

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION  
WORKSESSION MINUTES – JANUARY 10, 2023  
6:30 p.m. – Executive Session  
7:00 p.m. - Worksession

NOTICE OF MEETING:

TO ALL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

The worksession meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union was held on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey pursuant to the notice sent to each member. Action was taken.

Ms. McKenzie called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Yocasta Brens-Watson, Ms. Dixiana Carbonell, Ms. Marissa McKenzie, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Mr. John O’Shea, Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby, Ms. Chastity Santana

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams (arrived at 7:11 p.m.)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

Mrs. Minneci led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Koon read the statement required under the “Open Public Meetings Act” that adequate notice was published in The Union County Local Source, The Star Ledger and/or Tap into Union, posted in the Administration Building and the Clerk’s Office of the Township; a copy of which is on file in the office of the Board Secretary.

Mrs. Minneci read the district’s mission statement.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Ms. Carbonell, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the Board go into Executive Session at 6:36 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: Student matters and any other matter falling under the attorney client privilege.

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, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 7:02 p.m.

Comments from Public on Resolutions:

None

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes will be approved at next week’s regular meeting.

Communications:

Communications are part of the personnel section of the agenda.

Superintendent’s Report:

The Superintendent’s Report consisting of the state of the schools, student spotlight and personnel spotlight will be presented at next week’s regular meeting.

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Minneci presented the Education/Student Discipline Committee agenda.

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated the students in our district are 70% black or brown; that the list of books in E-3 are good books but they are not representative of the student population.

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

E-1. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT OF HIB

Superintendent’s Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period December 21, 2022 to January 10, 2023, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

E-1A. AFFIRM SUPERINTENDENT’S DETERMINATION OF HIB

Affirm the Superintendent’s determination of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period December 14, 2022 to December 20, 2022, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

**AYE:** Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,  
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Ms. McKenzie

**NAY:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Fiscal and Planning Committee Resolutions:**

Mr. O’Shea presented the Fiscal and Planning Committee agenda.

Mrs. Williams arrived at meeting at 7:11 p.m.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked F-10 – what is the difference from last year’s out-of-district student amount to this year’s \$16 million? Mr. O’Shea stated between \$12-\$13 million monthly.

Mrs. Regis-Darby asked F-15 – Rachel’s Challenge – this was a community-based fundraiser when did it become paid by Title I? Ms. Hall stated it was PTA sponsored until it went to the elementary and it became Title I and then high school. Mrs. Regis-Darby asked if Kawameeh and Hannah Title I buildings? Ms. McKenzie stated it is not, it is Title IV funds.

**Grievance/Negotiations Committee:**

Ms. McKenzie presented the Grievance/Negotiations Committee agenda.

**DISCUSSION:**

None

**Operations Committee Resolutions:**

Mrs. Minneci presented the Operations Committee agenda.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mrs. Minneci stated there will be a request for one bus for the students participating in the Young Men of Distinction Conference on February 11<sup>th</sup> – the event is at Union College and followed by a dinner at Galloping Hills Golf Course; chaperones would be Ann Margaret Shannon and two counselors. We did talk about this in committee last night. Ms. McKenzie asked for the cost. Mrs. Koon stated she would find out and get back to the Board. Ms. McKenzie stated once we have the costs, we can put it on the agenda.

**Personnel Committee Resolutions:**

Ms. McKenzie presented the Personnel Committee agenda.

**DISCUSSION:**

Ms. Carbonell asked that the position of the teacher be added to P-3.

## Residency Committee Resolutions:

Mrs. Minneci presented the Residency Committee agenda.

## DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Minneci stated that there were to be two hearings today and only one family showed up. However both students were found not to live in Union and the residency committee would like the students put on the agenda next week for exit.

## Technology Committee:

Mrs. Brens-Watson presented the Technology Committee agenda.

## DISCUSSION:

None

## Approval of Bills:

Bills will be approved at next week's regular meeting.

## Unfinished Business:

None

## New Business:

Ms. McKenzie presented which Board member will be on the committees and stated the committees will now meet prior to the worksession meetings starting February:

- Education/Student Discipline – Ms. Carbonell (Chair), Mrs. Brens-Watson, Mrs. Minneci, Mrs. Scott-Hayden
- Fiscal and Planning – Mr. O'Shea (Chair), Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci
- Operations – Ms. Santana (Chair), Ms. McKenzie, Mr. O'Shea, Mrs. Williams
- Policy – Mrs. Williams (Chair), Mrs. Brens-Watson, Ms. Carbonell, Ms. Santana
- Personnel – Mrs. Scott-Hayden (Chair), Ms. Carbonell, Ms. McKenzie, Mrs. Minneci
- Grievance/Negotiations – Ms. McKenzie (Chair), Ms. Santana, Mr. O'Shea, Ms. Minneci (custodians/Maintenance only), Mrs. Williams (teaching staff, administration only)
- Legal/Residency – Mrs. Minneci (Chair), Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Mrs. Williams
- Technology – Mrs. Brens-Watson (Chair), Ms. Carbonell, Mr. O'Shea, Mrs. Regis-Darby

## School Assignments:

- Battle Hill – Mrs. Brens-Watson
- Connecticut Farms – Mr. O'Shea
- Franklin – Mrs. Regis-Darby
- Hannah Caldwell – Mrs. Minneci
- Livingston – Mrs. Williams
- Washington – Mrs. Scott-Hayden
- Jefferson – Ms. Carbonell
- Burnet – Ms. McKenzie

- Kawameeh – Ms. Santana
- Union High School – all Board members

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated the committee members should fluctuate; Ms. Brens-Watson has never been on Education – she can sit in that position to learn that committee and I will give her that committee. Ms. McKenzie stated the record will be changed to reflect that.

Ms. McKenzie stated the Board members will be designated as follows:

- NJQSAC – Ms. McKenzie, Ms. Santana
- School Safety Committee – Ms. Santana (Delegate), Ms. Scott-Hayden (Alternate)
- Liaison to Township Committee and Channel 34 – Mrs. Minneci (Delegate), Mrs. Williams (Alternate)
- Union County Education Services Committee – Ms. Santana
- NJSBA – Ms. Carbonell
- Union County School Boards – Ms. McKenzie (Delegate), Mrs. Scott-Hayden (Alternate)

She also stated that committee meetings are on Monday's, but it was shared that the committees would meet prior to the worksession in person. Asked if the Board would like to go back in that direction – where the main committees would meet at 4 or 5:00 (depending on schedule), prior to worksession – Personnel, Finance, Operations and Education and possibly Technology for 30-45 minutes. Board members agreed. Ms. McKenzie stated we will try it out starting February.

Also, that if you cannot attend a meeting to please text her or email Mrs. Cappiello.

Ms. Santana stated to Dr. Taylor that the Board should get invitations from the principals to attend functions at the schools. Dr. Taylor stated he would inform the principals and Bernadette will send the full schedule. Ms. McKenzie asked for calendar invites. Mrs. Minneci stated to reach out to the PTA presidents to put the Board on their list also.

#### Comments from the Public:

Ann Margaret Shannon stated thank you for the discussion on the bus for the students. I thought I would see the two UTEA grievances on this agenda. Ms. McKenzie stated Krisanne emailed her and she emailed her back stating when committee assignments were set, then we would have it scheduled for next week.

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 7:45 p.m.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

*Yolanda Koon*

YOLANDA KOON  
BOARD SECRETARY

