UNION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

WORKSESSION MINUTES – OCTOBER 9, 2012

Meeting held at James M. Caulfield Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL: Mr. David Arminio, Mrs. Susana Cooley, Mrs. Linda Gaglione, Mr. Richard Galante, Mr. Thomas Layden, Mrs. Versie McNeil, Mr. Vito Nufrio, Mr. Francis R. Perkins, President and Mrs. Judy Salazar

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL: None

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Perkins at 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Salazar led the board members and audience 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.

Mr. Perkins stated that notwithstanding the fact that the notice has indicated action items, it was his understanding that the board will not be moving any action items at this meeting. Mr. Damato said that he believed that the request was to “pull” action on resolution P-1 and vote on all other items listed for action. He asked Mr. Galante if that was correct. Mr. Galante said that was correct.

COMMUNICATION:

All communication has been reviewed and sent to the appropriate committees for action.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Martin had two items that he wanted to bring to the board’s and the public’s attention. He said that in a few minutes the board would be discussing the September bullying report. Dr. Martin said that each month the district is asked to file a report regarding how many bullying incidents there are in the district. He said that there are six confirmed cases in September compared to last September when there were thirty incidents. Dr. Martin said that the district is moving in the right direction and all the credit goes to the schools and the programs that are in the schools. He said that these programs were effective and they are working. Dr. Martin said that he has heard from administrators, staff, parents and students that they are more aware of what bullying looks like and they are aware of the fact that it will not be tolerated in the schools. He said that the numbers bear that out. Dr. Martin said that certainly there was always improvement that could be made; the district has not yet reached the state where it is perfect. He said that when there is improvement being shown, he thought it was important to acknowledge it.

Dr. Martin said that the board has been talking about health and fitness this year. He said that there has been a meeting of people in the community that are interested in this topic; teachers, administrators and board members were part of the meeting. Dr. Martin said that there will be another meeting on October 15th and if anyone was interested in attending the meeting on how to make “wellness” a part of everyone’s life, should come. He said that he read an article in the New York Times about school lunches across the nation and how the program to limit the amount of starch and sugar is being responded to by students. Dr. Martin said that unfortunately, students are throwing out their vegetables and fruit. He said that they are angry at the fact that the portions of cheeseburgers, pizza and tacos are smaller. Dr. Martin said that there is a revolt taking place in school cafeterias throughout the nation. He said that the article contained quotes from school administrators who said they really don’t blame the students and if they were in the students’ position and they were not getting the type of food that they liked, they too would be throwing out their fruits and vegetables. Dr. Martin thought that this district is an educational institution and part of education should be starting at an early age teaching the benefits of proper nutrition so that students do not throw away nutritious food. He said that it should be made a part of what the students do daily. Dr. Martin said that the board is very interested in this topic and the discussions will continue. He said that wellness is a hot topic across the nation and he was a little taken aback that there are people in leadership positions who are shrugging and saying they don’t blame the students.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA TO BE APPROVED AT THIS MEETING

Ms. Shannon asked for an update from Dr. Martin on P-2 with the substitute secretaries. Dr. Martin said that he spoke to the personnel committee about this, a job description has been developed which has been approved by the committee and will be added to the agenda for next week. He said that it was very important that the intent of the substitute secretary position is different than a substitute for a teacher. Dr. Martin said that it is not meant that every single day that a secretary is absent, a substitute will be coming in. He said that the intent is to cover for secretaries that will be out on an extended absence.

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE:

Mrs. McNeil stated that the committee met earlier in the evening. She presented the agenda items.

Mrs. McNeil said that Mrs. Moutis wanted to formally invite all board members to attend the NJASK 300 event which will take place next Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. before the board meeting. She said that certificates will be presented to students at that time.

Mrs. Conti stated that on resolution E-12, she put the program would be effective November 1st but she asked the board, if she could arrange it with the Interim County Supervisor, the in-class resource may start on October 23rd. She said that the Interim County Supervisor was on vacation and she was waiting for her return. There was no objection from the board on this.

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Gaglione said that the committee met and all resolutions were discussed. She presented the agenda.

