

TO ALL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Township of Union will be held on Saturday, February 28, 2009 at 8:00 a.m., at the James Caulfield Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey.

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Township was held at the James Caulfield Administration Building, 2369 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey on Saturday, February 28, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. pursuant to notice sent to each board member.

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

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL: None

Mr. Manochio led the board and audience members 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.

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Moved by Mr. Helmstetter, seconded by Mr. Abraham that the following resolutions be adopted:

F-1. PRE-APPROVE DISTRICTWIDE STUDENT FIELD TRIP DESTINATIONS AND PURPOSES PURSUANT TO *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.8*

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

F-2. APPROVE ATTACHED LIST OF CONTRACTS AND/OR PURCHASES PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(21)*

That the board approve attached list of contracts and/or purchases pursuant to the requirements of *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(21)* in accordance with the information appended to these minutes: (a) Heritage Festivals - \$16,000 – Chorus/Band Spring Trip – Union High School

F-3. ACCEPT PRELIMINARY ELIGIBLE COST (PEC) DETERMINATION OF A SCHOOL FACILITIES PROJECT FROM THE NJ DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – HANNAH CALDWELL ELEMENTARY ECC - STATE PROJECT #5290-083-09-1001

That the board accept Preliminary Eligible Cost (PEC) Determination of a School Facilities Project from the New Jersey Department of Education for State Project #5290-083-09-1001 – Hannah Caldwell Elementary School ECC in the amount of \$1,144,586 which is 40% of total project cost of \$2,861,466 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Helmstetter asked what the next step would be after the board approves resolution F-3. Ms. Dunn said that upon receipt of the adopted resolution from the Board, Mr. Lacavage would issue a letter of Final Eligible Costs and then the board would be enjoined in a grant agreement and the project would have to be put into the 2009-2010 budget.

Dr. Jakubowski said that as the district is moving forward with the expansion at Hannah Caldwell, he said that the original intent of the space was that it would become a pre-school center but in conversations that he had yesterday, he did not know where the pre-school expansion plan would be a year or two from now. He said that he would like to meet with Mr. Potter one more time to go over the plan because if seven classrooms with bathrooms are constructed and this space turns out not to be used as a preschool center, he wanted to make sure that these classrooms could be serviceable in other ways. Dr. Jakubowski said he wanted the board to be aware because he did not know what was going to happen at the state level. Mr. Figueiredo said that with all of the special needs requirements coming down from the state with more inclusion in classrooms, this might be another way to utilize the space. Dr. Jakubowski said that he agreed the space could be utilized for other purposes. Mr. Figueiredo said that he was also referring to other special needs students who now go out of district maybe at some point, the district may want to start in-district programs so that it can save some of the exorbitant tuitions.

Dr. Jakubowski said that the district applied for the state grant monies because of preschool expansion. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the state changed its mind about preschool expansion, could the district use the facility at its discretion. Ms. Dunn said that the Preliminary Eligible Costs are determined by the application which the district submitted together with the educational and physical

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE
DISCUSSION

specifications. She said that there was latitude to change certain things but if the whole scope of the project changes that would change the eligibility factor. Mrs. Gaglione said that if the state decided down the road that they wanted to scrape the preschool expansion program, the state would not say that the district would not get the grant. Ms. Dunn said that the grant was not based upon preschool expansion but upon the fact that the board wanted to turn the space into preschool classrooms. Dr. Jakubowski said he was not so sure of that. Ms. Dunn said that this was a Level III project. Mr. Manochio asked what Level III meant. Dr. Jakubowski said it was the priority level. Mr. Manochio asked if there was a time-frame with each level. Dr. Jakubowski said there was not. Ms. Dunn said that Mr. Lacavage was very anxious for the district to approve the Preliminary Eligible Costs so that the district could enjoin in the grant because the deadline for application had passed. She said that she thought the board should just go ahead with the plan as is because classrooms are classrooms. Ms. Dunn said that minor changes can be made to the project but when the state comes to inspect the completed project, the state will approve the "physical" what was done in relation to what the plans were before the monies are actually given to the district. She said that the district made many modifications on the "bond" projects and the district still received its compliment.

AYE:	Mr. Abraham, Mr. Figueiredo, Mr. Helmstetter, Mr. Manochio, Mrs. McNeil, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Ruhl, Mrs. Salazar and Mrs. Gaglione	
NAY:	None	
ABSTAIN:	None	MOTION WAS CARRIED

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Moved by Mr. Ruhl, seconded by Mr. Manochio that the following resolutions be adopted:

O-1. APPROVE CONTRACT WITH PAYMENTECH, LLC FOR ITSELF AND ON BEHALF OF JP MORGAN CHASE BANK, N.A. FOR ONLINE SCHOOL LUNCH PAYMENTS

That the board approve contract with Paymentech, LLC for itself and on behalf of JP Morgan Chase Bank, N.A. to establish a merchant account for online school lunch payments in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

O-2. REPORT RECEIPT OF BIDS

Report receipt of bids received February 26, 2009 for two (2) 2010 Type "D" Front Engine School Buses in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

O-3. AWARD BID FOR TWO (2) 2010 TYPE "D" FRONT ENGINE SCHOOL BUSES- H.A. DEHART & SON

That the board award bid for two (2) 2010 Type "D" Front Engine School Buses to H.A. Dehart & son, 311 Crown Point Road, Thorofare, NJ in the total bid amount of \$175,990.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Manochio asked where Thorofare, New Jersey was. Mr. Manochio said he was not really sure but he thought it was southwestern New Jersey. Mr. Manochio asked what a merchant account for online school lunch payments was. Ms. Dunn said that this will enable parents deposit money for school lunches into an internet account for their student. Mr. Helmstetter asked if the bids for the school buses were in line with what the district has been paying for buses. Ms. Dunn said that the prices for the buses were very much in line with what the district has been paying and the bid award was less than the amount that was budgeted for the buses. Mr. Manochio asked if these were small buses. Ms. Dunn said that they were 54 passenger buses.

AYE: Mr. Abraham, Mr. Figueiredo, Mr. Helmstetter, Mr. Manochio, Mrs. McNeil, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Ruhl, Mrs. Salazar and Mrs. Gaglione

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION WAS CARRIED

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Moved by Mr. Manochio, seconded by Mr. Abraham that the following resolutions be adopted:

P-1. APPROVE PERSONNEL ACTIONS

That the board approve personnel actions in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

P-2. AMEND LIST OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

That the board amend list of substitute teachers in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

P-3. APPROVE VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS FOR DISTRICT STUDENT – OCCUPATIONAL CENTER OF NEW JERSEY

That the board approve Occupational Center of New Jersey to conduct a vocational assessment for a district student at a rate of \$100 per day, not to exceed 10 days or \$1,000 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

P-4. ACCEPT PROPOSAL FOR INSURANCE BROKER SERVICES FOR 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR – BUSINESS & GOVERNMENTAL INSURANCE AGENCY (BGIA)

That the board accept proposal for Insurance Broker Services for the 2009-2010 school year from Business & Governmental Insurance Agency (BGIA), Plaza Nine, 900 Route 9 North, Woodbridge, New Jersey for the annual consultation fee of \$100,000 in accordance with the information appended to these minutes.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Manochio asked Mr. Damato to explain resolution P-4. Mr. Damato said that the back up for the resolution included the RFP which describes what services the district wanted or needed and could not be provided in house. He said that under the old medical insurance plan, Blue Cross/Blue Shield paid the broker a brokerage fee and for that fee, the broker performed all of the services which were included in the RFP. Mr. Damato said that New Jersey State Health Benefits Plan does not pay brokerage fees, so in order to get the same level of service for district employees and be able to provide these services, the district had to do an RFP and seek proposals from outside vendors. He said that the proposal was posted on the website under the "Fair and Open Process" and one (1) proposal was received which was from the broker who has been servicing the district since before he came into the district. Mr. Damato stated that BGIA does a great job and he recommended that the board approve this agency. Mr. Perkins asked what the services were that could not be performed in-house. Mr. Damato said that they were all listed on the RFP. He said that he included the RFP with the vendor's proposal so that the board could see essentially what the broker would be doing. Mr. Damato said that there are claims management situations and COBRA issues that the broker would get involved in. He said that the broker does act as the district's liaison with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Caremark and State Health Benefits to try to coordinate any issues with employees that occur. Mr. Damato said that there are some anomalous situations with regard to health benefits for specific therapies like occupational, vision, respiratory therapies and things of that nature that really need to get special attention and a level of expertise is needed to approach those types of problems. He said that the broker will also be doing actuarial reports for the district and will provide management information from which the district can make good and informed decisions about what the district will do in the future; if the benefit package will be changed; where is the district's utilization greatest; what types of services are used more than others and this information will be

helpful in the negotiations process to try to propose changes to employee coverage, dependent coverage or co-payments and the district will know how much it will affect the budget. Mr. Manochio asked if the broker makes recommendations to the individuals who negotiate for the board. Mr. Damato said that they did. Mr. Manochio asked if they were part of the negotiating process. Mr. Damato said they were. Dr. Jakubowski said that they did quite a bit for the district during the recent arbitration hearing. He said that before the board goes into negotiations, he will sit with representatives from BGIA to get information from them. Mr. Manochio asked if the board would have to vote on this proposal in June. Mr. Damato said that the portion of the brokerage services that will be voted on in June will be for all of the property and casualty portions of the district's insurance policies such as fire, theft, general liability, automobile, etc. He said that health benefits is a separate section of the district's insurance. Mr. Manochio asked if the contract which was voted on today was valid for one year or will it become a package in June. Mr. Damato said that this was valid for one year.

AYE:	Mr. Abraham, Mr. Figueiredo, Mr. Helmstetter, Mr. Manochio, Mrs. McNeil, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Ruhl, Mrs. Salazar and Mrs. Gaglione	
NAY:	None	
ABSTAIN:	None	MOTION WAS CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Paperless Agenda - Mr. Perkins said that the individual who is the demonstrator was not available to provide an online presentation. He said that the demonstration is available on the New Jersey School Boards Association website to anyone. Mr. Perkins said that he spoke to the vendor and Mr. McGettigan who is the policy director for the School Boards Association. He said that as he spoke to the vendor about the usage of the program, the vendor commented that individuals will learn to use the system either by printing certain pages of the document or using it in a totally paperless way. Mr. Perkins said that the advantage of this system over what is presently in place is that downloading the attachments and taking up space on the computer's hard drive. He said that this system would be web based. Mr. Perkins said that it is reported that the average school board spends about \$5,000 per year on postage, distribution, paper, etc. He suggested that this was an extraordinarily low estimate based on his experience and practice. Mrs. Gaglione asked how this system will make Mrs.

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Ditri's job different from what she is doing now. Mr. Perkins said that there will be no copying or collating. Mrs. Ditri said that it would entail going to a web site and uploading the information which would be accessible by board members and administrators with password access. Mr. Figueiredo said he assumed that the clarity of the documents would be better. Mr. Perkins said it definitely would. He said that another advantage would be that the documents would be "searchable" by keyword and/or context. Mr. Figueiredo asked if this system would archive all agendas posted. Mr. Perkins said it does. Mrs. Ditri said that right now the minutes are posted on the district's website but none of the attachments are there. Mrs. Gaglione said that if someone questions something that the board did five months ago, she did not know how the information could be located unless each month's minutes was reviewed. Mr. Perkins said that the question was asked if there would be laptop computers in front of each board member at the meetings. He said that he did not feel this was particularly onerous but that aside what can be done is that the agenda can be projected onto a screen in the library. Mr. Perkins said when he spoke to the vendor, the vendor expressed the learning curve for school boards and initially, board members still want a paper copy of the agenda but usually within a year no one wants a paper copy anymore. He said he felt this system was worth the effort. Mr. Perkins stated that the premier service, in which the vendor will manage the site not only for agenda, but also for other notices, news, events, reports and memoranda, etc. the cost is \$2600 per year. Mrs. Gaglione asked the board how they felt about this idea and if the board wanted to keep going forward. Mr. Manochio said that he would like to know what the disadvantages of the system were. He said that he had given Mr. Damato a document from Montvale which is a very upscale community and Montvale is holding off on implementing the system because of the costs. Mr. Manochio stated that if this is such a good program how many districts in North Jersey are utilizing it. Mr. Perkins asked Mr. Manochio what exactly he had a problem with. Mr. Manochio said that he wanted to know what other districts were using the program. Mrs. Gaglione said that this process has been discussed by the board several times over the past five years. She said that the board already had a presentation by NJ School Boards Association on this program. Mrs. Gaglione said that she had reviewed a program which was developed and is being used by a Vo-Tech School in South Jersey. She said that the board chose to go with School Boards in an attempt to reduce at least the buses from delivering agenda to board members and moving forward. Mrs. Gaglione said that the board still uses paper but she felt that the board had reduced expenses. She wanted to know if the IT Department could develop and manage its own website in-house rather than using an outside vendor for this purpose. Mrs. Gaglione asked Mr. Perkins to find out what other school districts were presently using the program. Mrs. Gaglione said that she felt the large expense in Montvale was because the district was going to

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purchase a laptop computer for each board members use. She said that there were laptops available in the High School library which could be utilized for use by the board at board meetings. Mr. Ruhl said that the computers in the library and the district's main system would have to be able to handle this program. He said that Union County purchased about \$1 million worth of computers only to find out that their server could not handle them. Mr. Perkins said that the advantage of this program is that the district's server is not being used. Mrs. Gaglione said that she had a question about if the system went down, did the vendor have a sufficient backup system. Mr. Perkins said that the basic program is \$1270 per year for just agenda and backup material posting on the web. Mrs. Gaglione did not think that \$2600 was not that much considering what the district is doing right now. Mrs. Salazar said that she was concerned that if the vendor was the one managing the site, what about the site's security especially regarding confidential items. Mr. Perkins said that there was a secure area on the site which can be accessed only by board members and administrators that have pass codes just the same as other websites. Mrs. Gaglione said that Mr. Figueiredo had some problems with the program and she asked him to let the board know how he felt about the program. Mr. Figueiredo said that the board has taken small steps and he felt it was wonderful and the board was moving in the right direction. He said that most large organizations are now communicating via e-mail or some other electronic system. Mr. Figueiredo said that the attachments that are sent with the agenda must be scanned at a lower resolution because the e-mail becomes too large. He said that because of that some of the documents are difficult to read. Mr. Figueiredo said that he has been able to create a monthly file on his computer at home so that if he wants to look back at any document, he can. He thought that the NJ School Board program would allow scanning documents at a higher resolution and the documents can be uploaded to the website. Mr. Figueiredo said that each board member would be able to access the site at home and print whatever documents they want. He thought that the cost was minimal. Mr. Figueiredo did not think that the district's IT Department could handle this as they are already bogged down. He said that the district in South Jersey maintains the site in-house but he did not think that our IT Department could do this right now. Mr. Figueiredo thought that the NJ School Board program was a minimal cost for a wonderful service and he felt that the board would be saving money in the long run. Dr. Jakubowski agreed and felt that the board should move forward. He felt that when and if the IT Department is expanded in the future they would be able to take over the maintaining such a site and he thought that going forward was the right thing to do. Dr. Jakubowski said that the cost was right and he felt the board had nothing to lose by trying this service. He said that with regard to laptop computers in front of each board member at a meeting, he suggested

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that a big screen be used at this time. Dr. Jakubowski said that he has spoken to individuals who feel that it is a turn off to the public to see board members with laptops in front of them. He said that possibly within the next year, the district would be able to take over and have an in-house website for this purpose. Dr. Jakubowski said that Kenilworth has started instituting a "paperless" agenda program in-house and he wanted to speak to individuals there to see how the system was working for them. Mr. Perkins said that he felt that the cost of going with the vendor was minimal. Mrs. Gaglione asked if there was any board member who was totally against this. Mr. Manochio said that he questioned the security of the system. He also felt that the costs would continue to increase. Mr. Manochio thought that it was a good idea and he would support it. He wanted to know if the board wanted to institute this program to ease the responsibilities on Mrs. Ditre or to save paper. Mr. Perkins said that the board wanted to save money. He said that the Township has already started to institute this process. Mr. Perkins asked Mr. Damato if the board needed to pass a resolution to enter into an agreement with NJ School Boards. Mr. Damato said that a resolution should be done. He asked Mr. Perkins if there was a contract that he could look at. Mr. Perkins said he would ask NJ School Boards to send it to him. He said that if any board member wanted a demonstration of the program, it was an online demonstration and it can be done individually.

Administration Building – Mr. Damato said that all of the central office administrators met with Mr. Potter to see how the project could be scaled back in light of the financial situation that is affecting everyone. He said that there were several aspects of the plan that the group wanted to take a fresh look at and one of them was installation of central air-conditioning. Mr. Damato said that they also reviewed façade work and interior modifications. He said that it was decided that at a minimum the following work would be done: (1) modification to the bathrooms to make them handicapped accessible; (2) repairs to the roof because there is a desperate need for roof repairs; (3) installation of new windows to make them egress windows especially in the business office area; and (4) flooring modifications to replace damaged floor tiles. Mr. Damato said that this would be the extent of the administration building modifications and he said that he wanted to see how this would come out bid wise. Dr. Jakubowski said that a facelift of the building's interior and exterior would be a nice thing. He said that there is still money left from the bond which can be used for this project. Dr. Jakubowski said that some of the issues that the central office will be facing is that when the roofing work is being done, the building will need to be closed down. He said that the business office cannot afford to be closed down for two weeks because of payroll and many other things. Dr. Jakubowski said that the timeline reflects that the roofing repairs will be done the last week

Administration Building

of July and the first week of August, provided that there is good weather. He said that accommodations will be made for some staff to go to the high school. Mr. Figueiredo asked if the work would be done this summer. Dr. Jakubowski said that it would go forward this summer. He anticipated that the entire \$900,000 which is left from the bond would not be spent on the modifications. Ms. Dunn said that she hoped that any extra funds could be used for some cosmetic fixes such as new carpeting and new dropped ceilings in various areas. Mr. Ruhl said that when the board began to talk about modifications to the administration building the issue of congestion in the business office area; he did not think that the modification planned would alleviate that problem. Dr. Jakubowski said that was true. Mr. Damato said that there were a few things that the board would be discussing in Executive Session with regard to those issues.

