

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION  
WORKSESSION MEETING – December 11, 2018

NOTICE OF MEETING:

The worksession meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, December 11, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member. Action was taken.

Mr. Nufrio called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. David Arminio, Dr. Guy Francis, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. Vito Nufrio, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby, Mrs. Linda Richardson, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Sherry Higgins (arrived at 7:17 p.m.), Mr. Jeffrey Monge

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Mr. Gregory Tatum, Mr. Gerry Benaquista, Mrs. Moses, Mr. Gregory Brennan, Mrs. Kim Conti, Mrs. Ann Hart, Mr. Barry Loessel, Mrs. Sandra Paul, Mrs. Maureen Guilfoyle

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Lester Taylor, Esq.

Mr. Nufrio led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Dr. Francis read the District’s mission statement.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS IN BOLD

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes will be approved at next week’s meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS:

These are typical communications for leaves and resignations as more detailed in personnel.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Mr. Tatum stated we have a guest from the YMCA. Also #5 under the Superintendent’s Report is coming off. Mr. Brennan stated that is correct. I received from the Department of Education a memo regarding GASB 75 (appended to minutes) which has to do with accounting

and financial reporting for post-employment benefits, other than pension, and what the State is not ready to do is they need to populate our audits on the website with the 17-18 numbers for each District in the State so they are pushing back the date that the audit is due. Therefore, our auditor recommended that we do the presentation for the audit at the January regular business meeting and then we will accept the audit report and also the corrective action plan.

Mr. Arminio asked when is the State going to have those numbers available for all the districts in the State – sometime in 2020. Mr. Brennan stated hopefully the beginning of January, maybe end of December – that is what we are hoping for. We didn't get a firm date. Also two items on the agenda will be removed or that I recommend that they be removed – F-14 and F-17 – they have to do with the audit and the corrective action plan which we will push them to January. Mr. Nufrio stated assuming no one has any objections to that it is certainly merited.

Mr. Tatum stated next week we will hear from Battle Hill School, as well as Jefferson. We will also hear from our own Ann Hart and Sandra Paul with an update on the school district's app. And then of course the highlights of the District.

Michael Johnson from the YMCA will give an update on a program that is being presented by the YMCA regarding our youth, their health and shape.

Michael Johnson stated he is the Director of Associations for Initiatives at the Gateway YMCA. The Gateway is in Union, Rahway and Elizabeth. Thank you for taking the time so I can speak about a new program that we are offering at the Y come early 2019. The title of the program is called "Healthy Weight and your Child".

Mrs. Higgins arrived 7:17 p.m.

This is adapted from a current curriculum called MEND – that is mind, exercise, nutrition and do it; it is also peer reviewed too. In a nutshell, "Healthy Weight and your Child is a 15-week/25 session program. It is focusing on youths that have excess body weight. It is a family based program.

It focuses on healthy eating, regular physical activity and behavior change to empower both the child and the family to live healthier lives. It is a family based program because the family works as a team to help the child succeed in weight management. It is not a weight loss program it is a weight management program.

During each of the sessions, two staff people are involved. One is a physical activity leader and one is the leader for the overall group discussion. Each session is about 2 hours. The first hour all the families are together, the next 30 minutes the youth break away and play games so they are physically active and the parents stay for additional information and the final 30 minutes everyone gets together and they are physically active together. The goal is for everyone to have fun and learn.

These are some of the topics that are discussed – navigating nutrition tips, moving and grooving as a family, problem solving, triggers – what are those triggers that tap you on the

shoulder and say sit down and don't move today – munch out on chips today. Midway through we do a grocery store tour, we speak with families – where do you go to shop and we go to that store and go down the aisles, look at the labels, portion sizes, where is the healthy stuff in the store and try to help them – budget, healthier foods.

Towards the end session 23 is about bullying. The program again for those carrying excess body weight so it is a good chance that the youth have been bullied at one time or another. That topic can be emotional as well.

For the program some data – it has been successful. The MEND program has been successful. It is a national YMCA program, it was implemented in 2015-2016 so far the numbers across the country with all the YMCAs there are 99 associations that offer the program – of those 99 programs 1,631 youth have been recruited for the program – so like 1200 families. An average for the first 20 sessions, 14 out of 20 parents came. Weights went down a little bit but BMI went down 1.7%. It doesn't sound like much in 4 months but the youth lost 1.7 in BMI without gaining. It is a weight management program so as the child maintains the weight and grows upwards because BMI is body mass index so the higher your weight on a particular frame, the higher your BMI. The child is more prone to chronic diseases as they get older.

