenda item approved on May 10, 2022 regular mtg (Affirm Superintendent's Determination of HIB – April 13-26, 2022.*

#### E-1-1. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period May 11, 2022 to May 17, 2022, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

#### E-2. APPROVE BATTLE HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – ESY PROGRAM

Approve the use of Battle Hill Elementary School for Extended School Year Program (ESY), ESY Services, CST testing and/or home instruction (July 2022) in case of Hannah Caldwell Elementary School being unavailable for use during July 2022 due to construction.

#### E-3. APPROVE NJSIAA MEMBERSHIP

Approve the membership and dues for the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association for Union High School Athletic Department for the 2022-2023 school year, 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

Susan Lipstein had a comment to make; however, due to Zoom difficulties, she wasn't able to speak during "Comments from the Public"; therefore, she was able to speak at this time.

Susan Lipstein stated I wanted to comment on Policy 3233 – political activities – where it states in #3 – it states “the teaching staff member shall not display any material that would tend to promote any candidate for office on an election day on school grounds that are used as polling place” – it was changed from a school to school grounds – my question is that the State statutes that no one can campaign less than 100 feet from a polling place but the school grounds are part of that space and how can you have a policy that conflicts with the State statute which is NJSA 19:35-15 – which only says you can't campaign 300 feet from the polling place. Our policy should follow the State law. State law trumps local law. You might want to relook at that and question its enforceability and its legality. I can't see you have a policy that conflicts with the State statute. And there shouldn't be a reason why teachers can't do it but everybody else can do. I don't think it should be passed tonight.

Mrs. Koon stated the changes were recommended by Strauss Esmay so we can approve it tonight and circle back with Strauss Esmay.

#### Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Mr. O'Shea stated there were questions from members of the Board regarding F-27 and Dr. Taylor will be introducing someone to answer those questions. Dr. Taylor stated Mr. Young, the CEO from Effective School Solutions will be presenting.

Mr. Young stated we have Princess Parker, who leads all the work in the district and Gerry Barone, a Union Township member, who is our chief clinical officer, and has been working with the district for about five years. We are located in New Providence and in existence since 2009. Our specialty area is providing intensive programs that support students with mental health, emotional and behavioral challenges. We are talking about students that are at a Tier 3 level – students that are at risk for outside placement or students that are already at out-of-district and trying to bring them back.

Our program began in the 2016-2017 school year. We have supported cumulatively 97 students in the district. Many students stay in the ESS program for the duration of their middle school and high school career. It is called a wrap around program. This year we have supported 44 students – Burnet, Union High School and a specialized program at Kawameeh. Of the 44 students, 14 of those were over 30%. Our students that return to the program from being out-of-district or who were in imminent risk of placement outside of the district and were able to stay in district because of the services being offered to them by ESS.

The special education department completed an analysis this week of current per student out-of-district placement costs. Those costs are roughly \$120,000 per student per year, inclusive of transportation. If we take this year as an example and multiply the 14 students in the program from out-of-district placement times \$120,000, that is \$1,680,000 that the district is saving or avoiding by keeping these students in district. Not to mention the academic benefits.

Over the life of the program, we have avoided 41 school years of out-of-district placement. When we bring a student back into the district in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and we retain them, the district is avoiding all of those years of costs that they might have otherwise incurred had that student stayed out-of-district.

Over the life of the program, out of those 41 schools years, the estimated total savings in aggregate is \$4.8 million as compared to the aggregate program fees over the last 5.5 years of \$2.4 million. The district has saved twice as much as it spent. In just the last year, the savings of \$1.7 million are compared to the program fees of \$617,000. The district is savings almost three times as much as it has spent in the last fiscal year.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated you said there were 14 students and that was a combination of kids that didn't go out – so what is the actual number. Mr. Young stated 14.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked Mrs. Koon if she could clarify that we had savings? Is that correct? Mrs. Koon stated I would have to doublecheck the numbers.

Mr. Young stated of those 14 students, some were students that came back this year, some could have come back 3-4 years ago. Four of those students we don't know exactly what their out-of-district tuition would have cost this year if they came back four years ago. We are making an estimate. The approach the special education department took was to look at the aggregate amount being spent on out-of-district placement this year, divided by the total number of students that are placed outside of the district, that comes up with an average per student tuition cost. We also have to look at the cost of transportation and you divvy that up by the number of students with transportation for out-of-district placement and you come up with a per student transportation cost. This year it was \$120,000.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated in 2016, the program was \$230,000. In that year how many students did we have out-of-district. Mr. Young stated 3 students and the average savings was \$94,000 per student for an estimated savings of \$282,000. The program fees were \$206,000 plus the program started halfway through the year – November/December 2016.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated from 2016-2022, you brought back only 14 students to the district. Over the course of the last 5-1/2 years, the 14 students are the students in the program this year who returned from out of district? Mr. Young stated over the life of the program, you have actually avoided 41 school years – about 20 students who have come back from out-of-district. The important number here in calculating this is not necessarily the number of students, it is the number of total schools of out placement avoided.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated there is never a “graduation” out of this support. Mr. Young stated there is a graduation out of the program. There is a clear entrance and exit criteria into the program. Our role in accordance with special education law is always to partner with the district to service students in the least restrictive environment. We don't support them at a Tier 3 service if they can be supported at a Tier 2 level of service.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated Tier 1 service is what the school provides. Mr. Young stated Tier 1 and Tier 2 – the school is providing. ESS is support for the top Tier 3 level of support and the Union staff members are providing the Tier 2 support and the Tier 1 universal support.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mr. O’Shea, seconded by Mrs. Brens-Watson, for adoption:

F-1. TREASURER’S REPORT

That the Treasurer’s Report dated April 30, 2022 be accepted.

