

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – January 18, 2022

NOTICE OF MEETING:

TO ALL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Union High School Library, 2350 North Third Street, Union, New Jersey pursuant to notice sent to each member.

Mrs. Minneci called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Yocasta Brens-Watson, Dr. Guy Francis, Ms. Marissa McKenzie, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. John O’Shea, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Scott Taylor, Mr. Gerald Benaquista, Mrs. Yolanda Koon

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

Mrs. Minneci led the Board and audience members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Minneci stated to make things easier; going forward whoever reads the mission statement will also do the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Mrs. Brens-Watson read the district’s mission statement.

Mrs. Minneci stated I would like to have a moment of silence for Davion Simpson, a student at Franklin School who passed away recently

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS:

Ann Margaret Shannon asked what are the changes to E-3 – school calendar? Mrs. Koon stated that there will be no mid-term exams at high school so the half days from January 26-February 1st will become full days of school.

Approval of Minutes:

Moved by Mr. O’Shea, seconded by Mrs. Brens-Watson, that the following minutes be adopted:

1. November 9, 2021 – executive session
2. November 9, 2021 – worksession
3. November 16, 2021 – regular meeting
4. November 16, 2021 – executive session

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,
Mrs. Regis-Darby

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Ms. McKenzie, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

MOTION CARRIED

Communications:

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – BAJWA

Letter of resignation from Misbah Bajwa, English teacher-Union High School, effective December 7, 2021.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – DiGIORGIO

Letter of resignation from Ann Marie DiGiorgio, paraprofessional-Special Services, effective January 1, 2022.

LETTER OF RETIREMENT – HURD

Letter of resignation, for the purpose of retirement, from Cecelia Hurd, part-time bus aide-Transportation Department, effective December 31, 2021.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – STEWART

Letter of resignation from Justin Stewart, Jr., part-time greeter-Franklin Elementary School, effective December 23, 2021.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – AINE

Request for extension of paid medical leave from Duteche Aine, school social worker-Burnet Middle School, new return date February 7, 2022.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – HRDINA

Request for paid medical leave from Sharon Hrdina, Library-Media Clerk-Connecticut Farms Elementary School, December 15, 2021-February 8, 2022.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – MUSARRA

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Marcy Musarra, special education teacher-Union High School, December 21, 2021-June 30, 2022.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – SCARPATI

Request for unpaid intermittent FMLA/NJFLA child rearing leave from Christopher Scarpati, math teacher-Burnet Middle School, January 31, 2022-March 31, 2022.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – SHAW

Request for intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Joy Shaw, English teacher-Kawameeh Middle School, January 3, 2022-January 3, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – WOJCIK

Request for extension of paid medical leave from Karen Wojcik, 12-month secretary-Special Services/Hamilton, new return date February 7, 2022.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – DiGIOVANNI

Request for extension of paid medical leave from Kathryn DiGiovanni, Principal-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, tentative return February 28, 2022.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – DAMIANO

Request for extension of unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) followed by unpaid non-FMLA/NJFLA child rearing leave from Courtney Damiano, new return date September 1, 2022.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – MATTHEWS

Request for extension of paid medical leave from Thomas Matthews, Principal-Washington Elementary School, tentative return January 10, 2022.

REMOVAL OF REQUEST FOR LEAVE – GRAUL

Removal of request for paid medical leave and unpaid FMLA leave from Kathleen Graul, secretary-Burnet Middle School (approved at December 2021 meeting).

REQUEST FOR LEAVE EXTENSION – O’NEILL SHEAHEN

Request for extension of unpaid child rearing leave under FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Allison O’Neill Sheahen, social studies teacher-Burnet Middle School, return date of March 1, 2022.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – SHPUNDER

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Christina Shpunder, Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant-districtwide, February 7, 2022-May 30, 2022.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – WHITLEY

Request for paid medical leave from Suzanne Whitley, World History teacher-Union High School, November 15, 2021-January 24, 2022.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – GIANNETTA

Letter of resignation from Nancy Giannetta, CST-districtwide, effective February 11, 2022.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – RIVERA DeHERNANDEZ

Letter of resignation from Kenya Rivera DeHernandez, part-time bus driver-Transportation Department, effective January 25, 2022.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Taylor stated the latest COVID data – the latest information in the Township reported by the County. We have seen a drop in the number of cases. Seven-day average as of January 14, 2022 was 416 and for the seven-day average as of January 6, 2022 was 879. I hope that the health department will guide us to full days next week. I will meet with them on Thursday.

