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 January 20, 2015, 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 January 20, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. pursuant to notice sent to each member.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL: Mr. David Arminio, President; Dr. Guy Francis, Mr. Richard Galante, Ms. Lois Jackson, Mr. Thomas Layden, Mr. Ronnie McDowell, Mr. Vito Nufrio and Mrs. Nancy Zuena

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL: Mr. Angel Salcedo

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

 Mr. Nufrio 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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

 Moved by Dr. Francis, seconded by Mr. Galante that the minutes of the Worksession of December 9, 2014 and the Regular Meeting of December 16, 2014 be adopted:

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

 NAY: None

 ABSTAIN: Mr. Nufrio and Mrs. Zuena MOTION WAS CARRIED

COMMUNICATION

REQUEST FOR MATERNITY AND UNPAID FAMILY LEAVES – DURAK

Shannon Durak, physical education teacher at Burnet Middle School, submitted a request for maternity and unpaid family leaves, for the period February 17th through May 31st, 2015.

REQUEST FOR RENTAL FEE WAIVER – YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

Ashley L. Green, Ph.D., Chairperson of Youth Symposium, submitted a request for rental fee waiver for use of Union High School on Saturday, March 14th, 2015 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for an outreach program.

COMMUNICATION REGARDING PARCC

Deborah and Craig Murray submitted correspondence to the board regarding PARCC testing.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT UNPAID FAMILY LEAVE – SVETVILAS

Narisa Svetvilas, school counselor at Union High School, submitted a request for intermittent unpaid family leave for the period January 12 through the end of the 2014-2015 school year.

REQUEST FOR MATERNITY AND UNPAID FAMILY LEAVE – RAMIREZ

Jennifer Ramirez, art teacher at Burnet Middle School, submitted a request for maternity and unpaid family leaves, for the period March 13 through June 8, 2015.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – DENNIS

John Dennis, teacher assistant at Battle Hill School, submitted a letter of resignation, effective January 30, 2015.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

 Mr. Tatum said that the main portion of his report involves the summary of the HIB incidents for the time period September 1st through December 31st, 2014. He said that before he got to that report and some of the other information that he had to share with the public this evening, there were two video presentations that were part of the Superintendent’s Report.

Mr. Tatum said that the first video was Senator Menendez speaking about the service of Board of Education members on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the New Jersey School Boards Association.

Mr. Nufrio said that he had run across the video from the School Board’s monthly bulletin and at first there was just a small article with the Senator’s picture but there was a link to view the video. He said that he asked Mr. Tatum, Mr. Arminio and Mr. Damato if it was appropriate to show the video at the meeting not only for the benefit of the board members present but for the community as well, so that there is a mutual understanding of what the board’s responsibilities are and how the board will proceed forward to make the community one of the best communities in the State.

Mr. Tatum said that last week at the worksession, he announced that Kawameeh Middle School had put together a video presentation which was shown on the Channel 11 morning news. He said that one of the people who became famous that day was the building principal, Jason Malanda. He introduced Mr. Malanda to speak about the video.

Mr. Malanda said back in the summer he received a call from Ms. Toccacelli stating that she had an idea for an anti-bullying initiative for the school. He said that with some collaboration with the teachers and the students, the video was produced. Mr. Malanda

introduced several students as well as staff members from the school who had participated in the production video. He said that this project was a total school involvement event and he felt that the end result was pretty good. Mr. Malanda said that there have been approximately 13,000 views on YouTube.

Mr. Tatum congratulated the staff and students at Kawameeh Middle School for their hard work.

Mr. Tatum said that for the month of December student attendance was 94.6% and staff attendance was 92.6%.

