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, October 13, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member. Action was taken.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:
Ms. Dicxiana Carbonell, 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, Dr. Jose Rodriguez, Mrs. Yolanda Koon

ALSO PRESENT:
Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

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

Mrs. Koon read the statement required under the "Open Public Meetings Act" that adequate notice was published in The Union County Local Source, The Star Ledger and/or Tap into Union, posted in the Administration Building and the Clerk's Office of the Township and posted on the Board's official website; 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):
Mrs. Scott-Hayden - thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and that the Board values their input and appreciates their time. She reminded the audience that all comments are to be respectful and constructive, and to refrain from calling out and yelling. The Board is unable to engage in back-and-forth dialogue; however, your comments will be reviewed and considered, and if feasible, the Superintendent or designee will provide a response at a later date

No comments from the public.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Rodriguez gave a brief presentation on the 2025-2026 Assessment Results (NJSLA and NJGPA) – full presentation will be given at the November board meeting. See presentation appended to the minutes.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

Board member Carbonell asked if E-5 could be discussed in executive session and voted on after executive session.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Minneci reported on the following:

E-1. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT OF HIB
Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period September 16, 2026 to October 13, 2026, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

E-5. APPROVE SUSPENSION – STUDENT #286545 – to be discussed in executive session and voted on thereafter.

All other resolutions will be presented and voted on at the next Board meeting.

DISCUSSION:
None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: None MOTION CARRIED

Ms. Carbonell requested that the staff positions be more specific and updated for the October 27th meeting.

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution was moved by Mr. Cohan, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, 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.

All other resolutions will be presented and voted on at the next Board meeting.

DISCUSSION:
None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: None MOTION CARRIED

Operations/Technology Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution was moved by Mrs. Faria, seconded by Mr. Nasta, for adoption:

O-5. APPROVE REQUEST FROM PTA – ANNUAL BONFIRE – UHS FOOTBALL FIELD
Approve request from the UHS PTA requesting the use of the UHS football field for their annual Bonfire on October 7, 2026 (5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.) (rain date October 14, 2026-6:00p.m.-7:00 p.m.).

All other resolutions will be presented and voted on at the next Board meeting.

DISCUSSION:
Ms. Santana indicated it was a nice event and asked if there was a way to ask Union PD to attend instead of the PTA paying Jobs in Blue. Dr. Benaquista advised the Board that the police department is down in officers but indicated he will be meeting with the new police chief and he would have discussions.

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, 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. Nasta for adoption:

P-1A. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – NEW HIRES
Personnel Actions-New Hires be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

All other resolutions will be presented and voted on at the next Board meeting.

DISCUSION:
None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: None MOTION CARRIED

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Minneci 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
305047	Union High School	9th
316017	Burnet Middle School	8th
350767	Jefferson Elementary School	4th
399018	Jefferson Elementary School	Kindergarten
350583	Hannah Caldwell Elementary School	4th
358101	Hannah Caldwell Elementary School	4th
308249	Union High School	9th
380809	Hannah Caldwell Elementary School	1st
350919	Hannah Caldwell Elementary School	4th

Approval of Bills:

Bills will be presented and voted on at the next Board meeting.

Unfinished Business:

Mrs. Scott-Hayden read the thank you card to the Board from Mrs. Minneci.

Mr. Cohan asked that the fiscal matter from the agenda be discussed in executive session.

New Business:

Ms. Santana – attended the WES and UHS open houses. She also indicated the Homecoming Dance was a joy to see.

Dr. Benaquista – Ms. Piano, principal of Washington Elementary School, told him that the parents have concerns regarding the Kenilworth Data Center and how close it is to the school. He will speak with the Township and send a response to the parents when available. Mrs. Conteh-Mackey indicated that Livingston Elementary School parents have concerns too.

Ms. Carbonell – fundraisers on the agenda, additional information is needed for the WES fundraisers for charity.

Mrs. Faria – with all the challenges in this district; the district has found ways to support students. The social/emotional learning helps students to help advocate for other students who care about their friends.

Mr. McDowell – asked if there could be a moment of silence at the next Board meeting and indicated there was a GoFundMe established. Dr. Benaquista indicated yes and will formally send it out once he receives the parents' o.k.

Mrs. Conteh-Mackey – the KMS pep rally was amazing to watch; very competitive in nature. She asked if the Board members can be invited next time.

Ms. Santana – there needs to be more alignment between KMS/BMS so that there are equal opportunities. Dr. Benaquista indicated they should collaborate with each other.

Mrs. Faria – there was a smore night at BMS and it was a very nice event.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Faria, that the Board go into Executive Session at 8:05 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; students; legal update

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

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

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: None MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 10:07 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 10:07 p.m.

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

E-5. APPROVE SUSPENSION – STUDENT
Approve long-term suspension and home instruction for student #286545 from the general education program.

DISCUSSION:
None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. Nasta, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: None MOTION CARRIED

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session, it was moved by Mr. Cohan, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the meeting be adjourned at 10:09 p.m.

All present voting YES MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
Yolanda Koon
YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY