

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, September 8, 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. Dixiana Carbonell, Mr. Michael Cohan, Mrs. Elsie Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Guida Faria, Mr. Greg Nasta, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. Ronnie McDowell (arrived 7:43 p.m.), Mrs. Nancy Minneci,

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Phil Stern, Esq.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden 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 with a direct hyperlink to the legal notices; a copy of which is on file in the office of the Board Secretary.

Approval of Minutes:

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

Communications:

Communications are part of personnel and operations.

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

No members of the public were present.

Superintendent's Report:

Superintendent's Report will be presented at the regular board meeting.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

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

E-1. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period August 19, 2026 to September 8, 2026 (no incidents to report), 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 July 22, 2026 to August 18, 2026, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

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

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

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

F-15. APPROVE EARLY/AFTERCARE CONTRACTS – YMCA

Approve contracts with the YMCA for (a) early care and (b) aftercare for the 2026-2027 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

The Board had discussions concerning if there was a waitlist and was advised that the Y is calling parents as spots are opening. The Board was advised that there was a meeting with the Boys & Girls Club concerning availability at their facility; however, there are no buses available so therefore trying to work through the transportation portion.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

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

Operations/Technology Committee Resolutions:

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

O-3. APPROVE REQUEST TO USE UHS TRACK – COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY/MFA FILM

Approve request from Mia Clara Rubinstein (Columbia University/MFA Film) to use the Union High School track on September 8, 2026 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. for filming a music video/short film for pop artist Ari Lee’s song “Olympics”.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. McKenzie indicated that no branding of the district was shown in the video. Board members had discussion regarding vetting any music video.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

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

Board members had discussions with administration concerning the distribution of Chromebooks in the district, requesting that since not all students received their Chromebooks that the teachers were accommodating those students and if distribution of the Chromebooks could take place earlier than the first day of school.

The Board and administration had discussions concerning UCVT transportation and communications to out-of-district parents/students through Parent Square.

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

No resolutions are being approved this evening; resolutions will be presented and voted on at the next Board meeting.

Approval of Bills:

Bills will be presented for approval at the next meeting.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Mrs. Faria - attended two events in the district and they were well attended by the parents. She indicated success in the district is a partnership with the parents and schools.

Mr. Cohan - also attended the event and there was great participation and attendance.

Mr. Nasta - attended the convocation and the grand opening of the PreK center and Ms. McKenzie, Mr. Cirella and his staff did a great job at Franklin; the school looks great.

Ms. Carbonell – there are a lot of leaves and interim leaves – there needs to be plans in place for when teachers are out so that substitutes can access these plans and teach the class.

Mrs. Conteh-Mackey – attended the cook out at Jefferson; Pomptonian did a great job and it was a great community event.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden – we did a welcome presentation and the parents were happy.

Mr. Cohan – gave a history of Jefferson Elementary School – in 1969 it went from an elementary school to Central 6 and then in 1991 it became Central 5 and in 2026 it is back to a neighborhood school. He indicated that Mr. McDowell has been advocating this for a long time.

Dr. Benaquista – would like to identify community members that attended Jefferson back in the day and allow them to walk the hallways of the school.

Mrs. Faria – redistricting of schools, report cards, days/nights for parent conferences – you all made it happen and the district has made great strides.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden – attended Franklin’s grand opening; teachers did a great job in decorating the classrooms.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mr. Cohan, seconded by Mrs. Faria, that the Board go into Executive Session at 7:36 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: Ms. Carbonell, Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. Nasta,
Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 8:15 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 8:18 p.m.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RETURN TO PUBLIC/WALK-ON RESOLUTION:

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

APPROVE USE OF SCHOOL BUS – UNION RAMS

Approve the use of a school bus to transport the Union Rams to the New York Jets training facility in Florham Park, New Jersey, on September 15, 2026, cost of driver to be paid for by Union Rams and a Certificate of Insurance and Hold Harmless Agreement to be provided to the district.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Ms. Carbonell, Mr. Cohan, Mrs. Conteh-Mackey, Mrs. Faria, Mr. McDowell,
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 Mrs. Faria, seconded by Mr. Cohan, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

All present voting YES

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Yolanda Koon

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