The average age is 10 years of age. It is 50-50 for male/female. The referral source are the following: 60% are physician referral, 17% Y staff, members, friends, family, word of mouth.

Requirements of the program – we want 5-8 families participating because there is a lot of group work and dynamics. When you get a really good group communicating, they bond, and they start working together.

The requirements are 7-13 years of age, carry excess body weight – with a BMI of 95%, each session a parent must attend and there must be physician clearance as well.

We are trying to get the word out and we will implement the program in 2019 and we received a little funding from the YMCA that helped for our training but now we have to get the ball rolling and be self-sufficient. We feel that there is need out there for the youth and families but we just don't know how to find them. We don't know how to get in touch with them.

Even the wording – we don't use the word “obesity” or “overweight” – there is stigma there. We are looking for people to help us spread the word – word of mouth and how can we just find those individuals that we can help.

Our first programs are going to be held in Union at the Wellness Center on Galloping Hill Road – twice a week. One challenge is they are two hours each session, meet twice a week. We are looking at a Tuesday and we know there is homework and take that into consideration – so maybe a Tuesday and Friday night. We are looking for referrals.

In a nutshell – 15 week program, 25 sessions per youth, 7-13 years of age and the family; each youth that participates has to be in the 95th percentile in excess body weight. There is a fee

to it and we will be able to provide financial assistance to the youth if the family can't afford it. We don't want to turn anyone away.

We are very proud of this program. We are looking to help people. Where are there? How can we find them? You can't just go up to somebody who may have excess body weight. What is the right approach? Who can we talk to? How can we reach them to help them?

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked when is it slated to start? Mr. Johnson stated we would love to start before February 2019.

Mrs. Higgins stated I'm a member and I have not seen anything. Are you not advertising that? Mr. Johnson stated at the school sites. There will be an upcoming brochure but that is not coming out until January. Word of mouth is the key. Before we have session one we have a session zero and that is when you have the interview process and when we say it is 25 sessions, 15 weeks, twice a week – there is a big commitment too. If anything we just want to get a conversation .

Mr. Nufrio stated I have a question for our attorney. Is it legal, once those flyers are prepared, can they be sent to the nurses offices. Mr. Taylor stated I don't see a problem with that. The YMCA is a non-profit organization, community based organization – that is not a problem. Mr. Nufrio stated then the nurse confidentially speaking with the parents can probably draw the attention to. Mr. Tatum stated I put down Mrs. Ionta as a contact person. She has access to all the nurses and maybe facilitate a discussion with them about students who may fit the profile that they are looking for so first contact through the school nurse. If there is some information for distribution that might be our first contact person that we can help you with. Mr. Nufrio stated he is referring to the Director of Phys Ed and Nursing – Linda Ionta – if you look on our website you will be able to see her contact information.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated you mentioned that there is a fee but you didn't mention what the fee was. Mr. Johnson stated there will be two fees. One for a member fee and a non-member fee. The fee is always tricky and we know this. The fee for a member is \$100; a non-member fee is \$125. It sounds like a lot, it is but when we did our training they said the value of the program – there is no price point across the country but there may be one in the future – they said the value of the program is about \$400 – two instructors, two staff, two hours, twice a week – four hours, two hours of prep time, 6 x 15 = 90 hours. To sustain it – we want to offer everything free but for sustainability we have to have something there to help.

Members of the public started to ask questions to the representative of YMCA. Mr. Taylor stated with all due respect to the members of the public – this is a presentation to the Board. You are welcome to confer with the gentlemen from YMCA afterwards or at the YMCA but we have to move on.

Mr. Nufrio stated you can extend your contact information so they can call you directly. It does sound like a bargain for that type.

Mr. Johnson stated the fee is tricky but we try to make it as fair as possible but there is financial assistance available for someone who is struggling. We don't have to take all the money upfront. They can make payments throughout because we don't want to turn them away.

#### EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:

Mrs. Regis-Darby gave an update of the Education Committee meeting. We met today and spoke about some of the courses for the 2019 school year. Tomorrow's Teacher which is a partnership with Kean University. The course is designed to get students to become interested in education earlier. It is an introduction to education, 3-credit course. It is going to be between 12-15 students. The student must have a GPA and this is Kean's requirement of 3.0 GPA. It is going to cost about \$200 per student and it is for one year so that is the first program.

The second program is History through Media and Pop Culture which is going to be by Mr. Nicholas Ferroni. The third one is Survey of African American History. The next one is the New Media which I think is something that we actually really need with looking at the media that we are working with right now at the high school and we just really need to update that one so we have to pay attention to that new media course that should be starting soon.

