

UNION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION – DECEMBER 9, 2008

Meeting was held at James M. Caulfield Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey 07083

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL: Mr. Gary Abraham, Mr. Manuel Figueiredo, Mrs. Linda Gaglione, President; Mr. Steven Helmstetter, Mrs. Versie McNeil, Mr. Francis Perkins, Mr. Steve Ruhl, Mrs. Judy Salazar

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL: Mr. Anthony Manochio

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Dr. Theodore A. Jakubowski, Ms. Karen M. Dunn, Mr. Gregory Tatum, Mr. James J. Damato, Mr. Anthony Magliacano

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Gaglione at 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Salazar led the board members and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Damato read the statement required under the "Open Public Meetings Act", a copy of which is on file in the office of the Secretary.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Mr. Damato stated that the communications had been referred to the appropriate committees.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mrs. Gaglione asked the board members to review the minutes for approval at the regular meeting next week.

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

Mr. Figueiredo stated that the committee met and he presented the agenda. Dr. Jakubowski thanked Mrs. Conte and Ms. Dunn for their hard work on the backup for resolution E-3. He said that this document has been forwarded to the County Office. Dr. Jakubowski stated that the three supervisors in the special services department are doing a very good job.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

SuccessMaker presentation

Dr. Jakubowski introduced Mrs. Moutis, Director of Curriculum Pre-K through 5. He said that over the past couple of years the district has seen unbelievable strides in district programs especially at the elementary level with regard to testing. Dr. Jakubowski said that as he had shared with the board members, all of the elementary schools met 41 of the 41 indicators on the NJASK this past year. He said that Mrs. Moutis was going to speak about a program which has contributed to much of the improvement.

Mrs. Moutis thanked the board for allowing Ms. Everard, from Pearson Digital Learning, to make a presentation at tonight's meeting. She said that in September she had spoken to the Education Committee to explain that the SuccessMaker program was being implemented in all third through fifth grade classrooms in the district. Mrs. Moutis said that starting in January; second graders will begin using the program. She said that in the Title I buildings, the students will utilize the reading and math programs and in the non Title I buildings the students will utilize the reading program only. Mrs. Moutis said that next year the non Title I buildings, grades 2 through 5, will use both the reading and math programs. She said that it has taken her five years to implement the program districtwide successfully. Mrs. Moutis said that last year Pearson Digital Learning invited her to speak at a conference regarding the district's test scores and implementation of the program in the district. She said that when she spoke to the Education Committee in September, she also indicated that a new program would also be implemented in PreK through second grade which is called Waterford. Mrs. Moutis said that this is the first time that she has taken on a brand new piece of technology in the elementary schools. She said that Title I has asked the district to do something different in the Title I schools, that public money cannot help with in specific buildings. Mrs. Moutis said that currently the district's Title I plan is very similar to the district's plan because of the success that she has had with the program. She said that Ms. Everard has been trying to get her to bring Waterford into the district. Mrs. Moutis said that starting up the program was costly, but the Title I component of the NCLB grant was substantially increased which allowed her to cover the costs of this new program. She said that program has been up and running since November 4th and all Title I buildings have this program in their computer lab. Mrs. Moutis said that she purchased additional licenses so that 40 students can use the Waterford program at one time and 40 to 55 students in the Title I buildings can be on the SuccessMaker program at one time. She said that all students Kindergarten through grade 5 in all buildings can be on some piece of technology that is individually designed just for their learning path. Mrs. Moutis introduced Christina Everard from Pearson Digital Learning, who came into the district six years ago when Mrs. Moutis became the supervisor of Title I and she turns to Ms. Everard and the district's professional development consultant, who

visits the individual buildings and discusses the plan per building in each classroom. Mrs. Moutis said that she looks to both of them for guidance and to example of things that work in other districts.

Mrs. Everard said that she would be giving an overview of both the SuccessMaker and the Waterford programs. She said that she wanted the board to know that she uses the Union School District as an example of a school district that realizes that these are supplemental programs and it never is meant to take the place of classroom teacher instruction. Mrs. Everard said that it truly an example of how the district teachers are using technology to differentiate and guide instruction using data to see where students strengths and weaknesses are and moving students along on their own paths. She thanked the board for its support and commitment to this program. Mrs. Everard said that she has a great relationship with the district with regard to professional development. She said that the educational consultant from Pearson comes to the district on a regular basis. Mrs. Everard said that one of the main reasons that technology is used to supplement instruction is so that there can be individualized and differentiated instruction. She said that children to day are "wired" for technology. Mrs. Everard said that every keystroke that a student makes on these programs is recorded and this data can be used to enforce instruction. She said that Mrs. Moutis has been a great proponent of teachers taking ownership of the students' data by running reports. Mrs. Everard said that the SuccessMaker program is a supplemental software product which has strong curriculum content, imbedded on-going assessment and a powerful management system that really ties everything together. She said that SuccessMaker is really a combination of twenty different programs that span reading, writing, math, ESL and some science. Mrs. Everard said that SuccessMaker looks at the courses in two different ways there are foundation courses, which are skill base designed to help fill in the gaps and give students requisite instruction that need to be successful and there are also open-ended "exploreware" which applies the skills to the more open-ended and project types of activities. She said that in Union the program was started with the foundation courses first so that students can be working at grade level and that is what the foundation courses are for. Mrs. Everard said that it is better if the students to grade level before the explore ware courses are implemented. She said that there is a lot of content in SuccessMaker but how does it work? Mrs. Everard said that students are not tested pre and post with SuccessMaker, but when students are enrolled in the foundation courses, they go through what is called an initial placement. She said that the students are using the software as they normally would but they do not know that behind the scenes they are being assessed. Mrs. Everard said that the system is dynamically adjusting the content up and down and it is trying to figure out what the student knows and what they don't know. She said that this program allows students to be evaluated based upon sixteen strands. Mrs. Everard stated SuccessMaker does not move a student forward based upon a percentage correct but upon a pattern of correct response. She said that the beauty of the courseware is that it is presented in a "mixed presentation". Mrs.