Budget Update – Ms. Dunn said that the Governor’s message would be given on March 10th and state aid figures will be released on March 12th. She said that a budget must be submitted to the County Superintendent by March 18th. Ms. Dunn said that this would allow the board to approve a budget at its regular meeting on March 17th. She said that public hearings on the budget can be held between March 30th and April 2nd. Ms. Dunn said that the County Superintendent has until March 30th to give final approval on the budget. She said that she has not heard much from Trenton other than to budget at current state aid levels. Ms. Dunn said that the latest news was that there may be a decrease in the district’s state aid levels. Dr. Jakubowski said that he and Ms. Dunn have discussed some strategies depending on what state aid is given to the district. He said that he is already getting calls from the Township to see where the district was. Dr. Jakubowski said that if the district’s state aid remains the same, with the strategies that are in place, the district will certainly be very fiscally responsible and taxpayer sensitive for the upcoming year. He said that if state aid is decrease, it will be more difficult. Ms. Dunn said that with the new funding formula the district was considered “not at adequacy” last year; she said that this was formula driven and she would know more when the state aid figures were received. Ms. Dunn said that it has been predicted that most budgets will be defeated this year and depending on if the district is “above” or “below” adequacy will determine the type of cuts that the municipality can make on a school budget. She did want the board to know that she and Mr. Vieira did speak to each principal, supervisor, and director with their budgets. Ms. Dunn said that she questioned them on their spending and the purposes of the expenditures. She said that the new regulations require that districts have processes for textbook adoption, rewriting curriculum guides, etc. Ms. Dunn said that when the budget is reviewed she wants to be able to expand on any budget line which may be questioned. Mr. Manochio asked if Ms. Dunn was projecting

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that the same budget would be maintained for the next school year. Ms. Dunn said that the schools were told that there was a "zero" increase for next year's budget. She said that the budget process for some of the individuals that she spoke to was a new thing. Mr. Manochio asked if all funds have been committed for expenditures for this school year. Ms. Dunn said that purchasing was cut off as of February 12th and there are some balances remaining on some budget lines. Dr. Jakubowski said that there are some administrators who have the mindset that if there are funds left over at the end of the year, they must spend that money. Ms. Dunn said it was her intent, through the one-on-one interaction, to see what was going on the individual buildings. She said that with all the new technology which is coming into the curriculum, there is less need for consumable supplies such as textbooks, paper, etc. Mr. Manochio felt that approximately 25% of supplies ordered are wasted and not used. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district's comparative costs for supplies are relatively low. He said that even though when Mrs. Lombardi left, two directors were put in place to handle curriculum, many of the other positions have been consolidated. Dr. Jakubowski said that supervisors are not considered administrative costs. Ms. Dunn said that the cost center is what determines an administrative costs and the district is still under the regional costs. Mrs. Gaglione said that in the past about facilities projects that has to be included in the budget; she did not believe that any of these projects have been done. Mrs. Gaglione said that one of her concerns was the lighting in the rec. gym at the high school. She said that when you are at an event in that facility, it is very difficult to see. Mrs. Gaglione said that it was her understanding that the athletic department at the high school has requested for many years that something be done about this problem. She wanted to know if there was anything in the budget for the upcoming school year to deal with this problem. Mrs. Gaglione said that someone mentioned to her that the bleachers in the big gym were going to be changed. She wanted to know what was happening with that. Ms. Dunn said that the bleacher project was in next year's budget. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the operations committee was aware of any major changes that need to happen in the coming year and if there is anything in the budget for next year, she asked Ms. Dunn to share it with the board. Mr. Magliacano said that the rec. gym was the original gym of the high school. He said that he has looked at the option of changing the light bulbs to a higher wattage and fixtures to a higher efficiency fixture but this cannot be done without running new electrical lines and this is a more extensive job. Mr. Magliacano said that he would have to price out what this would cost. Mrs. Gaglione said that it was her concern that students were throwing balls in the gym during baseball practice and it is hard to see detail. She did not know if changing all of the bulbs at one time might make a difference in the gym. Mrs. Gaglione thought that this was a hazard and she hoped that something could be done about it during the upcoming year. She asked Mr. Magliacano to share with the board what other projects would be done

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next year. Mr. Magliacano said that at this moment he is preparing a bid to change all backstops and the motors in the main and the rec. gyms. He said that the motors that put the baskets up and down are old and do not have safeties on them. Mr. Magliacano said that this project would have to be done over the summer. He said that playground paving and some roof work are also in the budget for next year. Dr. Jakubowski asked Ms. Dunn how much was put into the operation budget for next year. Ms. Dunn said that \$1.775 million was in the budget and another project included was Livingston School Intercom. Dr. Jakubowski said that he was well aware that the district has playgrounds that are old and to really redo a surface where the surface is milled and resurfaced, each playground would cost approximately \$500,000. He said that the district keeps trying to do repairs to the playground surfaces. Dr. Jakubowski said that it would be possible to spend \$4 or \$5 million to redo all of the playgrounds. He said that each year because of the tight budgets only projects that absolutely had to be done were put into the budget. Dr. Jakubowski said that there is only about 2% of the budget that is completely discretionary. Mr. Figueiredo asked if the roof work mentioned included the area in front of the cafeteria at the high school. Mr. Magliacano said that would be addressed before the end of this school year. Mr. Manochio asked which playground was in the worst shape. Dr. Jakubowski thought that probably Connecticut Farms playground was the worst. He said that the Livingston playground is the largest area and would cost the most to resurface. Mr. Ruhl asked how the Livingston playground project with the Tot Lot and the drainage went. Mr. Magliacano said that the Tot Lot has not yet been fixed; he said that there was a broken storm sewer from the school to the street which was corrected which had to be done before the Tot Lot could be addressed. He said that because of the slope of the property, the retaining wall could not be done by the present contractor because he was not State Contract certified to do the work but he was in the process of getting two quotes for the project. Mr. Magliacano said the Tot Lot project will require two separate contracts to complete the work. Mr. Manochio asked if a purchase order was cut for the repair of the flagpole in front of Connecticut Farms School. Mr. Magliacano said that he was waiting for a second quote for that job because Stuyvesant Avenue will have to be cut off to accommodate the bucket truck that is necessary to do the job. He said that this job will have to be done in coordination with the police department. Mr. Magliacano said the job would probably have to be done on the weekend. Mrs. Salazar said that she went to visit Washington School a few days ago and the playground at Washington is in relatively good shape but she thought that the boys and girls bathrooms on the second floor needed attention. She said that some of the stalls were taped shut the students could not use them. Mrs. Salazar said that she spoke to Mr. Hoyt about the SuccessMaker program as it seemed that Washington School was