The last one I got a little motivated by was the Introduction to the Drone Theory and Design – when I saw that one I was a little skeptical but when I actually listened to the presentation and what comes out of that class is something that is actually needed for our students and I think it is an awesome program that we as a Board need to take a look at and invest our students as they continue on their journey. So those are the scheduled anticipated courses for the 2019 school year.

Pre-k – the full day pre-k opening is starting January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Today the lottery was done so most of the parents were told if they had a slot for the January start of the pre-k program. Congratulations to all those parents who were awarded a slot. We had to turn many parents away; we don't want to but we didn't have the space right now. Good job pre-k. Now we are going to look at 3-k for all.

Mrs. Regis-Darby presented the Education/Student Discipline Committee agenda.

#### DISCUSSION:

None

#### FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:

Mrs. Richardson presented the Fiscal and Planning Committee agenda. She also stated that F-14 and F-17 are being removed.

Moved by Mrs. Richardson, seconded by Mrs. Williams, that the following resolution be adopted:

**F-15. APPROVE NON-PUBLIC TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE AGREEMENTS AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOL SECURITY AID PROGRAM AGREEMENTS – UCESC**

Approve the Union County Educational Services Commission 2018-2019 Nonpublic School Technology Initiative Program Agreements and Nonpublic School Security Aid Program Agreements for the following participating schools located within the District: (a) Holy Spirit School and (b) St. Michael School, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

**AYE:** Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

**NAY:** None

**ABSTAIN:** Mr. Arminio

**MOTION CARRIED**

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated F-13 can you give some more information. Is that Title I? Mr. Brennan stated that is carryover money from last year. Mrs. Richardson asked it goes back into the program it was used for last year? Mr. Brennan stated yes. IDEA is special education. This is carryover from 18 and use it in 19. Mr. Nufrio stated does that fall under Mrs. Guilfoyle? Mr. Tatum stated it does not. Mrs. Conti stated the moneys were unexpended from last year's grant and we must allocate and the State does that for us – sets aside a certain amount of the grant for non-public schools and we have a process that we have to consult with them and what they need for their schools and sometimes it is not expended so we carry it over to the next year's grant.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated so this was underneath non-public schools part of the budget. What was the original number? Mrs. Conti stated I don't have it handy right now. Mr. Nufrio stated when you carry it over it means it will be that much less. Mr. Brennan stated I don't think so. It is tied to out-of-district placements correct? Mrs. Conti stated there is a funding formula that they use but if you don't expend it you get to carry it over for the next year. My understanding is that it does not lessen the grant. Mrs. Regis-Darby asked how long is the carryover for if we don't spend it – do we have to give it back. We don't ever want to give back money we want to make sure we spend all the money. Mrs. Conti stated we are following all the guidelines for non-public funds and we can carry it over for two years but it is first in first out. We are always mindful and consulting with the non-public schools to make sure that they are part of everything so they can expend the money that they are entitled to. Sometimes they don't but like I said we can carry it over for two years. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated we will spend it basically. Just making sure we are spending it and not giving it back.

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:**

Mrs. Richardson presented the Operations Committee agenda.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS**

Mrs. Williams presented the Personnel Committee agenda.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

Moved by Mrs. Williams, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the following resolution be adopted:

**P-1. PERSONNEL ACTIONS**

Personnel Actions be approved in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**DISCUSSION:**

Dr. Francis stated P-1 – the removal of stipends – I see it is a negative number, where does that money go? Mr. Benaquista stated there is a budget line that covers all contractual stipends so as the year goes on some people have lunch duty and some might not or a class change so they can't do the lunch duty any more so they are taking from them and somebody else is put on but all the contractual stipends is budgeted through the contract through the Business Office. It is depending on the position so a person might lose it if they got a certain class and it doesn't work out that period and some other person gets it – just like hall monitors. Mr. Nufrio asked that is the general fund? Mr. Benaquista stated yes. Mr. Brennan stated it shifts from one person to another.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**POLICY COMMITTEE:**

Mr. Nufrio stated with the Policy Committee I informed Mrs. Richardson earlier this evening that I will be sending the language – our recommendation that we discussed last month with Mr. Brennan, Mr. Tatum and Mr. Taylor and Mrs. Richardson you should probably get that no later than Thursday. I indicated that it is a proposal just as the other is a proposal and the committee than can opt to either accept the change of that proposal or submit both to the Board to review and vote on at the second meeting which would be in January. Next week will be the first reading of either one or both depending on how the committee resolves it. You can do that by phone, it is minimal so I'm sure it is something that can be done easily. What I would ask Mr. Taylor to do is send it to Mrs. Richardson via email so she can then get a reaction. Mrs. Richardson stated I will not be here next week so if you can send it to Mr. Monge as well. Mr. Taylor stated sure I can email it to whomever is on the committee and you don't need to be here to advance it. Mr. Nufrio stated he is not on the Policy Committee. Mrs. Richardson asked he is not on the Policy Committee? Mr. Brennan stated no. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated Mr. Arminio is. Mrs. Richardson stated I'm so sorry Mr. Arminio. Mr. Nufrio stated you have the first and he will send the second. If you want to assign Mr. Arminio you can. Mrs. Richardson stated yes that would be appropriate.