Everard said that the instruction is also scaffolded so that if a student is having trouble, they may be given a tutorial; they may be dropped back to prerequisite instruction or they may be given sequential practice because the system has determined that the student is having trouble in division because they are not doing very well in Math and their math skills are reinforced before the student is advanced within the program. She said that it is really the management system that brings the program together and at any point in time a teacher can run reports to see where the students are at that time and across the different course there are over eighty different reports that are very easy to understand. Mrs. Everard showed the board an example of an individual student report which can identify areas where students are having difficulties. She said that if a student continues to have difficulties in certain areas, at some point the program will indicate that it has exhausted all of its resources and some other method will have to be used in order for the student to learn the specific concept. Mrs. Everard said that there is also a report that groups students who are having common difficulties. She said that as students go through their initial placement, the system has also determined a learning rate for each student and is able to forecast if a student is on the system for a specific amount of time, the student can be expected to get to a certain level and performance on the NJASK. Mrs. Everard said that SuccessMaker is not the only thing that will allow the students to perform well on the test, but it can be a strong indicator of performance on the test. She said that for the past three years her company has been doing a special consulting program called "high stakes management" with the district. Mrs. Everard said that this is a very concentrated look at the district's implementation of SuccessMaker and the company is able to "pull" data at key times throughout the year and "what if" reports are run to predict how students will perform on the test. Mrs. Moutis said that the average of the third and fourth graders that were "on target" – 97% in language and 95% in math – passed the test last year. She said that this program does work; even though it is a lot of work and a lot of data. Mrs. Everard said that at the end of the year an "on target" analysis and review after the test has been taken and the program is adjusted for the next year. Mrs. Gaglione asked when a teacher wants a specific report, can they go into the program and request a report or does the program automatically print reports. Mrs. Everard said that no reports are "automatically" printed. She said the teacher must request which report they want. Mrs. Everard said that all teachers that are presently using SuccessMaker have had in-service training on how to request reports from the program. Mrs. Gaglione asked how long it takes to get a report. Mrs. Everard said that the teacher just has to log into the system and request the specific report that they desire. Mrs. Moutis said that every classroom that is using the program has a motivational chart which allows the students to see what their progress has been and at what level they are. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the teachers were cooperative with running reports. Mrs. Moutis said they have no choice; when she requests a report they must send it to her. Dr. Jakubowski said that some of the classroom

teachers and the building administrators were not so sure about SuccessMaker but last year he had a meeting with the administrators and he made it perfectly clear what he expected at that time with regard to using the SuccessMaker program. He said that many of the classroom teachers have now become "obsessed" with getting their students on the program, because the results have been very good. Dr. Jakubowski said that the AAP teachers in particular know how to work with the "at risk" students to get them above the level they need to. Mr. Perkins asked where the data for this program is stored, who has access to the data, who owns the data and how is the data with respect to individually identifiable data, protected. He also wanted to know if parents had access to all of the data. Ms. Everard said that the data is stored on a server at each individual school so the district owns the data. She said that a password and a log in are required to get on the system. Mr. Perkins asked if a parent has the ability to have access to all of the data that pertains to their student. Ms. Everard said that parents do not have access from home but a teacher can print out a report. Mr. Perkins asked who else has access to the data. Mrs. Moutis said that she has suggested that teachers do not print reports for distribution to parents before sitting with a parent at a conference and going over every piece of data on the report. Dr. Jakubowski said that he has spoken to all of the principals with regard to these issues. He said that the recommendation has been that when a parent comes in for a conference, the teacher can go over any information on a student's report. Mr. Perkins asked if there was a requirement that a parent know that the student's data is being recorded and does a parent have to consent to that kind of recordation. He said that there is the issue of access to personally identifiable information in a data base. Mr. Perkins asked Mr. Damato what parents need to know as a legal matter about the recordation of data with respect to their students. Mr. Damato said that parents are entitled to whatever data or information that the district has on the computer and if a parent requests it, the parent is entitled to it because it is a "school record." Mr. Tatum said the question is to what extent is the data being used for evaluative purposes. Mr. Perkins said parents may not know that the data is available. He said he did not know what policies the district had in place and possibly the district would be required to adopt a policy with regard to this issue. Dr. Jakubowski said that the program is not designed to be used as an evaluation tool in terms of a "grade". He said that no student's score on SuccessMaker is used to calculate a grade in math or English. Dr. Jakubowski said that SuccessMaker is a "practice" program to allow students to implement specific skills. Mr. Perkins said that his question relates to the access of

accumulation of data and he wondered if Pearson's corporate counsel has talked about this issue. Ms. Everard said she did not know the answer to that but she would look into it. She said that the company is not able to access a school's data. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the data of a student is on the server for life. Mrs. Moutis said that in the beginning of September, all of the data from the previous year is "dumped" because each student starts "brand new" each year. Mr. Perkins asked if this constituted destroying school records. Mr. Damato said he thought this may be a problem. He said that if a hard copy of the data is printed and put in a student's cumulative file, the district would be covered.