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a little behind in the use of the program. She said that Washington School had received a donation of some computers but they were not compatible with the SuccessMaker program and some adjustments had to be made to the computers so that the program could be run on them. Dr. Jakubowski said that when the district uses Title I funds it must indicate that Title I schools are getting additional services that are not in the other schools. He said that over the past few years the district has been putting computers for SuccessMaker in the other schools but the Title I schools have more or the district may lose its Title I funds. Dr. Jakubowski said that Washington School has always been good at getting donations but the problem is that sometimes the computers are not compatible with the district's system. He said that all elementary schools have computers in the third and fourth grade classrooms. Dr. Jakubowski said that it was important for the board to look at the IT department as he felt that it should be expanded. He said that he has interviewed two people for positions. Dr. Jakubowski asked whether the district had received bids for technology. Mr. Damato said that the RFPs have not yet been posted. He said that the specifications have just been completed. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district needs a vendor that it can contact when there are issues. He said that he was looking to hire people for the IT department as soon as possible to help out in the IT department. Ms. Dunn said that she asked every building administrator to submit an inventory of all of their equipment per classroom so that the directors have inventories of what equipment is in what classroom. She said that this will help in the budget process as well as give the IT department to see what equipment was in each school. Mrs. Gaglione asked when the board needed to have the public hearing on the budget. Ms. Dunn said that she was not sure about the date but would let the board know in March after the budget document has been completed. She said that since the regular board meeting was on March 17th and the budget had to be to the County Superintendent for review the next day. Ms. Dunn said as soon as the state aid figures were received, the budget can be completed and the budget document will be forwarded to the board.

Test Scores – Dr. Jakubowski said that he met with Ms. Moutis, Ms. Lishak and the two middle school principals. He said that SuccessMaker and Waterford programs are doing well at the elementary schools. Dr. Jakubowski distributed an update written by Ms. Moutis regarding the progress of these programs. He said that in his conversation with elementary principals and elementary teachers indicates that the SuccessMaker program is still moving along great and the earlier grade teachers really love the Waterford program. Dr. Jakubowski said that these programs are supplemental work and students are not graded on any of it. He said that at the kindergarten and first grade level, teachers have mandatory conferences with parents and they do speak to parents about these

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programs. Dr. Jakubowski said that last year the third grade test scores were very good and all of the elementary schools in the district were very close. He hoped that this would also be the case in the third and fourth grade this year. Dr. Jakubowski said that some people may argue that using these programs is "teaching for the test" but he did not believe so but he did believe that it was "teaching drills for skills". He was very optimistic about the elementary scores for this year. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district cannot control when the State makes modifications or changes in the test. He said that Ms. Moutis met with the AAP teachers this past week and since most of them are part-time employees, she is modifying their schedules to let them know that all teachers must all work on Wednesday and Thursday and the rest of their schedules would be flexible. Dr. Jakubowski said that there was not one issue by any of the teachers with regard to this mandate. He felt that there were good teachers in the AAP program. Mr. Helmstetter said that Ms. Moutis update indicates that there is a lack of computers in grades three and four classrooms that use SuccessMaker. He did not think that only one computer with the SuccessMaker program in a classroom was enough. Dr. Jakubowski said that more computers will be purchased next year. Mr. Helmstetter wanted to know how many computers would be purchased. Ms. Dunn said that she did not know off the top of her head. Mr. Helmstetter thought that each classroom should have at least five computers. Mr. Manochio asked if Dr. Jakubowski thought that the SuccessMaker program was a key component in the third and fourth grade instruction. Dr. Jakubowski said the there are computers available in the computer labs at each school and the individual teachers must adjust and modify their classroom instruction accordingly. He said that it would be better if there were more computers in each classroom but this would require the installation of more lines. Dr. Jakubowski said that in the morning before school begins, some teachers give their students a note to be allowed to come to the classroom before class starts to work on SuccessMaker. He said that he would check with Ms. Moutis to see exactly how many computers are in each classroom at the present time. Ms. Dunn said that Ms. Moutis has an inventory of computer equipment by grade level and building. Mrs. Gaglione thought that there has been an increase in teachers "buying in" to using SuccessMaker because the teachers are seeing that the information which comes from the program is individualized to each student using the system and it helps to see where individual students are deficient. Dr. Jakubowski said that the teachers at Livingston, Washington and Battle Hill must make the greatest adjustment because those are the three schools now that as the student population changes, the scores have taken a little bit of a dip. Mr. Manochio said that individualized instruction is not a new concept. He believed that students learn from other students more so than any machine that you put in front of them. Mr. Manochio