Mrs. Gaglione said that it was discussed in the committee meeting that if schools were using the district’s buses for unbudgeted field trip, that the transportation department get paid prior to the trip so it can be included in the request for transportation.

Mr. Perkins asked what Mr. Olivio’s party was. Mrs. Conti said that Mr. Olivio has run a holiday party for over 30 years. She said that Mr. Olivio has a party for returning students from his program, who have developmental disabilities. Mrs. Conti said that it is a great evening; the alumni and current students in the program come out; they have a good time while learning much needed social skills and recreational activities and they have a good time. She said that the party is not only a fun event but it serves a much needed purpose. Mrs. Conti said that she wanted to commend Mr. Olivio for all that he has done and continues to do with this program. She said without him the program could not continue to expand the way that it does. Mrs. Conti said that this event usually takes place at the Elks and it has been a staple in the district for a long time.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE:

Mr. Layden stated that the committee met earlier in the evening and he presented the agenda items.

Mr. Layden stated that there would be one more resolution added for next week’s meeting. He said that it will pertain to a change order for reinforcement of the roof at Central-Five/Jefferson School project. Mr. Wiggins said that on the existing portion of Central-Five moisture was found in the roof.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Layden said that Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions has made a request to use Union High School to administer a 4½ hour test to students. He said that Kaplan was asking for a rental fee waiver for this purpose. Mr. Layden said that the committee did not have a problem with this request. Mr. Perkins asked if Kaplan was a profit-making organization. Mr. Layden said he believed it was. Mr. Perkins asked what they were seeking a waiver based on. Mr. Layden said that Kaplan wanted to use space at Union High School for pre-SAT prep test for junior students. He said that Kaplan would be providing materials to students free of charge and they would like to use the cafeteria on November 6th since students don’t have school on that day. Mr. Arminio asked if this was limited to Union High School students. Mr. Layden said he believed the test would be offered to juniors at the high school. Mr. Perkins asked if the students would be paying to take this practice test. Mr. Layden believed it the test was free of charge to students. Mr. Damato said that the letter indicates that students would not be charged and what the students get out of it is a performance report on the practice test. He said that it seems like Kaplan is trying to get students to sign up for their course after they receive the results of their practice test. Mr. Damato felt that Kaplan was trying to generate business.

Mr. Perkins asked if any other companies have asked for this kind of consideration and was the administration taking a position on this. Dr. Martin said that this was the first he was hearing about this request. Mr. Layden said that he has not seen a request like this before. Dr. Martin said that perhaps the board could speak further about this at next week’s meeting. He said that this would give everyone a chance to digest the information. Dr. Martin said that there are a number of private companies that come to the district with “free” offers. He said that sometimes the district does say yes to these offers. Dr. Martin said that the offers are weighed regularly. Mr. Nufrio said that the board has to take into consideration the fact that Kaplan wants to use school premises on a day that students do not have school, which prompts other concerns such as security and maintenance. Mr. Damato said that there would be custodians in the building as this date was Election Day. Mr. Nufrio asked about security. Mr. Damato said he did not know about security. Mr. Nufrio said that if that many students were to congregate in one area of the school, he would be concerned. Mr. Perkins said that the other consideration is the apparent endorsement by the district of a particular company. He said that obviously Kaplan is not doing it out of the goodness of their heart but are doing it to generate income so that they can make a profit. Mr. Perkins said there was nothing wrong with that but to the extent that they were doing it in the district, what are the ramifications, the appearances or the apparent endorsement, if any. He was kind of skeptical of allowing this. Mr. Perkins thought that the board should think more about it.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Mr. Galante stated that vote on resolution P-1 has been postponed. He said that the committee met earlier with the Superintendent and Mr. Galante presented the agenda. Mr. Nufrio said that he understood P-1 was being pulled from the agenda for action tonight until further discussion could be done on this matter through the personnel committee. Mr. Galante said that he did not move P-1, he only read it and it would be moved next week. Mr. Nufrio said that it was his understanding that there would be further review and better calculations, etc., pertaining to that item. Mr. Perkins said he did not see any conflict. Mr. Nufrio said that he did because Mr. Galante indicated that the resolution would be on next week’s agenda but that was not enough time to do this. Mr. Perkins said that there usually is a P-1 resolution on the agenda. Mrs. Ditri said that there were other names that would be included on resolution P-1 for consideration next week. Mr. Perkins said that he assumed the names that appear on next week’s agenda on resolution P-1 will not be the exact P-1 that was to be voted on tonight.