Ms. Everard stated that if she were to distinguish between Waterford and SuccessMaker, she would say that Waterford helps teach a child to read and SuccessMaker helps the child read better. She said that Waterford is a PreK through third grade program and it is a corelike program which contains enough content within Waterford for a student to use it everyday on the computer for a 180 day school year. Ms. Everard said that the program does not assume that the student is coming to school with any pre-literacy exposure. She said that this is a wonderful program for PreK and Kindergarten; she said there has also been some great success with autistic students in other districts. Ms. Everard said that her own child has been utilizing the program since the age of 2 ½ years. She said that because Waterford is for young children it uses many mnemonic techniques such as songs and nursery rhymes. Ms. Everard said that Waterford contains strong visuals and graphics, it is very resource intensive and very media rich. She ran the program and an example of one of the songs used was viewed by the board members. Ms. Everard said that the program does gain the attention of the students; it provides learning guidance for them and gives the students feedback. She said that the program has "voice over" all the way through the program so that if a student cannot read, the program will repeat many times and go over the vocabulary for them. Ms. Everard said that Waterford has different levels; Level 1 is "emerging reader" which does not assume that a student even knows the alphabet or the difference between a letter and a number. She said that "beginning reader" is where students learn sight words and students are recording and listening. Ms. Everard said that the "fluent reader" program which allows students to read for fluency, comprehensive, speed and expression. She said that PreK and Kindergarten are usually level 1; first grade is level 2 and second grade is level 3, however, there are children in a first grade class that can be at level 3. Mrs. Moutis said that she has gotten very positive feedback from the classroom teachers who are now using Waterford. Ms. Everard said that the instruction on Waterford is all in English but the tutorial to start the child off is also provided in Spanish and Mandarin; this is especially useful for an ESL student who is using the program. She said that there are soft covered books that go along with the program and

are available in the classrooms. Ms. Everard said that the reports which Waterford generates allows the classroom teacher to see at a glance how the entire class is doing and what progress each student is doing in each of the strands. She said individual student reports can also be generated to see how that student is doing versus the class average; how that student is doing in each of the strands and in what areas a student may be having difficulties. Mrs. Moutis said that in the Title I schools, every kindergarten student is on Waterford. She hoped that within three years every kindergarten through grade two students will be using the program. Mr. Helmstetter asked if there were computers in each classroom or did the students have to go to the computer lab to access the program. Mrs. Moutis said that in each Title I building there are 25 computers in the computer lab imaged for Waterford and in each building there are additional computers in the classrooms for access to the program. She hoped that every classroom will have two computers by the beginning of January. Mr. Perkins asked if aggregated data can be used to differentiate between the performance of one classroom as against another or one school as against another. Ms. Everard said it could be done. Dr. Jakubowski stated that there are two computers in each third and fourth grade classroom so that students can access SuccessMaker. He said that the Title I grant indicates that students who are perceived not to have the same opportunities are getting "more". Dr. Jakubowski said that he and Mrs. Moutis had an appointment with the County Superintendent of Schools so that she can review the district's application for Title I for the past year. He said that even though he wants all students to benefit from these programs, somewhere there has to be a distinction between Title I and non-Title I. Mrs. Moutis said that she met with Special Services last week and they are considering using these programs in the non-Title I buildings just for the special education population. She thanked the board for allowing her to share these two programs because if Waterford has at least half the magnitude that SuccessMaker has had, the district will see a phenomenal difference by second grade. Mrs. Gaglione asked if additional licenses are obtained in the district, how will that affect the Title I funding. Mrs. Moutis said it would not impact Title I because Waterford is not offered in the non-Title I buildings at this time. Mr. Helmstetter asked if this was enough of a difference down the road to differentiate between Title I and non-Title I. Dr. Jakubowski said that somehow, the programs will continue to be "tweaked" so that all students have access but still there is enough difference that the district does not lose its federal funding. Mr. Abraham said that Ms. Everard had mentioned that the Waterford program had been used with autistic students. He wanted to know if the district planned to expand to the autistic classes that are presently in the district. Mrs. Moutis said that in the new preschool expansion plan, a certain amount of money will be allotted for technology and she would like to use the money to implement this program in the preschool classes. Mr.

