

TOWNSHIP OF UNION BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA – September 19, 2023

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, September 19, 2023 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.

Ms. McKenzie called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Yocasta Brens-Watson, Ms. Dixiana Carbonell, Ms. Marissa McKenzie, Mrs. Nancy Minneci, Ms. Chastity Santana, Mrs. Kimberly Scott-Hayden

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mr. John O’Shea (7:09 p.m.), Mrs. Nellis Regis-Darby (7:05 p.m.), Mrs. Mary Lynn Williams

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Dr. Gerald Benaquista, Dr. Gretel Perez, Mrs. Yolanda Koon

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Christopher Buggy, Esq.

Mrs. Koon led the Board and audience members 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.

Ms. McKenzie read the district’s mission statement.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Mrs. Scott-Hayden, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the Board go into Executive Session at 7:06 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: personnel, legal.

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, Mrs. Regis-Darby,
Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

The Board returned to public session at 8:13 p.m.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC ON RESOLUTIONS:

None

Approval of Minutes:

Moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, that the following minutes be adopted:

1. July 18, 2023 – regular meeting
2. July 18, 2023 – executive session
3. August 15, 2023 – regular meeting
4. August 15, 2023 – executive session

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Brens-Watson stated the August 15th minutes are incomplete.

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

NAY: Mrs. Brens-Watson (August 15, 2023)

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Regis-Darby (August 15, 2023)

MOTION CARRIED

Communications:

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – HERNANDEZ

Letter of resignation from Zaida Hernandez, Spanish teacher-Battle Hill and Hannah Caldwell Elementary Schools, effective October 7, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – ARMOUR

Letter of resignation from LaShanna Armour, pre-school teacher-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, effective October 30, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – ARNETTE

Letter of resignation from Aziza Arnette, math teacher-Burnet Middle School, effective November 1, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – AURICCHIO

Letter of resignation from Maria Auricchio, learning disabilities teacher consultant-Battle Hill and Connecticut Farms Elementary Schools, effective October 30, 2023

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – MALLET

Letter of resignation from Delores Mallet, part-time bus aide-Transportation Department, effective September 1, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – MAYES

Letter of resignation from Michael Mayes, school counselor-Union High School, effective October 16, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – PIANO

Letter of resignation from Kelly Piano, Vice Principal- Franklin Elementary School, effective August 28, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – SMALLS

Letter of resignation from Donovan Smalls II, Vice Principal – Union High School, effective August 31, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – VASSELL

Letter of resignation from Andre Vassell, custodian-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, effective September 5, 2023.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION – SIDERMAN

Letter of resignation from Jason Siderman, special education teacher-Union High School, effective August 28, 2023.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – LANG

Request for paid intermittent FMLA/NJFLA leave from Ann Michele Lang, pre-k teacher-Battle Hill Elementary School, September 1, 2023-June 30, 2024.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – CARROLL

Request for paid sick leave from Joan Carroll, ICR Teacher-Special Education-Jefferson School, October 9, 2023-January 9, 2024.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – BERNARDES

Request for paid FMLA/NJFLA leave from Joao Bernardes, English teacher-Burnet Middle School, September 5, 2023-December 31, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – SINGER

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Corinne Singer, science teacher-Kawameeh Middle School, October 23, 2023-March 1, 2024.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – KATZ

Request for paid sick leave from Julie Katz, special education teacher-Washington Elementary School, September 7, 2023-October 23, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – DIX

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Samantha Dix-third grade teacher-Franklin Elementary School, October 30, 2023-April 17, 2024.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – CLARKE

Request for paid sick leave from Teresa Clarke, ICR teacher-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, September 7, 2023-September 28, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – WHITLEY

Request for unpaid leave from Suzanne Whitley, social studies teacher-Union High School, September 5, 2023-December 22, 2023.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – CANNON

Request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Colleen Cannon, art teacher- Connecticut Farms Elementary School, October 2, 2023-March 16, 2024.