Mr. Arminio asked for a clarification on resolution P-12. He asked if the $20 per hour not to exceed 200 hours per semester was per person or a total amount. Mrs. Ditri stated that it was total for all the individuals listed.

Moved by Mr. Galante, seconded by Mrs. Cooley that the following resolutions be adopted:

P-2. AMEND LIST OF SUBSTITUTES FOR 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board amend list of Substitute/Home Instruction List, Substitute Custodians, Substitute Cafeteria/Playground Assistants, Classroom Assistants and Secretaries for the 2012-2013 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

P-13. APPROVE DISMISSAL OF EMPLOYEE #11601

That the board approve dismissal of employee #11601 effective immediately. Employee will be paid for sixty (60) days as per contract that the Union Township Education Association has with the Board.

P-14. APPROVE STAFF TO TEACH MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMY

That the board approve following staff to teach in the Middle School Academy from October 10th through November 8th, 2012: BURNET MIDDLE SCHOOL – Tommy Harrell; Joann Gentile; Joao Bernardes, Laurence Petras, Suzanne Whitley; Stephanie Whitehead and Daniel Hrdina; KAWAMEEH MIDDLE SCHOOL – Nicole Toccaceli, Kevin Dougherty, Jill Hall, Amanda Viggiano, Kelly Popek and Jennifer Winters. These individuals will teach one class period per day for twenty (20) days at a rate of $38.25 per hour. All funds for Middle School Academy activities come from tuition paid by parents/guardians.

P-15. AMEND LIST OF CAFETERIA/PLAYGROUND ASSISTANTS FOR THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

That the board amend list of Cafeteria/Playground Assistants for the 2012-2013 school year in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Mrs. Cooley, Mrs. Gaglione, Mr. Galante, Mr. Layden, Mrs. McNeil, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Salazar and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

GRIEVANCE/NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Mrs. Gaglione said that this resolution deals with a Memorandum of Agreement which amends and modifies the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Union Township Education Association (U.T.E.A.) but the backup material provided to the board was not the Memorandum of Agreement and it does not include all of the salary guides. She said that this backup material was not what was to be voted on. Mrs. Gaglione asked that the correct backup material be provided to the board before voting next week. Mr. Perkins said that there are several board members that cannot vote on this resolution because there are conflicts.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Mr. Perkins indicated that the payment of bills would be approved at next week’s meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Arminio needed clarification on renewal of the district’s health insurance. He said that the district’s broker gets a commission and as far as he knew, in other districts, instead of just paying the broker a commission, the board or its designee can negotiate with the broker for a lesser amount than the percentage that the broker would ordinarily would get as a commission for the package. Mr. Arminio said that as insurance premiums keep going up, the broker’s commission keeps going up and yet the work is the same amount of work. He asked if the district can negotiate with its broker not just for health insurance but for all insurance, for a lesser amount than the ordinary percentage commission. Mr. Damato said that the district can do that. He said that he had a lengthy meeting last fall on that very topic between two brokers. Mr. Damato said that these brokers were competing for this account and he said that one of the things that was incorporated in the last couple of years at the broker’s expense was the whole issue of the Wellness Coach and the cost of the Wellness Coach was absorbed by the broker. He said that additional work was absorbed into their fee. Mr. Damato said that the commission percentage can be negotiated. He said that he spent a couple of nights negotiating with two companies to try to get the best deal. Mr. Damato said that he believed that the company the district was using at the time, given all of the things that they were involved in and worked on for the district, gave the district the best deal. Mr. Damato said that the district will be taking more proposals in the Spring and he tries to get as many companies to submit proposals as he can.