Perkins asked how the district responds to the non-Title I parent who says that they would like their child to have access to Waterford. Dr. Jakubowski said that he has not had a parent ask about Title I programs. He said that he would be as up front and as honest as he could possibly be to parents. Dr. Jakubowski was not sure why Franklin, Connecticut Farms and Hannah Caldwell were designated at Title I schools but he suspected that it was due to the fact that they had a large number of students on the free and reduced lunch program. Mrs. Moutis said that the money received for Title I is driven by the district's poverty but the basics skills component for the Title I program is not driven by poverty. She said that the three buildings that come above the cut-off for free and reduced lunch are Franklin, Hannah Caldwell and Connecticut Farms each year. Dr. Jakubowski said that he was not sure that as numbers have changed districtwide if these schools will remain at Title I schools. Ms. Dunn said that there has been a significant increase in the "at risk" population districtwide over the past few years. Mrs. McNeil asked if there is a program similar to SuccessMaker that is geared toward grades 6 to 11. Ms. Everard said that SuccessMaker originally was a program which covered Kindergarten to grade 12. She said that when the enterprise version came out it was changed from Kindergarten to grade 8. Ms. Everard said that there is a high school program which is called "Nova Now" that is an on-line, contact program. She said that it is used for credit recovery and dropout prevention but other types of curricula can be incorporated into the program. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district does have Study Island and Ms. Lishak is trying to assess whether or not that program is providing the service that the district really wants. Mrs. Moutis said that Study Island is a web-based program and it can be accessed from a home computer. She said that she tried to do that same thing with SuccessMaker for Title I parents but it was too complicated and needed too much technology to be accessible on the web. Mrs. Moutis thanked the board for allowing her and Ms. Everard to make the presentation this evening.

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Mr. Helmstetter said that the Fiscal and Planning Committee met earlier in the evening and he presented the agenda. He asked Ms. Dunn to explain resolution F-12 which deals with funds for capital projects. Ms. Dunn said that she attached a copy of NJ Code as backup for resolution F-12. She said that once the projects are included in the district's Long Range Facilities Plan, the district is able to withdraw funds, at any time by board resolution, to cover pre-development costs. Ms. Dunn said that she was waiting for the authorization from the State to verify that the two projects indicated have been put into the Plan and she has been notified that these projects have been added into the Plan. She said that the district is limited to 10% transfers into budgetary lines and today she completed a form to be sent to Dr. Centuolo to request approval

of the transfer of the funds into the Capital Outlay line because the district's capital transfers are now over the 10%. Ms. Dunn said that she spoke to Mr. D'Angelo the County Business Administrator and faxed him the information. She said that he has indicated by Tuesday the district will have Dr. Centuolo's authorization to make this transfer. Mr. Abraham stated with regard to student field trips which is covered by resolution F-10, he asked if the board had approved a French field trip to France by students from Union High School. He said that there has been a rumor circulating that a particular French teacher at Union High School has already had four students sign up for the trip and that the trip has been approved by the board. Mr. Abraham said he thought that the board was "dead set" against approving trips out of the country. Ms. Dunn said that there was nothing on the field trip list for a trip to France. Dr. Jakubowski said that he would try to find out about this trip. He said that in the past teachers have taken students on trip on their own. Ms. Dunn said that if it was the case that a teacher was sponsoring a trip privately, that any payments made by students could not go through the Student Activity Account. Mrs. McNeil said that at a prior meeting, fees to Potter Architects were discussed and it was indicated that their fees for the Administration Building project might be adjusted. She wanted to know what had been done with this. Mr. Helmstetter said that this issue was discussed at the Operations Committee meeting and would be reported on by Mr. Ruhl. Mr. Figueiredo asked if Union High School had submitted the information regarding the spring trip by the marching band and music students. Dr. Jakubowski said that he did receive a letter from Ms. Muller regarding the trip and he advised her that the trip had to first be approved by the department supervisor and the building principal before it could be presented to the board for approval. He said that he did speak to Mr. Gibbons today and he was going to present this information under new business tonight. Ms. Dunn said that she recently sent out an e-mail to all principals, supervisors and directors because there have been issues with the message not getting through to the staff that even though all staff received an e-mail regarding field trips, some individuals are not submitting information in a timely manner. She said that there has been a lackadaisical attitude on behalf of the administrators as to getting information submitted in a timely manner and she did not want the students to lose out. Dr. Jakubowski said that he has told the building administrators to use common sense when it comes to field trips. Mrs. Gaglione said that the Corrective Action Plan for the 2008 audit was very good.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Ruhl said that the committee met earlier in the evening and he presented the agenda. Dr. Jakubowski said that he, Ms. Dunn and Mr. Damato met with Mr. Potter regarding fees for work to be done at the Administration Building. He said that the matter was resolved and the board will be paying, overall, a lot less than the board would have approved if they had voted on the

resolution on the agenda last month. Ms. Dunn said that the district had received an original proposal for \$248,000 for the additions and renovations at the Administration Building. She said that the board did pay Potter the sum of approximately \$50,000 on that contract for the plans that were prepared. Ms. Dunn said that the original purchase order was being cancelled and a new purchase order was being reissued in the amount of \$75,000 which will cover the district for the remainder of the project.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Renovations to Administration Building

