

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, February 24, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the DMK Black Box Theater, 1980 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to notice sent to each member.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. Michael Cohan, Mrs. Elsie Conteh-Mackey, Mr. Ronnie McDowell, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Ms. Dixiana Carbonell, Mrs. Guida Faria, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. Greg Nasta

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Lester Taylor, Esq.

Mr. Cohan led the Board and audience members 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.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mr. Cohan, that the Board go into Executive Session at 6:04 p.m. to discuss the following subject matters without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b: personnel, legal updates

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, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 7:02 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 7:02 p.m.

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

Moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, the following minutes were adopted:

1. January 6, 2026 – organization meeting
2. January 13, 2026 – worksession meeting
3. January 13, 2026 – executive session
4. January 20, 2026 – regular meeting
5. January 20, 2026- executive session No. 1 and No. 2

DISCUSSION:
None

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Communications:

USE OF FACILITIES:

REQUEST FOR USE OF UHS FACILITY SITE

Request from Township of Union Chamber of Commerce to use the Union High School facility site for the 15th Annual Mayor’s Day 5K Run on September 27, 2026 (rain date October 11, 2026 (severe weather only).

REQUEST FOR USE OF FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Request from the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, in a partnership with Links, Incorporated, to use Franklin Elementary School (gymnasium, adjacent hallway, main doors and auditorium) to host The Family Wellness & Empowerment Expo on Saturday, March 21, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

REQUEST FOR USE OF HANNAH CALDWELL PARKING LOTS AND ACCESS TO HENRICKS DRIVE

Request from Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee seeking permission to access the parking lots of Hannah Caldwell Elementary School and rear access to Hendricks Drive on Saturday, March 14, 2026, for the annual Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade.

LETTERS OF RESIGNATION:**LETTER OF RESIGNATION – LAWSON**

Letter of resignation from Kianna Lawson, cafeteria/playground aide-Jefferson School, effective February 11, 2026.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – SPEKHARDT, JR.

Letter of resignation from Michael Spekhardt, Jr., special education teacher-Union High School, effective April 9, 2026.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – HERNANDEZ CHACON

Letter of resignation from Jessica Hernandez Chacon, paraprofessional-Battle Hill Elementary School, effective February 5, 2026.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – FOSTER

Letter of resignation from Ashley Foster, paraprofessional-Jefferson School, effective March 19, 2026.

LETTERS OF RETIREMENT:**LETTER OF RETIREMENT – ABRAHAM**

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Catherine Abraham, 10-month secretary-Union High School, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – GALLANTER

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Sherry Gallanter, speech therapist-Franklin Elementary School, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – DAUBERT

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Rene' Daubert, third grade teacher-Washington Elementary School, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – KASTNER

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Kimberley Kastner, third grade teacher-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, effective July 1, 2026.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – ZURKA

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Christine Zurka, paraprofessional-Battle Hill Elementary School, effective May 1, 2026.

EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION:

EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION – PARCHMENT

Employment Separation, Ayzriel Parchment, paraprofessional-Franklin Elementary School, effective February 10, 2026.

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE:

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – OSBORNE

Request for paid FMLA from Melissa Osborne, special education teacher-Burnet Middle School, January 19, 2026-March 13, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – TALBOT

Request for unpaid paternity leave from Matthew Talbot, math teacher-Kawameeh Middle School, April 6, 2026-June 17, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – WATANABE

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA from Elizabeth Watanabe, special education teacher-Battle Hill Elementary School, May 4, 2026-December 3, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – CARVALHO

Request for paid FMLA, followed by intermittent FMLA from Julie Carvalho, secretary-Union High School, February 26, 2026-June 30, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – TRIPP

Request for unpaid FMLA (paternity leave) from Eric Trip, world history teacher-UHS, May 11, 2026-June 12, 2026.

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE UPDATES:

CANCELLATION OF REQUEST FOR LEAVE – THOMPSON

Cancellation of request for paid intermittent leave from Robert Thompson, SE teacher-Union High School.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – FOX

Update to request for paid FMLA from Zara Fox, music teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, February 2, 2026-May 31, 2026 (return date subject to change).