Mrs. Gaglione stated at the meeting last fall she told the brokers that if they were going to supply the district with a Wellness Coach that she did not believe that the salary for the Wellness Coach should come out of the “customers’ pockets”. She said that just because the insurance company was providing the district with a service that is going to make people exercise or be more health conscience, it shouldn’t have to come out of the district’s part of the pay. Mrs. Gaglione said that is when the broker indicated that it would be offered as a “free” service. Mr. Nufrio said that he understood that the district did not have a Wellness Coach at this time and felt that it was incumbent on the broker to get a replacement as soon as possible because otherwise the district is getting a “freebie” but the district is not getting anything. Mr. Perkins said he thought they were doing that. Mr. Damato said that he was told that the broker was working on that and they are interviewing people for the position. Mr. Perkins said that there have been two people who have come and gone for some reason.

Mr. Perkins said that one of the impetuses of the whole wellness effort is to drive down the costs of health coverage for the district. He said because the district has a high enough population, it has an experience rating that is used by the carriers in establishing a rate. Mr. Damato said that it is a percentage of the overall gross premium. He said that there really is no incentive for a broker to help the district drive down insurance premiums. Mr. Damato said that this was a novel approach that the district had not seen before. He said that the district had many years of increasing costs for health care and the district had some very serious and costly health issues among its employees. Mr. Damato said that as the experience goes up, the premiums go up by a greater amount. He said that the district is trying to lower the experience and in order to do that, try to help employees get healthier through a wellness program which is offered by the district. Mr. Damato said he thought that it was working because the broker showed him some statistics about the number of people that they got to quit smoking and lose weight (he did not remember how many hundreds of pounds in gross weight that was lost by our employees). He said that there were things like that which could not be quantified and say, “the district is saving $200,000 this year because it has avoided all of these costs.” Mr. Damato said that there is no way of determining what costs have been avoided. He said he thought that the logic was correct and it probably will take a few years to see a trend but up to this point, he thought the trend was always in the opposite direction. Mr. Damato said that this offer seemed attractive to him and it seemed like it was a good idea. Mr. Nufrio asked if there was a timeline in which the Wellness Coach will be restored. Mr. Damato said that the broker told him that interviews for the new Wellness Coach were going to be last week; he hoped in the next few weeks a new coach will be hired. Mr. Nufrio asked who the coach works with. Mr. Damato said that the coach works with the employees; the Wellness Coach visits each school on a rotating basis and speaks to employees on a regular basis. He said that one of the things he worked out as part of the Wellness Program was to have flu shots offered at the schools, free of charge, to all employees through CVS. Mr. Damato said that there was also talk of doing other things because in the district’s experience it was found that only a very small portion of the workforce was taking advantage of having annual physicals, mammograms, etc. He said that the statistics are so low on services that are not being used, is alarming.

Mr. Damato said that the Wellness Coach, if nothing else, will try to get employees to take advantage of the services that are available to them through Blue Cross at no cost might be great. He said that early detection of illnesses such as cancer and heart disease is really where the money is for the district. Mr. Nufrio suggested that a more effective way of reaching the staff would be to use the U.T.E.A. officers to communicate exactly what the coach is prepared to offer. Mr. Damato said that the previous Wellness Coach visited the schools, brought handouts, and said exactly what he was there to do, asked if anyone would like to speak to him. He said that the previous coach was very passionate about his job. Mr. Damato said that the Wellness Coach gives a lot of information and speaks to anyone who has a question or problem.

Mr. Perkins said that one of the reasons that he is so passionate about doing the physical fitness, academic fitness, character fitness program (Committed to Fitness) is that as a person gets older, they begin to appreciate the value of every minute they lost in the past. He said that it seemed to him that every teacher in the district is young enough to think they will live for a lot longer than they realize it is when you get to be at a point in your life where you start thinking about it a little bit more. Mr. Perkins said that if people are knowledgeable concerning the effects of what they put into their bodies, what they take or not exercising he thought that any reasonable person will start to think about it, if not take overt action to get committed. He said that he was concerned about is that you don’t put off people who feel that “it’s too late” or “I’ll never get into shape”; any effort is better than no effort at all even it’s a fifteen minute walk up and down the stairs within the school building. Mr. Perkins said that he has spoken to Mr. Capodice, the president of the U.T.E.A. and he looked forward to cooperation by Association members in this effort. He said that it is very important that this program is done in a way that does not intimidate people and people don’t feel uncomfortable. Mr. Capodice said that if the board needed any help from the U.T.E.A. in support of this effort, he asked that they contact him. He said that the U.T.E.A. is having a Zumba night next Friday at 7 p.m.; the cost is $10.