Mr. Ruhl said that the committee discussed all of the options that the board is considering. Dr. Jakubowski said that when the renovations to the administration take place, which he believed will happen over next summer, the administration building operations will have to be moved to another location. He said that he believed that the Central Office will move to Union High School; the Business Office staff will probably be in the Attendance Office area and the Central Office staff will be on the other side of the building in the guidance area in order that registration can take place. Dr. Jakubowski said he did not know what the anticipated amount of time for the renovations might be, but he believed it would be approximately one month.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Mr. Helmstetter said that the personnel committee met and he presented the agenda. He said that it was discussed that the personnel committee meetings be scheduled at an earlier time in the evening in the future because more discussion time was needed. Dr. Jakubowski said that the staff listed in resolution P-4 will be running the afterschool program that will start in January. He said that this is the program that at one time was only in the DEPA schools but now has been expended to all elementary schools. Dr. Jakubowski said that at first only students at risk will be attending this program and then in the last month, the program will be expanded at least one extra day and all third and fourth graders will be given the opportunity to attend the sessions in preparation of the tests. He said that the staff listed in P-5 are those individuals who were security monitors at the high school for the play "A Flea In Her Ear". He said that it was an excellent show and the students did a great job. Dr. Jakubowski said that the monitors also did a very nice job for the district. Mrs. Gaglione asked where the money to pay the monitors comes from. Ms. Dunn said that it comes out of the general fund budget. Mrs. Gaglione asked if it hit a budget line that was associated with the music department. Ms. Dunn said it did not. Dr. Jakubowski said that in addition to the individuals listed in resolution P-5, there is also at least one regular security monitor from the high school on duty and the security individuals are paid through regular payroll. Mr. Abraham said that on resolution P-1 there are stipends for the AVA coordinators and the bookkeeper. He said that the coordinators were approved for the full year stipend but the bookkeeper was only approved for one-

half of the year. Ms. Dunn said that these individuals get paid twice a year but she said that she would check on the amount. Mr. Abraham said he had a question regarding item (b) on resolution P-7. He wanted to know how long the district would carry this person. Dr. Jakubowski said that Mr. Solla has worked sporadically during the months of September, October and November and he has produced a doctor's note that he is not capable of working. He said that Mr. Solla has every right to apply for an unpaid family leave and the district does not have the ability to deny a leave to someone who has been with the district for so long. Mrs. Gaglione asked Mr. Damato if the district had any right to deny an unpaid of paid family leave. Mr. Damato said that if an individual has a legitimate reason and it complies with the requirements of the law, the district cannot deny a leave. Dr. Jakubowski said that Mr. Solla is in the middle of some legal issues relating to an automobile accident in which he was involved. He said that he told Mr. Solla that he could not continue to come to work sporadically and he would either have to resign, apply for a family leave or come to work on a regular basis.

LEGAL COMMITTEE:

Mr. Perkins thought that resolution L-1 needed to be discussed and that it would have to be done in Executive Session. Mr. Damato agreed.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Mrs. Gaglione said that the bills would be approved at the regular meeting next week.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Dunn said that next week there would be a resolution added to the education committee agenda for approval of the Section IV of the special education monitoring. Dr. Jakubowski said that this is a document that has already been sent to the County Office and Section IV is something that the district has to submit.

Dr. Jakubowski said that the Mrs. Gainey from the C.A.S.T. department at the high school came to him with regard to equipment. He said that he has asked Mrs. Gainey to provide him with a list of items that she believes the department needs. Dr. Jakubowski said that he would meet with Ms. Dunn to see where some money for this equipment can come from.

Dr. Jakubowski said that he did receive a letter from Ms. Muller at the high school regarding the spring trip for the marching band and music department. He said that it is requesting that the board approve a trip to Virginia and the students will be transported by bus. Dr. Jakubowski said he did

not see any reason why the board should not approve this trip. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the students pay for the trip. Dr. Jakubowski said that the board pays for some of the chaperones that go on the trip but this is a budget item in the music department budget.

Mrs. Salazar updated the board with regard to the security cameras. She said that she has been communicating with Ms. Hart by e-mail. Mrs. Salazar said that Ms. Hart met with representatives at ProMedia and they discussed various issues in the technology department. She said that Ms. Hart has requested ProMedia to provide the district with some options to have things run more efficiently. Mrs. Salazar said that Ms. Hart will also be meeting with a second company, Network Securities which is in the process of being scheduled. She said that she had been informed that it was ProMedia that installed the wiring for the security cameras and options were discussed to get the security cameras back on line. Mrs. Salazar said that Ms. Hart has requested that all principals submit an inventory or mapping of all cameras within their buildings so that ProMedia can go over them thoroughly. She said that Ms. Hart expected the analysis to be completed with a week. Mrs. Salazar said that all information will be forwarded to Dr. Jakubowski before it is presented to the Technology Committee. Dr. Jakubowski said that he and Mr. Tatum would be meeting before the end of the week with Ms. Hart, Mrs. Ging and Mr. Peins to try to access the entire technology department. He said that the district is working with limited individuals; Mrs. Ging is still only working 60%. Dr. Jakubowski said that Ms. Hart has interviewed two individuals to possibly be added to the technology department. He said for the size of the district the technology department is so understaffed. Dr. Jakubowski felt that everyone in the technology department is doing a great job; the department needs someone with systems expertise. He said that he would get back to the board with recommendations. Dr. Jakubowski said that this all relates to the expansion of the administration building and looking at possibly purchasing the building on Lousons Road.