F-2. SECRETARY’S REPORT

That the Secretary’s Report dated April 30, 2022 be accepted.

F-3. CERTIFY TREASURER’S AND SECRETARY’S REPORT

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a), I certify that as of April 30, 2022 no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments (contractual orders) which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the district Board of education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8 and 18:22-8.1.

/s/ Yolanda Koon

Yolanda Koon, Board Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_ Dated

Pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.2(h), we certify that as of April 30, 2022 after review of the secretary’s monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials that to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.2(d)3 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year. This certification is solely based on the information provided by the School Business Administrator and Board Secretary and is assumed by the Board to be correct.

F-4. APPROVE APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS

Approve appropriation transfers in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-5. APPROVE LIST OF CONTRACTS/PURCHASE ORDERS

Approve the attached list of contracts and/or purchase orders pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5 (bid exceptions to requirement for advertising) and 18A:18A-10(a) (purchase through State agency; procedure), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-6. APPROVE DISTRICT WIDE TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES

Approve district wide travel and related expenses pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7 and Board Policy File Code 6471 and in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**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-8. APPROVE LIST OF 2021-2022 STATE CONTRACT VENDORS**

Approve the amended list of the 2021-2022 State Contract Vendors pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-10(a) (purchase through State agency; procedure) to facilitate schools' purchasing, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-9. APPROVED LIST OF CONTRACTS/PURCHASES (STUDENT ACTIVITY)**

Approve the attached list of contracts and/or purchases pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(21) (paid by funds raised by or collected by students), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes:

School	Account/Department	Vendor/Description	Amount
Union High School	2227/Senior Class	C&R Graphics – senior flair for Class of 2022	\$4,875.00
Union High School	Peer Ambassadors	Stitch America – uniform shirt for Peer Ambassadors leadership Program	\$2,500.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2049/NHS	NASSP – stoles for members	\$1,800 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2227/Senior Class	C&R Graphics – Banners to display at UHS and Town for Class of 2022 graduates	\$1,097.00
Union High School	2077/Music/Theatre	11hourDesign – creative design, marketing, advertising for Kiss Me Kate	\$10,390.00
Union High School	2018/Senior Awards	Chamber of Commerce – student TBD	\$2,500*
Union High School	2018/Senior Awards	Chamber of Commerce – student TBD	\$2,500*
Union High School	2018/Senior Awards	Crystal Scretchen Memorial Award-Battle Hill PTA-student TBD	\$1,000.00
Kawameeh Middle School	17/Music	Creations by Sahn – t-shirts for music students for Memorial Day Parade	\$1,700.00
Kawameeh Middle School	41/musical production	Creations by Sahn – musical production t-shirts	\$1,275.00
Kawameeh Middle School	41/musical production	Hummel – playbills/posters for musical	\$2,000.00 (not to exceed)
Kawameeh Middle School	41/musical production	Audio Inc. – audio equipment rentals and crew members	\$4,000.00 (not to exceed)
Kawameeh Middle School	41/musical production	Production Associates – lighting and set design for musical	\$6,150.00

\*Originally approved by Board on 3/22/2022 - for \$1,000 each; Chamber of Commerce increased awards to \$2,500 each.

**F-10. APPROVE 2021-2022 OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENT PLACEMENT LIST**

Approval be given to amend the 2021-2022 out-of-district student placement list, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-11. APPROVE FUNDRAISERS**

Approve the following fundraisers, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes:

Event Name	Date	Purpose
Wacky Hat Wednesday	May 25, 2022	UHS/Ski Club – to raise funds for Ski Club trips
Drink/Bank Sale	May 18 through June 2022	UHS/Ski Club – to raise moneys for Ski Club trips
Bed, Bath and Beyond Registry	May 18 through June 2022	UHS/Club TESSLO/Unified Club – to supply materials for CBI program
Cookie/Candy Sale	May 18 through June 2023	UHS/Girls Tennis Team – to raise moneys for end of year party and swag for team

**F-12. ACCEPT DONATIONS**

Accept the following donations, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes:

From	For Use By	\$/Item
Shutterfly, LLC	Burnet Middle School	\$2,907.68
Shutterfly, LLC	Jefferson School	\$1,588.85
Union Plaza Diner and John Basilone Marine Detachment	Special Services Department for special services picnic at Rabkin Park, June 8, 2022 (rain date June 15, 2022)*	Food and services

\*Due to supply chain issues, diner requested that the May 20<sup>th</sup> date and May 24<sup>th</sup> rain date be moved to June 2022.

**F-13. APPROVE CHANGE TO PERKINS SECONDARY PROGRAMS**

Approve the Township of Union School District will not apply for funds allocated under the Perkins Secondary programs for the 2022-2023 school year due to Perkins V program constraints.

**F-14. APPROVE SCHOOLBOARDNET SERVICES – PAPERLESS AGENDA**

Approve the renewal of Schoolboardnet Services for the paperless agenda at the annual rate of \$1,888 (no increase from last year) for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-15. APPROVE TUITION RATES FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR**

Approve the following tuition rates for the 2022-2023 school year.