Mr. Arminio said that a couple of weeks ago Washington School had an ice cream social from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. He said that there were hundreds of people in attendance; it took place on the playground of the school. Mr. Arminio said that the purpose of this event was for teachers and parents to meet in an informal way. He said that this social was organized by the PTA and it was supported by the U.T.E.A. Mr. Arminio thought that this was a fantastic idea and almost every teacher at Washington School volunteered to stay after school for this event.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Salazar said that there was an item that was discussed in the operations committee regarding the old boilers at Burnet Middle School and she thought that the district should be prepared for a capital expenditure in connection with the replacement of these boilers. She said that Mr. Wiggins can explain further about this situation. Mr. Wiggins said that he went around with the boiler inspector this year and he pointed out that he would certify the boilers at Burnet Middle School for this year but absolutely no way would he certify them next year. He said that the stable bolts that hold the whole boiler together were rotted. Mr. Wiggins said that an entire section of the boiler had to be cut out and new portions installed last year. He said that there are three boilers at Burnet Middle School. Mr. Wiggins said that the board must start thinking about replacing the boilers. Mr. Perkins asked what would happen if there was a catastrophic failure during the middle of the winter. Mr. Wiggins said that he hoped all three units would not go down all at once. He said that there are alternate heating units that might be available in emergency situations. Mr. Nufrio asked if all three boilers were in the same condition. Mr. Wiggins said that they were. He said that all three were original to the building and they are in various states of deterioration. Mr. Nufrio asked if there was a “cost estimate” for the replacement of the boilers. Mr. Wiggins said that he does have two or three companies who he asked to come up with some “numbers”, he said that an engineer will have to be involved, write a specification for the project and put the project out to bid.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mrs. Taylor said that she was in attendance at this meeting as a representative of P.A.C.E. She said that at a previous board meeting this group introduced itself to the board and she had a prepared statement that she wanted to read into the record:

*P.A.C.E. is a volunteer group of concerned parents who want to work in conjunction with the Township of Union Public Schools providing information, programs and support to our children and to help parents to encourage academic success in the Township of Union Public Schools and to empower other parents to do so. We started meeting last December and the first programs we worked on were two nights of NJASK parent/ child programs last March. Those programs were attended by an extremely large group of parents and children and parents learned to help their children at home which is invaluable. We would like to continue to help provide programs such as these extremely successful NJASK parent/ child informational and practice programs which were held last spring and which were so popular. At the July 17, 2012 Board of Education meeting, we presented a letter to the board indicating our desire to co-sponsor another program. It appears that time constraints kept us from presenting this program in time for back to school. At this time, we would like to ask the board to indicate its support to the parents of P.A.C.E. so that we can continue to work together on future programs. We would like to continue to meet with Dr. Martin and plan programs with him that continue to be consistent with the district’s academic goals. We are here personally tonight to ask for your support so that we can continue to help the district achieve its goal for academic success for our students. This would help us all to meet the district’s goals and is consistent with the board’s own policy of involving parents in the education of their children.*

Mrs. Taylor said that the group would like to ask authorization to continue to have input and work closely with Dr. Martin as they have done in the past. She felt that it has been very successful.