Dr. Jakubowski said that he has drafted a letter which he will be sending to all employees regarding the change of medical insurance within the district. He said that the letter does not discuss negotiations but only that the district has opted to go back to State Health Benefits – School Employees Benefits. Dr. Jakubowski said that the letter indicates that the district has looked at several options and it is believed that this is in the best interest of the district. He said that the letter also indicates that the business office will be reaching out to all employees over the next week or so that the process can get started. Dr. Jakubowski said that he hoped the new insurance would become effective on February 1st but no later than March 1st. He said that his letter was written in a friendly tone to be more informative than anything else because he was not sure if all employees were aware of what was going on.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. McNeil said that she attended the New Jersey School Boards Association Delegate Assembly on November 22nd. She said that only action was taken on one resolution and it was approved. Mrs. McNeil said that the resolution reads as follows: "NJ School Boards Association believes that because Veterans Day is a Federal and State holiday in a commemorative expression of our veterans' sacrifices, public schools are encouraged to consider all means of observing this holiday including the possibility of closing schools. This will provide the opportunity for students and staff members to participate in commemorative events." Mrs. McNeil said that the resolution originates from East Rutherford in Bergen County because they do not have the option to close. She said they hoped this resolution will allow it to be done. Mrs. McNeil said that the assembly spent about half an hour of individuals making motions on the wording of the resolution. She said that she did stay for the regionalization meeting but Union is not affected by it. Mrs. McNeil said that it was quite interesting to hear what the districts that are involved had to say. Dr. Jakubowski said with regard to Veterans' Day in the district, the teachers in the district know that if they ask for the day off as a personal day it is granted. He said that there are about four or five people each year who take advantage of a personal day on Veterans Day. Mrs. McNeil said that if the board would like to present a resolution at the next Delegate Assembly the cut off date is Monday, March 2, 2009. She said that if there is anything that the board would like to have addressed at the assembly, she asked that the board contact her before that date.

Mr. Abraham said that with recent world events and the terrorist attacks in India, this issue has come back to the forefront. He said that he and Mr. Manochio have shared with the board privately, thoughts about whether it is possible or it is time since most of the security guards are at the high school and most are at the younger end of the age scale, would it be time for the district to have a part-time security director that would oversee not only the scheduling of all security issues but also if it an individual such as a retired police officer, that would review the emergency procedures and fine tune them so that the district is "up to snuff". Dr. Jakubowski said that he knew that Mr. Abraham had brought up this matter to his attention. He said that over the years, once in a while it comes up that the board hire someone else to oversee the entire security department. Mrs. Gaglione asked who oversaw the security monitors. Dr. Jakubowski said that at the high school, Mr. Benequista was given the responsibility of assigning the security monitors their areas and he signs their time-sheets. He said that at the two middle schools it is the building principals and/or his designee who oversee the security monitors. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district's emergency plans are reviewed each year and they are sent to the county office. He said he was not opposed to the idea. Mrs. Gaglione stated that she thought the question was money. Mr. Abraham said that is why he suggested someone part-time who did not get any benefits. Mrs. Gaglione said that if the person was part-time the security monitors would not report to that

person and they would still have to report to the designated person in their building. Mr. Abraham said that the part-time person would still be able to establish the schedules. He said that part of the problem is that because of the age of the security monitors, some of the students become too "chummy, chummy" with them. Mr. Abraham said that Mr. Benequista cannot be everywhere in the building. Dr. Jakubowski said that the security monitors are not that young anymore, they have been around awhile. He sometimes wondered why they would want to have a career as a security monitor. Dr. Jakubowski said that the security monitors may be "chummy" with the students and the students may refer to them by their first names but by the same token but both Mr. Fortunato and Mr. Gibbons thought this has been advantageous because the students where they might not talk to a police officer will confide in the security monitors. He said that he did not know what a part-time retired police officer would monitor. Dr. Jakubowski said he thought that the board should discuss the matter further at another time. He asked the board to think about this issue and maybe in January some thoughts could be brought up as to how the board members feel about this. Dr. Jakubowski said that there have been police officers who have made proposals to the board in the past and the board has always opted not to do it. He said that there are now two Vice Principals and four Assistant Principals at the high school and he was not so sure that Mr. Benequista cannot handle the security. Mrs. Gaglione asked the board members to e-mail their comments and ideas to Dr. Jakubowski individually before the next meeting.

Mr. Figueiredo asked if all the board members had received the letter which he sent which he received from the Union County Education meeting which he attended last week and one of the members of the board is from Cranford and she was very upset at some of the regulations and stipulations that are coming down upon boards of education. Mr. Figueiredo said that she has drafted a letter with several other individuals and she has presented the letter to the Cranford Board of Education. He said that they were going to "tweak" the letter and submit it to the NJ Commissioner of Education. Mr. Figueiredo said that the letter was four pages long and he did not read the entire thing to the board. He said basically the letter is saying that members of boards of education are not paid and the Commissioner is regulating them. Mr. Figueiredo asked the board members to read the letter and if anyone had any thoughts on it, they should forward them to him. He said he was not saying that the board should draft a similar letter and if the board felt it was a non-issue, he would put it aside. Mr. Perkins asked procedurally where the regulations were at this time. He asked if the comment period was closed. Mr. Damato said that the NJ School Boards Association is continuing to make comments and there may be a significant number of revisions made before the regulations are finally adopted. Mrs. Gaglione said that she attended a seminar last week and it was made very clear to all in attendance that there may be a lot of changes in the regulations. Mr. Perkins asked if anyone knew if the comment period had been closed. Mr. Damato said that he did not know specifically if the comment period was closed