Mr. Tatum said that kinds of programs that the district has implemented have a direct impact on the numbers that he was about to share with the public. He was very pleased that over the past few years the implementation of the anti-bullying program has shown a reduction in incidents of bullying in the schools. The following report covers the period September 1st through December 31st, 2014:

Battle Hill Elementary School – one reported incident; report completed; investigator – Christine Birstler; nature of report – other distinguishing characteristics; discipline imposed – one day suspension

Burnet Middle School – one reported incident; report completed; investigator – Tara Colandrea; nature of report – one sexual orientation; discipline imposed – lunch detention

Connecticut Farms Elementary School – five reported incidents; reports completed; investigator- Janette Tramuta; nature of report – three other distinguishing characteristics and two race; discipline imposed – one case manager/counselor; three school counselor I/C session; four 1-3 day suspension from morning; five day detention with principal; I/C with school counselor for six sessions

Franklin Elementary School – no reported incidents

Hannah Caldwell Elementary School – five reported incidents; reports completed; investigator – Sue Strumpf/Karen Hoffman; nature of report – five other distinguishing characteristics; discipline imposed – two lunch detentions

Jefferson Elementary School – two reported incidents; reports completed; investigator – Karen Hoffman; nature of report – one other distinguishing characteristics and one sexual orientation; no discipline imposed

Kawameeh Middle School – two reported incidents; reports completed; investigator – Jill Hall; nature of report – one gender sexual orientation/other; discipline imposed – one office and one Saturday detention

Livingston Elementary School – no reported incidents

Union High School – seventeen reported incidents; reports completed; investigator – Lucille Williams; nature of report – sixteen other distinguishing characteristic and one gender; discipline imposed – counseling

Washington Elementary School – no reported incidents

The following are district and school programs:

September

Ongoing – All district students receive instruction on topics related to anti bullying, tolerance and respect.

District Parent Presentation on the Student Bill of Rights and the process/procedures for reporting incidents of HIB and appealing decisions. Information presented on the student code of conduct and Union Board of Education policy updates; HIB specialist visited classrooms to discuss the HIB lessons.

Faculty and Staff Training on HIB during September Meetings

*Student Assemblies*: Buddy Up Program; Anti-Bullying Club; “How to Fill Your Bucket” to all grade level children K- 4; Lunch Bunch Groups

Programs Ongoing

Franklin P.R.I.D.E./Peacemaker Program

Elementary -“Caught Being Kind”

October

Week of respect – District wide observance of the week of respect with various lessons, assemblies and information presented by faculty to students on respecting others; Mix It Up Day; “Think Peace, Wear Blue Day”

BMS- PBSIS ; Peer leadership program; Purple ribbon recognition; Advisory Curriculum; and Psychoeducational groups on the topics of study skills and organization, “Girls in Real Life Situations – G.I.R.L.S.” and Unknown Sons

September: PBSIS, monthly class lessons, new entrant group

KMS- “In our School” graffiti wall in which students used quotes and images to express the respectful environment at KMS; Positive affirmations were placed on every locker in the building for students to see as they entered the building on the first day of Week of Respect;

National Guard Red Ribbon Week Program

District Unity Day: “Think Orange-Wear Orange!- Colors of Respect- Colors are worn for various causes focused on respect.

Groups and Sessions

One on one; Social skills; Peer mediation; Internet safety; Tolerance and respect

UHS- Character Education group visited Hannah Caldwell School 4th grade class for an anti-bullying lesson

New Jersey Assault program, CAP, aims to prevent child assault by teaching children to recognize and deal with potentially dangerous situations and by training teachers and parents to help prevent victimization of children

November

Three screens assembly program on “Be More Awesome”; ART contest - The theme is “Fun Things To Do Instead of Doing Drugs”; Merck Community Works – provided by Merck Pharmaceuticals. This curriculum addresses life skills such as conflict resolution, active listening, work readiness skills, and anti-bullying.

December

“Be True to You” - Anti-Bullying Assembly; Holiday Spirit Week; UHS- Character Education group visited Hannah Caldwell School 4th grade class for an anti-bullying lesson

Mr. Tatum said that early registration for pre-K has been posted on the district website. He said that it will begin on January 26th and he asked that the public consult the district website for information on the actual dates and times for particular schools.

Mr. Tatum said that on Thursday, January 22nd at 7 p.m. there will be a PARCC information session. He said that this session is designed to provide parents with general information regarding PARCC scheduling and requirements. Mr. Tatum said that information pertaining to PARCC content for language arts and math was provided in previous district workshops. He said that other PARCC information including practice test sites can be located on the district website under the PARCC tab.

Mr. Tatum said that on Saturday, January 24th there will be a community workshop held at Kean University East Campus Lounge located at 203-215 North Avenue, Hillside, NJ at 10 a.m. He said that this information is also posted on the district website and this information has been distributed to all staff within the district as requested.