REQUEST FOR INTERMITTENT LEAVE – SAAVEDRA

Request for paid intermittent FMLA, followed by unpaid intermittent FMLA, from Angela Saavedra, third grade teacher-Hannah Caldwell Elementary School, September 5, 2023-June 22, 2024.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE UPDATED – GUNTHER

Updated request for paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently) from Kayla Gunter, third grade teacher-Franklin Elementary School, September 11, 2023-February 14, 2024.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE – KESSOCK

Request for paid FMLA/NJFLA leave from Tracy Kessock, Transportation Manager-Transportation Department, September 20, 2023-October 20, 2023.

REQUEST FROM TOWNSHIP OF UNION RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Letter from Township of Union Recreation Department requesting the use of the Jefferson School parking lot on Saturday, October 21, 2023 (rain date October 22, 2023) from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the Township's annual Trunk or Treat event.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Benaquista stated it is with much sadness we announce the passing of Dr. Guy F. Barbato on September 7, 2023, he was a former teacher of biology, principal of Connecticut Farms Elementary School and assistant superintendent of schools. Dr. Benaquista asked for a moment of silence.

Dr. Benaquista presented the 2022-23 Assessment Summary Results; a summary is below and the presentation is appended to the minutes:

Noticings and Trends:

- New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) proficiency percentages increased from 2021-2022 to 2022-2023 in (a) ELA (grades 4, 5, 7, 9); (b) math (grades 4, 5, 6, Algebra I, Geometry)
- NJSLA test takes: (a) ELA – 3,813; (b) math - 3,846
- New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA) proficiency percentages increased from 2021-2022 to 2022-2023 in both ELA and math
- Despite these increases, there is still a lot of room for growth (math and science)
- Multi-lingual learners (MLL) and special education students continue to have the lowest levels of proficiency
- Our growth year-over-year is comparable to that of the State overall

How can we continue to learn from our data?

- Administrators will be working with PLCs to help staff better access, analyze and use available district, school and classroom data
- Continuing to build on our utilization of LinkIt to help analyze and communicate data, especially through use of the “fingertip reports”
- Encouraging staff to use the summarized evidence statement reports to inform their SGOs
- Encouraging staff, departments, and buildings to work collaboratively on SGOs, planning and assessment
- Monitoring student learning using benchmarks in the fall, winter and spring to help us target instruction based on areas of need

Buildings	Subject Areas	Program
Elementary/Jefferson	ELA and Math	i-Ready Diagnostics
BMS/KMS	ELA and Math (6-8); Science (8 only)	IXL Diagnostics-ELA, Math LinkIt Benchmarks (Science)
UHS	ELA and Math	LinkIt Benchmarks

How do we increase achievement?

- Common PLC times have been established to support cross-building collaboration
- Focusing our PD on high effect instructional strategies and content-specific practices
- Focus on developing a better understanding of math fluency in K-8
- Focus on explicit phonics instruction (science of reading) in K-2
- Piloting ELA programs rooted in SOR in K-5 ELA with a goal of September 2024 adoption
- Provide teachers with training on developing assessments that require reasoning, analysis and application
- Adoption of K-2 science program that focuses on scientific and engineering practices
- Plan to rewrite K-8 science curriculum
- Provide science staff with specific PD focused on using the science and engineering practices to explain scientific phenomena
- Provide elementary staff with PD focused on better understanding of science and math content

- Using WIDA Fingertip Reports to help differentiate for MLL students based on their language readiness and “can-do’s”

How do we support our students who are struggling?

There are a number of ways that we are providing specific support for students, including but not limited to:

- Intervention periods are now built into K-4 school schedule
- Better utilize resources to differentiate instruction for students in classrooms and during interventions
- Participate in upcoming RAPID Learning Acceleration Professional Development Program
- Participate in New Jersey High Impact Tutoring Program
- Provide targeted instruction in phonics for special education students
- Working to reevaluate and make changes to I&RS process
- Awaiting finalized draft of special services audit and will look to see what actions need to be taken

Dr. Perez stated we are working on the gaps and concerns; a true collaboration of problem solving.

Ms. Carbonell stated in the State of New Jersey, students did not do well, especially in math. We have a lot to do – is it students, teachers or COVID results. We need to empower our parents and offer workshops. Literacy is a problem. Our parents want to help but they don’t know how.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated we need to learn from our data and what the data tells us so that we can make instructional decisions. Parents need training in science of reading; you can’t solve problems if you only focus on phonics.

