NOTICE OF MEETING:

TO ALL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union will be held on October 21, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. at Union High School Library, North Third Street, Union, New Jersey 07083

 The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held at Union High School Library, North Third Street, Union, New Jersey on October 21, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. pursuant to notice sent to each member.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL: Mr. David Arminio, Dr. Guy Francis, Mr. Richard Galante, Thomas Layden, Mr. Steven Le, Mr. Vito Nufrio and Mr. Francis Perkins, President

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL: Ms. Lois Jackson and Mr. Angel Salcedo

 Mr. Perkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

 Mr. Arminio led the board and audience members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

 Mr. Damato read the statement required under the “Open Public Meetings Act” a copy of which is on file in the office of the Secretary.

 Ms. Jackson entered the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

COMMUNICATION:

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF RENTAL FEES – HOLY SPIRIT SCHOOL

Lori Volturo, Sports Coordinator at Holy Spirit School, submitted a request for waiver of rental fees for use of school gymnasiums in the district for their 2014-2015 sports program.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – TAVARES

Josefina Tavares, cafeteria/playground assistant at Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, submitted a letter of resignation, effective September 12, 2014.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – SODEN

Ashley Soden, language arts teacher at Burnet Middle School, submitted a letter of resignation, effective October 31, 2014.

REQUEST FOR EXTENDED UNPAID MEDICAL LEAVE – GOLDING

Maura E. Golding, resource room teacher at Franklin School, submitted a request for extended unpaid medical leave, for the period September 30, 2014 through January 31, 2015.

REQUEST FOR EXTENDED UNPAID MEDICAL LEAVE – BETHEA

Georgia Bethea, cafeteria/playground assistant at Franklin School, submitted a request for extended unpaid medical leave, for the period September 30, 2014 through October 26, 2014.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – GREENSPAN

Wendy Greenspan, resource teacher at Franklin School, submitted a letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective January 1, 2015.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – GALLO

Diane Gallo, ten-month secretary at Union High School, submitted a letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective January 1, 2015.

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF RENTAL FEES – ST. MICHAEL’S SCHOOL

Alejandria Rodriguez, track coach at St. Michael’s School, submitted a request for waiver of rental fees for use of Union High School track and field.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – POLTROCK

Patrice W. Poltrock, speech/language specialist at Connecticut Farms School, submitted a letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective January 1, 2015.

REQUEST FOR UNPAID FAMILY LEAVE – SIINO

Frances Siino, teacher at Franklin Elementary School, submitted a request for unpaid family leave for the period October 15, 2014 through January 31, 2015.

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF RENTAL FEES – CROSSROADS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Pastor Tom Sigley from Crossroads Christian Fellowship, for waiver of rental fees for the use of Battle Hill School Gymnasium during the months of January, February and March for volleyball/basketball program.

REQUEST FOR MATERNITY AND FAMILY LEAVE – SOBREIRO

Gabrielle Sobreiro, English teacher at Union High School, submitted a request for maternity and family leave, for the period December 19, 2014 through April 12, 2015.

REQUEST FOR MATERNITY AND EXTENDED FAMILY LEAVE – O’HOLLA

Laura O’Holla, teacher at Jefferson School, submitted a request for maternity and extended family leave, for the period November 13, 2014 through the end of the 2014-2015 school year.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF UNPAID FAMILY LEAVE – COLONNA

Susan Colonna, teacher assistant at Battle Hill School, submitted a request for extension of unpaid family leave for the period October 17th through November 30th 2014.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – CASELLA

Ruth Casella, cafeteria/playground assistant at Connecticut Farms School, submitted a letter of resignation, effectively immediately.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

 2013-2014 Violence and Vandalism Report – Mr. Tatum said that part of the requirements for the State of New Jersey is that twice a year the district reports on the incidents of Violence and Vandalism throughout the school district. He said that Section A of the report indicates accounts of incidences by category. Mr. Tatum said that there were sixteen incidents of violence; no incidents of vandalism; four incidents of substance abuse and fifteen incidents of harassment, bullying and intimidation. He said that there was zero cost to the district due to vandalism during this time period. Mr. Tatum said that the police were notified four times when no complaints were filed and six times where a complaint was filed. He said that there were no in-school suspensions; 42 out of school suspensions; no expulsions and no suspension of privileges. Mr. Tatum said that there were a total of 60 student offenders; 28 student victims; 2 school personnel victims and no student victims of violent criminal offenses. He said that as far as disciplinary actions, there were 27 assignments, educational program, instruction and/or support services; no in-district programs; 19 home assignment/home instruction and no out of district programs.

 Mr. Tatum said that for the month of September, student attendance was 97.3% and staff attendance was 97%.

 Mr. Tatum said that for those who did not have the opportunity to attend, the NJASK Perfect Score ceremony was held before the meeting this evening. He said that students in grades 3 through 8 received certificates of recognition for achieving a perfect score of 300 on the NJASK assessment during the 2013-2014 school year. Mr. Tatum said that there were a total of 209 students that received this award. He said that this number has grown from a total of 137 in 2011. Mr. Tatum said that among the 209 students there are students who have achieved this recognition in both math and language arts and also there were a number of students that have achieved a perfect score for a second, third and a fourth time. He said that he was very proud of all of the students and he congratulated them on their fine achievement.

 Mr. Tatum said that it has been reported to him by the building principals that all “back to school” nights were heavily attended by parents and it appears that there was an increase in parents that attended the events this year. He said that this was a good

indication that the students were off to a very productive start for the 2014-2015 school year.

 Mr. Tatum said that the Union High School Marching Band placed first out of 19 bands at the U.S. Bands New Jersey State Championship at Rutgers University on Saturday, October 18th. He said that additionally, the band won awards for the best overall effect at that competition. Mr. Tatum said he was very proud of the staff and students involved in the marching band program.

 Mr. Tatum said that start of the new keyboarding and strategies for success classes have begun in the sixth grade. He said that at Kawameeh Middle School a number of students were introduced to Club Fair where all sixth grade students had the opportunity to gain information on club that they can participate in throughout the course of the school year. Mr. Tatum said that Kawameeh Middle School has also initiated a purple ribbon initiative where students can report acts of kindness that they witness during the course of the school day and it is his understanding that over 30 ribbons have already been awarded. He said that the sixth grade students at Burnet Middle School partook in an ice cream social.