**RESIDENCY COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:**

Mrs. Williams presented the Residency Committee agenda and stated this will be discussed in executive session. Mr. Nufrio stated there will not be executive session tonight so any discussion will be next week.

**TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE:**

Mrs. Higgins stated she was unavailable to take the call. An update will be presented at next week's meeting.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

Approval of bills will be next week.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Mr. Tatum stated just to the Board you received a rice notice on an employee that has been determined that we do not have to proceed with that right now. I will update you on the contents of that moving forward but we will not go into executive session to discuss that individual.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Arminio stated just to report that the Chamber of Commerce is going to be presenting a new scholarship and hopefully it will be a multiple thousand dollars in the new scholarship for students looking to go into business – going to college for business or going into business like a technical aspect or trade or whatever it might be. Hopefully we are going to get up to \$5,000. Mr. Benaquista asked do they have the requirements? Mr. Arminio stated we have them now, yes so we will be getting it to the Board for approval as soon as we can.

Also I would like to congratulate three students from Union High School that participated in the American Legion Oratorical Contest. It is not an easy contest. It is 10 minutes with a memorized speech on an aspect of the Constitution that they are given and then they have to come back for round two and talk for 4-5 minutes with no notes on a topic that they have never seen on an aspect of the amendments of the Constitution and one of the students Ayokunnumi Oluwakuyide, who placed first and Arthanious Shafik, who placed second and Anthony Jackson who placed third. They won a couple of hundred dollars from the Town and now they go on to regional, then the State and then the national. The first and second place students were phenomenal – both are juniors in high school.

Mr. Tatum stated I thought in previous years we actually brought the winner to one of the Board meetings. Mr. Arminio stated we never done this particular contest but certainly we can reach out. Miss Mangarella was the one who ran the contest so if we want to get in touch with her and have at least the first place girl there. Mr. Arminio stated so contact you so we can contact this girl through Miss Mangarella. Mrs. Moses stated o.k. Mr. Benaquista stated I will stop by and see Miss Mangarella the next time I'm in the high school.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated now that we have our pre-k program on the way I was talking to some of your administration here and I think the next venture that this District should go into is a



dual language program – starting at our pre-k/kindergarten level. I think that is the way education is going now. I think that it is something that we should look forward to and looking to see how we can incorporate dual language into one of our schools here in Union. Also a truly completed gifted and talented program. Mrs. Minneci stated I agree.

Mrs. Richardson stated I think Bill Banister and his traffic study on Connecticut Farms School - it was a very positive presentation. We are only going to lose eight parking spots. Mr. Brennan stated as a staging area for the construction equipment. Mrs. Richardson stated while we were discussing it with the principal of Connecticut Farms. Mr. Brennan stated Ms. Warren was here. Mrs. Richardson stated the PTA president was here and Barry. We also came to the conclusion that not just before this construction started but presently there is problems with the drop off of students and the picking up of students. Barry made very good suggestions on how we can make an area where the cars are parked and how we can have a section where they come in and go out; restriping the parking lot; having a police officer – somebody out there monitoring crossing for the children's safety. Mr. Brennan stated elongated speedbumps. Mrs. Richardson stated which was really not part of the study but it was something that came up as we were talking about the study. Eight parking spots isn't really a great deal compared to what we thought it was going to be in the beginning but this other information came out that there is already a problem with parking which we need to have addressed and Mrs. Warren didn't want to start these changes now because winter was coming and she felt that it would be a good idea to start this in September. Mr. Loessel stated she didn't want to implement the plan until next year. Mr. Brennan stated because this construction has been pushed back to September 2020 – the road construction but there still should be some things done soon because we have safety issues.

Mr. Tatum stated we should look at the procedures we put in place for Hannah Caldwell School – monitoring of the crosswalk and so forth and we have two monitors out there and that has been very helpful. The truth is that was a long ongoing problem with that building – 5-7 years and finally we got something done over there. There are some elements of that which could also help short term. There were some issues of monitoring that area both administratively as far as the monitors but now we have them both.