Ms. Carbonell stated to the community, invite literacy in your homes – buy books for your students, play board games.

Mrs. Minneci thanked Dr. Benaquista for his presentation.

Dr. Benaquista stated we do have a lot of work to do; the entire State needs help. We are doing things different to help the students. We need consistency and we are not looking back. We have great educators and administrators. We cannot improve the district without our parents. If students are struggling, parents need to connect with the counselor for extra help.

Report of HIB for the period September 13, 2023-September 19, 2023 – no incidences to report.

Dr. Benaquista introduced the student liaisons – Neissa Filias and Gia Patel.

Neissa Filias and Gia Patel gave a presentation which is appended to the minutes and a summary is below:

Union High School takes great pride in its diverse range of after-school activities and extracurricular clubs. The following initiatives deserve recognition:

- The Asian Student Alliance Club
- The Roots: Black Excellence Club
- The Men and Women's Empowerment Clubs
- The Interact Club
- Key Club
- Union High School's Student Council

The UHS Dance Team – the girls have been working hard since July and have such amazing talent.

Sports 2022 – UHS athletic achievements:

- Four seniors on the boys 4x400 team winning the Union County Relays in spring track
- Three seniors on boys 4x400 team were Union County Champions in the Sprint Medley Relay
- Girls 4x400 team won Union County Championship
- Boys 4x400 team won the Section 2 Group 4 State Championships
- UHS Golf Team will participate in Union County Conference's first Girls Golf Open
- Girls Tennis: 13:6

Sports 2023 Season:

- Football – 3:1
- Girls Soccer – 1:1:1
- Boys Soccer – 4:0:1

Education/Student Discipline Committee Resolutions:

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

E-1. *Agenda item reported at September 12, 2023 worksession -Superintendent's Report of HIB (August 16-September 12, 2023).*

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

Superintendent's Report of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) for the period September 13, 2023 to September 19, 2023 (no incidents to report) (*no vote required; for reporting purposes only*).

E-2A. APPROVE HOME SCHOOLED STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Approve M.S., who is home schooled, to participate in the middle school field hockey program for the 2023-2024 school year.

E-2B. APPROVE HOME SCHOOLED STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Approve K.B. and J.B., who are home schooled, to participate in sports at Union High School during the 2023-2024 school year.

E-3. APPROVE CURRICULUM

Approve the following curriculum, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes: Grades K-12 – Physical Education/Health Curriculum.

DISCUSSION:

None

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Regis-Darby (E-3)

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. Minneci, for adoption:

F-1. TREASURER’S REPORT

That the Treasurer’s Report dated August 31, 2023 be accepted.

F-2. SECRETARY’S REPORT

That the Secretary’s Report dated August 31, 2023 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 August 31, 2023 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 January 31, 2023 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 DISTRICT WIDE TRAVEL AND RELATED EXPENSES

Approve district wide travel and related expenses pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7 and Board Policy File Code 6471 and in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-7. Agenda item approved at September 12, 2023 worksession – Student Field Trips.

F-8. APPROVE LIST OF 2023-2024 STATE CONTRACT VENDORS

Approve the amended list of the 2023-2024 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 FUNDRAISERS

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

Event Name	Date	Purpose
Online Blast Fundraiser	September 20, 2023- September 20, 2024	Union Boys Soccer – to raise funds to purchase additional equipment, team meals and team activities
BSN Online Clothing Store	September 20- December 30, 2023	UHS Wrestling – to raise funds for programs; end of season party and trophies; summer wrestling camp, etc.

F-10. APPROVE 2023-2024 OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENT PLACEMENT LIST

Approval be given to amend the 2023-2024 out-of-district student placement list, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-11. ACCEPT DONATIONS

Accept the following donations:

From	For Use By	\$/Item
Estate of Ellen Arlene Brautigan	Franklin Elementary School	\$2,000.00 (school supplies)
Estate of Ellen Arlene Brautigan	Union High School	\$2,000.00 (school supplies)
Pepsico Beverage Sales	Union High School	\$171.07
Amber Crawford	Burnet Middle School	Yamaha Baby Grand Piano (GC1 model) – market value \$18-25,000