 Mr. Tatum said that at Jefferson School the targeted behavior support program is off and running. He said that this was a program that was implemented mid-year last year and he was happy to announce that this program was off the ground. Mr. Tatum said that Jefferson School has also implemented a “peaceful playground” program. He complimented the administrators in that building; he said that he had the opportunity to stop at Jefferson School one afternoon and saw the administrators out on the playground really managing the behavior of the students and he felt that the school was off to a good start under the leadership of Mrs. Damato and Ms. Bossard. Mr. Tatum said that Jefferson also had an ice cream social and some other fun activities for the students.

 Mr. Tatum said that at the elementary schools, there were teacher recognition breakfasts, ice cream socials, PTA book fairs and a number of other activities that were very inviting. He said that Livingston School reported that one of their third grade students, Alexandra Valesquez, was the youngest student to perform in the Union’s Got Talent program. Mr. Tatum said that Livingston School also raised a total of $240 for breast cancer research during the month of September.

 Mr. Tatum said that these are just some of the highlights of the activities that are taking place in the district schools. He was very proud of the accomplishments of all of the students in the district and the activities that the teachers are engaging the students in beyond the scope of the regular curriculum. Mr. Tatum said that he would

continue reporting positive information at upcoming board of education meetings as the year went by. He said that there would also be items posted on the district website.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

 Moved by Mr. Galante, seconded by Mr. Arminio that the minutes of the Planning Session of August 5, 2014 be approved:

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

Moved by Mr. Galante, seconded by Mr. Arminio that the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 19, 2014 and the Executive Session of August 19, 2014 be adopted:

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Le MOTION WAS CARRIED

Moved by Mr. Galante, seconded by Mr. Arminio that the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 3, 2014 and the Worksession of September 9, 2014 be adopted:

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

Moved by Mr. Galante, seconded by Mr. Arminio that the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 16, 2014 be adopted:

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Dr. Francis MOTION WAS CARRIED

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS ON THE AGENDA

 Ms. Sharp asked if resolution P-13 referred to a new position within the district. Ms. Conti said that these positions arose out of the need of students pursuant to an I.E.P. She said that this is outside of the contracted day and the district needed to hire a bus aid which was posted as requested by Mrs. Calderone. Ms. Conti said that this position is different than a regular para-professional. Ms. Sharp asked if this position was beyond the bus aid that would normally be on a bus; is this an additional aid. Ms. Conti said that there are some several different types of aids that help students on the bus.

 Ms. Sharp asked what a master technician and assistant technicians were. Dr. Lishak said that during the plays. She said that the master technician is the person who actually who actually works the control board and the assistant technician is the person who is more of a stage hand. Ms. Sharp said that she noticed that some people are named under both titles. Dr. Lishak said that a person works one job or the other and is not paid for both on the same night.

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

 Moved by Dr. Francis, seconded by Mr. Le that the following resolutions be adopted:

E-1.  APPROVE LIST OF STUDENTS REMOVED FROM THE ROLLS

That the board approve list of students removed from the rolls who are not domiciled in this school district [nine (9) students for the period September 1 through September 30, 2014; a total of nine (9) students for the 2014-2015 school year in accordance with the information appended to the nonpublic portion of these minutes.

E-2.   AMEND 2014-2015 OUT-OF-DISTRICT SENT AND RECEIVED ATYPICAL STUDENT PLACEMENT AND TUITION LISTS

That the board amend the 2014-2015 out-of-district sent and received atypical student placement and tuition lists will be approved in accordance with the information appended to the nonpublic portion of these minutes.

E-3.   ACCEPT VANDALISM AND VIOLENCE REPORT FOR 2013-2014 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board accept the Vandalism and Violence Report for the 2013-2014 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-4.    AFFIRM SUPERINTENDENT’S RESOLUTION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING CONCLUSIONS

That the board affirm the Superintendent's resolution of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) conclusions for the period September 4, 2014 to October 10, 2014

E-5.    APPROVE SCHOOL NURSING SERVICE PLAN FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board approve 2014-2015 School Nursing Service Plan in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-6.    APPROVE JOINT TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR- MORRIS-UNION JOINTURE COMMISSION

That the board approve joint transportation agreement for the 2014-2015 school year with Morris-Union Jointure Commission in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-7.    APPROVE TUITION CONTRACT AGREEMENT FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR – DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REGIONAL SCHOOL

That the board approve tuition contract agreement with Department of Children and Families Regional School for the 2014-2015 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-8.    APPROVE CURRICULUM GUIDES FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board approve curriculum guides for the 2014-2015 school year:  (a) Introduction to Television Production; (b) Comprehensive Health Education – Grades 9-12

E-9. APPROVE CHARTER SCHOOL TUITIONS FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board approve Charter School Tuitions for the 2014-2015 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-10.    APPROVE NJQSAC QUALITY SINGLE ACCOUNTABILITY CONTINUUM DISTRICT SCORES AND STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

That the board approve NJQSAC Quality Single Accountability Continuum District Scores and Statement of Assurance in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-11. APPROVE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIRD GRADE IN-CLASS SUPPORT PROGRAM – LIVINGSTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

That the board approve the establishment of a third grade in-class support program at Livingston Elementary School, effective October 22, 2014 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-12. APPROVE ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRST GRADE IN-CLASS SUPPORT PROGRAM – FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

That the board approve the establishment of a first grade in-class support program at Franklin Elementary School, effective October 22, 2014 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-13. APPROVE ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRST GRADE IN-CLASS SUPPORT PROGRAM – CONNECTICUT FARMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

That the board approve the establishment of a first grade in-class support program at Connecticut Farms Elementary School, effective October 22, 2014 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-14. APPROVE ESTABLISHMENT OF KINDERGARTEN IN-CLASS SUPPORT PROGRAM – FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

That the board approve the establishment of a kindergarten in-class support program at Franklin Elementary School, effective October 22, 2014 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-15. APPROVE ESTABLISHMENT OF KINDERGARTEN IN-CLASS SUPPORT PROGRAM – HANNAH CALDWELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

That the board approve the establishment of a kindergarten in-class support program at Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, effective October 22, 2014 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

E-16. APPROVE APPLICATIONS FOR INSTALLATION AND USE ON DISTRICT I-PADS

That the board approve the following applications for installation and use on district I-Pads by students and teachers: (a) Class DoJo; (b) Multiplication Genius and (c) Look in my eyes 1 restaurant

E-17. ACCEPT HEALTH AND WELLNESS WITH RETAIL DIETITION PROPOSAL – BURNET MIDDLE SCHOOL

That the board accept Health and Wellness with Retail Dietitian Proposal for Burnet Middle School between the district and Shop Rite of Union in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

DISCUSSION:

 None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

 Moved by Ms. Jackson, seconded by Mr. Layden that the following resolutions be adopted:

F-1.    ACCEPT TREASURER’S REPORT

That the Treasurer's Report dated September 30, 2014 be accepted.