but he did know that the both houses of the Legislature have tossed around various versions of the proposed enabling statute. He said that the proposed regulations have been issued and they raise so many questions beyond what the statute really envisioned. Mr. Damato said he thought there were a lot more comments that are coming down day by day and he thought the Department of Education never anticipated some of the situations that have arisen out of the proposed regulations. Mr. Perkins asked if there was a proposal or if anyone had challenged the scope of jurisdiction of the Commissioner with regard to some of the regulations. Dr. Jakubowski said that the NJASA has challenged the Commissioner's scope of jurisdiction on a number of issues. He said that some have come back with recommendations from judges. Ms. Dunn said that NJASBO has also made some challenges. Mrs. Gaglione said that some of the challenges were returned from the Federal Court because it was not addressed to the appropriate court. Dr. Jakubowski said that some of the issues that boards of education either have to take a look at if they want to make a challenge have to do with superintendent, assistant superintendent and business administrator contracts. Mr. Perkins asked if it was a prospective or a retrospective contract? Mr. Damato said prospective. Mr. Perkins said he thought the board would lose on a prospective contract. He did not know about a retrospective contract. Mr. Damato said that there was a discussion regarding payment for sick days that were in a bank and whether they could be paid to an estate upon the death of an employee. He said that the proposed regulations prohibit this practice. Mr. Damato said he did not know how the regulations were going to be interpreted and how they will be decided by a court because there are many people who are willing to challenge the regulations. Mr. Perkins said that if the board wants to comment, he thought that the board should. Mrs. Gaglione said that NJ School Boards encourages boards of education to speak to legislators and the education associations so that boards can provide input as this is part of what the responsibilities of a board of education is. She said that the people who are making the laws do not necessarily know or are aware of what goes on in school districts. Mr. Perkins said that there is no reason that the board should not make comments but the comments should be impersonal, should be based on reason and fact. He said that he has spent a lot of time in regulatory law with federal and state regulatory agencies, doing comments on regulations and offering draft language and if the board feels that it is necessary, then it ought to submit comments. Mr. Figuereido suggested that Mr. Perkins draft comments on behalf of the board to be presented and voted on by the entire board. Mr. Perkins said that he would prepare an outline with Mr. Damato. He said that in order to do it correctly, it would take time. Mr. Damato said that the professional associations have made extensive comments and extensive appearances at the Commissioner's Office. Mr. Perkins said that the board should review those comments and possibly join in on them. Mr. Figuereido thought that the board should send comments to let the Commissioner know how the board feels about the regulations. Mr. Perkins thought that many of the issues, such as moving the board elections to November, are strictly political. Dr. Jakubowski said that the board members are

elected officials of a community and he did not know why items such as contracts needed first to be approved by the County Superintendent before they could be presented to the local board of education. He felt that this was just another layer. Mr. Perkins said that since some funding for the school district comes from outside the community, he felt that the state should have some say in the practices of the district. Mr. Figueiredo said that the district representatives who attended the county meeting seemed to feel that the state is continually chipping away at any "say so" that local boards have to eventually come to a regionalization perhaps on a county level. Mrs. Gaglione thought that regionalization and the possibility of appointment of board members was a possibility.

Mr. Figueiredo said that he would like the board to once again discuss the updating of the high school auditorium. He said that the district just upgraded the football field to make it a "showcase" but he felt that the district had another showcase area and he felt that this was the high school auditorium. Mr. Figueiredo said that the auditorium is used by many groups. Dr. Jakubowski said that he hoped that the board could discuss this matter as the February planning session. He said that there are many projects on the table that the district would like to complete but they must be prioritized. Dr. Jakubowski said that when the board talks about the kind of money that is required for the projects and the amount of money that is available, fortunately, the board does have some funds available which are presently earning interest but it was his position that the football field was done with the money earned in interest and that the high school auditorium upgrade might be accomplished in the same way. Dr. Jakubowski said that he still did not know what the final decision would be from the State on pre-school expansion. He thought that the February planning session should be devoted mostly to just operational issues and an initial update as to where the district is with the budget. Ms. Dunn said that the budget will be due to the County Superintendent either March 3, 4 or 5. She said that it was her goal to get the board members a draft budget by March 1st. Ms. Dunn said that this was contingent upon what comes out of the Governor's Office and any of the new rules and regulations. She said that it may be necessary for the board to pass additional resolutions and her budget numbers must be struck as of the close of February 1, 2009. Dr. Jakubowski said that this would have to be done at the worksession in January as he would not be able to attend the regular meeting in January. Ms. Dunn said that all budget information from everyone in the district must be in her hands and in the budget module by January 9th and if this is the case, she may be able to prepare a draft of the budget by that date. Dr. Jakubowski said that he thought the budget must be done outside of all of the proposed projects and the projects must be funded from the resources that the district has in its Capital Reserve Account. Ms. Dunn said that if this is the case she would put everything on hold until February. Dr. Jakubowski said that board can discuss these issues at the worksession in January but he said that the board is talking about the possibility of purchasing a building on Lousons Road; and if the Governor makes a decision on the pre-school expansion program, he

has already been asked to give testimony in Trenton. He hoped that the Governor would be postponing the pre-school expansion for at least one year. Dr. Jakubowski said that if the district is forced to implement preschool expansion for next school year, he did not know how he was going to answer to the public that only 105 children who are on free or reduced lunch can take advantage of the program and every other individual in the community who expected their four year old to attend half day preschool cannot attend because of room availability. Dr. Jakubowski said that the Governor's preschool plan is to have only 15 students in a classroom and it be an all day program for 3 and 4 year old students who are at risk (at risk not being those with learning needs but those who come from poor families). Mrs. Gaglione asked if this was different from Head Start. Dr. Jakubowski said that was correct. He said that he was not sure how much longer Head Start program would be in the district. Dr. Jakubowski said that the sad thing is that even if there are seven new classrooms created in the expansion of Hannah Caldwell, next year when the number of students has to be expanded from 60 to 149 this will eat up all of the additional classroom space and it will still not allow those students who are not eligible for free and reduced lunch to participate in the program. He did not know why this was the program that the Governor wants to implement.