Mrs. Richardson stated it was a positive gathering. Mr. Brennan stated you also received a copy of that report as well.

Mrs. Minneci stated I would like to extend our condolences to the family of Martin Zweilman who passed away. He was an employee of our schools for 40 years and he was principal at Central 6 for 17 years. We thank him for his dedication to the Union Public Schools. Mr. Arminio stated according to some one of the best football announcer we ever had in Union.

#### COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC:

Jill Hall stated I just wanted to make two comments. When we had our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade orientation that ran last week, I wanted to applaud and thank the teachers – in their classrooms, running experiments. We had a lot of positive feedback from the parents about the STEM program. The chemistry teachers were setting fire to things. It was controlled fire and there was a purpose to it. We also heard a lot of good things about the CAD lab. Mr. Aiolla was in there

with the 3D printers going and creating all these things for the parents to see. As parents were leaving they had the opportunity to comment on that and it was really refreshing because almost all of them said I had no idea that all of this was going on. Some of the kids that walked in with one set of ideas of what they were going to do for high school left with a lot of information and now with these new courses that are being offered I feel like we and that public relations thing, we have a very solid base to really recruit some of our best kids to stay here as opposed to losing them to the various schools.

This Friday is our St. Jude classic – there will be three basketball games played at Union High School. St. Jude is very near and dear to my heart. My son's stem cell transplant went through St. Jude. His stem cells were cleansed there before he had his transplant back here at Hackensack. I'm personally grateful for everything St. Jude has done. You know the story, you have seen the pictures all the time and the work that they are doing is remarkable. Coach Feilly and Ms. Ionta as well as the senior class officers and the senior advisors because the money that is raised is going all to St. Jude but it is helping to get some of the seniors out to get their community service hours and to do some things on the side to raise a little bit of money for Project Graduation. It will be really good games so come on down or if you just feel compelled to open up your checkbook – St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Susan Lipstein stated what is the dual language program? Mrs. Regis-Darby stated it is a program where kids who speak English but they can get an opportunity to learn another language during the course of the day – whether Spanish or whatever but it will be either rollercoaster or day to day – speak English in the morning and Spanish in the afternoon. I always say you start at the young level because it is easier to learn it and keep it going and that is my recommendation to the Board. Mrs. Lipstein stated if you are ever going to do Chinese that would be the time to do it.

The Ed Foundation sent a letter and it is on communication – receipt of grants that we made to the teachers. I'm wondering if that needs to be Board approved as a donation the same way that I see we have a list in F-12 of accepting donations so then it would be covered under insurance and that is why we always send a list. Mr. Brennan stated o.k. Mr. Taylor stated it depends. Typically there should be a policy in place about donations – either from a dollar amount or dollar value over a certain amount and it is usually \$500 – has to be approved by the Board by resolution. If it is less than that the administration can just accept it. Mrs. Lipstein stated several of them are over \$2,000. Mr. Taylor stated I will dust it off and represent it and that can be taken into account.

Rich D'Avanzo stated UTEA vice president – how many pre-k sections are there going to be in January. Mrs. Regis-Darby stated eight full time and five part-time. Mr. D'Avanzo stated in future years because it is a State program that is pretty much the number that will continue or expand. Mrs. Moses stated it is an expansion program – every class going full day. Mr. D'Avanzo asked how many schools? Mrs. Moses stated we had six elementary schools.

Mr. D'Avanzo stated second thing being that it is that time of year as we get into the winter months, especially the Town of Union had issues regarding snow removal and things like that. Is there something sound in place that there is communication that the Town knows where

the bus stops are and vice a versus and other things that maybe they have addressed regarding because even from the storm before Thanksgiving and I stayed in Union, that next morning even when the plows from the Town came through the amount of cars and growing up in Union, the amount of cars parked at each house and the streets is incredible you would almost think you were in New York City in some cases. I know the Town talked previously about getting cars off the road so they can plow but it seems to be a bigger issue from just based on the amount of people that have cars for homes but on the other side and I know from working with the rec department and the public works, they are severely understaffed and their entire maintenance and the amount of trucks that they have – that is a big concern as well. As we get into these months and how the school calendar is looking in the future about whether or not we rely on the Town to make sure the paths are cleared especially for the bus stops as well and if you think back a couple of years we were closed for three straight days. We were probably one of the only towns in New Jersey at that point and I remember here at the meeting that the Town didn't know where the bus stops were.