Mr. Perkins said that he owed Mrs. Taylor an apology because he understood that Mrs. Taylor was trying to get in touch with him but he has been extremely busy over the past few days. He said that he has spoken with administrators with regard to P.A.C.E. did or did not do and the assets that P.A.C.E. used which were board assets. Mr. Perkins said that in considering this from his own personal point of view and this was not necessarily a board position, it occurred to him that the primary assets that were used in the presentation were in fact board assets and the goals that P.A.C.E. has set out really are the a function of the board’s responsibility to its students. Mr. Perkins said that he also understood that one of the “attractions” was the distribution of certificates for *Yo Addiction* yogurt by Mr. Paul Mazzarella, who is the owner of that business. He said that he understood from Mr. Mazzarella that these certificates were intended for the entirety of the school population and not only those who showed up at this presentation. Mr. Perkins said that Mrs. Taylor does make a good argument about increased parental involvement but the district already has PTA’s at every school with involvement of parents in a structure that has existed for a considerable period of time. He said that Mrs. Cooley, a member of the board, has been a PTA president for some time and Mr. Perkins has asked Mrs. Cooley to coordinate with the PTA’s in the district to become involved and he suggested that the P.A.C.E. parents be involved in the same way. Mr. Perkins said that the parents who show up at school functions have a relationship with the principals and the staffs of each of the buildings; they are selected from among the parents, usually within those buildings and he urged the P.A.C.E. parents to do the same. He said that when he looked at the assets that were used in this presentation, they were board assets, they were board employees doing things that they otherwise get paid to do within the district. Mr. Perkins said that he hoped that Mrs. Taylor was not terribly disappointed to hear his viewpoint. He said that if P.A.C.E. were overwhelming and had assets of its own and would pay for outside speakers to make presentations to district parents, that might be a different situation but he did not see that. Mrs. Taylor said that she did belong to the PTA but she said that P.A.C.E. parents feel that the “more hands on deck” the better.

Mr. Perkins said that sometimes can be the case, but when he reviewed with Dr. Martin the assets that were being used, they were board assets. He said that there had been “push back” from certain portions of that constituency about the “requirement” to appear at a “P.A.C.E.” event. Mr. Perkins asked Mrs. Taylor how many members there were in P.A.C.E. Mrs. Taylor said that she did not know exactly but at a recent “brainstorming” meeting of the group, there were approximately 30 people. Mr. Perkins said that he did recall representatives of P.A.C.E. attending previous meetings. He asked how many members of the organization were present at the meeting this evening. (Those that were members of the group raised their hands.) Mr. Perkins said he did not want to turn parents off from participating but he was really skeptical about getting yet another organization when already exists a structure within each school that can be effectuated in seeking those goals and objectives that the P.A.C.E. parents would want to seek. He said that unless the P.A.C.E. parents feel that the PTA’s for some reason just simply don’t do the job or they don’t know how to do the job, but he did not sense that this was the case. Mrs. Cooley said that as PTA president at Battle Hill School which is one of the smallest schools, she had over 450 members last year. She said that she had to cancel some events that had been organized by the PTA because parent involvement was lacking. Mrs. Cooley said that she felt the board had to get out there and spread the word. She said that there are PTA meetings at both middle schools tomorrow evening and she planned to attend each of those meetings. Mrs. Cooley said that Washington School had a meeting on Thursday, that she also planned to attend and speak to the executive boards at each of these schools to get the word out on the workshops that have been planned. She said that the PTA was also involved in getting speakers from different organizations to make presentations to parents for minimal or no charge.

Mrs. Gaglione asked if Mrs. Cooley was going to speak to the PTA’s about P.A.C.E. Mrs. Cooley said that she was going to speak to the PTA’s about making sure that parent workshops are being presented in the schools. Mrs. Gaglione asked Mrs. Taylor what her concern was that P.A.C.E. could not work in conjunction with the PTA’s to get things done. Mrs. Taylor said that she did not say that P.A.C.E. couldn’t do that, she said that P.A.C.E. was just an independent effort on its part. Mrs. Gaglione said that she gave P.A.C.E. a lot of praise for doing that. Mrs. Taylor said that it was something that the group felt very strongly about. She said that PTA seems to be overloaded in some respects and they don’t, a lot of times, have the help that they need. Mrs. Gaglione asked what was to stop all of the P.A.C.E. parents from doing a coordinated effort with all of the PTA’s to run a workshop. Mrs. Taylor said she did not think that it couldn’t be done; she said that P.A.C.E. was initiating an independent initiative. Mrs. Gaglione said that when P.A.C.E. ran programs in the past there was overwhelming response but the supplies and the efforts were done by district staff. Mrs. Taylor said that she knew there were teachers present at the workshops and she was not the person directly in charge of running the event. Mrs. Gaglione said that this is where the concern has come in. She suggested that if P.A.C.E. wants to continue something of this sort, somehow it is coordinated with all of the PTA presidents in the district. Mrs. Gaglione said that any funds necessary to run such a workshop could come out of PTA proceeds. Mr. Nufrio stated that the PTA is a duly sanctioned organization and certainly to echo what Mrs. Gaglione said, he also praised the efforts of the P.A.C.E. parents, but it becomes a matter or question of what exactly would be the difference between P.A.C.E. and the PTA and then it becomes a matter of procedure as to the recognition of the organization. He said that PTA has been and will continue to be the duly recognized group to represent each individual school; they have officers and of course, the principal is part of the PTA. Mr. Nufrio said that he can certainly understand the concern that the principal may have some difficulty knowing who he was dealing with. He said that there is a PTA in each building and the principals would be dealing with them unless the Board of Education were to acknowledge the existence of another organization which would be a procedure.