F-2.     ACCEPT SECRETARY’S REPORT

That the Secretary's Report dated September 30, 2014 be accepted.

F-3.     CERTIFY TREASURER’S AND SECRETARY’S REPORTS

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13(d), I certify that as of September 30, 2014 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 18A:22-8.1.

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 James J. Damato Dated

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:20-2.13(e), we certify that as of September 30, 2014 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. 6:20-2.13(b) 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 LINE ITEM TRANSFERS

That the Board approve line item transfers in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-5.   APPROVE CONTRACTS AND/OR PURCHASE ORDERS

That the Board approve the following contracts and/or purchase orders pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5 and 18A:18A-10(a) and in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-6.   APPROVE ATTACHED LIST OF CONTRACTS AND/OR PURCHASES

That the board approve attached list of contracts and/or purchases pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(21) in accordance with the information appended to these minutes:  (a) Forest Lodge Catering - $1,600 - 2015 Eighth Grade Trip - Kawameeh Middle School; (b) NJSIAA - not to exceed $2,000 - football playoff gate - Union High School Athletic Department; (c) NJSIAA - not to exceed $12,000 - state wrestling tournament reimbursement - Union High School Athletic Department; (d) UCIAC - not to exceed $4,000 - reimbursement for county wrestling tournament - Union High School Athletic Department; (e) Scholastic Book Fairs - $3243.75 – book fair – Kawameeh Middle School; (f) Twp of Union BOE - $1080 – reimburse for transportation Key Club trip to Six Flags/Great Adventure – Union High School; (g) Effingers – not to exceed $2,000 – girls’ soccer sweat suits – Union High School Athletic Department; (h) Burmax - $4091.94 – annual purchase of cosmetology kits – Union High School; (i) Rogers and Hammerstein Theatricals - $2673.50 – royalty and books for “Grand Night for Singing” (fall musical production) – Union High School; (j) Villani Bus Company - $1,100 – transportation for JR.O.T.C. to Stony Acres, East Stroudsberg, PA – Union High School; (k) N.J. District Key Club International – not to exceed $4,000 – 2014-2015 Key Club dues – Union High School; (l) Twp of Union BOE - $1080 – in-house transportation to 2014 Fall Rally – Union High School

F-7.   APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES

That the board approve district wide 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 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-8.   PRE-APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE STUDENT FIELD TRIP DESTINATIONS AND PURPOSES

That the board pre-approve district wide student field trip destinations and purposes pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.8 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-9.    APPROVE COMPREHENSIVE MAINTENANCE PLAN REPORT

That the board approve Comprehensive Maintenance Plan Report (Actual FY14, Budgeted FY15 and Planned FY16) in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-10.  APPROVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE BUDGET AMOUNT WORKSHEET

That the board approve Annual Maintenance Budget Amount Worksheet (Form M-1) pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26A in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-11.   ACCEPT DONATIONS

That the board accept the following donations:  (a) Target - Take Charge of Education in the amount of $539.05 for use by Washington Elementary School; (b) Target – Take Charge of Education in the amount of $170.29 for use by Kawameeh Middle School; (c) Target – Take Charge of Education in the amount of $138.13 for use by Burnet Middle School; (d) Target – Take Charge of Education in the amount of $155.70 for use by Livingston Elementary School

F-12. AMEND TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION 403(B) PLAN

That the board amend Township of Union Board of Education 403(b) plan in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-13. ACCEPT 2013 SAFETY GRANT FUNDS – NEW JERSEY SCHOOLS INSURANCE GROUP

That the board accept 2013 Safety Grant Funds from New Jersey Schools Insurance Group in the amount of $43,711 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-14. APPROVE SUBMISSION OF FY2015 IDEA GRANT AMENDMENT 1

That the board approve submission of FY2015 IDEA Grant Amendment 1 to allocate the $14,573 unexpended nonpublic funds from the FY2014 IDEA Basic Grant.

F-15. APPROVE SUBMISSION OF SCHOOL GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR PROJECT UNIFY

That the board approve submission of the following School Grant Applications for Project UNIFY (Special Olympics New Jersey in accordance with the information appended to these minutes: (a) Hannah Caldwell Elementary School application and (b) Burnet Middle School application.

F-16. AUTHORIZE PARTICIPATION IN MUNICIPAL’S CONTINUING DISCLOSURE COOPERATION INITIATIVE

That the board authorize participation in the Municipal’s continuing disclosure cooperation initiative in accordance with the attached formal resolution.

F-17. APPROVE REFUNDING BOND ORDINANCE UPON FIRST READING AND AUTHORIZING NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

That the board approve a Refunding Bond Ordinance upon first reading and authorizing Notice of Publication in accordance with the attached formal resolution.

F-18. APPROVE REFUNDING BOND ORDINANCE

That the board approve a Refunding Bond Ordinance providing for the Refunding of School Bonds dated April 1, 2005 and in accordance with the attached formal resolution.

F-19. AMEND LIST OF STATE CONTRACT VENDORS FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

That the Board amend list of 2014-2015 State Contract Vendors to facilitate schools’ purchasing in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

DISCUSSION

 None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

 Moved by Mr. Layden, seconded by Mr. Arminio that the following resolutions be adopted:

O-1.    APPROVE BUS EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND SECURITY DRILL REPORTS

That pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:17-11.2 the board approve the following bus emergency evacuation and security drill reports in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

O-2.    RENEW CONTRACTS FOR BEFORE AND AFTER CARE – Y.M.C.A.