Mr. Tatum said that the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day program was held on January 19th at Hannah Caldwell School. He said that the overall theme of the program was a day of service. Mr. Tatum said that the program was opened by Union High School JROTC honor guard and there were performances by local churches and organizations and culminated with a student recognition program award. He wanted to thank the Union Community Center for their special recognition and presentation to him at the event for becoming Superintendent of Schools in the Union Public Schools.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS ON THE AGENDA

 None

 Mr. Arminio stated that the board would be following a new procedure called a “consent agenda” at its meetings. He said that a “consent agenda” does not require each resolution to be read in its entirety; if an individual on the board would like to read a particular resolution, they can do so; otherwise he will ask the board member to move the resolutions and have another member second the motion.

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

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

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

That the board amend list of students removed from the rolls [five (5) students removed for the period December 1 through December 31, 2014 for a total of twenty-six (26) for the 2014-2015 school year] in accordance with the information recorded in the nonpublic portion of these minutes.

E-2. AMEND LIST OF ATYPICAL STUDENT PLACEMENT AND EXITS

That the board amend list of out of district atypical student placement and exits and home instructors for the 2014-2015 school year in accordance with the information recorded in the nonpublic portion of these minutes.

DISCUSSION

 None

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Zuena and Mr. Arminio

 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 board accept the Treasurer’s Report dated December 31, 2014.

F-2. ACCEPT SECRETARY’S REPORT

That the board accept the Secretary’s Report dated December 31, 2014.

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

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a), I certify that as of December 31, 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 18:22-8.1.

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 James J. Damato Board Secretary Date

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.2(h), we certify that as of December 31, 2014 after review of the secretary’s 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. 6A:23-2.2(d) 3 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 upon 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 ATTACHED LIST OF CONTRACTS AND/OR PURCHASE ORDERS

That the board approve the attached list of contracts and/or purchase orders pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5 and 8A:18A-10(a) and in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-6. APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES

That the board approve districtwide 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 and in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

F-7. APPROVE STUDENT FIELD TRIP DESTINATIONS AND PURPOSES

That the board approve 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-8. 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, LLC - $1,600 – 2nd payment for 8th grade trip – Kawameeh Middle School; (b) American Tours and Travel - $22,500 – marching band/chorus spring trip - Union High School; (c) American Tours and Travel - $7,500 – marching band/chorus spring trip – Union High School; (d) Yankee Candle Fundraising - $1,385.26 – student council fundraiser – Kawameeh Middle School; (e) Audio Incorporated - $1,578.64 – audio rental for “A Christmas Carol” – Union High School; (f) NJSIAA – not to exceed $3,000 – State Basketball playoff game – Union High School Athletic Department; (g) All American Tours and Travel - $26,250 – marching band/chorus spring trip (3rd payment)- Union High School; (h) All American Tours and Travel - $18,750 – marching band/chorus spring trip (4th payment) – Union High School

F-9. ACCEPT DONATIONS

That the board accept the following donations: (a) $2,000 from UP (Union Plaza Diner) Fund for use by Special Services Department

F-10. APPROVE AMENDMENT TO FY15 NCLB GRANT

That the board approve an amendment of the FY15 NCLB Grant be submitted due to the FY14 NCLB Carry-Over funds for the following: TITLE I-A - $100,981; TITLE IIA - $23,490; TITLE III - $30,188 for a TOTAL of $154,659.

F-11. AMEND 2014-2015 LIST OF STATE CONTRACT VENDORS

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

DISCUSSION

 None

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Zuena and Mr. Arminio

 NAY: None

 ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

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

O-1. AFFIRM SUPERINTENDENT’S RESOLUTION HIB CONCLUSIONS

That the board affirm the Superintendent’s resolution of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) conclusions for the period December 10, 2014 through January 9, 2015.