I was around the building with Sarah McCulloh. We are looking at how to make the building more handicap accessible for our physically challenged students and community. I went by the gym which is being redone. We are about a month to month and half away of reopening the gym.

January is my sixth month as superintendent in the district. I have spent the first half listening and learning and trying to assess our needs and establish myself as a member of the Union community. I'm somewhat confident to report out what we have done and still must do, short-term, to get us a good footing so we can tackle the long-term needs.

Today at the Administration Building, we had every office filled with an individual since October 2020. Tonight, with the Board's hopeful approval of Bill Eichert, math supervisor, our leadership team will be whole. I did notice a need for our leadership team to be provided professional development. Since our teachers have to cope with trauma of the pandemic and teacher shortages, I will be fostering some professional development in that area. Thanks to Gerry Benaquista's input, coaching for our relatively new building principals.

Second need was to create systems – protocols are necessary if you are to have an effective and efficient running school district. There were missing systems like hiring process. With the help of Vinnie Rettino, we are developing a structured process on how we recruit, hire and train new staff. How you evaluate staff and leadership. All these things are coming back in motion so we can move into long-term needs we have.

Finally, there is a wonderful culture in place in Union. There were culture related issues particularly in the way communication, transparency and visibility. We are working on communication – we have principals sending out regular emails, me sending out messages. Transparency between the Board and the school district administration – we are trying to pump out as much stuff that people did not know previously. At the next Board meeting, I'm going to spend about 20 minutes going over stay strong and iReady data and tell a story of how are district is performing or not performing.

We have to look forward from this point on. One of the main concerns is that for several years, we have been operating curricula instruction and assessment in a hodge-podge way – with no real strategy involved. Dr. Perez, our new Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum,

Instruction and Assessment will do a complete audit and review of the curriculum. We have an assessment plan in place.

Other fundamental needs that we have – is a social emotional wellness program – actual culture changing.

Finally, we need to do work on our long-range plan. Our district has some great things going on but we need a map to tie everything together. If we don't have a map this will just happen randomly without strategy, financial support and holding people accountable to do it. That is why we need a strategic plan.

I postponed two meetings but I hope to meet again. Union has been without a strategic plan for as long as people can remember. It is time for us to have goals, action steps to support the goals. We should be aligning finances to the goals we implement and we should be having professional development to support those goals.

We have a steering committee that has identified goals – I see the Board being responsible and being in agreement. The Board goals can align with the planning goals. Your evaluation of me aligns to the goals, my evaluations of my leadership team aligns to the goals, the budget support the goals. Goals include equity, performance, community partnerships and social emotional.

I hope to get back together February 22-23, 2022 and I will work with the Board president, vice president and education chair to help me solidify these nights. The UTEA was gracious enough to fund dinner. Hopefully it will be the night of the reopening of the high school gym. Right now I have 154 people registered. The hopeful vision is to have the strategic plan ready to go to implement for September 1 of the 2022.

Compliance Reporting – HIB – we have had three cases – two were not founded and one was founded. HIB for the first period – September to December 2021 and compared to 2019-2020 data. Total cases: 2021 – 31; 2019 – 29; reports in the news, there is an uptick in violence and HIB. See agenda item E-2.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked what conditions have to be in place for the students to return to full days of school? Dr. Taylor stated nothing has changed regarding our protocol. There are things we wish we can do better – we can mask more during lunch; but we don't have the staff to supervise. The last meeting with the health department did not focus on school-based data, but more on the Township data. We are hoping by Thursday that the next set of reports will be down.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked have you considered using the ESSER funds to test students? Dr. Taylor stated some districts are adopting that students be tested every 2-3 days and the district would have to provide to show a negative result. The problem with testing our students, the Board counsel has advised that it is tricky to legally require testing. I think the larger issue is funding, even if using ESSER, it is an exorbitant amount of money and manpower. Our nursing staff is stretched thin.