Preschool (full day)	\$13,302.00
Kindergarten	\$13,302.00
Grades 1 through 5	\$15,140.00
Grades 6 through 8	\$14,709.00
Grades 9 through 12	\$15,461.00

LLD	\$16,501.00
M.D.	\$19,831.00
B.D.	\$26,835.00
Autism	\$17,168.00
Part-time Preschool Handicapped	\$0.00
Full-time Preschool Handicapped	\$13,979.00

**F-16. APPROVE CHIEF MEDICAL INSPECTOR – MULLICK**

Approve Bharati Mullick, M.D., as Chief Medical Inspector pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:40-1 for the 2022-2023 school year at an annual fee of \$28,500, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-17. APPROVE LEARNWELL – BEDSIDE INSTRUCTION**

Approve teachers employed through LearnWell to provide bedside instruction for district students on an “as needed” basis for the 2022-2023 school year in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 [Account #7693-11-150-100-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-18. APPROVE MORRIS UNION JOINTURE COMMISSION**

Approve Morris Union Jointure Commission (MUJC) to provide (a) physical therapy - \$220/hr.; (b) occupational therapy - \$200/hr.; (c) speech therapy - \$235/hr.; (d) personal aides for ESY - \$7,383.33 each; (e) personal aides – 10 months: \$72,727.00 each, in accordance with the students’ IEPs, not to exceed \$530,000 for the 2022-2023 school year [Account #11-000-216-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-19. APPROVE PLATT PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATES -PSYCHIATRIC CONSULTATION**

Approve Platt Psychiatric Associate to provide basic student in-office psychiatric consultation at the rate of \$1,000.00 per evaluation, fee for complex student psychiatric consultation at the rate of \$1,600.00 per evaluation, and attorney or forensic conferences at the rate of \$600.00 per hour for the 2022-2023 school year (not to exceed \$14,000.00) [Account #11-000-219-320-01-19], in accordance with the information in the hands of each Board member.

**F-20. APPROVE APPLICATIONS FOR NEW JERSEY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT**

Approve the applications for the New Jersey Inclusive Education Technical Assistance Project (NJIETA) for pre-k technical assistance to schools on inclusive education for Battle Hill, Connecticut Farms, Franklin, Hannah Caldwell, Livingston and Washington Elementary Schools on the topic of Preschool Inclusion 101 during the 2022-2023 School Year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-21. APPROVE COUNSELING CENTERS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT – MENTAL HEALTH SCREENINGS**

Approve Counseling Centers for Human Development for mental health screen (#90791-initial diagnostic interview) at the rate of \$225.00 per screening (not to exceed \$5,000.00) for the



2022-2023 school year [Account #11-000-219-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-22. APPROVE THE FAMILY CENTER AT MONTCLAIR – MENTAL HEALTH SCREENINGS**

Approve The Family Center at Montclair for mental health screenings at the rate of \$150.00 per screening and \$850.00 for psychiatric evaluation (not to exceed \$7,500.00) for the 2022-2023 school year [Account #11-000-219-320-01-19 (7074)], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-23. APPROVE EPIC HEALTH SERVICES – NURSING SERVICES**

Approve Epic Health Services Inc. d/b/a Avenna Healthcare, to provide nursing services at the rate of \$150.00 per trip (not to exceed \$244,950.00) for the 2022-2023 school year [Account #11-000-216-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-24. APPROVE ADVANCING OPPORTUNITIES – EVALUATIONS**

Approve Advancing Opportunities to conduct assistive technology and augmentative communication (AAC) evaluations for district students: (a) assistive technology - \$1,200.00 per evaluation and (b) augmentative communication - \$1,400.00 per evaluation (not to exceed \$4,600.00) for the 2022-2023 school year [Account #11-000-219-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-25. APPROVE CBI PETTY CASH ACCOUNTS - CBI**

Approve establishment of petty cash accounts for costs associated with students' IEP driven Community Based Instruction (CBI) at the following schools for the 2022-2023 school year: (a) Hannah Caldwell Elementary School – Extended School Year Program - \$1,000.00, (b) Burnet Middle School - \$1,050.00, (c) Kawameeh Middle School - \$1,050.00 and (d) Union High School - \$7,400.00.

**F-26. APPROVE FRONTLINE**

Approve Frontline, the district's program for application tracking, absence and time attendance, professional growth, special education and intervention, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**F-27. APPROVE EFFECTIVE SCHOOL SOLUTIONS – THERAPEUTIC MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Approve Effective School Solutions (ESS) to provide therapeutic mental health services through licensed professionals to students in our district for the 2022-2023 school year, not to exceed \$630,050.00, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-28. *For informational purposes only – vote not required.* List of legal services for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, 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: Mrs. Regis-Darby (F-27)

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Operations Committee Resolutions:

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

O-1. APPROVE SECURITY DRILL/BUS EVACUATION REPORTS

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1 and P.L. 2009, Chapter 178, approve the following security drill and bus evacuation reports for the 2021-2022 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-2. APPROVE RENEWAL OF FOOD SERVICE COMPANY – POMPTONIAN

Approve renewal of Pomptonian Food Service as company for district food services for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-3. APPROVE ARCHITECTS OF RECORD

Approve Architects of Record for the period July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022: (a) Parette Somjen Architects LLC and (b) EI Associates.

O-4. APPROVE ENGINEERS OF RECORD

Approve Engineers of Record for the period of July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023: (a) Consulting & Municipal Engineers, (b) T&M Associates and (c) EI Associates.

O-5. APPROVE AUDITOR – SUPLEE CLOONEY & CO.

Approve the auditing firm of Suplee Clooney & Co. for the period of July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

O-6. APPROVE LEGAL SERVICES – FLORIO, PERRUCCI, STEINHARDT, CAPPELLI, TIPTON & TAYLOR, LLC

Approve the law firm of Florio, Perrucci, Steinhardt, Cappelli, Tipton & Taylor as the Board Attorney for the period of July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-7. APPROVE PROPERTY/CASUALTY/WORKERS COMPENSATION BROKERAGE SERVICE - FAIRVIEW INSURANCE AGENCY

Approve Fairview Insurance Agency as the property/casualty/workers’ compensation brokerage service for the district for the period July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

O-8. APPROVE HEALTHCARE BROKER

Approve Willis Towers Watson, as healthcare broker, for the period of July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

**O-9. APPROVE JDM CONSULTANT SERVICES**

Approve JDM Consultant Services for interim facilities and construction management services.