Mr. Nufrio stated that was reported in error because it was then later indicated to Mr. Tatum and I that the Town did in fact have the bus routes but perhaps they didn't have any of the changed routes. I guess what would be in order to address it now is to have the transportation department be sure that they forwarded any new routes as well as the old. Mr. Tatum stated there hasn't been a lot of changes but there have been a few this year. We will get that to them. Mr. Brennan stated I will speak with Gail.

Mr. D'Avanzo stated you are in a no win situation no matter what happens. It is as simple as that. What happened that Thursday was clear out of the blue. It was the whole State. One of the things when we talk about busing and the Town and we have to take into consideration the distance of a lot of staff members drive as well. The one time there was a regular opening and a couple of people did get into accidents. Delayed opening I know that parents are antsy and this and that but if we get to a point of some big storms we know we will be closed at least 2 days the way they clear snow. There are a lot of other factors too.

Chasity Santana stated I talked up the survey and of course when you talk up the survey you get all of the other end of it and one of the comments that I received was while they were taking the survey they didn't understand why they were mentioning anything about free and reduced lunch in the actual survey. That was a comment I got from one or more of the parents. One of them really didn't understand it. They asked do I have to be in free and reduced to take this survey? I said no just give your opinion. I was translating more or less of what was on it. That was something to think about in the future and I don't know why it was worded that way or if there is a reason as to why it was worded that way so I can get it out there to people. I would like to know to give them an answer. All I said is I would bring it up at the Board.

My second one – this past eventful month we had an occurrence at Washington playground where there was a serious safety issue where an actual vehicle drove onto the playground and I believe at this time and my kids personally are at Jefferson, Kawameeh and Washington and at a building level we should be doing something to let parents and everyone – right now the weather is going to get worse and it is not going to get better and maybe our admin should be sending out a robo call to let people know to please legally park especially when it is

dangerous outside. You shouldn't be riding onto a playground to pick up your child. We all want to get our children one way or another and kudos to Mr. Malanda. I sent a ferocious email to all my three principals and he took it upon himself to send out a robo call that specifically spoke to that. He said in general, please note from here on in if the weather gets worse drive slowly, be careful and always yield. The thing is this we are not here for the comfort or safety of the parents, we are not here for the comfort of the teachers and I want them safe don't get me wrong, we are here for the comfort and safety of the children and all these goings on we have to let them know that we are here for the safety of every child not just mine or yours - every single child. If that means you have to get there a little early or get there late to pick up your kids than that is what you have to do because safety comes first. I think that is something that needs to be thrown out again because it is vicious out there sometimes when it comes to pick up.

I remember when that whole entire episode went down, the car was weaving in between Kawameeh kids that is why I sent an email to Mr. Malanda. Our poor crossing guard almost got slaughtered she was like a martyr for the cause and I think we should really be sending out something saying on a District level, please you have to safely get your children.

Mr. Nufrio stated it is a good idea Mrs. Santana. Mrs. Santana asked is there another survey coming out because I remember hearing one from ARAMARK and one from District. The one up is that ARAMARK? I just want to give people the correct information. Mr. Brennan stated the one that is up is from ARAMARK. We have representatives from ARAMARK here tonight if you want to comment. Mr. Nufrio stated if Mrs. Santana needs to speak to them let her do that.

Suehay Monge stated I have a few questions – Mr. Brennan I wanted to know if you are still on track with putting out the RFP's for January. Mr. Brennan stated January/February I said. Mrs. Monge stated that would go out online? Mr. Brennan stated posted on our website and also advertise in the newspaper. Mrs. Monge stated I also want to bring up the survey, kindergarten was left off of that survey, it was not included, all other grades were. If I'm not mistaken kindergarten eats lunch as well.

I found the survey to not really speak to the concerns that we have regarding the food services. There were questions like "why does your child eat lunch? One of the options was "because their friends eat lunch" so that isn't really speaking to the quality of the food and whether or not it is being cooked properly and whether or not they have enough employees to be able to get the kids seated in time to have a good enough time for them to be able to eat. Among other issues that were brought up. The survey I felt that it did not speak to the concerns that were brought up and I don't actually know how they even relate to providing quality food for our kids. That being said I know the District is going to put out their own survey and I would just ask that when that survey is put together to please try to make the survey so the parents can candidly answer what the issues really are so that we can fix them. Whether with ARAMARK or with another company. I just think that it is really important because this is where our kids are eating every single day and since I brought this to the Board's attention a month or two back I don't feel that it really changed. My son came home last week starving it was two weeks in a row he came back 2 days he didn't eat because the meat was undercooked. I just want to know and I asked this at the last meeting what is being remedied? Has ARAMARK been met with?