That the board renew contracts for before care and aftercare with the Y.M.C.A. of Eastern Union County in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

O-3.    APPROVE ADVERTISEMENT FOR DISPOSAL OF EQUIPMENT

That the board approve advertisement for disposal of equipment that is deemed no longer serviceable in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

O-4.    ADOPT RESOLUTION TO PURCHASE ELECTRICAL GENERATION SERVICES – ALLIANCE FOR COMPETITIVE ENERGY SERVICES (ACES)

That the board adopt resolution binding the Township of Union Board of Education to purchase electrical generation services through the Alliance for Competitive Energy Services (ACES) bid - Cooperative Pricing System ID#E8801 - ACESCPS in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

O-5. APPROVE WAIVER OF RENTAL FEES – HOLY SPIRIT SCHOOL

That the board approve rental fee waiver for use of school gymnasiums for the 2014-2015 school by Holy Spirit School for their sports program in accordance with the information in the hands of each board member. Holy Spirit will be responsible to pay utility costs of $10 per hour per day for use of the facilities.

O-6. APPROVE WAIVER OF RENTAL FEES – ST. MICHAEL’S SCHOOL

That the board approve rental fee waiver for use of Union High School track on Fridays from March 6th through May 29th, 2015 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. by St. Michael’s School. St. Michael’s will be responsible to pay utility costs of $10 per hour per day for the use of the facilities.

O-7. APPROVE RENTAL FEE WAIVER – CROSSROADS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

That the board approve rental fee waiver for use of Battle Hill gymnasium during the months of January, February and March 2015 by Crossroads Christian Fellowship for its volleyball/basketball program in accordance with the information appended to these minutes. Crossroads Christian Fellowship will be responsible to pay utility costs of $10 per hour per day for the use of the facilities.

DISCUSSION:

 Mr. Arminio said that last week at the worksession, the board discussed resolution O-6 and someone had mentioned that this was the first time that St. Michael’s was using our facilities. He said that St. Michael’s did use the track last year and their use of the track did not interfere with any other activities.

 Mr. Nufrio said that at the worksession he brought up to the board regarding resolution O-2 that time was of the essence at this point in the year. He said that the district should be exploring other options in the future to address before and aftercare.

Mr. Nufrio hoped that the board would take the time to look into the possibility of adopting this as an in-house service as opposed to contracting it out to the Y.M.C.A.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

 Moved by Mr. Nufrio, seconded by Ms. Jackson that resolution P-1 be adopted:

P-1.      APPROVE PERSONNEL ACTIONS

That personnel actions be approved in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: Mr. Arminio

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

Moved by Mr. Nufrio, seconded by Ms. Jackson that resolution P-2 be adopted:

P-2.      AMEND SUBSTITUTE LISTS FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board amend Substitute Lists for the 2014-2015 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mr. Galante MOTION WAS CARRIED

Moved by Mr. Nufrio, seconded by Ms. Jackson that resolutions P-3 through P-8 be adopted:

P-3.      APPROVE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY (DCPP) DISTRICT LIAISON – CONTI

That the board approve Kim Conti, Director of Special Services as Department of Children Protection and Permanency (DCPP) Liaison for the 2014-2015 school year, at no additional cost to the district.

P-4.      ACCEPT LETTERS OF RESIGNATION

That the board accept letters of resignation as follows:  (a) Josefina Tavares, cafeteria/playground assistant at Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, effective September 12, 2014; (b) Ashley Soden, language arts teacher at Burnet Middle School, effective October 31, 2014; (c) Wendy Greenspan, resource teacher at Franklin School, effective January 1, 2015 (retirement); (d) Diane Gallo, ten-month secretary at Union High School, effective January 1, 2015 (retirement); (e) Patrice W. Poltrock, speech/language specialist at Connecticut Farms School, effective January 1, 2015 (retirement); (f) Ruth Casella, cafeteria/playground assistant at Connecticut Farms School, effectively immediately

P-5.      APPROVE LEAVES FOR STAFF

That the board approve leaves for the following staff: (a) Maura E. Golding, resource room teacher at Franklin School, unpaid medical leave for the period September 30, 2014 through January 31, 2015; (b) Georgia Bethea, cafeteria/ playground assistant at Franklin School, unpaid medical leave for the period September 30, 2014 through October 27, 2014; (c) Frances Siino, teacher at Franklin Elementary School, unpaid family leave from October 15, 2014 through January 31, 2015; (d) Gabrielle Sobreiro, English teacher at Union High School, request for maternity and family leave for the period December 19, 2014 through April 12, 2015; (e) Laura O’Holla, teacher at Jefferson School, maternity and extended family leave for the period November 15, 2014 through the end of the 2014-2015 school year; (f) Susan Colonna, teacher assistant at Battle Hill School, extended unpaid family leave for the period October 17 through November 30, 2014

P-6.      APPROVE MASTER AND ASSISTANT TECHNICIANS FOR THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board approve Master Technicians at a rate of $20 per hour (not to exceed 200 hours per semester) and Assistant Technicians at a rate of $10 per hour (not to exceed 200 per semester) for the 2014-2015 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

P-7.       AMEND RESOLUTION PROVIDING SALARY AND FRINGE BENEFITS FOR CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL

That the board approve amended resolution providing salary and fringe benefits for Central Office personnel to include Director of Human Resources and Part-time Staff Accountant in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

P-8.       APPOINT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICER AND ASSISTANT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICER

That the board appoint Gerald Benaquista, Director of Human Resources as the district's Affirmative Action Officer and Dr. Noreen Lishak, Assistant Superintendent as the district's Assistant Affirmative Action Officer at no cost to the district.

DISCUSSION:

 Mr. Arminio said that there were a number of individuals who were retiring and he knew that the Central Office had sent a card of some type of notification to each individual who was retiring to thank them for their service. He said that he would like to thank these individuals for their service to the district. Mr. Arminio said that he has known Ms. Greenspan for many years. He wished her good luck on her retirement. Mr. Arminio acknowledged Mrs. Gallo, and Ms. Poltrock; he congratulated them on their retirement.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

P-9. APPOINT WELLNESS ADVISOR – BOAKYE

That the board appoint Akua Boakye, teacher at Union High School, as Township of Union Board of Education Wellness Advisor replacing Laura Damato, at no cost to the district

P-10. APPROVE STAFF TO PRESENT PARENT WORKSHOPS – CALANDREA

That the board approve Tara Colandrea to present five (5) parent workshops funded through Title I during the 2014-2015 school year at Burnet Middle School at a rate of $38.25 per hour not to exceed four (4) hours per session in accordance with the information appended to these minutes. (Acct #20-231-200-300-31-20-0011)

P-11. APPROVE CURRICULUM WRITING TEAMS FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board approve Curriculum Writing Teams for the 2014-2015 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

P-12. APPROVE CERTIFIED TEACHERS TO PROVIDE BEDSIDE INSTRUCTION – PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, INC.