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – JURKOVIC

Request for leave update from Jessica Jurkovic, ESL teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, new return date May 5, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – MANCINELLI

Request for extension of NJFLA from Lynne Mancinelli, media specialist-Washington Elementary School, new return date April 1, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – KERR

Request for paid medical leave update from Allan Kerr, full-time driver-Transportation Department, February 2, 2026-February 13, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – GIGANTINO

Request for paid FMLA update from Kathleen Gigantino, paraprofessional-Battle Hill Elementary School, February 23, 2026-April 23, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – MITSaelIDES MICCICHE

Update to request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA from Maria Mitsaelides Micciche, ESL teacher-Battle Hill Elementary School, March 20, 2026-October 21, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – ZURKA

Update to request for paid medical leave from Christine Zurka, paraprofessional-Battle Hill Elementary School, March 6, 2026-April 30, 2026.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – MENDES

Update to request for paid intermittent leave and paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA from Christie Mendes, OT-Franklin and Connecticut Farms Elementary School, November 24, 2025-March 12, 2026 and March 13, 2026-June 15, 2026, respectively, returning September 1, 2027.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATE – KORZEN

Update to paid FMLA from Olga Korzen, fourth grade teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, February 2, 2026-February 18, 2026.

REQUESTS FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE:**REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – LEON**

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Deanna Leon, kindergarten teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, January 30, 2026-June 30, 2026.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – HIGGINS

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Kelly Higgins, second grade teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, January 15, 2026-June 15, 2026.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – REILLY

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Raymond Reilly, security-Burnet Middle School, January 22, 2026-January 22, 2027.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – KATZ

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Barbara Katz, CST-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, February 3, 2026-February 3, 2027.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – PERDOMO O’HARA

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Jessica Perdomo O’Hara, preschool instructional coach, January 20, 2026-January 20, 2027.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MESSLER

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Scott Messler, PE teacher-Union High School, February 2, 2026-December 22, 2027.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – FERNANDEZ

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Gina Lisa Fernandez, world language teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, January 23, 2026-January 23, 2027.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MILLER

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Randi Miller, special education teacher-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, January 12, 2026-January 12, 2027.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – FIORDILINO

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Maria Fiordilino, special education teacher-Burnet Middle School, January 30, 2026-June 30, 2026.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – SCHARAGO

Request for paid intermittent leave from Michele Scharago, special education teacher-Livingston Elementary School, March 1, 2026-March 1, 2027.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – OSBORNE

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Kelly Osborne, paraprofessional-Battle Hill Elementary School, February 10, 2026-March 2, 2026.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – HRDINA BROWN

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Felecia Hrdina Brown, preschool instructional coach, February 10, 2026-June 30, 2026.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MARTINEZ

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Marisol Martinez, payroll department, January 30, 2026-June 30, 2026.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MEEKINS

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Marilyn Meekins, fourth grade teacher-Franklin Elementary School, February 17, 2026-June 17, 2026.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – SANGHAVI

Request for paid intermittent FMLA from Tejal Sanghavi, BT-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, February 19, 2026-June 30, 2026.

Comments from Public (on resolutions):

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

No comments from public.

Superintendent's Report:

Student Liaison - Ethan Beaumont – UHS Senior – plays soccer and baseball; club and honors – winter student athletic trainer, National Honor Society and the Farmer Fam. Featured in a TikTok for Attendance Campaign. Ethan presented the following:

- Football – NY Giants donated \$10,000 to UHS football program
- UHS girl's track – North 2 Group 4 State Track Champions
- Ali Silvestre represented UHS at the National Girls and Women in Sports Day at Rutgers
- Athletes of Month for January – Julia Laverty – swimming; Kizlah Morgan - girls basketball; Jaydon Robles – wrestling; Javy Ocasio - boys basketball
- UHS wrestling – Aiden Cross – 100th career win; Coach DiBellonia brought the Jack DeBarbieri Memorial Cup back; team finished the dual meet season 22-5 record; UHS will be hosting boys' and girls' regionals in March
- Boys' basketball – 18-4 overall record and a 63-41 win over Dayton in the Union County tournament preliminary round
- Girls' basketball – 12-9 overall record
- UHS swimming and bowling celebrated senior nights
- UHS PAC – spring musical – Frozen: The Broadway Musical

Dr. Benaquista presented his Superintendent Report as follows (presentation appended to minutes):

- Enrollment – 2025-2026- February 15th – 7,760
- Doorman – Burnet Middle School is piloting Doorman, an innovative cell phone management app making us the First school in New Jersey to launch this forward-thinking program. This pilot aligns with NJ's new school cell phone law, effective July 1, 2026.
- U-Care Team – Dr. Rodriguez sat down with TV34 and Edess to discuss our U-Care Teams and give us an update on attendance throughout the district
- TUPS 2026 Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony – May 7, 2026 – Inductees:
 - Christine A. Amalfe
 - David Arminio
 - Michael T. Bono
 - Nija Charles
 - Douglas DeLuca
 - Elizabeth Duffy

- Grace Durling
- Steven Edwards
- Samuel Fortunato
- Gleen A. Grant
- Dr. Theodore Jakubowski
- Dr. Michael Lodato
- Ronald Manzella
- Donald Ralph Marangi
- Andrew Meltzoff
- Linda Simensky
- Dr. Amy Simon
- Lawrence Edward Roberts
- National School Counselors' Week
- Transportation Day
- Multilingual Parent Advisory Committee (MPAC)
- HIB – Incidents to Affirm – period January 21st-February 10th – 8 founded, 2 unfounded, 1 inconclusive (see E-1-1)
- HIB – Incidents to Report – period February 11-24th – 3 founded, 1 unfounded, 3 inconclusive (see E-1-A)
- Student Safety Data System (SSDS) – reporting period September 1, 2025-December 31, 2025 (period 1) (see E-7) – incidents:
 - UHS – 40
 - BMS – 24
 - KMS – 8
 - BHES – 0
 - HCES – 0
 - Jefferson – 1
 - CFES – 0
 - FES – 0
 - LES – 0
 - WES - 0
- Attendance Initiative: January 2026 – K-12 – 95.15%
 - Attendance Award – January 2026 – KMS – 7th grade – 97.24%
- Preschool Lottery for 2026-2027 – February 23-March 27, 2026
- Math Matters – a homework help program
- ParentSquare Update – 46% of parents/guardians have downloaded the App
- Congratulations – Jacklyn Cassandra – Valedictorian and Ava Soares – Salutatorian
- Thank you to the Buildings and Grounds, Transportation Department and Township of Union DPW for their hard work and dedication during Sunday's Blizzard

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

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

E-1. *Agenda item approved at February 10, 2026 worksession (Affirm HIB-January 14-20, 2026).*

E-1A. *Agenda item reported at February 10, 2026 worksession (Report HIB-January 21-February 10, 2026).*

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

Affirm the Superintendent's determination of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the periods January 21, 2026 to February 10, 2026, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

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

Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period February 11, 2026 to February 24, 2026, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

E-2. APPROVE GIRLS ON THE RUN PROGRAM – JEFFERSON SCHOOL

Approve Girls on the Run Program at Jefferson School from April 6 to June 3, 2026 (Mondays and Wednesdays) from 2:45 p.m.-4:00 p.m., at a cost of \$25.00 per student (coaches: Stephanie Manderichio, teacher and Samantha Salinas, parent).