**O-10. APPROVE REQUEST FROM TOWNSHIP OF UNION EDUCATION FOUNDATION – LIVINGSTON SCHOOL PLAYGROUND**

Approve request from the Township of Union Education Foundation requesting the use of Livingston School playground on June 4, 2022 for a Family Fun Health Fundraising Program (10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**O-11 REQUEST FROM DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY-FIRE DIVISION**

Approve request from Department of Public Safety Fire Division for a donation of a 16-passenger bus from the Board of Education, 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**

**Personnel Committee Resolutions:**

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Ms. McKenzie, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, 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**

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

**P-1C PERSONNEL ACTIONS – TRANSFERS**

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

**P-2. APPROVE RESIDENCY INVESTIGATORS – SUMMER 2022**

Approve residency investigators to work during summer 2022 as follows: (a) Maria Schmidtberg – 50 hours not to exceed 70 hours for July and August (\$25/hr.); (b) Thomas Sheridan – 25 hours not to exceed 50 hours for July and August (\$20/hr.); (c) Dan Hodge – 25 hours not to exceed 50 hours for July and August (\$20/hr.).

**P-3. ACCEPT LETTERS OF RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT**

Accept letters of resignation/retirement from the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Eff. Date	Reason	Notes
Annya Restrepo-Ayala	Spanish teacher	Franklin	6/30/2022	Resignation	Adequate contractual notice given
Britini Fricke	Teacher	Franklin	4/26/2022	Resignation	Resignation date accepted
Mary Lewis	Librarian media specialist	Kawameeh	7/1/2022	Retirement	Adequate contractual notice given
Aldo Marsillo	Assistant Transportation Manager	Transportation Dept.	8/31/2022	Retirement	Adequate contractual notice given
Anna Perdicologos	Bus aide	Transportation Dept	7/1/2022	Retirement	Adequate contractual notice given
Amanda Cohen	Science teacher	KMS	6/3/2022	Resignation	Resignation date accepted

**P-4. APPROVE LEAVES**

Approve leaves for the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Leave Dates	Leave Type	Notes
Jennifer Parkhurst	School counselor	Connecticut Farms	Extension thru 5/31/2023 Return date: 6/1/2023	Unpaid non-FMLA/non-NJFLA child rearing leave	FMLA/NJFLA Entitlement exhausted; org leave began 4/6/2021
Karen Wojcik	12-month secretary	Special services/ Hamilton	Extension Return date: 6/15/2022	Paid medical leave	Org. leave began 6/15/2021
Julia Vicidomini	Attendance	UHS	5/30/22-5/31/2022 Return date: 6/1/2022	Unpaid/non-FMLA medical leave	FMLA entitlement exhausted
Kathleen Graul	10-month secretary	BMS	Intermittent 5/11/2022-6/30/22	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA	FMLA/NJFLA not to exceed 12 weeks
Sheren George	Paraprofessional	BMS	Extension thru 5/31/2022 Return date: 6/1/2022	Extension of unpaid FMLA	FMLA entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks; org leave began 3/14/2022

Laura Standal	Special education teacher	Washington	Extension thru 6/30/2022	Update to current intermittent leave under FMLA; extension of consecutive FMLA followed by unpaid non-FMLA	FMLA entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks
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**P-5. APPROVE TREASURER OF MONEYS – JENNIFER SEMLER**

Approve the reappointment of Jennifer Semler as Treasurer of School Moneys for the 2022-2023 school year at an annual salary of \$4,900.00.

**P-6. APPROVE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICER – AWARDING CONTRACTS**

Approve Yolanda Koon as Affirmative Action Officer for awarding contracts for the 2022-2023 school year under P.L. 1975, c. 127, at no cost to the district.

**P-7. APPROVE CUSTODIAN OF RECORDS – KOON**

Approve the appointment of Yolanda Koon as Custodian of School Records for the 2022-2023 school year, at no cost to the district.

**P-8. APPROVE QUALIFIED PURCHASING AGENT – KOON**

Approve Yolanda Koon as Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA) for the 2022-2023 school year, at no cost to the district.

**P-9. APPROVE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT – BENAQUISTA**

Approve the Employment Contract of Gerald Benaquista, Assistant Superintendent for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**P-10. APPROVE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT – KOON**

Approve the Employment Contract of Yolanda Koon, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**P-11. APPROVE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT – PEREZ**

Approve the Employment Contract of Dr. Gretel Perez, Assistant Superintendent for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**P-12. APPROVE VOLUNTEER – UNION HIGH SCHOOL**

Approve Catherine Brumfield (former employee) to volunteer at Union High School for the 2021-2022 school year.

**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:** Mrs. Minneci (P-9; P-11); Mrs. Regis-Darby (P-1C); Mrs. Scott-Hayden (P-9; P-10)

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Policy Committee:**

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following policies were moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Ms. McKenzie, for adoption:

**POL-1. APPROVE POLICY 3233 – POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

Approve Policy 3233 – Political Activities, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**POL-2. APPROVE POLICY 5460 – HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION**

Approve Policy 5460 – High School Graduation, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**POL-3. APPROVE POLICY 9560 – ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOL SURVEYS**

Approve Policy 9560 – Administration of School Surveys, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**POL-4. APPROVE POLICY 9181 – VOLUNTEER ATHLETIC COACHES AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY ADVISORS/ASSISTANTS**

Approve Policy 9181 – Volunteer Athletic Coaches and Co-Curricular Activity Advisors Assistants, 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:**

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

**R-1. APPROVE LIST OF STUDENTS REMOVED FROM ROLLS**

Approval be given to amend the list of students removed from the rolls [three (3) students exited the month of April 2022 (3 from high school) or a total of thirty-three (33) students for the

2021-2022 school year] who are not domiciled in this school district and one (1) student who will be allowed to complete the 2021-2022 school year, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

**R-2. APPROVE TO REMOVE STUDENT**

Approval to remove student #256053 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.