Ms. Santana stated we are relying on numbers to get back to school. Also one of the reasons we are having half days is to take away that lunch component. Have we thought about the breakfast portion about this. The same way the kids are in for lunch, they are coming in for breakfast. What does that look like? At Jefferson, all the students are bused in. Dr. Taylor stated spacing our kids out for breakfast; rotating schedules but the high school they are such complicated schedules – but to open up more lunches. When we are half days, we will have maintenance crews do double rounds of cleaning. I will put a message out on Thursday afternoon after my meeting.

Mrs. Minneci stated on the strategic plan – before those dates, will we have a meeting with the full Board so they will know what was discussed? Dr. Taylor stated I want to make sure this Board is involved in review of the goals and talk about the process and get the Board's feedback.

Tonight, our spotlight student is from Franklin Elementary School and thank you for coming out tonight. Dr. Baskerville will say a few words about our special guest.

Dr. Baskerville stated I'm happy to be here and happy on behalf of Franklin to introduce our student who is being spotlighted tonight – Dillon. What I love is when my teachers are able to give me feedback. Feedback is important to make decisions such as this. One of the points that was made was how kind he is. When Dr. Baskerville comes to the class, what do I always say is important – kindness. Kindness is my favorite thing. Teachers told me how empathic he was towards others in the classroom, I got excited about that. I like empathy and kindness is my favorite thing. The other thing is Dillon asks questions and that is important. You ask questions and you work hard towards your learning goals. As you move forward in the future, the will that you build to develop and push towards your learning goals will make a big difference in the career, the trajectory you go on. You matter, you are important, you are amazing and you rocked it out.

Parents are key and one of the things I say is if a parent is proud, your child will be proud. My parents were excited about this. I said you can do it virtually or in person and they said we are coming in. I want to thank my parents.

Dillon's mom stated I'm a big advocate for teachers. I think you are doing an excellent job. I would not personally be able to do it. I'm a social worker. Teachers, you are in a category by yourselves. Thank you.

Dr. Taylor asked for the student liaisons to speak. No student liaisons attended tonight's meeting.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Mrs. Brens-Watson for adoption:

E-1. *Agenda item approved at January 11, 2022 worksession (Affirm Superintendent Determination of HIB)*

E-1A *Agenda item reported at January 11, 2022 worksession (Report of HIB)*

E-1-1. AFFIRM SUPERINTENDENT'S DETERMINATION OF HIB

Affirm the Superintendent's determination of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the periods December 21, 2021 to January 11, 2022, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

E-1-1A. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period January 12, 2022 to January 18, 2022 (no incidences to report), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

E-2. APPROVE JANUARY REPORT – NJDOE – HIB

Approve the Township of Union Public Schools January report presented by Superintendent as required by the New Jersey Department of Education of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB). The report provides the public with the information collection from September 2021 through December 2021, as well as the number of incidents per school building, status of investigations, HIB investigators, nature of the HIB reports and the discipline resulting from the report findings. The HIB report also includes all training of school district personnel, building programs and assemblies during the time period.

E-3. APPROVE UPDATED SCHOOL CALENDAR – 2021-2022

Approve updated School Calendar for the 2021-2022 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mr. O'Shea, seconded by Mrs. Scott-Hayden for adoption:

F-1. TREASURER'S REPORT

That the Treasurer's Report dated December 31, 2021 be accepted.

F-2. SECRETARY'S REPORT

That the Secretary's Report dated December 31, 2021 be accepted.

F-3. CERTIFY TREASURER'S AND SECRETARY'S REPORT

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a), I certify that as of December 31, 2021 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.

/s/ Yolanda Koon

Yolanda Koon, Board Secretary

_____ Dated

Pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.2(h), we certify that as of December 31, 2021 after review of the secretary's monthly financial report (appropriations section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials that to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over-expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 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 on the information provided by the School Business Administrator and Board Secretary and is assumed by the Board to be correct.