Mr. Figueiredo asked for an update to putting all agenda information on a website rather than e-mailing the information to board members. Mr. Damato said he thought this was one of the things on Mrs. Ging's to do list and he thought that Mrs. Ging was swamped at this time. Mr. Figueiredo said that he would like to present this option for discussion in January to the board. He said that the New Jersey School Boards Association for a fee of \$2,400 per year will set up a website and take care of everything for the district. Mrs. Gaglione asked how the information is given to them. Mr. Perkins said that NJSBA provides forms to be filled out by the board members. He said that NJSBA would do a presentation for the board at a board meeting. Mrs. Gaglione said that someone from NJSBA made a presentation to the board several years ago. Mr. Figueiredo said that this would allow all information regarding a meeting to be posted on a website for easier access. Dr. Jakubowski said that he was in favor of having NJSBA do another presentation if it would make the process easier. Mr. Figueiredo said that he knew Mrs. Ging was swamped and the district's IT department was shorthanded. He felt the NJSBA program would alleviate this problem. Dr. Jakubowski said that it made sense to him. Mrs. Gaglione did not have a problem with asking a representative from NJSBA to make a presentation at the January worksession. Mr. Perkins said that a web-based program would make the information much more easily accessible. Mr. Figueiredo said that he has not seen the presentation but he has visited NJSBA's website. He felt that \$2,400 was not a large amount of money.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mrs. Lipstein, the president of the Township of Union Education Foundation thanked the board for discussing a fee waiver to her organization so that the annual reception can be held at Union High School and she wanted to invite all board members to attend this reception. Mrs. Lipstein said that a buffet dinner was planned and she looked forward to giving out grants to district teachers again this year. Mrs. Gaglione stated that there was some question regarding the time of the event. Mrs. Lipstein thought that the event would begin at 5:30 p.m. She said that the Foundation does get many requests for technology equipment and she wanted to know if Mrs. Hart would be the person to speak to regarding the technology needs of the district. Dr. Jakubowski said that was the right person. Mrs. Lipstein said that the Foundation is in the process of getting a "smart board" for the math department. She said that the Foundation is working hard to raise money. Mrs. Gaglione asked Mrs. Lipstein to give an update on the Barnes & Noble fundraiser which recently took place. Mrs. Lipstein said that Ms. Scotto read to children on Saturday morning and Mrs. Lischak read to children in the afternoon. She wanted to thank these individuals for donating their time. Mrs. Lipstein said that the Foundation made over \$600 on this event.

Dr. Jakubowski said that there was one more piece of "unfinished business" that he wanted to mention. He said that he has spoken to the County Superintendent regarding the 50th alumni reception and he does not think that it will be doable. Dr. Jakubowski said that getting food would be absolutely impossible. Mr. Perkins asked how much money the board spent on the event last year. Dr. Jakubowski said approximately \$7000 was spent. Mr. Perkins asked what that amount covered. Dr. Jakubowski said that approximately \$3000 went to cover costs for food; approximately \$2,000 went for the diplomas and the remainder of the money went for postage, flowers, etc. Mr. Perkins asked if the district could get an exception written in the regulation so that it would be able to fund events such as this. Dr. Jakubowski said that when he spoke to the County Superintendent regarding this matter, she looked at him like this was a ridiculous idea. He said that he told Dr. Centuolo that it was an unbelievable event and the 50 year graduates really appreciated it. Dr. Jakubowski said that Dr. Centuolo did not understand. Mr. Perkins said that the idea has to frame in a way that is "good for the community". He thought that it was good for the community for individuals to come back. Dr. Jakubowski said that since the class reunion was not being held on the same weekend as this event as normally occurs he did not know how many people would attend. He said that he believed that coffee and cake could be served. Mr. Perkins suggested that the event take place during the high school graduation ceremony. Mr. Figueiredo suggested that the board get local businesses to sponsor the event and also include the retirees, etc. at the same time. Dr. Jakubowski said that he thought the district could honor the retirees with a resolution.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Moved by Mr. Perkins, seconded by Mr. Helmstetter that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss litigation and negotiation issues without the presence of the public in accordance with the provisions of *N.J.S.A. 10:4-2b*. The Board will disclose the discussion conducted during the executive session, with notice to the public, when the disclosure will not result in unwarranted invasion of individual privacy or prejudice to the best interests of the Board of Education and provided that such disclosure does not violate federal, state or local statutes and does not fall within the attorney/client privilege. All present voting yes.

THE BOARD RETURNED TO PUBLIC SESSION**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the board, it was moved by Mr. Ruhl, seconded by Mrs. McNeil that the meeting be adjourned at 9:50 p.m. All present voting yes.

Respectfully submitted

JAMES J. DAMATO
BOARD SECRETARY