**R-3. APPROVE TO REMOVE STUDENT**

Approval to remove student #236057 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.

**R-4. APPROVE TO REMOVE STUDENT**

Approval to remove student #241335 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.

**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**

Mrs. Koon stated during executive session, we needed to take a vote on whether or not to continue the suspension of students.

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution was moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Ms. McKenzie, for adoption:

**APPROVE TO CONTINUE SUSPENSIONS**

Approve to continue the suspensions of Student Nos. 230598, 230845, 240560, 228196, 230050, 228168, 220511, 218062, 210527, 226044 from in school instruction pending a hearing by the Board on May 23, 2022.

**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**

Technology Committee:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution were moved by Mrs. Brens-Watson, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, for adoption:

T-1. ACCEPT EMERGENCY CONNECTIVITY FUND FUNDING

Accept Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) funding commitment in the amount of \$931,200.00 for the submission of reimbursement of equipment and services allowed through the ECF Program (no cost to the district), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

T-2. APPROVE RECYCLING OF DEVICES

Approve list of devices for recycling, 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

Approval of Bills:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and moved by Mrs. Brens-Watson, seconded by Ms. Santan that the Board concur with the bills listed in the permanent bound register appended to these minutes and be ordered for payment.

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

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Mrs. Minneci stated Dr. Taylor let Board members visit some of our schools – some of us went, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams and Ms. McKenzie – we went to Battle Hill, Burnet, Franklin, the high school and Jefferson. I was so impressed by the teachers, students, the activities that went on. Very proud to say that they are working very hard. Thank you to everyone that works so hard for our students and the students that work so hard to make us proud.



Mrs. Williams stated Battle Hill was really special to me. Being a mother of a special needs child, the amount of love and caring and compassion that those teachers show those kids – I can't even explain. There was a little boy walking down the hall with his aide and he gave me an incredible hug and it made my day. A big shout out to the teachers and administration there. They are amazing.

Mrs. Minneci stated I want to recognize Mrs. Gainey; she is retiring in June so tonight is her last meeting. Thank you.

Mrs. Williams stated the last regular meeting was emotional and there were people that came up to the mike and they referred to our children as bad and some judged the parents. That is unacceptable to me but you cannot label our children and you can't judge our parents and say you want to be part of the solution. You can't if your mind is that closed and you are labeling children and judging parents. I asked that everybody who approaches that mike is mindful on how you talk about our children.

#### Comments from the Public:

Mrs. Hall stated for many years the Board has listened to me about school counselors versus guidance counselors. I think tonight was a good example why it is so important for us to get that straight. ESS was talking about Tier 3 level of intervention. All the clinicians that work for ESS has similar credentials to every school counselor you have hired. School counselors are required to have 60 credits; many of us have our LTCs; many case managers and child study team and social workers and to imply that we are not performing Tier 3 interventions – I'm feeling competitive right now because I can assure you that we are in the trenches every day with kids that are really struggling. We are capable and competent. To imply that is not the level of care that we are providing, I want to be clear, and that is why I feel so strongly because guidance counselor has a certain connotation to it. That is not who we are any more we are medical health professionals that work in a school setting.

Tomorrow night we have a parent presentation – “Parents who host lose the most”. It is a program that provides information for parents who might be thinking about graduation parties and underage drinking.

On Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Board requested more on vaping, so there is a FaceBook live in coordination with the Township Committee. We are adding a roundtable with a question and answer.

Last month, we were able to bring in Miss USA to Union High School and her platform has to do with empowerment for women. We did a roundtable with some of our spectacular young women. After that Miss USA went onto Instagram and posted that this was “the most thoughtful and intelligent group of girls” she has met with. It was a great day.

Mrs. Cardosa stated I'm also known as “grandma” to Julianna at Connecticut Farms and one at Battle Hill and Burnet. The teachers at Battle Hill, Connecticut Farms and Burnet are awesome. Whether a special needs child or regular gen child. I have them all across the board. Julianna is our special child. She started at Battle Hill, ended up in Franklin, and found her way

to Connecticut Farms with Mrs. Brown, who we thank God every day that she came into our lives. Julianna was non-verbal and she is talking, reading, doing math. God protect that woman, she is awesome. We have wonderful teachers in our school system. We also have wonderful children. We need to bring out the potential in them and work together as a team; not pull each other apart. I have been at other meetings where things have gotten political and everything else. We don't need that. We need all of us to work together for our children. A shout-out to grandparents. I volunteer at Battle Hill. I have seen you there Dr. Taylor, it is wonderful. The rewards you get back from those children is amazing. I love those kids. Whether they are special needs or regular. I am out there in the playground. I look out for them and at the end of the day, instead of sitting home on my sofa, I'm out there talking to these wonderful children. I know the teachers are working without a contract. Please give them a contract. You have amazing teachers out there and we don't want to lose them.

Christina Burser stated my concern of the services of ESS, rather than district employee counselors, that in accordance with the numbers only .0065% of our special education population of Kawmeeh, Burnet and Union High School is being serviced. Students would be more appropriately serviced by school counselors and case managers who are assigned to students for the duration of their academic learning. I think it would be more valuable to see the financial reports of hiring full-time counselors and case managers versus outsourcing our money to ESS. ESS spoke about the 44 students that they have been serving, at UHS there are 400 classified students, in Burnet there are 148 classified students and at Kawameeh there are 127 classified students. For a total of 675 classified students with varying needs, placements in the classrooms – I think it needs to be acknowledged that 1% of our special education population is being serviced by ESS.