O-2. APPROVE USE OF HAMILTON SCHOOL – UNION POLICE DEPARTMENT

That the board approve use of Hamilton School by the Township of Union Police Department for the period January through September 2015 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

DISCUSSION

 None

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Zuena and Mr. Arminio

 NAY: None

 ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

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

P-1. APPROVE PERSONAL ACTIONS

That the board approve personal actions in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

P-2. AMEND SUBSTITUTE LISTS FOR 2014-2015

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

P-3. APPROVE LEAVES FOR STAFF

That the board approve various leaves of absence for the following staff: (a) Shannon Durak, physical education teacher at Burnet Middle School for the period February 17th through May 31st, 2015; (b) Narisa Swetvilas, school counselor at Union High School, intermittent unpaid family leave for the period January 12 through the end of the 2014-2015 school year

P-4. APPROVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTER – SAMANTHA PASSO CONSULTING

That the board approve Samantha Passo of Samantha Passo Consulting, 832 Park Place, Red Bank, NJ 07701 to present two (2) two-hour workshops “Strategies to Prepare Students for the Rigors of the PARCC” - January 16 and February 13, 2015 at Livingston Elementary School in accordance with the information appended to these minutes. The January session will focus on writing and the February session will focus on reading. The fee for both of these workshops is $1400. (Acct #7182/11-000-223-320-01-07)

P-5. APPROVE TRAINING TO DISTRICT STAFF – SUMMIT SPEECH SCHOOL

That the board approve Ellen Hansen from Summit Speech School, 705 Central Avenue, New Providence, NJ 07974 to provide training to district staff on the Baha sound processor at a rate not to exceed $150 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes. (Acct #7075/11-000-219-320-02-19)

P-6. APPROVE INTERPRETATION SERVICES – *inlingua*

That the board approve *inlingua*, 95 Summit Avenue, Summit, NJ 07901 to provide interpretation services on an “as needed” basis. Interpretation services will be billed according to the rates identified in the information appended to these minutes. in an amount not to exceed $1,000 for the 2014-2015 school year. (Acct#11-000-216-320-01-19)

P-7. APPROVE CERTIFIED TEACHERS FOR BEDSIDE INSTRUCTION – SILVERGATE PREP

That the board approve the following certified teachers employed by Silvergate Prep, 10 Finderne Avenue, Bridgewater, NJ 08807 to provide bedside instruction for district students on an “as needed” basis for the 2014-2015 school year in an amount not to exceed $5,000: (a) Robert Vignoli, (b) Brandy Jimdar Morrison, (c) Alexandra Arnese Devincenzo, (d) Alejandro Castro, (e) Denise Gonsiewski, (f) Catherine Mallon and (g) Kristina Grish-Asimogiou (Acct # 7693/11-150-100-320-01-19)

P-8. APPROVE AUDIOLOGY SERVICES – SUMMIT SPEECH SCHOOL FOR AUDIOLOGY CONSULTATIVE SERVICES

That approval be given to Summit Speech School for Audiology Consultative Services, 705 Central Avenue, New Providence, NJ 07076 to provide services in accordance with the information appended to these minutes. for the 2014-2015 school year in an amount not to exceed $1,000. (Acct #11-000-219-320-01-19)

P-9. APPROVE CERTIFIED TEACHER FOR BEDSIDE INSTRUCTION – CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL PROGRAM

That the board approve Colleen M. Cerebe, certified teacher, employed through Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia School Program (CHOP) to provide bedside instruction for district students on an “as needed” basis for the 2014-2015 school year in an amount not to exceed $3,100 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes. (Acct#7693/11-150-100-320-01-19)

P-10. APPROVE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEE NO. 10880

That the board approve termination of employee #10880, effective January 21, 2015.

P-11. ACCEPT RESIGNATION – DENNIS

That the board accept resignation from John Dennis, teacher assistant at Battle Hill School, effective January 20, 2015

P-12. APPROVE PAYMENT OF RETROACTIVE SALARY TO STAFF

That the board approve payment of retroactive salary to the following staff: (a) Employee #11426 – $1,404 for black seal license stipend from July 1, 2013 through December 31, 2014; (b) Employee #10888 - $1,404 for black seal license stipend from July 1, 2013 through December 31, 2014; (c) Employee #10913 - $1,170 for black seal license stipend from October 1, 2013 through December 31, 2014; (d) Employee #10484 - $5,115 for black seal license stipend from June 1, 2009 through December 31, 2014 and (e) Employee #11139 - $281 for CDL stipend from July 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014.