E-3. APPROVE PARTNERSHIP – NEW JERSEY DENTAL FOUNDATION AND NEW JERSEY DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Approve partnership with New Jersey Dental Foundation (NJDF) and the New Jersey Dental Association (NJDA) to provide oral health kits at no cost to the seven elementary schools for each student, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-4. APPROVE ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS – 2026 HEART GRANT

Approve acceptance of funds from the Union County Board of County Commissioners 2026 HEART (History, Education, Arts Reading Thousands) Grant in the amount of \$1,500.00 for Livingston Elementary School to paint a mural by the outdoor garden area, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-5. APPROVE TUPS TO APPLY FOR HIGH IMPACT TUTORING COMPETITIVE GRANT AWARD

Approve Township of Union Public Schools to apply for the New Jersey Acceleration Program: High Impact Tutoring Competitive Grant Award (Cohort 3) in the amount of \$320,000, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-6. *Agenda item approved at February 10, 2026 worksession (recreation grant).*

E-7. APPROVE STUDENT SAFETY DATA SYSTEM REPORT

Approve the Student Safety Data System Report (formerly Violence and Vandalism Report) (SSDS) for period one (September 1-December 31, 2025) of the 2025-2026 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-8. APPROVE SUSPENSION

Approve the continuation of long-term suspension and home instruction for student #266593 from the general education program.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

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. McDowel, seconded by Ms. Santana, for adoption:

F-1. TREASURER’S REPORT

That the Treasurer’s Report dated January 31, 2026 be accepted.

F-2. SECRETARY’S REPORT

That the Secretary’s Report dated January 31, 2026 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 January 31, 2026 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 January 31, 2026 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 (copyrighted materials and licenses) 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 DISTRICTWIDE TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES

Approve districtwide 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. *Agenda item approved at February 10, 2026 worksession (student field trips).*

F-7A. 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-8. APPROVE LIST OF 2025-2026 STATE CONTRACT APPROVED VENDORS

Approve the amended list of the 2025-2026 State Contract Approved 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-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 Name/Account #	Vendor/Description	Amount
Livingston Elementary School	2012/2 nd grade	Liberty Science Center	\$2,638.50
Union High School	2527/Class of 2027	Dorney Park – Jr. Class Trip	\$17,000.00
Union High School	2061/Cosmetology	Questex – payment for International Beauty Show/Be Well	\$1,715.00
Union High School	2077/Theater	Hellhound Audio – audio rental and technicians for Frozen	\$10,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	46/UHS Clubs	Kiwanis – registration for Key Club district convention and train new officers	\$12,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2077/Theatre	The Costumer – costume rental for Frozen	\$10,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2077/Theatre	Somerset Foods – concessions for Frozen	\$2,000 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2077/Theatre	11hourDesign – graphic design, program design, printing, scenic materials for Frozen	\$15,000.00 (not to exceed)

Union High School	2526/Class of 26	Major Printing Company – purchase of lawn signs for Class of 2026 for lawn sign sale	\$5,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2526/Class of 26	Major Printing Company – purchase senior class t-shirts for senior class fundraiser	\$5,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	46/UHS Key Club	New Jersey Key Club – registration for Key Club district convention (DECON)	\$8,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2033/Marching Band	11hour Design – marching band prop design and construction materials	\$2,495.48
Union High School	2526/Class of 26	Hersey Park – Class of 2026 Senior Trip	\$15,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2526/Class of 26	Sunny Trail Inc. – transportation for senior trip to Hershey Park	\$10,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2527/Class of 27	Sunny Trial Inc. – transportation for Jr. Class trip	\$12,000.00 (not to exceed)
Battle Hill Elementary School	2013/3 rd grade	Liberty Science Center – 3 rd grade and student council trip	\$3,090.00
Washington Elementary School	2010/2 nd grade	Turtle Back Zoo – 2 nd grade field trip to the Turtle Back Zoo	\$1,950.00
Washington Elementary School	2007/4 th grade	Medieval Times – 4 th grade field trip to Medieval Times	\$4,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2045/Performing Arts	WorldStrides – tour company payment for trip to Boston	\$10,000.00 (not to exceed)
Union High School	2051/JROTC	Dominate The Drill Pad – training Camp for JROTC	\$4,552.45