Have they been talked to regarding the different issues? Some schools probably have one issue and where a school has another issue. I know that the high school had a really long line this was mentioned at a couple of PTA meetings back so that was another concern of mine regarding that.

Two more things unrelated to ARAMARK – Mr. Tatum has the District ever thought about, my kids would kill me if they heard me, regarding snow days especially now that they have computers, why don't they teach from home because then a day is not lost and we get out of school earlier and the teacher can teach from the comfort of their home and the kids can do their work and you don't have to worry about staying up til 3 in the morning wondering whether or not you should call a day out.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated we need technology in all the schools. Mr. Tatum stated there would be other issues contractually.

Mrs. Monge stated Mrs. Darby I wanted to know what you meant about the gifted program but don't answer just yet because I have one more thing.

Regarding policies I know there was a policy a couple of weeks back that was supposed to be put on or it was on and it was taken off or whatever – I still see it is not on the agenda and it has been 2-4 meetings. My question is because Mr. Nufrio mentioned that he redrafted the policy that was originally drafted by the Policy Committee – what is the actual procedure. What is the actual policy for creating policy? Is it the president's job to create the policy or the policy committee to create the policy and then reviewed by the Board.

Mr. Taylor stated no pun intended comments go to the chair and the chair will delegate who to respond to keep the decorum. Mr. Brennan is on first. Mr. Brennan stated can I defer to Deb Smith to respond. Ms. Smith stated I have the survey questions in front of me. The kindergarten was an oversight so I asked that be updated. There is an open ended question – the last question to give us feedback. People can write whatever they want. I don't see any references at all in the questions to free and reduced. Mrs. Santana stated at least seven times it was in there.

Mr. Taylor stated we are going to have ARAMARK respond and then we are going to move to the next questions and/or comments.

Ms. Smith stated with respect to the chicken, our chicken is fully cooked. I would like to talk to you after the meeting. Our policy is if a student is unhappy with his meal he should go back and ask for a manager. This is our intention to have the student get something that they want and if there are any questions and/or concerns we want to know.

Mr. Brennan stated as far as ARAMARK and their representatives being in the know and us going back, Mike Sacco has been to various Board meeting and gathering this information and you are hearing from the parents and also I have been in contact with Deb Smith. The word is obviously getting back to you about the concerns at the Board meetings.

Rosa stated I asked my daughter about the school lunches and her educated answer was they are gross. I asked her to elaborate and she said that the items are undercooked, there is not enough food for 8<sup>th</sup> period and last year that there was somebody that found a bug in their food. When I asked why they didn't go back and ask she said the lines are long. As far as a manager, do the kids know so we are asking the parents – I'm not there. I don't eat the school lunch. Are we engaging the kids for their feedback directly; I know it is a survey and they announced to do it during school but is there a committee of kids that can give the input because they are the ones that are there eating the lunch and I think their feedback would be greatly appreciated and probably looked at – that is my opinion. I'm not there eating lunch.

Mrs. Moses stated the District survey – the students will be involved. They will take it during cycle class and it will go out to all of our students at the high school, middle school on their device so they will have the opportunity to do that. We are getting that feedback. However, parents feedback are important because kids come home and they talk to you about the lunch. We need that too. For the little ones and they have to do a survey, a real important question will be on the survey “is your child in kindergarten” because they come home and they talk to mommy, daddy, grandma and whomever. Rosa stated I absolutely understand at the younger levels but I think the kids as we are teaching them leadership skills and we want to prepare them to be vocal in a constructive manner as opposed to what my daughter said that it is gross and stuff – elaborate. I think engaging students especially at the high school level and getting their feedback and also asking them what are solutions to make this better? Can we tell you who the manager is so that you know that when you have feedback, instead of waiting on this long line because you have a very limited lunch, this is the manager you go to. This is the protocol for providing feedback. Mrs. Moses stated we had Mr. Wojcik pulled a couple of students together and they started to talk about the lunch and that is how we generate our questions which will come out after you collect the data from ARAMARK and eight weeks later because we have to give ARAMARK time to look at the data. See what they need to do and then we will roll out ours. We are going to look at the data and do something about it.

Rosa stated again I'm a messenger here on behalf of the students, one of my girl scouts told me that there was an incident when there was a mouse in the cafeteria that was climbing on her leg. Apparently it did happen. Is there some kind of possible way, I understand rodents – winter, is there something that maybe on winter break we can have some pest control come in and look at the situation. Mr. Loessel stated we have pest control and they come out once a month. When we found out that there were mice in there we had the exterminator come out every day and set extra traps and stuff like that and we can't use poison in the schools. It makes it a lot harder to catch and there is a lot of food in the schools, cake sales, and that brings them in also. We are on it trust me. Rosa stated I appreciate that.