F-12. ACCEPT STATE AID UNDER CHAPTERS 192 AND 193 FROM NJDOE

Accept State Aid from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) for services under (a) Chapter 192, in the amount of \$103,003.00 and (b) Chapter 193, in the amount of \$38,389.00, for the total amount of \$141,392.00, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-13. APPROVE AGREEMENT FOR NONPUBLIC CHAPTERS 192-193 SERVICES – UCESC

Approve Resolution and Agreement for Nonpublic – Public Law 1977 Chapters 192-193 Services with the Union County Education Services Commission (UCESC) for the 2023-2024 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-14. APPROVE AGREEMENT FOR NONPUBLIC EQUITABLE IDEA SERVICES – UCESC

Approve Resolution and Agreement for Nonpublic School Equitable IDEA Services with the Union County Education Services Commission (UCESC) for the 2023-2024 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-15. APPROVE AGREEMENT FOR NONPUBLIC CHAPTER 226 NURSING SERVICES – UCESC

Approve Resolution and Agreement for Chapter 226 Nonpublic School Nursing Services with the Union County Educational Services Commission (UCESC) for the 2023-2024 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-16. APPROVE AGREEMENT FOR NONPUBLIC SECURITY AID PROGRAM – UCESC

Approve Resolution and Agreement for the New Jersey Nonpublic Security Aid Program with the Union County Educational Services Commission (UCESC) for the 2023-2024 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-17. APPROVE AGREEMENT FOR NONPUBLIC SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS – UCESC

Approve Resolution and Agreement for the New Jersey Nonpublic School Textbooks with the Union County Educational Services commission for the 2021-2022 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-18. APPROVE AGREEMENT FOR NONPUBLIC TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE PROGRAM – UCESC

Approve Resolution and Agreement for New Jersey Nonpublic Technology Initiative Program with the Union County Educational Services for the 2023-2024 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-19. APPROVE AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – UCESC

Approve Agreement for Professional Services with the Union County Educational Services Commission for the 2023-2024 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-20. APPROVE APPLICATION – MARK SCHONWETTER HOLOCAUST EDUCATION FOUNDATION GRANT

Approve application for the Mark Schonwetter Holocaust Education Foundation Grant for the 2023-2024 school year.

F-21. APPROVE APPLICATION – NEW JERSEY LEARNING ACCELERATION PROGRAM

Approve application for the New Jersey Learning Acceleration Program: High Impact Tutoring Notice of Grant Opportunity for the 2023-2024 school year.

F-22A. APPROVE N2Y – INTERACTIVE WEBINAR

Approve N2Y, LLC to conduct an interactive webinar for special education teachers and paraprofessionals related to Science of Reading for the 2023-2024 school year at a cost of \$399.00 (paid through Title II Account #8434).

F-22B. APPROVE N2Y – INSPIRE LICENSES

Approve N2Y, LLC to provide Inspire Licenses (Science of Reading) for districts students for the 2023-2024 school year at a cost not to exceed \$3,750.00 to be paid through Account #11-000-216-600-01-19.

F-23. APPROVE AFFILIATION AGREEMENT – KEAN UNIVERSITY

Approve the district to enter into an affiliation agreement with Kean University for the School Based Mental Health Grant Award for the 2023-2024 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-24. APPROVE DR. TRACEY SEVERNS (TEACH 4 RESULTS) – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Approve Dr. Tracey Severns, Teach 4 Results, to coordinate educational best practice professional development for teachers and administration for the 2023-2024 school year at a cost of \$64,000.00 (paid through ARP ESSER #19948 and CIA Budget #18231), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-25. APPROVE INSPIRED INSTRUCTION – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Approve Inspired Instruction LLC to coordinate educational best practice professional development for teachers and administration for the 2023-2024 school year at a cost not to exceed \$24,000.00 (paid through ARP ESSER Account #19948), in connection with the information appended to the minutes.

F-26. APPROVE RECOGNITION OF INDIVIDUALS/ORGANIZATIONS

Approve recognition of the following organizations and individuals for their service and support to the district community for the special services picnic held during the 2022-2023 school year:

- Teddy Stampoulos, AJ Oh, diner staff – Union Diner (aka Union Plaza Diner – donation of service, food and supplies
- Julian Butraigo – donation of DJ services

- John Moretti, Suzann Koelble – Township of Union Recreation Department – setup and facilitation for use of Township facilities
- Township of Union Police Department – monitoring and support

The efforts of those listed are recognized for having supported an important and positive event for the district community and are thanked profusely for their time, efforts and actions that enabled the event to take place.