F-9B. APPROVE FUNDRAISERS

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

Event Name	Date	Purpose
Sale – You’ve Been	February 25-June 30, 2026	BMS/Student Council – to raise funds to purchase equipment for outdoor recess
Sale – Chocolate Charms	March - June 2026	BMS/Student Council – to raise funds to purchase outdoor equipment
Pie a Teacher, Smencils, tape teacher to a wall	February 25, 2026-June 30, 2026	CFES/Student Council – to raise funds for playground Buddy Bench replacement
Vertical Raise-Online Fundraiser	March 9-June 30, 2026	UHS/Flag Football – to raise funds for end of year party and trophies
T-Shirt Sale	February 25-June 30, 2026	UHS/Flag Football – to raise funds for end of year awards and activities
Volleyball Tournament/March Madness	March 1-31, 2026	KMS/National Jr. Honor Society – to raise funds for charity
Basketball Tournament/March Madness	March 1-31, 2026	KMS/National Jr. Honor Society – to raise funds for charity
Penny Wars/March Madness	March 1-31, 2026	KMS/National Jr. Honor Society – to raise funds for charity

Outdoor Movie Night	May-June 2026	UHS/Class of 2026 – to raise funds for Class of 2026 – Senior Day
Slime a Senior	March 1-April 30, 2026	UHS/Class of 2026 – raise funds for senior trip
Donations/Collection – Women Products	March 1-31, 2026	UHS/Girls EmpowHerment Club – to collect female items to donate to women shelters/organizations
Concessions	March 19-22, 2026	UHS/UHSPAC – to raise funds for production of Frozen
Double Good Popcorn Sales	February 25, 2026-	UHS/Step Team – to raise funds for competition expenses, coverups and duffle bag
Volleyball Tournament after School	March 20, 2026	UHS/Asian Student Alliance – to raise funds for NYC trip to Chinatown Museum
School-Wide Reading Challenge	March 2-June 1, 2026	HCES/Schoolwide – to raise funds to purchase more books, future author visit and school-wide reading celebration

F-9C. ACCEPT DONATIONS

Accept the following donations:

From	For Use By	\$/Item
Atlantic Health Systems	UHS Scholarship Fund	\$200.00
Shutterfly LLC	Union High School	\$2,063.70
Washington School PTA	Washington Elementary School- 2 nd grade trip to Turtle Back Zoo	\$560.00
Washington School PTA	Washington Elementary School – 4 th grade trip to Medieval Times	\$123.00

F-10. APPROVE 2025-2026 OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENT PLACEMENT LIST

Approval be given to amend the 2025-2026 out-of-district student placement list (month of February 2026), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-11. APPROVE PARTICIPATION IN COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM

Approve resolution and agreement authorizing the district to enter into the Cooperative Pricing System Agreement with the Morris-Union Jointure Commission (MUJC) (Lead Agency), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-12. APPROVE INCREASE – KID CLAN SERVICES

Approve increase to the not to exceed amount for Kid Clan Services to provide speech therapy services for the 2025-2026 school year to \$65,000.00 from \$3,600.00 (an increase of \$61,400.00).

F-13. APPROVE NONPUBLIC SCHOOL SECURITY AND TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE PROGRAM SPENDING PLANS - UCESC

Approve the Union County Educational Services Commission (UCESC) Nonpublic School Security and Technology Initiative Program spending plans for United Academy of

Union located within the district for the 2025-2026 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-14. APPROVE RESOLUTION/AGREEMENT COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES – UCESC

Approve the Resolution/Agreement for Participation in Coordinated Transportation Services with the Union County Educational Services Commission for the 2026-2027 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-15. APPROVE SHORT-TERM PARTNERSHIP WITH FRIENDS OF UNION PUBLIC LIBRARY – HALL OF FAME

The Township of Union Public Schools seeks to recognize and celebrate the distinguished achievements of its alumni and staff through the Hall of Fame in partnership with the Friends of Union Public Library.