I know the PSAT just came out and I don't know if there has been enough time to benchmark where the kids should be but is there anything we are looking at to see how we can help the students with improving their SAT scores? Mr. Tatum stated normally when that is done we use the information as feedback. In prior years we had a prep class for it but I don't think we have it. Mrs. Moses stated yes we do – we have a prep class.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated just to go with Rosa's comment – the PSAT and the results, when you take a look at the results it actually guides our teachers on how we should readjust our teaching because when I looked at that data from the a couple of pieces of the assessment, you see what standards the kids are actually missing because those multiple choice part of it, you saw the item analysis where the kids got it wrong. When you look at your curriculum maps you saw that they are not being addressed until April but the kids are taking the SATs in November and December. How can we readjust those curriculum so they can master those standards because that is where I saw the big breakdown.

Rosa stated I spoke with Ms Laverne last week and she mentioned that there is going to be a Saturday class and there are so many students that can sign up. I just want to know at this point do we take that data to analyze so that we can give the kids a little more edge because we are looking at schools and it does tell you what the SAT requirements are on average. Let's try to get this to a team perspective from the teachers – making sure that the students are held accountable for getting the SAT scores up.

Mr. Tatum stated one thing that Mrs. Darby said and is most important is amending the curriculum and that is an age old problem not just with SATs but with teaching in general. A lot of times when we give a State assessment – we never had an opportunity to cover that material and different grade levels cover different material at different times. It is very important to addressing that issue.

Mr. Taylor stated I'm sorry to be the bad guy but we are in the answer phase now not in the back and forth phase.

Mr. Nufrio stated the spirit of what you were trying to target has been fully understood and hopefully we are going to do so something more than just what we have done in the past.

Mr. Taylor will you kindly respond to Mrs. Monge's questions regarding the policy and changes. Mr. Taylor stated the Board of Education operates on a committee based system. All be it there are instances that they operate as a committee of the whole. There are certain instances or issues that there could be four committees, policy being one of them. The preferred/traditional route would be for an issue by any Board member, member of the administration, etc. rather than walking an item on at a meeting for proposed committee or policy change to refer to the committee for review, study analysis, consultation with the administration, if necessary, and are required because most policies do require some administrative action to carry it out. Pursuant to the Board Member Code of Ethics, 18A, Board members prior to adopting policies ethically are actually required and encouraged to consult with those that will be affected by the policies. It is preferred ethically from a protocol – good business practices to review the issues with the committees and the administration prior to – not that you need administrative approval in all instances but to consult prior to walking it on.

In the present instance there was a policy that was proposed pursuant to the bylaw section of the policy manual. The bylaws of this Board empower the president and the Superintendent to establish the agenda. The item in question and also a step beyond the normal course because there are certain items that could be walked on at a regular meeting but pursuant to the policy

manual, this is from top of the head recollection, in order to amend a policy it actually has to be on the agenda so it has to be in the advertised agenda in order for that policy to be amended and quite frankly to give the public notice that it is going to occur.

A Board member just can't by surprise change up things by walking it on. That did not occur. There was discussion and dialogue about when and how that was going to happen. The president had a statement this evening that it was not on the agenda but will be next week. Once it is advertised it will be for the first reading. It requires two readings and then a two-thirds majority vote to amend the policy.

Mrs. Monge asked why has it taken so long to get on there? It has been 3-4 meetings now. Mr. Taylor stated I just explained all of that. That is the process and I will leave the whys and the hows to the Board members. They are the governing body. I just give you the process.

Mr. Arminio stated I would like to amend one thing that you said - only regular policies not two-thirds. Mr. Taylor stated just bylaws. Mr. Arminio stated the bylaws – two thirds – just to clear that up. Mr. Taylor stated thank you.

Mr. Nufrio stated just to respond – at last month's meeting, this was all stipulated unfortunately I was inundated with deceased members of the family and I attended four funerals in the last 3-1/2 weeks. I did say that Mr. Taylor would have the recommendation that we made at the review last month with regards to how we felt the committee should at least assess any changes – that would be done by the committee; be brought to the table for first reading next week and the second meeting will be in January which also will be fair to the new Board members. They will have an opportunity to also cast their votes.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mrs. Williams, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

AYE: Mr. Arminio, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Higgins, Mrs. Minneci, Mrs. Regis-Darby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Nufrio

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,**

**GREGORY E. BRENNAN  
BOARD SECRETARY**