That the board approve certified teachers employed through Professional Educational Services, Inc., 34 South Delsea Drive, Glassboro, New Jersey to provide bedside instruction for district students on an “as needed” basis for the 2014-2015 school year in an amount not to exceed $15,000 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes: (a) Doreen Benesy O’Hare; (b) Michael Castellucci; (c) Anthony Galioto; (d) Kevin Hoey; (e) Alice Holler Dietz and (f) Pamelia Myers (Acct #7693/11-150-100-320-01-19)

P-13. APPROVE STAFF AS PERSONAL BUS AIDES FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board approve the following staff to be Personal Bus Aides for the 2014-2015 school year AM (before elementary school) and PM (after elementary school) Transportation to assist students to and from school at a rate of $13.84 per hour: (a) Paula Martinez and (b) Eileen Bross-Gueli

P-14. APPOINT SUBSTITUTE POSITION WITHIN THE PAYROLL DEPARTMENT-McGarry

That the board appoint Norma McGarry in a substitution position within the payroll department to temporarily replace Karen Polinger during her leave for the period October 22nd through November 26, 2014 at a rate of $38.25 per hour.

P-15. ACCEPT PROPOSAL FOR FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES – NW FINANCIAL GROUP, LLC

That the board accept proposal for financial advisory services in connection with the Refunding of School Bonds dated April 1, 2005 to NW Financial Group, LLC, 2 Hudson Place, Hoboken, New Jersey for a flat fee of $7,500 plus reasonable out-of-pocket expenses in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

DISCUSSION

 None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

APPROVAL OF BILLS

 Moved by Ms. Jackson, seconded by Mr. Layden that the board concur with the bills listed in the permanent bound register appended to these minutes and be ordered for payment.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

 Mr. Nufrio wanted to represent the outstanding situation that still needs to be concluded that has to do with the money that was collected for the James Madison School in Edison; the school that suffered a complete loss after a fire. He said that the students in our district did a wonderful job of collecting funds and it is still to be determined how the district will distribute the funds. Mr. Nufrio said that he hoped that Mr. Tatum would formulate a plan as to whether a representative of the Edison district attends a board meeting to accept the funds. He said that Mr. Vieira is in charge of collecting the funds as the Business Administrator. Mr. Nufrio said that Mrs. Manochio did a wonderful job in gathering all of the data from the individual schools. He said that some of the schools had already forwarded the money to the James Madison School and it has been confirmed that the funds were received. Mr. Nufrio said that are still funds in the student activity accounts that need to be resolved. He asked Mr. Vieira and Mr. Tatum for guidance so that the board can be presented with a full accounting.

 Mr. Arminio said that earlier in the month, the Mayor’s Day 5K Race was run and a letter has been submitted which will be posted on next month’s agenda. He said that the race was a success and committee thanked the board of education for their assistance.

 Mr. Perkins said that a meeting of the board on October 16th there were interviews by the board of the three finalists in the Superintendent search. He said that Mr. Tatum was appointed as Superintendent of Schools by a unanimous vote and as a matter of course, his contract has been sent to the Executive County Superintendent for review and approval. Mr. Perkins said that the board was highly confident that the contract will be approved. He said that there have been some questions about the announcement of that following the Executive Session at which Mr. Tatum and the two other candidates were interviewed. Mr. Perkins said that following the interviews the board went back into public session; the minutes of that meeting will reflect that action; but as a matter of record tonight, he wanted to make the announcement and congratulate Mr. Tatum for being chosen as the new Superintendent of Schools.

 Mr. Tatum thanked Mr. Perkins and the members of the board of education for their confidence in him to lead the district forward throughout the next three years. He said that throughout the course of the years that he has been in the district, he has seen a number of issues that the district needs to work on. Mr. Tatum said that there were a number of things that needed to be changed. He said that one man cannot do it alone, it will take the collaboration and cooperation of everyone in the district. Mr. Tatum said that he wanted everyone to know that he would foster their support in order to make this district a better place for all students, staff and for the community. He hoped that everyone would join him in his efforts to move the district forward and make it the best place it can possibly be.

 Mr. Nufrio said that after an exhaustive process that went on for months and the final recommendations of the Search Committee that interviewed most of the candidates that submitted an application, the meeting that Mr. Perkins alluded to, which he was a part of, really left no indication that anyone else would be the choice. He said that Mr. Tatum gave a stellar interview; all aspects of the interview were well covered and fully explained; and Mr. Tatum’s vision is one that the entire board adheres to, that is to move forward in all directions including programs and curriculums that the district currently has and expand them. Mr. Nufrio said that Mr. Tatum had the ability, the skills and the experience to be the leader of the district and he looked forward to working with Mr. Tatum.

NEW BUSINESS

 Mr. Arminio reminded the board that it had to prioritize its goals at next month’s worksession.

 Mr. Arminio said that the girls’ soccer team at the high school has reached the semi-finals in the Union County Tournament and will be playing this coming Saturday in Clark.

 Mr. Arminio said that the girls’ cross country team placed second in the Conference Meet and Jial Keyes placed second in the Conference Meet for the girls’ cross country team.

 Mr. Arminio said that this Friday, the Union High School football team plays Watchung Hills High School at Cooke Memorial Field.

 Dr. Francis suggested that since Mrs. Ditri was planning on retiring next year, the board should start looking for someone to transition into her position. Mr. Tatum said that the process has already started and he hoped that in December someone would be appointed to the position.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

 Ms. Hall wanted to personally congratulate Mr. Tatum. She said that when Mr. Tatum first came to the district, her mom went out of her way to remind her how fortunate the district was to have brought Mr. Tatum here. Ms. Hall felt that the district was in very good hands.