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was anxious to see the fourth grade scores to see if the growth he hopes to see has been achieved. Mr. Tatum said that when teachers get the data from SuccessMaker, it is for the purpose of planning classroom instruction and the program is only as good as what the classroom teacher does with the results. He said the technology and the teachers embracing the system are the most important components but unfortunately sometimes the teachers become over-reliant on the program. Mr. Tatum said that Mr. Perkins had asked at a earlier meeting about what accessibility parents have to the data received from the SuccessMaker program. He said that he spoke to Ms. Moutis and indicated to her that she should have made it very clear that this data is not really something that should be shared with parents and that the data should be used by the classroom teacher for planning purposes and the management of the classroom instruction. Mrs. Gaglione said that we are getting into a technology-driven age and she felt that not only in our district but across the country that the wiring in older schools are not compatible with all of the technology. She felt that the public must understand that schools must be updated to get them up to par to be in a "technology-driven" age. Dr. Jakubowski said that the test scores at the middle schools are the district's weakest area. He said that he sat and discussed the test scores with Ms. Lishak, Ms. Hart, Ms. Ford and Mr. Ghiretti. Dr. Jakubowski said that mathematics scores at Kawameeh had dropped so significantly that he was not sure that the entire test was given to the students but that was not the case. He said that the GEPA prep cycle at the middle schools that was instituted years ago was designed as a "test besting" course and was not based on the sixth or seventh grade math curriculum. Dr. Jakubowski said that after the course was instituted, the scores started to go up. He said over the past couple of years, Mrs. Lombardino saw that the math curriculum in the sixth and seventh grade, in particular, was getting so extensive due to State requirements. Dr. Jakubowski said that some of the curriculum started to be filtered into the GEPA prep and he told the math department that this needed to stop because this was not the purpose of the GEPA prep cycle course. He said that the GEPA prep cycle was a "test besting", "drill for skill" and all of the things that students need to do to pass the mathematics portion of the test. Dr. Jakubowski said that the seventh grade scores at Kawameeh last year were significantly higher than Burnet in mathematics and he said that he needed to see that when this year's eighth graders take the test what the result will be. He felt that if the eighth grade scores come back this year and they were close, he felt this meant that there was a real issue in what is happening in eighth grade math classes at Kawameeh. Dr. Jakubowski said he thought that in the sixth and seventh grade there will be a one half year each in six or twelve cycles; English and Mathematics. He said that all students will have the same amount of time in Math and English prior to taking the test. Dr. Jakubowski said that this year in grade eight at Burnet there is a cycle that any student who did not pass

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the test in the seventh grade, one of the eighth grade elective areas was a combination Math/English Test Besting cycle class. He said that this class was to go over the things that the students needed to know to pass the test and it was not to include any of the eighth grade Math or English curriculum. Dr. Jakubowski said that scores were better when these types of classes were given to students. He felt that these classes were to prepare students how to take the test. Mr. Figueiredo asked how long the cycle class was in the eighth grade for those students who have not passed the test. Dr. Jakubowski said that he would like to increase the sixth and seventh grade cycles to 18 weeks of math and 18 weeks of English. He said that the cycles in the eighth grade are half year electives. Dr. Jakubowski said that he wanted the course to be the first half of the school year. He said that the GEPA prep is run after school in January, February and March. Dr. Jakubowski said that the only test that the students really need to pass was the eleventh grade test in order to get a diploma. He said that Ms. Lishak is looking at programs similar to SuccessMaker that can be utilized by middle school students. Mr. Figueiredo asked if this was going to be put in place for the 2009-2010 school year. Dr. Jakubowski said it would be. Mr. Figueiredo asked if this curriculum would also be available at Kawameeh Middle School. Dr. Jakubowski said that it would be implemented at both middle schools. He said that Ms. Lishak would be coming to the March worksession and give a presentation on NJQSAK and the new curriculum guides.

NJQSAC – Dr. Jakubowski said that at the March worksession Ms. Lishak will be distributing to the board members the information which has been distributed to all faculty regarding NJQSAC. He said that Ms. Lishak has had a number of meetings regarding NJQSAC with administrators and faculty. Dr. Jakubowski said that a committee must be established and the committee will be comprised of himself, Ms. Dunn, Mr. Magliacano, Ms. Moutis, Ms. Lishak; one teacher; one building principal and one board member. He said that every member of the committee must attend every meeting. Dr. Jakubowski said that he was pretty sure that he would be choosing Mr. Salvatore as the building principal and he asked the board if anyone was interested to let Mrs. Gaglione know and a selection would be made. Dr. Jakubowski said that at every faculty meeting the building principals are talking about tiered instruction and curriculum in preparation for NJQSAC. He said that most of the NJQSAC is comprised of checklists but the most difficulty piece of the evaluation will be Operations because the monitors will come in and look at the facilities. Dr. Jakubowski said that in terms of the governance piece, the monitors will look at policies, etc. He said that the test score piece the district has no control over and the curriculum guides will all be put on the district's website because they must be accessible to

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anyone. Dr. Jakubowski said that beside the committee, Mr. Damato and Mr. Tatum will also be involved. He said that he thought that a member of the community was also needed on the committee but from talking to other towns in Union County that have already gone through NJQSAC, they did not indicate that this was necessary. Dr. Jakubowski said he did not know if he would choose one of the PTA presidents to be on the committee. He said that NJQSAC is comprised of personnel, fiscal, operations, governance and curriculum. Mrs. Gaglione asked when NJQSAC will begin. Dr. Jakubowski said that the first committee will be right after the board election in April. Mrs. Gaglione asked when the final results would come to the district. Dr. Jakubowski thought that the results would be delivered to the district sometime next fall. He said that right after the Townwide Teachers' Meeting in September, all building principals will be given an agenda of items which must be included during their building meetings. Dr. Jakubowski said that the first two hours of the first Professional Development Day will be geared toward something toward NJQSAC for all staff and the middle and high school staffs will also have an additional two hours of instruction on NJQSAC on the first Professional Development Day. He said that Ms. Lishak will discuss all of this with the board at the worksession in March. Dr. Jakubowski said that Ms. Lishak went through NJQSAC last year in the district she came from. He said that this was one of the reasons he was excited about bringing Ms. Lishak on board. Mrs. Gaglione said that during NJQSAC the monitors would be going through the district's policy manual to make sure that they are updated. She said that some of the policies have already been put on the website. Mr. Perkins said that in theory the entire policy manual including updates should be on the website but that is one of the things that the district has not had the resources to transform from print to be posted on the website. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the district was in compliance and the policies are up to date. Mr. Perkins said that he could not say that. Mr. Damato said that the district has had Strauss Esmay to review the district's policies and Strauss Esmay has given the district policy templates. He said that those policy templates are in the process of being reviewed and to date only a couple of sections have been completed. Mr. Damato said that there are several sections that need to be customized for the Union Board of Education. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district still gets updates from Strauss Esmay of policies that the board must adopt. Mr. Perkins said that NJ School Boards will review the policy manual and he thought that the board should forward the entire manual for review as this is part of what the district pays dues for. Dr. Jakubowski said that Strauss Esmay did recreate some policy templates which were particular to the district. Mr. Damato said that there are a whole set of procedures that go along with the policies that should be custom to the district. Mr. Perkins said that a NJ School Boards review will tell the board what areas are missing and that should be where the board starts in the update of the policy manual. Dr. Jakubowski said