F-27. APPROVE JEWISH VOCATIONAL SERVICES – VOCATIONAL EVALUATIONS

Approve Jewish Vocational Services to provide vocational evaluations (2-3 days) at the rate of \$1,025.00 per evaluation (not to exceed \$8,000.00) for the 2023-2024 school year [Account #11-000-219-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-28. APPROVE LEARNING TREE MULTILINGUAL EVALUATION AND CONSULTING – EVALUATIONS

Approve Learning Tree Multilingual Evaluation and Consulting to conduct educational, speech/language, social history, and psychological evaluations for district students at the following costs: (1) in Spanish - \$800.00 per evaluation and (2) other languages - \$850.00 (not to exceed \$7,000.00) for the 2023-2024 school year [Account #11-000-219-320-01-19], in connection with the information appended to the minutes.

F-29. APPROVE LEARNWELL – BEDSIDE INSTRUCTION

Approve teachers employed through LearnWell to provide bedside instruction for district students on an “as needed” basis for the 2023-2024 school year in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00 [Account #7693-11-150-100-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-30. APPROVE SUMMIT SPEECH SCHOOL – AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

Approve Summit Speech School to provide audiology services at the following rates for the 2023-2024 school year (not to exceed \$2,500.00): (a) acoustic evaluation – K through 5th grade - \$550.00 and 6th through 12th grade - \$750.00; (b) staff in service - \$250.00/hr. (care and use of DM/FM systems); (c) staff in service - \$250.00/hr. (education regarding auditory disorders); (d) student classroom observation - \$250.00/hr.; (e) educational audiological evaluation - \$400.00 per evaluation; (f) equipment troubleshooting on site - \$250.00/hr.; (g) audiological consultation - \$250.00/hr., in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-31. APPROVE KID CLAN SERVICES – BEHAVIOR TECHNICIAN AND BCBA SERVICES

Approve Kid Clan Services, Inc., for behavior technician (BT) and BCBA services (not to exceed \$500,000.00) for the 2023-2024 school year [Account #11-000-216-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-32. APPROVE CHILDREN ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRIC OF SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY – PSYCHIATRIC EVALUATIONS

Approve Children Adolescent Psychiatric of Southern New Jersey to provide psychiatric evaluations with full report for district students at the rate of \$1,200.00 per evaluation (not to exceed \$7,200.00) for the 2023-2024 school year [Account #11-000-219-320-01-19], in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-33. *For informational purposes only – vote not required.* List of legal services for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

F-34. APPROVE RESOLUTION APPOINTING TAYLOR LAW GROUP – BOARD ATTORNEY

Whereas, the Township of Union Board of Education (“Board”) has the need for Board Attorney and related legal services; and

Whereas, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Public Schools Contract Law, N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1, et. seq. the Board previously appointed Florio, Perrucci, Steinhardt, Cappelli, Tipton and Taylor (“FPSCT&T”) via Resolution F-47 on April 25, 2023 effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 or until a successor law firm is appointed; and

Whereas, the Board’s designated and lead attorney of record from FPSCT&T, Lester E. Taylor, Esq. has established another law firm, i.e. Taylor Law Group, LLC,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby assigns/approves the assignment of the above contract from FPSCT&T to the Taylor Law Group, LLC and/or the appointment of the Taylor Law Group, LLC as Board Attorney and related legal services effective October 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 or until a successor law firm is appointed, whichever is later.

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated there is no back-up information for F-22A/B; F-24 - \$64,000. Dr. Perez stated this is for staff/administrators –13 half and full day PDs – on how to use data and research-based practices to optimize student achievement, enhance professional practice, and achieve school and district goals.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Brens-Watson (F-22A/B),
Mrs. Regis-Darby (F-22B/F-23)

MOTION CARRIED

Dr. Benaquista stated that Mrs. Conti would like to highlight people who have helped our students.