Barbara Lamorte stated I would like to invite everyone to the commemoration of Hannah Caldwell Day on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at the Caldwell Parsonage. Hannah and her husband, Reverend James Caldwell, were heroes of the American Revolution at the Battle of Connecticut Farms. This year we are being included in the 11 a.m. service at Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church. The church is inviting everyone to that as well.

The Caldwell Parsonage is part of the Crossroads of the American Revolution which is part of the National Park Services. In October we were honored with a beautiful standing placard on our lawn that faces Caldwell Avenue. In 2026, our nation is commemorating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its birth and the Caldwell Parsonage will be part of that celebration. We ask you to stop by.

Susan Lipstein (via Zoom) stated Policy 3233 – I can't understand how we can praise teachers and they are the only people that can't campaign on school grounds when State law says you can't campaign or pass literature out 100 feet from polling places.

As President of the Township of Union Education Foundation, you just approved the use of Livingston School on June 4<sup>th</sup>. I would like to invite everybody to Family Fun Health Day.

David Arminio stated 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary is called the Sester centennial. I did not bring sports results tonight. Next week at Battle Hill is career day. On May 23<sup>rd</sup> is awards night at the

high school. June 2<sup>nd</sup> is the Chamber of Commerce Gala and Annie Moses is being honored. June 8<sup>th</sup> the Rotary Club is honoring Jill Hall and all the school nurses for all the work that they did during the past two years.

Parent at Franklin (via Zoom) stated over the past month, we lost four teachers – 2 resigned and 2 transferred. This upcoming September, they are transferring 9 more teachers – what are the plans to replace them? Franklin is struggling. If the district is aware that teachers are retiring, why not hire new teachers? Why are they taking from Franklin, where we are losing teachers and placing them in other schools to fill the needs?

Dr. Taylor stated we do intend on hiring replacements. Dr. Baskerville, the principal, and the Mrs. Osborne, the principal at Connecticut Farms, will be teaming up for those interviews.

Mrs. Porter (via Zoom) stated I would like to express concerns for my child's social/emotional wellbeing. When her teacher resigned in March and the only teacher that was in her room was transferred to another school to fill a need based on the district. At the same time, within a couple of weeks before standardized testing, and now I noticed that there are a lot of teachers that are going to be transferred from Franklin to another school. I am asking that you reconsider transferring these teachers. They are amazing and awesome. Maybe fill in at the other school with the new teachers that you bring in.

My second concern is the district as an “unassigned” and “assigned” areas where children are assigned to different schools and I want ask if that could be revisited as far as where students will be going based on where they live not where they were assigned. My child was assigned and the bus was stopped so she is not at a school that is close to her and that be reconsidered as well.

Marilyn Meekens (via Zoom) stated teacher at Franklin. I have been there for 13 years and 17 years in district. I love it here. There is no other district and I found this to be my home. I would like to speak on the transfers. I urge you to reconsider. We need to address the potential issues of inequity and what it says to brave teachers who are upstander's for our students. Teachers have continuously been told to make sure that all students are treated fairly and with respect. That goes for teachers as well. We all need to be respected. Where is the support for the teachers who have the courage to speak up and speak out about the injustices and inequities that exist, not just at Franklin, but within the entire school district. For the first time in my 17-year tenure, I have the courage to speak out. I have been silent for a very long time. I actually feel I have a support system network and it is now being destroyed or torn apart by unexplained transfers. When I was sick, they were in my corner. They called me and came to my home and made sure that I had everything I needed. This Board is reflective of our community. I hope that this school district is moving in the right direction – sooner rather than later.

Amanda Bartes (via Zoom) stated I want to know what is happening at Franklin. There were 25 students in my daughter's classroom. They opened up a fourth classroom after spring break. Now there are issues with transfers. When there was a need for another classroom, no one was looking into the positions and they couldn't be filled. Her classroom is overwhelming for her teachers. I give credit to the teachers, they were amazing. It is a predominately a

minority school. If we are trying to give some sort of order with our children, I don't think it is a good idea with these transfers. I don't think it is beneficial to the teachers, the students or the community. I don't like Franklin as a high minority school, being put on the back burner and having these great teachers transferred out. I don't think it is a good idea. It would be great for you to reconsider these transfers.

Emily stated she is a teacher at Franklin. I urge you to reconsider P-1 transfers. We need to address the potential issues of inequity and what it says about these brave teachers that upstanders for our students. As a new teacher, it has been extremely awkward and unsettling trying to navigate in an environment where my blackness attributes related to what it seems to be problematic. It doesn't say I don't look the part. I also have been acted on related to staff members or administration. I hadn't been asked how am I doing, how my day was or if I needed support, would I like to eat lunch or join the social club? My teaching position in this district seems unstable and uncertain and I don't feel safe. The district is looking to recruit and retain teachers of color; I wonder about the teachers of color that are already here – do we matter? Are we invisible?

Ms. Walter stated teacher at Franklin. I urge you to rescind the agenda items – P-1 transfers. I have been in the district for over 4 years and I know the issues of inequity and racial divisiveness are unfortunately real. I have worked in corporate America where diversity and equity training are commonplace. I am outraged that it is not something that is a priority in our school district. We live in a multifaceted world where it is impossible to prepare our children for their future when the adults that are responsible for their education (inaudible) in the past. How can we do right by children of color when we do not treat our black teachers ethically, neither in policy or in our every day practice. I am heartbroken that my teacher partner for the past three years is being randomly and unjustly transferred. As you know, teacher post COVID has many challenges. Increasing class sizes – I have 25 students, with no assistant. Varying academic levels, as well as the social emotional needs of the student. I urge you to rescind P-1C transfers.