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he agreed and he believed that the district was up to date with all mandated policies. Mr. Perkins said that he has a serious issue with Strauss Esmay. He said that the district has paid money to the consultant that essentially when policies are mandated by regulations, it was his philosophy was that the district take the words of the regulation as closely as possible follow the regulation as a policy. Mr. Perkins said that the purpose for doing this was because when statewide regulations are parroted the specific language of the regulation, if it has ever been tested, has a juris prudence that follows it and there is now a built in interpretation by the courts, etc. that need not be justified. He said that Strauss Esmay literally came in and reworded the policy manual because they thought that it would be easier for people to understand the policies if they are reworded. Mr. Perkins said he could not disagree with this procedure more because it did not enhance the understandability of the regulations. He felt that the district needed to write policy with the anticipation of a legal contest. Mr. Perkins thought that the work that they did was detrimental to the interpretation of the policies.

Mrs. Gaglione said that it was necessary for the board, itself, to have "Board Goals". She said that she brought up this matter about eight months ago and she was advised that the board had goals. Dr. Jakubowski said that the board did have goals. Mrs. Gaglione thought that the individual board members should make suggestions of goals and forward them to her. She believed that one of the goals should be that the board be certified by taking credited courses and she knew that some of the board members had issues with that. Mrs. Gaglione thought that one of the goals could be that every year members of the board take at least two credited courses. She said that the courses are available during Convention in Atlantic City as well as on line. Dr. Jakubowski said that the last time he sat down with a board president and to establish board goals was with Mr. Manochio. He said that when Ms. Lishak and he were going over NJQSAC information, he did find board goals for 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, which looked pretty good. Dr. Jakubowski said that he would forward these goals to the board member in his Hotline this weekend. He agreed with Mrs. Gaglione that the board should establish two or three goals of things the group hopes to achieve in the upcoming year. Mrs. Gaglione asked that each board member forward three goals to her and she would compile a list of all suggestions for goals. She said that after she had gone to the NJQSAC conference, she came to the board and was told that the board did have goals. Dr. Jakubowski said that sometimes people confuse board goals with district goals. He said that the district has 14 districtwide goals and this will also be a part of NJQSAC. Mrs. Gaglione asked Mrs. Salazar as chairperson of the Superintendent Evaluation Committee if she could please distribute evaluation forms to the other members of the board for them to complete. Mrs. Salazar said that she would distribute forms next week.

Marking Periods – Union High School – Dr. Jakubowski distributed information regarding changing the marking periods at Union High School, which was prepared by Ms. Hart and Mr. Gibbons for review by the board. He said that he supported Mr. Fortunato because he believed in having semesters at Union High School. Dr. Jakubowski said that Mr. Gibbons really believes that there should be marking periods. He said that most districts have marking periods. Dr. Jakubowski said that he thought this could be started in September 2009. He said that he still needed to speak to Mr. Gibbons about mid-term exams and final exams and it will depend on what material each exam will include how the exams will be graded. Dr. Jakubowski said that that he wanted the transition to be done right. He said that only problem was cycle courses that were only half year courses. Dr. Jakubowski said some of these cycle courses are very good and he would hate to see the high school lose. He said that he met with all of the guidance counselors at the high school and they are all very excited about the transition. Dr. Jakubowski said that he would give the board more information about the change as he receives it but he wanted to let the board know what has been done so far in case they received questions from the community. Ms. McNeil said that in her district there are semesters, a mid term and final exams. She said that students may be exempt from the final exam if they have four "A's" or three "A's" and a "B".

Extended Day Program - Dr. Jakubowski distributed an update on the first week of the Extended Day Program which was just completed at the high school. He said that he had a conversation with Mrs. Guilfoyle who is one of the three administrators that are in charge of this new program. Dr. Jakubowski said that he had received one letter complaining about the Extended Day Program. He believed that it was written by one of the students in the program who attended the first day and did not want to continue attending. Dr. Jakubowski said that Ms. Guilfoyle said that the average attendance was 90%. He said that there was a good crowd at the parent orientation the first night of class. Dr. Jakubowski said that the periods would be rotated so that the students do not always have their subjects in the same order each night. He said that the goal is still curriculum and to get the students out of the program as soon as possible. Dr. Jakubowski said that the students in the program are those who do not conform to the rules and regulations in the regular high school program. He said that Ms. Guilfoyle was chosen as one of the administrators so that she can evaluate the teachers and looking at the curriculum in the program. Dr. Jakubowski said that this program is a lot different from the old Sundown program. He said that that there was more focus on what the students are learning, there was more individualized instructions, Mr. Gibbons wants the administrators walking around

Extended Day Program

to the five classes as the classes are going on. Dr. Jakubowski said that there were some positive changes. Mr. Gibbons has told students that if they are doing well, they may be able to come into school to participate in a ninth period class such as JROTC, for example. He was optimistic that this program could work. Mrs. McNeil asked if any students in the program this year, would be able to go back to the regular program this school year. Dr. Jakubowski said he did not know that at this time. He said that the other students in the high school are watching and he did not want these students to think that students would only be put in Extended Day for a few days. Dr. Jakubowski said he wanted the students to have to attend for a long enough period of time so that it is not looked on as a serious matter. Mrs. McNeil asked if the board could get something in writing which indicates the criteria and the goals of the Extended Day Program. Dr. Jakubowski said he would ask Mr. Gibbons to get something to the board. Mr. Manochio said he felt that it was good that the administrators were not just sitting in the office, but visiting the classrooms during class sessions so that students know that there are administrators there. Dr. Jakubowski said that this program has a different "focus" than the old Sundown program. Mrs. Gaglione thought that the letter received was from a student who felt that this was an "isolation" situation and it was a negative experience. She said that she did respond to the letter and advised that it was the observation of the board that this program was to create a positive situation and not a negative one. Mrs. Gaglione said that she did not go into the specifics of why this program was created and she advised the writer that they were free to forward any comments to her with regard to the program in the future. Dr. Jakubowski said he had not received a call from any parent appealing any student who was placed in the program.