F-16. APPROVE KAVITA SINHA – EVALUATIONS

Approve Kavita Sinha MD, FAAP to provide neuropsychiatric and neurodevelopmental evaluations at the rate of \$700.00 per evaluation for the 2025-2026 school year (not to exceed \$7,000.00) [Account #7074/11-000-219-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-17. APPROVE AGREEMENT WITH RED ROVER – ABSENCE AND HIRING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Approve Agreement with Red Rover, an absence and hiring management software system to improve the efficiency and accuracy of employee absence tracking and substitute management system (replacing Frontline with a cost savings of approximately \$25,000.00), effective July 1, 2026.

F-ATTY. *For informational purposes only – vote not required.* List of legal services paid as of January 20, 2026 for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Cohan advised that (a) F-15 is a short-term partnership with the Friends of the Union Public Library and they will maintain an independent bank account and oversee all ceremonies, fundraising activities and related operations for the first class of honorees in May 2026; thereafter a 501(c)(3) will be established for an independent organization in 2027, (b) F-17 is a new absence management system and will save the district \$25,000.00 and (c) F-12 – the increase in this resolution is moneys already allocated to other vendors for speech therapy; however, the other vendors will no longer be used so that all the moneys have been allocated to Kid Clan Services.

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Operations/Technology Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mr. Cohan, 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 for the month of January 2026 and, if applicable, bus evacuation reports for the 2025-2026 school year, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

O-2. APPROVE REQUEST FOR USE OF UHS FACILITY SITE

Approve request from Township of Union Chamber of Commerce to use the Union High School facility site for the 15th Annual Mayor's Day 5K Run on September 27, 2026 (rain date October 11, 2026 (severe weather only).

O-3. APPROVE REQUEST FROM NATIONAL COALITION OF 100 BLACK WOMEN – USE OF FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Approve request from the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, in a partnership with Links, Incorporated, to use Franklin Elementary School (gymnasium, adjacent hallway, main doors and auditorium) to host The Family Wellness & Empowerment Expo on Saturday, March 21, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-4. APPROVE REQUEST FOR USE OF HANNAH CALDWELL PARKING LOTS AND ACCESS TO HENRICKS DRIVE

Approve request from Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee seeking permission to access the parking lots of Hannah Caldwell Elementary School and rear access to Hendricks Drive on Saturday, March 14, 2026, for the annual Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade.

T-1. APPROVE RECYCLING OF EQUIPMENT

Approve list of equipment for recycling, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

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

P-1A. *Agenda item approved at February 10, 2026 worksession (New Hires).*

P-1A-1. 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 (*none at this time*)

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

P-2. APPROVE SUBSTITUTE LISTS

Approve Substitute Lists for the 2025-2026 school year.

Name	Position	Rate
Zulmary Gutierrez	Sub-custodian	\$16.00/hr.
Claudette Pryce-Grant	Sub-custodian	\$16.00/hr.
Jason Novoa	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Birane Thiao	Daily sub	\$170.00/per day
John Adesoji Oguntoye	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Kaitlin Laverty	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Cedric Bryant	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Jude Asikabueu	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day (pending paperwork)
Ashley Kingsley	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Shane Apito	Daily sub	\$160.00 per day (pending paperwork)
Zachary Fernandez	Daily sub	\$160.00 per day (pending paperwork)
Brianna Bowles	Daily sub	\$160.00 per day (pending paperwork)
Vincent Langan	Daily sub	\$160.00/per day
Erin Meixner	Daily sub-nurse only	\$250.00/per day

P-3A. ACCEPT LETTERS OF RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT

Accept letters of resignation/retirement from the following staff, with regrets:

Name	Position	Location	Eff. Date	Reason	Years of Service
Kianna Lawson	Cafeteria/ playground aide	Jefferson	2/11/2026	Resignation	10 yrs.
Michael Spekhardt, Jr.	SE teacher	UHS	4/9/2026	Resignation	2 yrs.
Catherine Abraham	10-month secretary	UHS	7/1/2026	Retirement	25 yrs.