F-4. APPROVE APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS

Approve appropriation transfers in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-5. APPROVE LIST OF CONTRACTS/PURCHASE ORDERS

Approve the attached list of contracts and/or purchase orders pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5 (bid exceptions to requirement for advertising) and 18A:18A-10(a) (purchase through State agency; procedure), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-6. APPROVE UCESC NONPUBLIC SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE PROGRAM SPENDING PLAN - UCESC

Approve the Union County Educational Services Commission (UCESC) Nonpublic School Technology Initiative Program spending plan for St. Michael School located within the district for the 2021-2022 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-7. PRE-APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE STUDENT FIELD TRIPS

Pre-approve districtwide student field trip destinations and purposes pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.8 in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-8. APPROVE LIST OF 2021-2022 STATE CONTRACT VENDORS

Approve the amended list of the 2021-2022 State Contract Vendors pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-10(a) (purchase through State agency; procedure) to facilitate schools' purchasing, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-9. APPROVE PARTICIPATION IN COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION – WARREN COUNTY SPECIAL SERVICES SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approve resolution for participation in coordinated transportation with Warren County Special Services School District for the 2022-2023 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-10. APPROVE 2021-2022 OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENT PLACEMENT LIST

Approval be given to amend the 2021-2022 out-of-district student placement list, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-11. APPROVE FUNDRAISERS

Approve the following fundraisers, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes:

Event Name	Date	Purpose
Program Advertisements and Patron Packages	January 24-March 28, 2022	UHSPAC – to raise funds for the fall production
Water Bottle Sales	January 4-June 30, 2022	UHS/Union Farmers Football – to raise funds for miscellaneous expenses within the football program
T-shirt/sweatshirt sale	February 1-28, 2022	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – to raise funds to support activities of the NSHS
Food Drive	March 202	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – to collect canned food for food drive
Latin Dance Night	March 2022	UHS/National Spanish Honor Society – to raise funds to support activities of the NSHS

F-12. APPROVE PURCHASING MANUAL

Approve the updated 2021-2022 Purchasing Manual, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-13. Agenda item moved to February 2022 Board meeting (CAFR Report) – due to State not releasing numbers.

F-14. Agenda item moved to February 2022 Board meeting (CAP) – due to State not releasing numbers.

F-15. For informational purposes only – vote not required. List of legal services for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stepped out of meeting prior to vote.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,
Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Mrs. Regis-Darby came back into meeting.

Operations Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mr. O'Shea for adoption:

O-1. APPROVE SECURITY DRILL/BUS EVACUATION REPORTS

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1 and P.L. 2009, Chapter 178, approve the following security drill and bus evacuation reports for the 2021-2022 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-2. APPROVE SUBMISSION OF ALTERNATE METHOD OF COMPLIANCE

Approve submission of the alternate method of compliance in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:26-6.3 and/or 6.4 for toilet room facilities for early intervention, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms (2021-2022 school year), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-3a. *Agenda item failed on vote at January 11, 2022 worksession (Rescind Resolution Adopting Code of Ethics) and O-3b not needed (Adopt Code of Ethics).*

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Santa stated O-1 – can we add that the building principals need to inform the parents that active shooter drills occurred so that the parents know what is going on. Can we add it to our policy? Dr. Taylor stated he directed principals to send a message out to the parents after the event.

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O'Shea,
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Ms. McKenzie, seconded by Mrs. Brens-Watson for adoption:

P-1A. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – NEW HIRES

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

P-1B PERSONNEL ACTIONS – EXTRA PAY

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

P-1C PERSONNEL ACTIONS – TRANSFERS

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

P-2. APPROVE PUBLIC AGENCY COMPLIANCE OFFICER – KOON

Approve Yolanda Koon as Public Agency Compliance Officer (PACO) for the year 2022, at no cost to the district.

P-3. ACCEPT LETTERS OF RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT

Accept letters of resignation/retirement from the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Eff. Date	Reason	Notes
Misbah Bajwa	English teacher	UHS	12/7/2021	Resignation	Effective date accepted
Ann Marie DiGiorgio	Paraprofessional-special services	Hannah Caldwell	1/1/2022	Resignation	Effective date accepted
Cecelia Hurd	P/T Bus Aide	Transportation	12/31/2021	Retirement	Previously approved 12/21/21; change from “resignation” to “retirement”
Justin Stewart Jr.	P/T greeter	Franklin	12/23/2021	Resignation	
Nancy Giannetta	CST	Districtwide	2/11/2022	Resignation	Adequate contractual notice given
Kenya Rivera DeHernandez	P/T bus driver	Transportation	1/25/2022	Resignation	