 Ms. Hall said that DYFS flows off the tongue more easily than DCP&P but it the Division of Child Protection and Permanency, not the Department.

 Ms. Hall said that this week is Red Ribbon Week and the district will be celebrating a variety of different anti-drug initiatives in the schools. She said at Kawameeh, there are 95 posters that have been submitted to Convention Links for consideration in a poster contest throughout the county; she said that no one from the school won but some of the posters were awesome and she applauded the art and health classes for having participated. Ms. Hall said that if any board members were in the area of Kawameeh Middle School tomorrow afternoon at 1:15 p.m. the National Guard is coming to the school to do presentations to the sixth grade classes which concern anti-drug team building.

 Mr. Monge congratulated Mr. Tatum. He said that he had a lot of communication with Mr. Tatum when his family first moved into the district and he appreciated a lot of Dr. Tatum’s assistance.

 Mr. Monge said that with regard to the PARCC test, the district is directing parents to the internet website and the site is evolving and changing each day. He said that the district is talking about having workshops and he felt there should be a specific workshop for parents with students that have special needs. Mr. Monge said that it is very unclear when you go through the forms and he couldn’t imagine how those parents who have English as a second language would be able to navigate the site. He said that it has been mentioned that students will have the ability to “opt out” of the test. Mr. Monge said that some of the forms on the website are administrative forms that were meant for teachers/administrators versus parents and he felt this was a mistake. He said that a lot of districts have passed a resolution at the board level to say that parents can opt out their students and this is the process of doing so. Mr. Monge said that it seemed like the procedure was made by each individual building principal. He felt that clarity needed to be provided to parents. Mr. Monge said that there is also a question about technology and whether or not there is sufficient technology in the schools to support the test. He said that at the debate Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins talked about how test scores had gone up. Mr. Monge said that he compared Spring 2014 numbers and compared them to the NJ Department of Education 2012-2013 numbers and in many cases, there was actually a reduction in scores. He said that the goal is to have 100% proficiency and the reality is that the district does not have that. Mr. Monge said that Mr. Le made a big thing about test scores and the reality is that the numbers are not there. He said as a parent, the transparency of being able to say this is where the district is and this is where the district wants to go is really what parents need to know. Mr. Monge said that the report on the state site said that most of the district schools are lagging against its peers in state schools. He said that if the district knows where it is and it knows where it wants to go, everyone can work together and try to get there. Mr. Monge said that the truth for Mr. Tatum is that Union wants to be a high performing district and it needs to understand what the goals are and what it takes to get there.

 Mr. Nufrio said that aside from possible miscommunication that may exist, he still stood by his statement as he was sure his colleagues did that across the district we have seen excellent improvement in test scores. He said that is not the only measure that the district should be evaluating its students by. Mr. Nufrio congratulated Mr. Monge as a parent for his son’s achievement of a perfect score on the NJASK. He said that Mr. Monge was a very happy parent taking pictures and he thought that was part of what the district is looking for, to continually bring to the district, the types of programs and the types of instruction that will help students perform at the highest possible level. Mr. Nufrio said that the only exception that he takes is the 100% achievement; technically, it started out years ago as 100% but it is down to 90%. He said that the district is always in transition with regard to any state directives or mandates regarding evaluation of students and teachers. Mr. Monge asked where the district was today. Mr. Tatum said that at last month’s meeting he did give the district scores for all of the grade levels in math and language arts. He said that there are some scores that are considered to be “flat” which means that some scores may have been reduced a little. Mr. Tatum said that overall the district in and of itself has shown some improvement for the most part. He said that secondary scores have shown continuous improvement year after year. Mr. Tatum said that the district is not at 100% proficiency but it is continuing to make improvements and the areas that the district has identified that need refinement, have been reported. He said that there are some academic areas that the district is stronger than in other academic areas. Mr. Tatum said that he recognizes the fact that there is room for improvement.

Mr. Monge said that at the debate there was a presentation of something that was totally different than what actually happened. He said that he had to go through layers of websites to be able to get to the information. Mr. Monge said that the information should be provided at the school level to let parents know where the district is at the present time and where it wants to be in the future.

Mr. Perkins said that he wanted to clarify that the difference between the candidates’ debate which had to do with an election with which the board has no business at all. He said that he would caution everyone as a matter of law that the board has no concern with the election; however, Mr. Monge raised some questions that are poignant and he thought should be addressed by the board for the general public. Mr. Perkins said that any set of data can be analyzed in one way or another way. He said that he appreciated the fact that Mr. Monge had an interest in not looking at the data the same way the district may be looking at it. Mr. Perkins said that he felt it was important to address the issue of the so called “opt out” option on the PARCC test. He said that he spoke to an educator about this and was told that there is no provision in the PARCC legislation to “opt out” and that may be the case. Mr. Perkins said that the fact that there is no provision for “opting out” doesn’t mean that a parent can decide that they would rather that their child not take the test. He said that the Department of Education has the authority to require that the district administer the test but he understood that there was nothing in the law that requires a student to take the test or what the consequences are if the student does not take the test. Mr. Perkins said that the “jury is still out” on this issue. He said that the Department of Education has been sending information regarding the test on a regular basis. Mr. Perkins said that he did not find the statement by the individual that there is no provision for opting out in the law to be inconsistent with a parent’s ability to say “I’d rather my child did not take the test.” Mr. Monge said that there have been school boards that have taken a proactive measure to actually pass a resolution that parents can opt out and how. Mr. Perkins said that he would argue that is beyond the capability of a board to do and it has no legal effect. Mr. Monge said that if the district is going to use the test result as a measurement for Gifted and Talented or it goes into the student’s permanent record that is an effect. He said that when a student takes a test it is recorded and they are judged by the result of the test. Mr. Monge said that he has looked at some other schools and for example, Union Catholic says that they will judge the student by any standardized test that the student takes as consideration of any student who wishes to attend that school and if the student did not take the test, they will have to take the school’s test. Mr. Monge said that when parents went to Open House, teachers did not know if the PARCC would be a measurement on whether they would be able to get into Gifted and Talented the next year. He said that he has done a tremendous amount of research on this issue. Mr. Perkins said that he had no doubt that other districts have taken action but the question is what is the legal effect. He said that if the district is not authorized by the Department of Education and state law to do it, it has no meaning at all. Mr. Monge said he felt it was a local issue that the board can take the reins on. Mr. Perkins asked Mr. Monge to provide him with the statute that governs this. Mr. Monge said that he would send information to Mr. Perkins of other boards in other states that actually “kicked out” the Common Core and standardized testing as it pertains to Common Core. Mr. Perkins said that he did not want to get into a debate but the he did not know the extent of the legal ability of a school district to do that.