Sherry Gallanter	Speech Therapist	Franklin	7/1/2026	Retirement	16 yrs.
Jessica Hernandez Chacon	Paraprofessional	Battle Hill	2/5/2026	Resignation	2 mos.
Rene' Daubert	3 rd grade teacher	Washington	7/1/2026	Retirement	25 yrs.
Ashley Foster	Paraprofessional	Jefferson	3/19/2026	Resignation	12 yrs.
Kimberly Kastner	3 rd grade teacher	Hannah Caldwell	7/1/2026	Retirement	31 yrs.
Christine Zurka	Paraprofessional	Battle Hill	5/1/2026	Retirement	19 yrs.
Ayzriel Parchment	Paraprofessional	Franklin	2/10/2026	Employment separation	3 mos.

P-3B. APPROVE LEAVES

Approve leaves for the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Eff. Dates	Reason
Zara Fox	Music teacher	Connecticut Farms	Revised 2/2/2026-5/31/2026	Paid FMLA, return date subject to change
Allan Kerr	FT driver	Transportation Dept.	Revised 2/2/2026-2/13/2026	Paid medical leave
Kathleen Gigantino	Paraprofessional	Battle Hill	Revised 2/23/2026-4/23/2026	Paid FMLA
Jessica Jurkovic	ESL teacher	Connecticut Farms	Return Date 5/5/2026	Updated return date
Lynne Mancinelli	Media specialist	Washington	Return Date April 1, 2026	Extension of NJFLA
Robert Thompson	SE teacher	UHS	Cancelled	Cancelled paid intermittent FMLA
Kelly Higgins	2 nd grade teacher	Connecticut Farms	1/15/2026-6/15/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA
Raymond Reilly	Security	BMS	1/22/2026-1/22/2027	Paid intermittent FMLA
Barbara Katz	CST	Connecticut Farms	2/3/2026-2/3/2027	Paid intermittent FMLA
Jessica Perdomo O'Hara	Preschool instructional coach	Districtwide	1/20/2026-1/20/2027	Paid intermittent FMLA
Scott Messler	PE teacher	UHS	2/2/2026-12/22/2027	Paid intermittent FMLA
Gina Lisa Fernandez	World language teacher	Connecticut Farms	1/23/2026-1/23/2027	Paid intermittent FMLA
Randi Miller	SE teacher	Connecticut Farms	1/12/2026-1/12/2027	Paid Intermittent FMLA
Maria Fiordilino	SE teacher	BMS	1/30/2026-6/30/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA

Michele Scharago	SE teacher	Livingston	3/1/2026-3/1/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA
Melissa Osborne	SE teacher	BMS	1/19/2026-3/13/2026	Paid FMLA
Deanna Leon	Kindergarten teacher	Connecticut Farms	1/30/2026-6/30/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA
Matthew Talbot	Math teacher	KMS	4/6/2026-6/17/2026	Unpaid paternity leave
Kelly Osborne	Paraprofessional	Battle Hill	2/10/2026-3/2/2026	Paid intermittent leave
Felecia Hrdina Brown	Preschool instructional coach	District wide	2/10/2026-6/30/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA
Marisol Martinez	Payroll	Business Office	1/30/2026-6/30/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA
Maria Mitsaelides Micciche	ESL teacher	Battle Hill	Updated 3/20/2026-10/21/2026	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA
Elizabeth Watanabe	SE teacher	Battle Hill	5/4/2026-12/3/2026	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA
Julie Carvalho	Secretary	UHS	2/26/2026-6/30/2026	Paid FMLA followed by intermittent FMLA
Marilyn Meekins	4 th grade teacher	Franklin	2/17/2026-6/17/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA
Christine Zurka	Paraprofessional	Battle Hill	Revised 3/6/2026-4/30/2026	Paid medical leave
Christie Mendes	OT	Franklin and Connecticut Farms	Updated 11/24/2025-3/12/2026 And 3/13/2026-6/15/2026	Paid Intermittent FMLA And Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA
Olga Korzan	4 th grade teacher	Connecticut Farms	2/2/2026-2/18/2026	Update to paid FMLA
Eric Tripp	World history teacher	UHS	5/11/2026-6/12/2026	Unpaid FMLA (paternity leave)
Tejal Sanghavi	BT	Connecticut Farms	2/19/2026-6/30/2026	Paid intermittent FMLA