Mrs. Conti stated Union Diner hosted a Christmas breakfast and a picnic at Rapkin park for special service students. She introduced Teddy Stampoulos from the Union Diner and thanked him for all he has done. She thanked Julian Butraigo for the donation of DJ services, John Moretti, Suzann Koelble from the Township of Union Recreation Department for the setup and facilitation for use of the Township facilities and also the Township of Union Police Department for their monitoring and support during events. She also thanked the Transportation and Maintenance Departments, Laurie Saunders and Joe Seugling.

Grievance/Negotiations Committee:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolution was moved by Ms. McKenzie, seconded by Mrs. Regis-Darby, for adoption:

G-1. APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – UTTA

Approve resolution approving Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Union Township Transportation Association (UTTA) and the Township of Union Board of Education for the contract term of July 1, 2023 through August 31, 2027, 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, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Operations Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resolutions were moved by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mrs. Minneci, 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, if applicable, bus evacuation reports for the 2023-2024 school year, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-2. APPROVE SUBMISSION OF ANTICIPATED FACILITY REQUESTS

Approve submission of the Anticipated Facility Requests for (a) 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 at Connecticut Farms, Franklin, Hannah Caldwell, Livingston and Washington Elementary Schools and (b) Application for Change of Use for a classroom at Connecticut Farms Elementary School, for the 2023-2024 school year, to the New Jersey Department of Education (Union County office), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

O-3. APPROVE REQUEST FROM TOWNSHIP OF UNION RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Approve request from Township of Union Recreation Department requesting the use of the Jefferson School parking lot on Saturday, October 21, 2023 (rain date October 22, 2023) from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the Township’s annual Trunk or Treat event, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Santana stated school lunches – our students who have large balances, we will still feed them a real lunch not like other schools that have been in the news. Mrs. Minneci stated I encourage parents, if you have a balance, please fill out the free and reduced lunch form.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Personnel Committee Resolutions:

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

P-1A. *Approved at September 12, 2023 worksession – Personnel Actions-New Hires.*

P-1B *Approved at September 12, 2023 worksession – Personnel Actions-Extra Pay.*

P-1C *Approved at September 12, 2023 worksession – Personnel Actions-Transfers.*

P-1A-1. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – NEW HIRES

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

P-1B-1. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – EXTRA PAY

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

P-1C-1. PERSONNEL ACTIONS – TRANSFERS

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

P-2. *Agenda item approved at September 12, 2023 worksession – Substitute Lists.*

P-2A. APPROVE SUBSTITUTE LISTS

Approve Substitute Lists for the 2023-2024 school year.

Name	Position	Rate
Justin Bogan	Sub-teacher	\$120/per day

Olive Tejada	Sub-teacher	\$120/per day
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P-3. ACCEPT LETTERS OF RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT

Accept letters of resignation/retirement from the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Eff. Date	Reason
Zaida Hernandez	Spanish teacher	Battle Hill/Hannah Caldwell	10/7/2023	Resignation
LaShanna Armour	Preschool teacher	Hannah Caldwell	10/30/2023	Resignation
Aziza Arnette	Math teacher	BMS	11/1/2023	Resignation
Maria Auricchio	Learning disabilities teacher consultant	Battle Hill/Connecticut Farms	10/30/2023	Resignation
Delores Mallet	PT Bus Aide	Transp. Dept.	9/1/2023	Resignation
Michael Mayes	School counselor	UHS	10/16/2023	Resignation
Kelly Piano	Vice Principal	Franklin	8/28/2023	Resignation
Donovan Smalls II	Vice Principal	UHS	8/31/2023	Resignation
Andre Vassell	Custodian	Hannah Caldwell	9/5/2023	Resignation
Jason Siderman	Special Ed teacher	UHS	8/28/2023	Resignation

P-4. APPROVE LEAVES

Approve leaves for the following staff:

Name	Position	Location	Leave Dates	Leave Type
Ann Michele Lang	Pre-K teacher	Battle Hill	9/1/2023-6/30/2024	Paid intermittent FMLA/NJFLA
Joan Carroll	ICR teacher-special ed	Jefferson	10/9/2023-1/9/2024	Paid sick leave
Joao Bernardes	English teacher	BMS	9/5/2023-12/31/2023	Paid FMLA/NJFLA
Corinne Singer	Science teacher	KMS	10/23/2023-3/1/2024	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)
Julie Katz	Special Ed teacher	Washington	9/7/2023-10/23/2023	Paid sick leave
Samantha Dix	3 rd grade teacher	Franklin	10/30/2023-4/17/2024	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)
Teresa Clarke	ICR teacher	Hannah Caldwell	9/7/2023-9/28/2023	Paid sick leave
Suzanne Whitley	Social Studies teacher	UHS	9/5/2023-12/22/2023	Unpaid leave
Colleen Cannon	Art teacher	Connecticut Farms	10/2/2023-3/16/2024	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)

Angela Saavedra	3 rd grade teacher	Hannah Caldwell	9/5/2023-6/22/2024	Paid intermittent FMLA leave followed by unpaid intermittent FMLA leave
Kayla Gunter	3 rd grade teacher	Franklin	Updated 9/11/2023-2/14/2024	Paid child rearing leave followed by unpaid FMLA/NJFLA (concurrently)
Tracy Kessock	Transportation Manager	Transportation Dept.	9/20/2023-10/20/2023	Paid FMLA/NJFLA

P-5. *Agenda item approved at September 12, 2023 worksession – Student Teachers and Internships.*

P-6. **APPROVE CHANGE OF SALARY CLASS #2 – EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 2023**
Approve Change of Salary Class #2 (effective September 2023), in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-7. **APPROVE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICERS – 2023-2024**
Approve updated Affirmative Action Officers for the 2023-2024 school year, at no cost to the district, as follows: Lauren Walker, as Affirmative Action Officers; Isabella Scocozza, as Assistant Affirmative Action Officer and Ben Kloc, as Affirmative Action Officer for classroom practices.

P-8. **APPROVE UPDATED 2023-2024 HOURLY RATES LIST**
Approve updated 2023-2024 Hourly Rates List, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

P-9. **APPROVE AFFILIATION AGREEMENT – KEAN UNIVERSITY**
Approve the Speech Pathology Practicum/Externship Affiliation Agreement between Kean University School of Communication Disorders and Deafness and the Township of Union Public Schools, for a three (3) year period commencing August 1, 2023 and terminating on August 1, 2026, in connection with the information appended to the minutes.

P-10. **APPROVE RESOLUTION APPROVING ROTH 403(b) AND 457(b) ACCOUNTS**
Whereas, the governing Board of the Township of Union Board of Education (the “Organization”) has established 403(b) and 457(b) retirement programs that are funded through voluntary employee’s salary reduction contributions for the purpose of enhancing retirement income;

Whereas, the IRS allows this retirement program to be funded with after-tax dollars and therefore be considered a ROTH 403(b) or ROTH 457(b) retirement plan;

Whereas, the Secure Act 2.0 creates an income limit of \$145,000 for the deductibility/pre-tax contributions for anyone over age 50; and

Whereas, those earning in excess of the income limit must make the catch-up contribution to a ROTH account using after tax dollars;

Be It RESOLVED that the Organization hereby agrees to approve that the tax-shelter companies offer ROTH accounts to the employees of Township of Union Board of Education (at no cost to the district).

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Brens-Watson asked if the district does exit interviews because we need to get a handle on why they are leaving the district. Dr. Benaquista stated yes and we are creating a survey if they don't want to take part of the exit interview. He informed the Board that the district is trying to get a 15-step guide in place. Mrs. Brens-Watson stated if the culture in the workplace is welcoming, people will stay. We need to look at why they are leaving. We can't always compete with money. Dr. Benaquista stated little things sometimes make a difference.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Policy Committee:

The following item was approved at the worksession:

POL-1. *Agenda item approved at September 12, 2023 worksession – Regulation 2464-Gifted and Talented Students (M)*

Residency Committee Resolutions:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Minneci reported the below:

R-1. REPORT OF STUDENTS VOLUNTARILY TRANSFERRED TO DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE

For informational purposes only (no vote required): The following residency investigations were completed and the listed students transferred to the district of residence:

Student No.	School
#280573	Kawameeh Middle School – 8 th grade
#298127	Out-of-District Student
#246615	Union High School – 11 th grade
#371292	Pre-K 4
#378000	Pre-K 3