P-13. APPROVE APPOINTMENT OF VICE PRINCIPAL AT JEFFERSON SCHOOL – BOSSARD

That the board approve the appointment of Althea Bossard as Vice Principal at Jefferson School effective January 21, 2015 at an annual salary of $109,895.

DISCUSSION:

 Mr. Nufrio asked Mrs. Bossard to stand in the audience to be identified. He said that he met Mrs. Bossard last year and he had the privilege of seeing her in action when he attended the Jefferson School Open House. Mr. Nufrio said that both she and Mrs. Damato, the principal at Jefferson School, met people at the front door of the school to welcome them to the Open House. He said that he has heard excellent comments about Mrs. Bossard and Mrs. Damato and he wished to compliment the both of them and wish them success in the future.

 Mr. Arminio said that he has known Mrs. Bossard for awhile. He congratulated Mrs. Bossard on her appointment.

 Dr. Francis also congratulated Mrs. Bossard on her appointment as Vice Principal of Jefferson School.

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Zuena and Mr. Arminio

 NAY: None

 ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

LEGAL COMMITTEE

 Moved by Ms. Zuena, seconded by Mr. Nufrio that the following resolution be adopted:

L-1. ADOPT SETTLEMENT – D.C. v. TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION

That the board adopt settlement in the matter of D.C. v. Township of Union Board of Education; Superior Court of New Jersey, Law Division, Essex County, Docket No. ESX-L-8336-13 in accordance with the information recorded in the nonpublic portion of these minutes.

DISCUSSION:

 None

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Zuena and Mr. Arminio

 NAY: None

 ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

APPROVAL OF BILLS

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

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Zuena and Mr. Arminio

 NAY: None

 ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

 Mr. Arminio reiterated that this coming Thursday, January 22nd at 7 p.m. there would be a presentation at Union High School for parents to ask questions regarding the PARCC test. He hoped that everyone would be satisfied with the answers they receive.

 Mr. Arminio said that he wanted to congratulate Mr. Tatum on the honor which he was given at the Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration at Hannah Caldwell for his service to the community from the United Community Center.

 Mr. Arminio also wanted to remind the public that there would be a PARCC workshop at Kean University East Campus on Saturday, January 24th. He said that he was going to attend.

 Mr. Arminio said that the members of the shuttle hurdle squad of the boys’ track team were successful at the N.J.S.I.A.A. Group 4 championship. He said that they not only won the event in 30.54 seconds but their time is the number one time in the country so far this year. He said that members of the shuttle hurdle event are Justice Stewart, Anthony Acola, Elisha Accorade and Sam Accorade. Mr. Arminio congratulated these students.

 Mr. Arminio said that Washington Elementary School had a blood drive and they collected 30 pints of blood.

NEW BUSINESS

 Mr. Arminio said that at the worksession last week, he stated that there would be a statement regarding the PARCC presented at this meeting. He said that he has prepared a statement which gives the board’s position on PARCC. Mr. Arminio said that there have been a lot of items going around in the newspaper, on the radio and people talking about PARCC. He said that after he reads the statement, there will be printed copies of same available after the meeting. Mr. Arminio said that the statement would also be posted on the district website.

*Only a short time ago a park was a place where one might go to take a walk, to relax, or to relieve stress. Now the word PARCC creates anxiety and stress for students, parents, teachers, administrators, and yes, even board of education members.*

*The Township of Union Board of Education empathizes with parents, students, and teachers and acknowledges the mixed feelings they may have concerning the upcoming test. During the school year, the district has scheduled a number of PARCC information sessions to review PARCC content and provide guidance on PARCC requirements and practice testing information. The district, although prepared with student testing devices and district broadband requirements, continues to have concerns with the unforeseen issues that may occur such as site interruptions or connectivity issues beyond the district’s control. In addition, the district is justifiably concerned about the stress incurred by students and staff from a standardized test of this magnitude. In order to alleviate some of these concerns a PARCC information session concentrating on test procedures and logistics has been scheduled for January 22, 2015, 7:00 p.m. at Union High School library. Interested parents are welcome to ask questions concerning the district’s readiness for the test and general scheduling concerns. Answers to content based questions are available on the district website under the PARCC tab.*