Gordon (via Zoom) stated a resident for 15 years. What I have seen in Franklin Elementary Schools in the last couple months is (inaudible). My daughter is in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, she will be leaving school in two months. She doesn't have a teacher that she can call a great teacher. This is affecting this girl's emotional wellbeing. What is happening at the Board? Why you have to do the transfers? A teacher left school for 12 weeks, came back and resigned. My daughter's aide was moved. Nobody knows anyone in the class anymore. A substitute came in to teach the children who are supposed to take a standardized test. I don't even know what to say but something needs to be done. You can't be transferring teachers randomly and without recourse to the students. The welfare of the students and teachers must be recognized.

Zakiyyah Cobbs stated a parent and teacher and Franklin. As a teacher in the school district it appears to pay a lip service to equity and inclusion. A district whose progress is bias and to silence and invoke white privilege and elevates our fragility. While literally and figuratively ignore the cries of black women and other minorities in this district. I have written and spoken to almost everyone here in the last five years. Five years is a long time to work in an environment that doesn't provide equity, inclusion, professional growth. Student learning are overall below (inaudible). It is unconscionable to be ignored by administration at the highest

level. It is discouraging. At the beginning Mrs. Williams about people making comments about children and parents, you seemed disturbed by that, I do too and I work here. Our kids and parents deserve better. Unfortunately it is a problem in our district. One that needs to be addressed immediately. We have to change. We have done surveys, are we talking to the kids or talking about them. My fourth graders are very opinionated, and they have a lot to say. COVID has changed kids; they are accelerated. As a parent, I urge everyone, to pay attention to how the kids are and we need to do better.

Elsie Mackie (via Zoom) stated the technical issues and Wi-Fi in the district, this is disturbing with the inability to hear the comments. What is actually going to be done about it? This does not make sense in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. What is being done to address these issues? This has been going on for years. ESS data – with children with disabilities – a lot of it is done in district and to be out of district could be a number of things. Cost savings – how do you expect 14-40 kids versus 7,000 students who have been really challenged, why doesn't the district consider hiring and bringing people in. You have to build a relationship. Paraprofessionals is another thing. There are horror stories that I'm hearing and you can outsource to agencies that treat our children like a science project. They come in when they feel like it. Children are going without aides. It is absolutely unacceptable. I know everyone's heart but this goes on deaf ears. Paraprofessionals need to be back in school; hired by the district and monitored by the district. It is so disturbing to hear about Franklin. To hear parents and staff to echo the same problem is disturbing. It looks like they say and it has been that way for years. It is unacceptable. You can't preach about equality and say you are going to be diversified and hire teachers of color (inaudible) needs to be treated as such. Why are parents being engaged and why isn't the staff. This isn't the Union that I know. It doesn't look good.

Tiffany Reid-Anglin stated I was on the agenda for PIC. I would also like to add that the transfers were made less than an hour before it was made public. Did other teachers receive such short notice? Were voluntary transfers considered before forcing involuntary transfers upon myself and at least one other black teacher? I know another black teacher from Franklin was transferred last year, involuntarily, and extreme isolation at work and another year without support from the district. I'm not sure if any of you remember me but I sat here before you last year pleading for an opportunity to continue to serve my students and families at Franklin. I truly am grateful to be here; however, I am offended that I feel invisible and unvalued on a daily basis. Last year my dedication and commitment, how students and families nominated me Governor's Educator of the Year. Although it was an award, it was not acknowledged or celebrated. Celebratory time for me was roughen and tainted by discriminatory reactions by staff and not acknowledged by administration. Behavior that should have been unacceptable. While this is one example of the microaggressions that I face daily and it has caused me great disappointment. I am not only saddened by the involuntary transfer but the unfair way it was delivered. As teaching daily through COVID, even at my son's hospital bed, I hope the worst is over. While a transfer may not seem like a big deal to anyone else, a working mom of three school-age children, it creates another hardship. Another in a long line of hardship in navigating this school district as a black teacher.

Ms. Santana stated I wasn't on the Board but I want to say congratulations to you.

Stacy Watson (via Zoom) stated I want you to reconsider the transfer of the teachers. I'm heart broken right now. My daughter had her in kindergarten and first grade. She is phenomenal, she goes over and beyond. She treated my child like she was her own child. She is a teacher that is there not just for a paycheck, she is there because she loves the children, she cares about the children and she goes over and beyond. I have seen her do that for everyone's child. She loves them all. The teacher my daughter has now, can't keep the kids in control. The kids are everywhere. It is chaos. When you transfer people, you have to look at what kind of person you are dealing with. The kids love Ms. Anglin. They look for her. You know when a teacher is doing the right thing because kids know good people and bad people. If you are a bad teacher, a kid is not looking for you. The Board needs to reevaluate everything. We need teachers that really love and care for our kids.

Cayla Gunther stated Franklin is a wonderful school. It is hard to hear some comments that it is not. I truly love working there. There are so many wonderful teachers there. Yes we are struggling right now; we are short staffed. I have to give a shout-out to so many staff members that are stepping up every day and covering and making sure these kids are taken care of no matter what.