DISCUSSION:

None

Technology Committee:

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

T-1. APPROVE LIST OF RECYCLED EQUIPMENT

Approve list of recycled equipment, in accordance with the information appended to the minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated I want to encourage the district to consider donating technology to two schools in Africa. Mrs. Brens-Watson stated Mrs. Regis-Darby is invited to the next Technology Committee meeting and we will take into consideration what Mr. O’Shea had stated previously.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Bills:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, and moved by Mrs. Brens-Watson and seconded by Ms. Santana, 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, Ms. Carbonell, Mrs. Minneci, Mr. O’Shea,
Mrs. Regis-Darby, Ms. Santana, Mrs. Scott-Hayden, Ms. McKenzie

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Mrs. Minneci stated she was at Hannah Caldwell’s open house, and they had a presentation on HIB.

Ms. Santana announced the back-to-school dates for all schools. She stated that the district has a lot of work to do but we will take it to the next level.

Mrs. Carbonell stated a shout out to the district for receiving the seal for literacy.

Mrs. Scott-Hayden stated the district has some great staff; thank you for returning and educating our students. Welcome back to the students. She invites parents to work along with the district to make it better.

Ms. McKenzie stated that the Board is listening and trying to make a difference. We welcome your feedback. Thank you to my colleagues.

Comments from the Public:

Mr. Arminio stated that the Union Library had their summer reading program. K-5 – 369 participants, 7-12 – 133 participants and adults – 307 participants. The requirement was to read nine or more hours of the summer. The winners received an annual membership to the Science Center (K-5); streaming services (7-12) and a Kindle Fire (adult).

Friday night's football game at Cook Field is Union v Somerville. Sunday is the Mayor's 5K race and it is supporting two union students with cancer.

Historical Society – 250th anniversary of the United States – we will be meeting with Dr. Benaquista and the UTEA to make a plan.

September 27th – Ice Cream Day at Cold Stone – raising funds for the Union Library.

Cathy Jakositz stated she wanted to express her gratitude and congratulations to Dr. Benaquista. Thank you to Dr. Benaquista regarding COVID testing and getting us back to school. The school opening keynote speaker was great.

Laurie Montoa stated Principal Bossard is a leader; when will she become the permanent principal at UHS?

Luisa Biaz stated welcome back; Ms. Bossard needs to become the principal of the building. The high school is not perfect, we have work to do but we cannot lose her. Dr. Smalls resignation is shocking. Our district has racial issues. We need to see the results of the audit.

Michelle Zada stated her daughter was part of the pilot program for preschool 3 and now she is in kindergarten. Communication in schools needs to be better. Having comments from the public at 10 p.m. is too late. Receiving communication from the school on August 28th regarding placement is late and can the school list be given earlier so we can take advantage of the tax-free days. Also there are a lot of half days without childcare; there are no resources for parents.

Mrs. Brens-Watson stated we need Zoom meetings back with comment accessibility so parents will be more involved.

Sonia stated at the high school there was a metal detector trial and now it is over. Please find a grant so a metal detector can be installed. Security is a must. You strive for inclusivity and equity. What avenues are you looking into to get Zoom back so people can be heard; not everyone can be here at 10 p.m. It opens the door to the community. Ms. Bossard is excellent.

She cares and is supportive. Please take that into consideration; we don't want to lose anyone else.

Mrs. Regis-Darby stated all it needs is for the Board to make a motion.

Ms. Santana stated thank you to Ms. McKenzie for all that she does.

Ann Margaret Shannon stated welcome back and thank you Dr. Benaquista for the kind words on teachers. UTEA had their second townwide block party; August 23rd was a golf outing and the UTEA raised \$6,000 for a senior scholarship; Friday is Hispanic Heritage Celebration at Biertuempel Park and Sunday is the Mayor's 5K. We are looking forward to more events.

Ms. McKenzie stated all our Board members are working hard. We have encouraging energy and we will work together.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board in public session it was moved by Mrs. Regis-Darby, seconded by Ms. Santana, that the meeting be adjourned at 10:04 p.m.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Yolanda Koon

YOLANDA KOON
BOARD SECRETARY

