

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION MINUTES – April 8, 2025

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, April 8, 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 7:08 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Ms. Dixiana Carbonell, Mr. Michael Cohan, Mrs. Guida Faria, Mr. Ronnie McDowell, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. Greg Nasta, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Elsie Conteh-Mackey (8:06 p.m.)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Gerald Benaquista, Dr. Jose Rodriguez, Mrs. Yolanda Koon

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

Mrs. Minneci 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 Board meeting.

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:

Good evening, everyone. 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.

David Arminio – there is a student at Washington Elementary School who has cancer, her father lost his job and we would like to surprise her. We were able to reach another student who is now cancer free and the plan is to have them ring the bell. Come out and give your support.

Last day to vote for the New Jersey Hall of Fame is April 15th. Please support at least this one person, Governor Livingston (first Governor of New Jersey who also lived in Union). In preparation for the centennial celebration, we need to elect him as this will help us.

Jill Hall – big shout on the play “In the Woods”; complicated show. She is disappointed on the realignment. In the past it was brought up and everyone seemed to be on board and then it would fall by the waste side and I do not want that to happen and it seemed that no one really wanted to deal with it. The problem remains so we need to make sure this stays in the forefront and not forgotten. I know we don’t have the money. I really hope to bring back the extended day program and let us handle and serve better the needs of children, EDP – bring back some version of that perhaps we need to take a second look and it could be cost effective.

Virginia Jeffries – F-17 and 16 – what are the professional services? Is there a list of vendors? Excess surplus per June 24th. How much of it do we have as a budget gap? Does this carry over begin in July? Approval of Bills – Madcreek invoice-\$15,000 – what type of professional public relations company is this? Was this voted on? Can you explain F-16 and F-17?

Superintendent’s Report:

Superintendent’s Report will be presented at regular board meeting.

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 March 18, 2025 to April 8, 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 March 12, 2025 to March 18, 2025, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-2. APPROVE GIRLS ON THE RUN PROGRAM - FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Approve Girls on the Run Program at Franklin Elementary School for grades 3-4 (April 8-June 1, 2025 (Tuesdays and Wednesdays), from 3:15-4:30 p.m.), at a cost of \$25.00 per student.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution was 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.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Grievance/Negotiations Committee:

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

G-1. APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT – UTASA

Approve Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Union Township Association of School Administrators and the Township of Union Board of Education for the contract term of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nasta, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Ms. Santana, Ms. Carbonell

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Faria, Mrs. Minneci

MOTION CARRIED

Legal Committee:

Legal Committee resolution will be approved at regular Board meeting.

Operations/Technology Committee Resolutions:

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

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

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

P-1A. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – NEW HIRES

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

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Policy Committee:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and the Policy Committee, the following policies were moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Ms. Santana for **FIRST READING**:

POL-1. POLICY 5460 – HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION (M)

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

POL-2. POLICY 5512 – HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING (M)

Approve Policy 5512-Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

POL-3. POLICY 5516 – USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Approve Policy 5516-Use of Electronic Communication Devices, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

POL-4. POLICY 5710 – STUDENT GRIEVANCES

Approve Policy 5710-Student Grievances, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

POL-5. POLICY 7441 – ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND ON SCHOOL GROUNDS (M)

Approve Policy 7441-Electronic Surveillance in School Buildings and on School Grounds, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

POL-6. POLICY 8500 – FOOD SERVICES (M)

Approve Policy 8500-Food Services, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

POL-7. POLICY 9320 – COOPERATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES (M)

Approve Policy 9320-Cooperation With Law Enforcement Agencies, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

POL-8. REGULATION 5533 – STUDENT SMOKING

Approve Regulation 5533-Student Smoking, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mr. Cohan

MOTION CARRIED

Residency Committee Resolutions:

The Residency Committee resolutions will be voted on at the regular Board meeting.

Approval of Bills:

Bills will be approved at next week's meeting.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

None

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mrs. Faria, seconded by Mr. Cohan, that the Board go into Executive Session at 7:38 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, student matters, legal update.

Please take notice that minutes will be taken of the discussion conducted during the executive session and the Board will disclose the minutes of the executive session when the disclosure will not result in unwarranted invasion of individual privacy or prejudice to the best interests of the Board of Education and provided that such disclosure does not violate federal, state or local statutes and does not fall within the attorney/client privilege.

Action may be taken when the Board reconvenes in public session.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 9:20 p.m.

MOTION TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION:

There being no further business before the Board it was moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Mr. Nasta, that the Board return to public session at 9:20 p.m.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

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

E-6. APPROVE LONG-TERM SUSPENSION – HOME INSTRUCTION

Approve home instruction for the following Burnet Middle School student on long-term suspension: (a) Student #291068 and (b) Student #311079.

E-7. UHS LONG-TERM SUSPENSION – HOME INSTRUCTION

Approve to continue home instruction for the following Union High School students on long-term suspension: (a) Student #266593 and (b) Student #266641.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta,
Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Ms. Santana, 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 Mr. Cohan, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the meeting be adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Yolanda Koon

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