P-4. *Agenda item approved at February 10, 2026 worksession (student teachers/internships).*

P-5. APPROVE VOLUNTEERS

Approve volunteers to perform services within the district, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-6. APPROVE ATTENDANCE – MORRIS UNION JOINTURE COMMISSION

Approve Sheri Rouleau, Supervisor of Special Services, to attend meetings at the Morris Union Jointure Commission (MUJC), at no cost to the district for the 2025-2026 school year.

P-7a. APPROVE ATTENDANCE – NJSBGA 2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE/EXPO

Approve Yolanda Koon, School Business Administrator, to attend The New Jersey School Buildings Grounds Association (NJSBGA) 2026 Annual Conference/Expo “Learning, Leading, Legacy” at Harrah’s Waterfront Conference Center, Atlantic City, New Jersey on March 22, 2026 through March 25, 2026, at a cost not to exceed \$1,750.00.

P-7b. APPROVE ATTENDANCE – NJSBGA 2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE/EXPO

Approve Anthony Cirella, Manager of Buildings and Grounds, to attend The New Jersey School Buildings Grounds Association (NJSBGA) 2026 Annual Conference/Expo “Learning, Leading, Legacy” at Harrah’s Waterfront Conference Center, Atlantic City, New Jersey on March 22, 2026 through March 25, 2026, at a cost not to exceed \$1,750.00.

P-8. APPROVE ATTENDANCE – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Approve Marissa McKenzie, Assistant Superintendent to attend “School Safety Specialist Academy” Professional Development (5-session training – February 3, 10, 17, 24 and March 3, 2026; 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) at the Professional Conference Center, ESCNJ, Piscataway, New Jersey, at no cost to the district.

P-9. APPROVE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEE

Approve termination of Employee #13348 effective immediately, with 30 days’ pay in lieu of notice pursuant to contractual obligations.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. McDowell reported on the following:

R-1. REPORT OF STUDENTS TRANSFERRED TO DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE FOLLOWING RESIDENCY INVESTIGATIONS

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

Student No.	School	Grade
#286556	Union High School	10 th grade
#276516	Union High School	11 th grade
#310823	Burnet Middle School	7 th grade
#276042	Union High School	11 th grade
#379044	Livingston	Kindergarten (OOD)
#296519	Union High School	9 th grade

For informational purposes only (no vote required): The following totals are as of the January 20, 2026 Board meeting (2025-2026 school year):

	Total	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Students Removed:	0	0	0	0
Students Voluntarily Transferred	6	4	0	2

Approval of Bills:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and moved by Mr. Cohan, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the Board concurs with the bills listed in the permanent bound register appended to these minutes and be ordered for payment.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

None

Comments from the Public:

Christine Zurka – her first job in the district was 20 years ago. She indicated that for the last 7 years she had to fight for the money the paraprofessionals deserved. She worked for the children and worked with great teachers. She will remember all the children, and she loved what she did.

Mr. Brown – he has two students in the district, and he is here in support of the teachers. He asked if there was any news on the contract to the teachers.

Mr. Taylor responded that the parties have been in negotiations for the past 18 months, several offers have been made, and a tentative agreement has been reached. The document

should be ratified by the UTEA in March and then presented to the Board to be ratified and approved in either late March or early April.

Virginia Jeffries – she has concerns of the executive session/worksession meeting. She asked what the cost is for Red Rover and indicated that P-9 was not on the agenda. She indicated that (a) the work session meeting has no posted occupancy, (b) during executive session, there is no room to accommodate the public, (c) when executive session ended, there was not enough time for the public to get back into the meeting room.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mr. Cohan, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Yolanda Koon

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