Ms. Loghan asked if it was against the U.T.E.A.’s rules to use the staff members the way they were used for the NJASK workshop that was run through P.A.C.E. Mr. Perkins said that the district has an employment contract with its teachers and the entire staff and if they work, they get paid. He said that there were questions that were raised because there were assets used, such as the reverse 911 telephone system, that were board assets and at looking at it, it was his conclusion that P.A.C.E. did not bring any expertise to the table that didn’t already exist within the board, its staff or the parental involvement of the PTA. Mr. Perkins said that he thought it was fine that the P.A.C.E. parents were interested and he applauded that, but there was already a structure through which the P.A.C.E. parents can express their interest and help support the PTA. He suggested that this is what the P.A.C.E. parents do. Mr. Perkins said that the P.A.C.E. parents can become involved with the existing organization, with the slate of officers in the tradition of American schools.

Mrs. Edwards said that she had a daughter that attended Kawameeh Middle School. She said that when she first became a member of P.A.C.E., she thought that the parents came together with individual needs that they didn’t think were being addressed by the PTA or the school district; especially in her case. Mrs. Edwards said that the group did not come together because they wanted to work outside the PTA but because of individual needs that each parent had with their child(ren) that were not being addressed within the school. She said that the group talked about ways that they could volunteer their time to work with Dr. Martin; even if it is to support him in doing an Academy night. Mrs. Edwards said that P.A.C.E. wanted to support the superintendent to make it better for the students. She said that her daughter was not on the honor roll and not one of the failing students; she said that she is in the middle. Mrs. Edwards said that the school district and the PTA seems to forget about the average students. Ms. Shannon asked Mrs. Edwards what grade level her daughter was. Mrs. Edwards said she was in middle school. Ms. Shannon asked what grade level were the programs that P.A.C.E. was talking about. Mrs. Taylor said that it was for elementary and middle school. Mr. Perkins said that with individual problems, he suggested that the parents raise them on a one-on-one basis with the Superintendent whose door is always open or with the school principal. He said that everyone on the Board of Education is a “volunteer” and they are doing exactly what the P.A.C.E. parents are suggesting that they do.

Mrs. Taylor asked if this means that P.A.C.E. will still be able to work with Dr. Martin if a few of the parents decide that they want to come in to speak to him or are they precluded from doing that. Mr. Perkins said that they were not precluded from doing that at all. He was suggesting that from his point of view, the effort on NJASK that P.A.C.E. was involved in was really a board effort and P.A.C.E. contributed a name to it. Mr. Perkins suggested that P.A.C.E. use the existing structures that the district has. He said that parents are always free to address the board with concerns or to make a presentation to the board on any subject.

Mrs. McNeil said that parents can also reach out to the Education Committee. She said that the committee will meet with anyone on worksession meeting nights, if they just notify Dr. Martin or her that they want to come in with concerns.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Moved by Mr. Galante, seconded by Mrs. McNeil that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of *N.J.S.A. 10:4- 2b.* The Board will disclose the discussion conducted during the executive session, with notice to the public, 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.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Mrs. Cooley, Mrs. Gaglione, Mr. Galante, Mr. Layden, Mrs. McNeil, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Salazar and Mr. Perkins

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

BOARD RETURNED TO PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no further business before the board, it was moved by Mr. Arminio, seconded by Mrs. Cooley that the meeting be adjourned. All present voting yes.

Respectfully submitted

JAMES J. DAMATO

BOARD SECRETARY