P-4. APPROVE LEAVES

Approve leaves for the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Leave Dates	Leave Type	Notes
Duteche Aine	School social worker	BMS	New return date 2/7/2022	Extension of paid medical leave	Org leave began 11/8/2021
Sharon Hrdina	Library/Media Clerk	Connecticut Farms	12/15/2021-2/8/2022 Return: 2/9/2022	Paid medical leave	

Marcy Musarra	Special education teacher	UHS	12/21/2021-6/30/2022	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks
Christopher Scarpati	Math teacher	BMS	1/31/2022-3/31/2022	Unpaid intermittent FMLA/NJFLA child rearing leave	FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks
Joy Shaw	English teacher	KMS	1/3/2022-1/3/2023	Intermittent FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks
Karen Wojcik	12-month secretary	Special Services/ Hamilton	New return date 2/7/2022	Extension of paid medical leave	Org. leave began 6/15/2021
Kathryn DiGiovanni	Principal	Hannah Caldwell	New return date 2/28/2022	Extension of paid medical leave	Org. leave began 9/27/2021
Courtney Damiano	Health and Phys Ed teacher	Washington	Tentative return date 1/10/2022	Extension of paid medical leave	FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks
Kathleen Graul	Secretary	BMS	Removal of request for 1/18/2022 through 4/13/2022	Removal of request for paid medical leave and unpaid FMLA	Request not needed at this time. Future dates TBD
Allison O'Neill Sheahen	Social studies teacher	BMS	New return date 3/1/2022	Extension of unpaid child rearing leave under FMLA/NFLA (concurrently)	Org. leave began 10/4/2021 FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks
Christina Shpunder	Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant	Districtwide	2/7/2022-5/30/2022 Return: 6/1/2022	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)	FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) entitlement not to exceed 12 weeks
Suzanne Whitley	World History Teacher	UHS	11/15/2021-1/24/2022	Paid medical leave	
Thomas Matthews	Principal	Washington	New return date: 1/10/2022	Extension of paid medical leave	Org. leave began 11/29/2021; returned 1/10/2022

P-5. APPROVE STUDENT TEACHERS AND INTERNSHIPS

Approve student teachers and internships for the 2021-2022 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Regis-Darby (P-1A-3, P-1A-4, P-1A-5)

MOTION CARRIED

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Ms. McKenzie for adoption:

R-1. APPROVE LIST OF STUDENTS REMOVED FROM ROLLS

Approval be given to amend the list of students removed from the rolls [three (3) students exited the month of December 2021 (2 from elementary, 1 from secondary) or a total of nineteen (19) students for the 2021-2022 school year] who are not domiciled in this school district, in accordance with the non-public information appended to the minutes.

R-2. APPROVE TO REMOVE STUDENT

Approval to remove student #288268 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.

R-3. APPROVE TO REMOVE STUDENT

Approval to remove student #318204 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.

R-4. APPROVE TO REMOVE STUDENT

Approval to remove student #360503 from the attendance rolls as the student has been determined to be ineligible to attend the Township of Union Public Schools as a resident student.

DISCUSSION:

Dr. Francis asked if the email received today was that part of residency? Mrs. Minneci stated the email received by Board members, was it part of tonight’s residency. Dr. Taylor stated it was not.

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Bills:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and moved by Mr. O’Shea, seconded by Mrs. Brens-Watson that the Board concur with the bills listed in the permanent bound register appended to these minutes and be ordered for payment.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Unfinished Business:

Dr. Francis stated I just wanted to make sure Tap into Union was at no cost to the district. Mrs. Minneci stated there is no cost.

Ms. Santana stated the high school gym floor, it is a big accomplishment. Something bad happened and now it is being fixed, we need to highlight the positives.

New Business:

Mrs. Minneci stated I’m sure Ms. Hall will speak about the webinar to support our students - it’s a multi-community support system in SEL.

Battle Hill is having an empanada fundraiser coming up. Jefferson is at the Caldwell House on Sunday.

I would like to highlight one of our former students, Darnell Stapleton – he was selected as one of the top 50 college offensive line coaches for 2021. He attended here, graduated Rutgers, he played for the Steelers and now he is a coach. We are proud of him and his accomplishments.

Davison Igbinosun was selected to play in the All-American Bowl but unfortunately due to COVID he couldn’t play. He was on national TV to commit to Ole Miss. It was very exciting.

Also congratulations to Coach Grasso who was selected as one of the coaches for the All-American Bowl.