Dr. Lishak said that she had been asked by Mr. Tatum to look into exactly what Mr. Monge was talking about and she did reach out to the state. She said, unfortunately, she was not able to get a definite answer from the state on what the district can do, what are the repercussions and what exactly will happen. Dr. Lishak

said that she was waiting for the state to come back and give her some clarity on what the district has to do as far as “opt out” goes. She said what the state did say to her was that the district cannot stop a parent from asking that their child not be tested. Dr. Lishak said that as far as Gifted and Talented and any of the other standardized testing uses for getting into Honors or any other programs in the district, she said that in Union there is a “three of five” or a “five of seven” criteria which means if a student does not take a standardized test, it will not be held against them because there are other criteria that can be used to enter them into a program. She said that in Union, no child will be penalized for not taking the test. Dr. Lishak said that parents need to understand is that if children “opt out” of the test and if those students who “opt out” are the district’s highest performing students, the district will still receive scores from the state that will show that those students are not in the “mix”. She said that there will be an effect on the district; the test scores will reflect it.

Dr. Lishak stated with regard to the special education information regarding PARCC, she has spent time with Ms. Conti reading through what amounts to a general education phone book, a special education phone book and she needs an interpreter to figure all of the things that they are talking about. She said that the amount of information is unbelieveable. Dr. Lishak said that she has also reached out to Pearson, the company developing the test, and sometimes it takes two or three days to get an answer from them. She said that the district is planning a special education parent workshop because it is too difficult for parents to maneuver through all the things that need to be done by themselves. Dr. Lishak said that there will be three parent workshops in November and the dates will be posted on the district’s website. She said that hopefully the state will provide more information.

Dr. Lishak said that she and Mr. Tatum sat down in mid-August and discussed the fact that across the district, the elementary curriculum has not been standardized. She said that the secondary schools basically run on a standardized curriculum. Dr. Lishak said that she and Mr. Tatum agreed that this has something to do with the scores that are showing in some of the schools. She said that if you look at Franklin School, it has improved by, in some cases, almost thirty points. Dr. Lishak said she is trying to find out what is working in a school like Franklin and she has already begun to revamp the AAP program to “mirror” what is happening in Franklin and the other successful schools in the district. She said that it has been recognized that there are schools in the district that are more successful. Dr. Lishak said that over the past few years the elementary schools have become an “island by themselves”. She said that she and Mr. Tatum have directed that this will no longer be the case. Dr. Lishak said that she did not want Mr. Monge to think that the district is not recognizing that there are some deficiencies in some of the schools, she said that she is aware and focusing on what needs to change now. Dr. Lishak said that on November 14th all elementary principals will take part in a workshop where the aspects of the more successful schools will be presented for implementation in all of the elementary schools. She hoped that at the end of the year the district will see some serious amount of growth.

Mr. Monge said that is not what he heard at the Candidates’ Night debate. He said as a parent, he felt that the Common Core mathematics is a totally different way of teaching students how to multiply and divide. Mr. Monge said that he had difficulty helping his son with math homework. He said that what Common Core is trying to do is teach every student to learn in the same manner and to get to the answer in the same way. Mr. Monge said that every child does not learn in the same way. He said parents used to be able to help their children with homework but now parents can’t even help students with their homework. He said that the parents at his child’s school are talking to each other about the homework because they don’t understand how getting to an answer all of a sudden changed. Mr. Monge said that it is not about what the answer is, it is about how did you get to the answer. He said when you speak about standardized tests and that the district is seeing some type of a trend, now those standardized tests are out the window and the district will be dealing with PARCC and the students are not prepared for it. Mr. Monge did not know how the district was going to prepare for a test which students will be opting out of. He said that the district has to be proactive rather than reactive and let people know where the district is. Mr. Monge thought that the parents should be given clear instructions with regard to “opting out” their students. He felt that the district needed to take leadership and not have the students go through all of the craziness of preparing for the hours of exams, typing and many of the students don’t know how to type. Mr. Perkins said that this is a dialogue worth having unfortunately it is not to do this evening. He said that the questions that Mr. Monge raises are valid points and points shared by members of the board but when you have a State Department of Education, they are the entity which dictates the form of education for the State of New Jersey. Mr. Perkins said that there is no autonomy in the municipality and a board of education has far less power than you may think it has. Dr. Lishak said that the state is dictating to the district that it must administer the test but it is up to the board to let parents know whether the district will offer the “opt out” option. She said that it is up to parents to decide whether their children will take the test. Mr. Monge thought that the district should develop some sort of a plan. Mr. Perkins said that the sovereign in the State of New Jersey is the State of New Jersey. Mr. Monge said that the board is able to pass resolutions to do what is best for the community instead of reacting to a State which is not giving the district the answers it is looking for.

Mr. Monge suggested that Mr. Perkins go online to the website that he has been directing parents to and obviously, Mr. Perkins is not educated on the PARCC information. Mr. Perkins said he was not but he was educated on the law. Mr. Monge said that it did not matter about the law. Mr. Monge said that the district is directing parents to a website which contains so much information it is hard to cover everything. He said that Union is not unique to the states that are using Common Core and assessment tests based on Common Core. Mr. Monge said that he would send the board members information that he has been able to find on the website. He said that he also joined a New Jersey United Opt Out parent group that he is getting a ton of information from. Mr. Monge said he felt that parents can work with the board and the administrators to share information.

Mr. Le said that he did stand on what he said that the Candidate Night debate. He said that over the past five years that district has taken proactive steps, ideas and initiatives have been implemented to increase scores. Mr. Monge said that Dr. Martin’s name was not even mentioned during the debate and he was not given any credit for the increased scores. He said that Dr. Martin had a lot to do with increasing scores.

 Mr. Capodice wanted to direct his comments to Mr. Tatum. He said on behalf of his association, he wanted to congratulate Mr. Tatum on his appointment as Superintendent as he believed it was well deserved. Mr. Capodice said that he was very familiar with Mr. Tatum’s work ethic and his ability to bring people together. He wished Mr. Tatum the best of luck.

