

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION MINUTES – June 10, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

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, June 10, 2025 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.

Ms. Carbonell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Ms. Dixiana Carbonell, Mr. Michael Cohan, 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:

None

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

Ms. Santana 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 the regular meeting of the Board.

Communications:

Communications are part of Personnel and Operations.

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

Board President Carbonell read the following statement to the attendees of the worksession:

Good evening. I'd like to take a moment to thank you all for being here today. As we begin the public comment portion of this meeting, I want to remind everyone that we value your input and appreciate your time and effort in sharing your thoughts and concerns.

As Ms. Koon stated previously, I ask that all comments be respectful and constructive, and that we refrain from calling out, yelling, and disrespectful language.

Each speaker will be given three minutes to address the board. Please remember that while we are eager to hear your perspectives, we may be unable to engage in back-and-forth dialogue during this portion of the meeting. However, your comments will be carefully reviewed and taken into consideration by the board, and if feasible, the Superintendent or designee, will respond to questions in real time or provide a response at a later time.

With that said, I invite our first speaker to approach. Please state your name and address.

Anne Margaret Shannon – UTEA President – spoke about transparency and how it is a concern. She asked if there is transparency and does everyone one knows what is going on? She mentioned the following and asked if they will be filled: (1) nonrenewal of a 2nd grade teacher, (2) why is there not a posting for a French teacher, (3) Social Studies Supervisor, and (4) UHS Academic Coaches – maybe positions won't be filled?

Kathleen Bruns-Meyers – she wanted to thank Dr. Rodriguez – he came to her classroom for Read Across America and he threw a pizza party for her class. She indicated her class loves him.

Superintendent's Report:

Superintendent Report will be next week.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

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

E-1. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period May 21, 2025 to June 10, 2025, 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 May 14, 2025 to May 20, 2025, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-13. APPROVE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TEAM – CONDUCT NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOP COMPREHENSIVE EQUITY PLAN

Approve the Affirmative Action Team to conduct the needs assessment and develop a Comprehensive Equity Plan, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Scott-Hayden indicated she attended the meetings regarding the comprehensive plan which is for three years. They are still working on PD for all employees. The team had input and there are still areas that need to be addressed.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mr. McDowell, seconded by Mr. Cohan, 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.

F-9A. 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 |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Kawameeh Middle School | 5/Administration | Township of Union BOE-Chromebook fines collected during 2024-2025 school year | \$2,200.00 (not to exceed) |
| Kawameeh Middle School | 30/Administration | Cranford Pool – 8 th grade trip on 6/10/2025 to Cranford Pool | \$1,900.00 (not to exceed) |
| Union High School | AP Testing | College Board-to pay for AP exams given by College Board | \$26,805.00 |
| Union High School | 2033/Marching Band | Vanderhoof Transportation-balance of bus for Philippines International Day Parade | \$1,295.00 (not to exceed) |
| Union High School | 2033/Marching Band | Penske-Orlando Truck Rental | \$2,103.20 |
| Union High School | 3340/Softball | Costa Del Sol – softball end of year banquet | \$3,819.85 |
| Franklin Elementary School | 2005/Chromebook Fees | Township of Union BOE-Chromebook fines collected during 2024-2025 school year | \$5,000.00 (not to exceed) |

F-19. APPROVE PERSON-CENTERED APPROACHES IN SCHOOLS AND TRANSITION - COHORT PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Approve to participate in the 2024-2025 Person-Centered Approaches in Schools and Transition (PCAST) Cohort Participation Agreement to begin in June 2025 and to continue with ongoing multi-year on-site support as per the agreement (at no cost to the district), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-30. APPROVE STEPPING FORWARD COUNSELING CENTER – HOME INSTRUCTION SERVICE

Approve Stepping Forward Counseling Center (SFCC) to provide Home Instruction Service for students for two (2) hours per day, ten (10) hours per week at a rate of up to \$100.00/hr. (not to exceed \$4,000.00) for the 2024-2025 school year [Account #7693/11-150-100-320-01-19], in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Conteh-Mackey asked for clarification on F-19 and F-30. Dr. Benaquista indicated on F-19, the special services department will receive ongoing customized training and technical assistance on person-centered approaches with multi-year on-site support. Mr. Cohan indicated on F-30, for medical home instruction for a student

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Operations/Technology Committee Resolutions:

Operations/Technology resolutions will be approved at the Board's regular meeting.

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

Dr. Benaquista indicated that P-8 needs to be approved this evening.

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

P-8. APPROVE EMPLOYEES FOR REAPPOINTMENT – 2025-2026

Approve employees on the attached list to be reappointed for the 2025-2026 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Minneci (#8933 only)

MOTION CARRIED

Policy Committee:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following policy was moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mrs. Faria, for **FINAL READING/ADOPTION**:

POL-1. POLICY 5111 – ELIGIBILITY OF RESIDENT/NONRESIDENT STUDENTS (M)

Approve Policy 5111 – Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISUCSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following policies wer emoved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mrs. Faria, for **FIRST READING**:

POL-1a. POLICY 3212 – ATTENDANCE

Approve Policy 3212 – Attendance (teaching staff), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

POL-2a. POLICY 4212 – ATTENDANCE

Approve Policy 4212 – Attendance (support staff), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

REG-1. REGULATION 3212 – ATTENDANCE

Approve Regulation 3212 – Attendance (teaching staff), in accordance with the information in appended to the minutes.

REG-2. REGULATION 4212 – ATTENDANCE

Approve Regulation 4212 – Attendance (support staff), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. McKenzie indicated that the attendance policies/regulations is a step-by-step process for excessive absences, including an improvement plan.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Minneci reported the following to the Board and community:

For informational purposes only (no vote required): The following totals are as of the May 20, 2025 Board meeting (2024-2025 school year):

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Students Removed: | 8 |
| Students Voluntarily Transferred: | 21 |

Approval of Bills:

Bills will be approved at the Board's regular meeting.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Mrs. Minneci – attended the planting of pear trees sponsored by the County at Battle Hill Elementary School and Livingston Elementary School. She congratulated the 11 students who are going to Boy State at Ryder University.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden – attended STEM night at Franklin Elementary School and she was glad to see all the parents and students in attendance. She indicated it was a good event but next year her goal is to make the event even better.

Mrs. Minneci – attended the KMS art show and indicated it was amazing.

Ms. Santana – attended the KMS art show and indicated it was a great event.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden – informed the Board and community that Mrs. Minneci received a UTEA award. Mrs. Minneci indicated it was a wonderful event and thank you.

Ms. Santana – asked for a moment of silence for the Camie Dudek, a student from Washington Elementary School who passed away.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mr. Cohan, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the Board go into Executive Session at 7:30 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

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

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

MOTION TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION:

There being no further business before the Board it was moved by Mr. Cohan, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the Board return to public session at 8:27 p.m.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

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

APPROVE REINSTATEMENT OF STUDENT

Approve reinstatement of student #291068, effective September 1, 2025.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

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

APPROVE LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND HOME INSTRUCTION

Approve to continue long-term suspension and home instruction for student #266593.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

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. Minneci, seconded by Mr. Cohan, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

All present voting YES

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Yolanda Koon

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