 *The Township of Union Board of Education is obligated by law to follow the directives of the Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education which were spelled out in a memo sent on October 30th by Commissioner Hespe.*

 *In order to accomplish this, a number of initiatives were undertaken. Our school district has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars to ensure that we have enough bandwidth to cover the requirements of the testing and that each school has enough computers to facilitate the administering of the PARCC. In addition, district students have prepared for testing during computer classes and regularly scheduled computer lab time. As required by the State, our district curriculum at each grade level has been aligned to the common core standards. Also, general classroom instruction focusing on necessary skills in each content area has been on-going as required.*

 *The Board is aware of the time constraints needed for administering PARCC. Each school principal has created a schedule based on school size to help facilitate the most efficient use of time and resources with the least impact on instructional time.*

 *District teachers have prepared for the administration of the test through professional development and information sessions beginning in 2013. Recently, Dr. Noreen Lishak, Assistant Superintendent, attended a State run workshop on test administration; and on January 27th, she will attend another State run workshop along with a member of the IT department which will focus on the technology requirement of PARCC.*

 *Recently, we have received several requests for information regarding the procedure for parents to follow who are refusing to allow their child to participate in the state testing. It must be stated first that the State of New Jersey does not recognize “opting out”. Some states have this option, but New Jersey does not. It is not a legally permissible alternative which was also made clear in Commissioner Hespe’s memo of October 30th. However, if a parent refuses to allow his or her child to participate in the PARCC, a letter must be sent to the principal of the child’s school requesting that the child NOT participate in the PARCC. Children who are not participating in testing will not be excluded from attending school on testing days; however, during scheduled testing time these individuals will be placed in a supervised area and these individuals will be permitted to work on previously given assignments or to read a book brought by the student. No electronic devices will be allowed. The instructional program planned during the time of the administration of the PARCC is the PARCC assessment no alternative instructional program will be provided during PARCC administration.*

 *The district has adjusted the criteria for entrance into various programs i.e. honors classes, AP courses or Gifted and Talented programs. Standardized test results will be used for inclusion into district programs or as an exclusionary factor. Additional PARCC information can be found on the district website under the PARCC tab.*

 *The Board of Education is as concerned as parents, staff, administrators and most of all, our children. Maybe in the near future PARCC can once again return to its original meaning of a stress free place.*

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

 Mrs. Damato, the principal of Jefferson School, thanked the board for approving Mrs. Bossard at Vice Principal at Jefferson School. She said that she has had a great year so far at Jefferson School. Mrs. Damato said that she was very proud to be working with Mrs. Bossard as part of her team. She said that there were some successes that she wanted to share with the public since the beginning of the school year. Mrs. Damato said that Jefferson School had an Academic Achievement program; she said in September the goal was to reduce the number of students in the program by 20%. Mrs. Damato said that the data right now shows that the school will be able to exit 34% of the children in the AAP program. She said that they are not officially exiting them right now because she wants to make sure that they are ready to go on to the middle school.

 Mrs. Damato said that another thing that the board supported at Jefferson School was the Peaceful Playground. She said that the Peaceful Playground curriculum is teacher and student training for conflict resolution and it also provides training for the Cafeteria/Playground aides that are the individuals who are monitoring the students during recess. Mrs. Damato said that there are indoor and outdoor structured activities in this program. She said that at this time last year Jefferson had 320 incidents between students and this year there have only been eleven. Mrs. Damato said that this program has made a huge impact on the positive behavior program and it has increased the respect students have for each other and for school property.

 Mrs. Damato said that she is also proud that the school was able to figure out how to house its shows in the school auditorium to share the school with the community. She said that the shows were conducted on two days and she was very proud that it could be arranged to have the community be able to participate in the shows. Mrs. Damato said that after the second show there was the tragic accident where the school lost Ms. Chrystal Scretchen and the school will be dedicating other shows to her and in the spring, the students will be performing a song that the Ms. Melcher, the music teacher, has been developing. Mrs. Damato said that she will be inviting Ms. Scretchen’s family and members of the community to participate at that show.

 Ms. Bossard thanked the board for being appointed as Vice Principal at Jefferson School. She said that she was very excited to be working with Mrs. Damato. Ms. Bossard said that she had been in the district for 17 years and she was very happy to be working in Union with the board members, the students and the parents.