I would like to speak about the transfers for this year. Over the last six years, Franklin lost almost 20 teachers to transfers. Many of these teachers asked to leave because of harassment, intimidation and bullying that had been taking place there. Although whether there are document of these cases, there have been an overwhelming amount of problems. There is a continued mention of this divide within our school but the divide has been formed by teachers who choose to separate themselves. Many of the teachers that have remained at Franklin over the past few years, who are teachers that have called Franklin home for upwards of 25 years. It is frustrating for us who are trying to stick around for our kids. We love being there and we love the students and our colleagues. I know many of my colleagues that I am close to and are leaving, or have left in the past, it ate them up inside. It was a hard decision for them to make to leave but they did it for themselves and their families and their careers. It was their choice.

But what happens with all these teachers leaving, the mistreatment of those of us left behind. We have had almost a complete turnover in staff since I have been there – 10 years. Next year if all of these transfers go through, only six teachers, including myself, will remain since I started. Although those teachers will go somewhere else and will shine at any of our schools, it is hard to watch them all go. With everything being so focused on social emotional learning, we need it too for our teachers. We need support and we need to feel that we are all on the same page. I want the Board to make the right decision with these transfers; that it is the right choice for our kids. We are just looking for a year at Franklin with no added stress.

We have all this learning loss and how we are going to get them where they need to be. We need to be doing that in a positive environment in and out of our classrooms. We want to enjoy coming back to work again.

Melissa (via Zoom) stated I want to say about the transferring of the teachers, it should be up to the teachers whether or not they want to transfer. Unless they are not performing academically for the kids, then that is different. My son loves his teacher. This is his last year at

Franklin. I think there should be more African American teachers in all of the Union district schools. The teachers should decide whether they should be transferred or you have x-amount of years to be at this school and then we will transfer you out, not mid-school year.

Vicki Morraco (via Zoom) stated 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Franklin. I want to speak on behalf of our school, our students and my colleagues. I want to ask that you reconsider the transfers for the stability of our school. We are going to have a lot of spots that will be left open and we are short staffed. I have been a witness to my colleagues that I have become close with and many of these colleagues are of color. They struggle to find their way to feel accepted and welcomed in the work place. We need PD for us to learn about the differences, diversity because I don't know what else to ask for to help mend all these broken places that are evident in Franklin. My heart goes out to my colleagues because these are the most genuine women that I have met in my life. They are the most hardworking and they don't get the credit other colleagues get. These are the women I work beside every day – not just regular school hours but after school hours. The afterschool programs, they are the first to put their hand up to put in the extra time to work for the kids. Money is secondary. It breaks my heart but I do think it is the district's responsibility to provide the staff with the proper training to be able to open all our eyes to the differences that often cause conflict that don't need to. It is just an understanding of the differences that we have. I do urge that your reconsider the transfers that are involuntary. Look at all the teachers that have wanted to stay and haven't asked for transfers. They are there for the kids and they connect with them.

Paul Casey (via Zoom) stated I'm heartbroken. Hearing this tonight means that nothing has changed. Over the last three years, six black administrators have left this district; that was a sign that things weren't going well in the district. This is not the first time issues have been raised about the transfers happening this evening, but the decision was made to do it anyway. On the same evening, Goal #3 on equity – the Strategic Plan was rolled out. That goal means nothing if this district isn't going to listen to a black teacher speaking out. Saying things like “we hear you”, putting things like equity in the Strategic Plan, is going to fall on deaf ears in this district. Both people that support equity and people that would like to see this status quo will know that they are just empty words because action are not following through to support teachers of color in this district. It is time for people to step up and hold people accountable for this kind of behavior and eliminate what is essentially institutional racism in the Township of Union Public Schools. It is enough. Listen to the black teachers and parents who are speaking up. We stand behind you.

Ginny (via Zoom) stated I'm a parent in Union and have been in Union for over 15 years and hearing about the teachers being transferred is ridiculous. Franklin is a good school. The teachers are doing amazing. Ms. Anglin is such a great teacher. She takes care of all the kids. Even when she was at her son's bedside, that is an amazing thing to do – to be a mom, a teacher – it is amazing. Transferring all the teachers is ridiculous.

Ann Margaret Shannon stated UTEA president – there is not an answer right now with what has been going on. It is very disheartening. There is so many sides to this. Union Township Education Association has worked with this Board of Ed to have our State Association

– New Jersey Education Association help us with professional development. I just want to commit to work with the Board that the UTEA is here to help fix it.

Mrs. Williams stated this has been difficult and a lot to say with seven minorities on this Board, this was thought out, discussed and I think it is going to be best for our kids. No matter where they go they are going to shine. I'm hoping with the transfers, even though you don't like them, that you take this as an opportunity to touch that next child and to shine in your new schools. It had been a difficult decision to make.

Dr. Taylor stated I don't expect the public to understand the position that I'm in – what all 10 schools need. I'm on the same page as the Board and community about doing two things – diversify our staff and faculty; particularly our certificated faculty. I have a chart that my assistant put together that shows the percentage of our student body and the percentage of the certificated faculty – broken down by demographic in all of schools. What you might not know is one of our elementary schools, which is being impacted by the transfers, has a student population of 40% black but only has a 9% black certificated faculty, which means to me the diversity problem is widespread. These transfers were in part my effort to diversify schools outside of Franklin.

I also want to clarify that the teachers that were transferred out were not picked by demographic. Of the seven teachers, three teachers are white, one is Hispanic, one is Asian and two are black. I was not intentionally targeting any particular population. I was looking at the entire district.

I will also point out with regards to equity, whatever lip service you got back then, I'm a new guy, spent a year, listened and that is what led to the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is tied to my evaluation. This Board and I have talked about how I will be evaluated by the board of education and they will consider my progress or regression based on my ability to accomplish the goals – one of which is about equity. If I'm not doing my job, I'm out of a job that is what it comes down to.

#### 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 10:23 p.m.

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

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

YOLANDA KOON  
BOARD SECRETARY