With everything that is going on, we do have some great highlights.

Mrs. Brens-Watson stated we have a new supervisor of mathematics – congratulations. He is my oldest son’s favorite teacher and is sad to see him go.

Ms. Santana stated I am the Board liaison for Kawameeh PTA. It is not too late to get your calendar apple. They are looking to reschedule the Burnet Middle School/Kawameeh Middle School volleyball game for this spring. Be on the lookout for the pasta, karaoke night in the spring. They usually meet every Monday, except for this month. I invite everyone to become a paid PTA member. Your involvement is what you want; it doesn't have to be a parent, it can be a community member. I would like to give a shoutout to the executive board – Kathy McGee, president, Erin Orsino, first vice president, Nadyrah Amin-Fenner, second vice president, Aracely DiGirolamo, treasurer and Carla Soares, secretary.

I really am a black and gold Steeler. I do want to say that not only was Nell Stapleton top 50, he was top 20 for the Louisiana Ragin Cajun Football Team. It is exciting to see Union up there and doing great things.

Comments from the Public:

Jill Hall stated I hope to announce a special event of my focus group – a group of students at Union High School who are really looking to engage in special ways in special ways that they come up with a really awesome fundraiser. All I'll say is get your dancing shoes ready. It will be a fabulous event.

On February 8th we will have six of a series of events rolled out by the multi-community SAC group and it will be funded by Parent Contacts, which is a not-for-profit for kids to call in when they are under duress and their executive director will be presenting emotional support to your child. It is on Zoom so everyone is welcome to come.

Ann Margaret Shannon stated I'm personally very happy to be back at school and I hope we continue in this direction. I have some concern about serving breakfast in the morning. I thought we received an email that said they could pick up breakfast for the next day when they picked up their lunch. I received texted from UTEA members that they are upset (inaudible). I would ask that you reconsider serving breakfast in school and do what we have done in the past, when they pick up their lunch, they can pick up breakfast for the next day. Dr. Taylor stated I will discuss that with my leadership team when I meet with them next week.

Zachia Rosberry stated I received a letter today that made an erroneous accusation regarding residency. After reaching out to the superintendent, I received a cold and generic response. I caution Board members and parents to really pay attention to issues in this district. No equality but equity. Our kids deserve quality education and an equitable experience, no matter what school you attended in this district – like take home breakfast. Serving breakfast in school is good for kids. I want to be clear that all of our schools are not the same and we need to pay attention to all the kids. We are talking about social emotional and relationships – we really need to do that.

Susan Lipstein stated Tap into Union – our new news source. I'm assuming that means that all of those notices that we put into the Local Source and Star Ledger will also be on Tap into Union. I'm looking forward to that.

As the president of the Ed Foundation, staff members, mark down March 15th – that is the due date for the grant applications. We are excited to see the great ideas. You can go to the district website to get the application. If you have questions, you can send us an email and we will be happy to answer you. Looking forward to doing this. It will be our 20th year and we are proud of that.

Mr. Buggy asked that the Board move into executive session to discuss the Ionta litigation, other litigation and personnel matters.

Motion for Executive Session:

Moved b Mrs. Brens-Watson, seconded by Mr. O’Shea, that the Board go into Executive Session at 8:03 p.m. to discuss the following subject matters without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b: Ionta v Township of Union Board of Education, other litigation and personnel matters,

Please take notice that minutes will be taken of the discussion conducted during the executive session and the Board will disclose the minutes of the executive session when the disclosure will not result in unwarranted invasion of individual privacy or prejudice to the best interests of the Board of Education and provided that such disclosure does not violate federal, state or local statutes and does not fall within the attorney/client privilege.

Action may be taken when the Board reconvenes in public session.

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Dr. Francis, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,
Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Regis-Darby

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 8:20 p.m.

Moved by Mrs. Minneci, seconded by Mr. O’Shea, that the following resolution be adopted:

APPROVE SETTLEMENT RESOLUTION

Approve resolution to approve settlement for Employee #6910 v Board of Education of the Township of Union, et al., Docket No. UNN-L3741-18, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

None

AYE: Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,
Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Dr. Francis, Mrs. Regis-Darby

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mr. O'Shea, seconded by Ms. McKenzie, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

All present voting YES

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