 Ms. Detjen asked who would be fielding the questions at the January 22nd PARCC workshop. Mr. Arminio said that the five minute “comments from the public” portion of the meeting is only for comments. He said that the district’s policy indicates this. Ms. Detjen said that her comments are that she thanked the board for accepting e-mail invitation for the board to take the PARCC on Saturday at Kean University.

 Ms. Lipstein wanted to speak personally and as the President of the Township of Union Education Foundation. She wanted to note the passing of Irwin Jaeger, who for 45 years worked in the district as a science teacher and science supervisor. Ms. Lipstein said that Mr. Jaeger had a tremendous impact on the curriculum at Union High School and on thousands of students that went through the Union School District. She said that Mr. Jaeger passed away last week; Mr. Jaeger retired in 2000. Ms. Lipstein said that Mr. Jaeger was a wonderful teacher. She said that Mr. Jaeger established an AP Biology class and in order to give students enough time to complete labs for that class, he came to work early and he started teaching at 7 a.m. Ms. Lipstein said that after Mr. Jaeger retired he did not stay home for long, he asked if he could become a part of the Education Foundation and she had the great privilege of working with him for 13 years. She said that Mr. Jaeger had a great love for the students and he was the epitome of a wonderful teacher. Ms. Lipstein said that there have been many tributes to Mr. Jaeger posted on FaceBook over the past week. She said that Mr. Jaeger dedicated his career in Union; the district was extremely fortunate to have Mr. Jaeger choose to teach all those years in this district and even more fortunate that he worked with the Education Foundation. Ms. Lipstein said that the Education Foundation will be donating grants to science teachers in his honor and memory. She said that Mr. Jaeger was exactly the kind of teacher that she hoped all teachers can be; she said that Mr. Jaeger touched thousands of students. Ms. Lipstein said that Mr. Jaeger has many bricks in his honor on the Union High School Walk of Fame and the spirit of what Mr. Jaeger tried to do and what he did do had to be mentioned tonight.

 Ms. Brown wanted to “piggyback” on Mrs. Damato’s comment about the Peaceful Playground program. She said that she had concerns about the students at the middle schools and how they don’t get to exercise because they do not get a “recess” and the students don’t get a chance to get physical exercise after lunch. Ms. Brown said she felt that if this program is being taught to the students in the fifth grade that students should be able to exercise the fact that they can control themselves on the middle school level.

 Ms. Brown asked if the board ever thought of revisiting the idea of transportation; that is transporting more students to and from school. She said she knew that there was a mileage requirement in order to get transportation from the district but she thought in this day and age, some students are small and she worried that students can be “intercepted” at any point between home and school and by the time that attendance is taken, if something were to go wrong, there is a lengthy period of time that has already gone by where something harmful can be done to a student. Ms. Brown thought that the district should reconsider the mileage requirement for students to take the bus to school.

 Mr. Frazier, the Vice President of the U.T.E.A. said that he appreciated the board’s statement on the PARCC test and being give a copy of same prior to the meeting.

 Mr. Frazier said that back in December, there was a Memorandum of Agreement signed between the U.T.E.A. and the district. He said that the members of the U.T.E.A. are ready to move on it. Mr. Frazier said that the association is still waiting for the district to finalize the agreement.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

 Moved by Dr. Francis, seconded by Mr. Nufrio that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters 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: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Zuena and Mr. Arminio

 NAY: None

 ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

BOARD RETURNED TO PUBLIC SESSION

 It was moved by Mr. Layden, seconded by Ms. Jackson that the following resolution be adopted:

APPROVE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEE #11999

That the board approve termination of employee #11999, effective January 21, 2015.

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Zuena and Mr. Arminio

 NAY: None

 ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

MOTION TO ADJOURN

 There being no further business before the board, it was moved by Mr. Nufrio seconded by Dr. Francis that the meeting be adjourned.

AYE: Dr. Francis, Mr. Galante, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Layden, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Nufrio, Mrs. Zuena and Mr. Arminio

 NAY: None

 ABSTAIN: None MOTION WAS CARRIED

 Respectfully submitted

 JAMES J. DAMATO

 BOARD SECRETARY