 Mr. Capodice said that Mr. Tatum spoke tonight about working on changes in initiatives and trying new ideas and he hoped that Mr. Tatum will have the U.T.E.A. in on the partnership in a joint effort to bring changes to the district in positive ways. Mr. Capodice said that there are many great attributes of the district and he looked forward to and was very excited about those changes. He said that he and the association were looking forward to getting the negotiations done and come to a conclusion so that the educators can get back to doing what they do best which is teaching the students of the district and working on increasing the test scores.

 Mr. Crosby asked if the district was ready to engage PARCC; does the district have the technical ability to deal with this test that will be taken by students on the computer and are the students in the district being prepared to take this new test. He said that the network and equipment requirements for the test are high and he has heard that the “pilot” test given last spring was a disaster. Mr. Crosby asked if the district had enough technology to handle all of the information. He said that he has been looking at the sample questions for the test on line and although the information on the test has not changed for many years, the way that the questions are asked is kind of convoluted and the language is not easy to understand. Mr. Crosby said that the form of the test has erased all of the basic knowledge that everyone has about how to use a computer. He said that the menu bar does not exist; children have to go to a special box to pick up letters, numbers and symbols to answer the questions. Mr. Crosby asked if the district is preparing the students to take this test.

 Mr. Tatum said that the district is preparing the students to be ready to take the test. He said that the district started working on the infrastructure last year and the district has purchased a number of new computers that are compatible to the PARCC test. Mr. Tatum said that the district has recently upgraded computer labs in Battle Hill School because there were some issues. He said that the district did learn a lot from the field test last year. Mr. Tatum said that last spring some questions did arise about the technology and the district implemented a new keyboarding program in the middle schools which became a controversial issue. He said that the students had to learn how to be able to transfer information from the keyboard to the screen which was one of the things that the district got in feedback in terms of where students had difficulties during the field testing. Mr. Tatum said that he did not want to send students into a testing situation where they had an unfair disadvantage. He said that everything that Mr. Crosby mentioned were certainly valid points and concerns that the district is looking at. Mr. Tatum said that in terms of the actual physical readiness, the district is doing everything it can do to take some proactive steps based on information which the district has at any particular time. He said that the district is going to do the best it can to be ready based upon the knowledge and information that it has. Mr. Tatum said that he would like to work together with parents to serve the students in the best way possible.

 Ms. Barfield congratulated Mr. Tatum on his selection as Superintendent. She said that she came to the meeting tonight with a different issue on her mind and something that is bothering her. Ms. Barfield said that she recently had a conversation with the principal at her son’s school and she asked him if there were any African-American teachers in the school. She said that there is not one at her son’s school. Ms. Barfield said that this really bothers her as diversity is very important to her. She said that her children, everyone’s children deserve to see people that “look like them” teach. Ms. Barfield said that later in the conversation, the principal told her that he does not hire on “race”. She wanted to know who she should direct her concern to that would handle this. Ms. Barfield said that at her son’s previous school, there was only one African-American teacher. She said that other parents have noticed this as well and want to move forward with it. Ms. Barfield said that this is something that personally bothers her as well as other parents in the school. She did not understand why there was not one African-American teacher in the school. Ms. Barfield said that the principal also mentioned to her that because she asked him that question, he did not appreciate her coming into his office and calling him a racist. She said that she had to remind the principal that it was his perception of himself and she was just asking a question. Ms. Barfield said that she personally knew of African-American people that have applied to Washington School as well as Livingston School that have Masters degrees and were turned away. She said that she knew of teachers at Washington School who only have their Bachelors Degree and it is their first year teaching. Ms. Barfield felt that credentials were not being taken into consideration when hiring new teachers.

 Mr. Tatum said that the district has a new Director of Human Resources and the person who Ms. Barfield should be addressing her comments was him. He said that one of the things that he intended on doing in the district is to institute a new system of recruitment where the district will be visiting college campuses and actively recruit the best teachers and hopefully there will be some better representation of minority candidates. Mr. Tatum said that he also hoped to have a Job Fair in the district so that there is an opportunity to see some of the young people who are coming out of college. He said that a new screening process will also be undertaken where when applications come in they will be reviewed. Mr. Tatum said that over the past summer, the district did hire a number of new teachers and there were a number of minority teachers included. He said that Ms. Barfield must understand that the district is interested in hiring good, solid teachers of all backgrounds. Mr. Tatum said that he had to praise the new teachers that he hired over the summer for doing a fantastic job. He did agree that there were more minority teachers out there. Mr. Tatum said that there were ways of attracting minority teachers but the first thing that he has to do is change the mindset of what people believe about what goes on in the district and change the perception to make them feel welcome in the district.

Ms. Barfield said that the district has to realize that credentials are the same no matter what and if a person had their Masters Degree, you would think that a principal would want that person more than someone who just had a Bachelors Degree. She said that because there are no African-American teachers at her son’s school, she would like to see at least one person who looked like her.

Mr. Tatum said that Ms. Barfield’s points were well taken and he stated that she should feel free to reach out to Mr. Benequista in the Human Resources Department and he would also like to meet with Ms. Barfield to discuss this issue a little more so that the issues can be addressed.

Ms. Kelly congratulated Mr. Tatum and wished him success in the new position. She wanted to know why this announcement was made on the Facebook page by Board of Education candidates and as of this morning, she did not see any announcement on the district’s website. Mr. Perkins said that the resolution was passed in public session at a Special Meeting of the board which took place on Thursday evening and the truth of the matter at that point it became public information and anyone who had knowledge of it could have relayed it to other people. Ms. Kelly said that the community has been asking for a new Superintendent and as far as transparency goes, the website where the parents are always asked to go, does not have this information posted. She asked if there were plans to put the information on the website. Mr. Perkins said that the announcement was made tonight and it is part of the record. Ms. Kelly said that she felt it would be great if some sort of announcement were put on the website.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

 There being no further business before the board, it was moved by Mr. Le, seconded by Mr. Nufrio that the meeting be adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. Le, Mr. Nufrio and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

 Respectfully submitted,

 JAMES J. DAMATO

 BOARD SECRETARY/GENERAL COUNSEL