Budget Strategies – Dr. Jakubowski said that in the past the district has spent a considerable amount of money preparing a newsletter regarding the budget. He said that as the district is using its website more and more, he wondered if the newsletter could just appear on the website instead of doing a mailing. Dr. Jakubowski said that he would also plan to do several programs on Channel 34 to speak about the budget and urge the community to support the budget. He said that he would also go to a faculty meeting at each school as he has done in the past. Dr. Jakubowski asked Ms. Dunn how much the newsletter has cost in the past. Ms. Dunn said that the cost of printing and mailing is approximately \$5,000. Mrs. Gaglione thought that the district needed to do a mailing because she did not know how many families have access to the internet. Mr. Perkins agreed but he did not know how many people really watch Channel 34. He suggested that e-mail addresses of district parents be collected so that information can be distributed electronically. Mr. Perkins said that this would give the district a data base of parent e-mails. Dr. Jakubowski said that a

Budget Strategies

decision on this did not have to be made at this meeting. He said that the newsletter usually consists of a page which lists polling places; the school calendar for the upcoming school year; and several pages which include facts about the district schools. Dr. Jakubowski said that parents receive this newsletter once a year and it is a form of public relations for the district. He said that this newsletter is posted on the webpage. Dr. Jakubowski said that the newsletter is not hard to prepare once all of the "numbers" are received. Mr. Manochio asked who the biggest voting block in the community was. Dr. Jakubowski said he thought that senior citizens were the biggest block but the newsletter is only sent to parents of students in the district. Mr. Helmstetter said he thought that the newsletter should still be mailed. Mrs. Gaglione said that she thought in the future it could be distributed electronically but she did not feel that the district was there yet. She said that many school districts are "building" their data base of parent e-mails. Mrs. Gaglione thought that this information could also be used in the future to get messages to parents regarding school closings or other emergencies. She thought that the IT Department should be able to set up some sort of "reverse 911" system. Mr. Figueiredo thought that a way of getting this information was to ask for an e-mail address from parents who are registering new students or when parents are filling out paperwork at the beginning of the new school year. Mrs. Gaglione thought that was a good idea but someone had to decide who would maintain the data base and whose job it will be to input the data.

Dr. Jakubowski asked the board if they had a problem with hiring additional IT personnel. He said that he has interviewed several people. Mrs. Gaglione said that she did not have a problem with it as long as the district is not penalized for being out of compliance. Dr. Jakubowski asked if IT personnel went under administrative costs. Ms. Dunn said it was. Dr. Jakubowski asked if the administrative costs were still well below. Ms. Dunn said as of now the district was below. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district may want to wait to hire additional personnel until July 1st. Mrs. Gaglione asked Dr. Jakubowski to let the board know what the new individuals responsibilities will be and where they will be located. Dr. Jakubowski said he would.

Mr. Figueiredo asked about the staff development sessions that have been cancelled. Dr. Jakubowski said that staff development sessions were not cancelled. He said that he has spoken to Ms. Mangarella, the staff development coordinator. Dr. Jakubowski said that all of the money that was put in the original budget for the 2008-2009 school year staff development has been expended. He said that Ms. Mangarella kept scheduling sessions and central

office was not really looking at the budget. Dr. Jakubowski said that when it was discovered that the account was over budget, Ms. Lishak told Ms. Mangarella that for the time being until she had the opportunity to sit down with her and discuss strategy, the sessions needed to be cancelled. He said that Ms. Mangarella took it upon herself to send an e-mail to everyone in the district. Dr. Jakubowski said that Ms. Mangarella has already been spoken to and she did indicate that she misunderstood what Ms. Lishak had said to her. He said that he has gone over the list of sessions that Ms. Mangarella still wanted to schedule and the things like yoga, palates, etc., if individuals want to pay to attend, then those could go forward and if not, they would be cancelled. Dr. Jakubowski said the sessions which he felt needed to go forward would be scheduled. Mr. Figueiredo asked if that information would be disseminated to all staff. He said that he has had staff members approach him to ask what happened to staff development. Mr. Figueiredo said that the staff is still under the assumption that everything has been cancelled. Dr. Jakubowski said that he and Ms. Lishak went over the list and Ms. Lishak would be meeting with Ms. Mangarella next week and then communication would be sent to all staff to indicate which sessions are still available for staff development. Dr. Jakubowski said that there were some sessions that were required for NJQSAC that could not be cancelled.

Mrs. Gaglione said that the board did not make any concrete decision about Central-5 but she did not know how much more it would cost or how much more difficult it would be to incorporate solar energy in the plan. She said that the board had to approach the taxpayers regarding this project and she thought that it might not be a bad idea to put solar energy in one of the district's buildings. Dr. Jakubowski said that it was not a bad idea. He said that the Morris Union Jointure went solar in their new facility but there have been some issues with it. Mr. Damato said that he has already discussed this with Mr. Potter and Mr. Potter is actively seeking proposals for this purpose. He said in addition to that, there is now some additional grant money available if solar energy is being utilized. Mr. Damato said that he would pursue all avenues to see if it could be make it to the district's cost advantage. Mrs. Gaglione said that she met an individual from Union County who was the only one in the county who does solar and he advised that there was grant money available for the purpose. Mr. Damato said that the central office administrators and Mr. Potter have put together a packet of information for the Union Township Planning Board. He said that under the Administrative Code, the district is required to give certain submissions to the Planning Board for a forty-five (45) day comment period. Mr. Damato said that during that time the Planning Board can make written comments to the Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education by and through the Township Engineer and all of which should somehow been considered by the Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education can

also make recommendations to the Board of Education about the considerations. He said that after he made the submission to the Planning Board, he did speak to the Township Engineer who thought it might be helpful if Mr. Damato appeared at the Planning Board meeting last Thursday night to make a brief presentation and gave them an overview of the Central-Five project. He said that he did make the presentation but he did not bring Mr. Potter or anyone else with him to the Planning Board Meeting. Mr. Damato said that he spoke for about ten or fifteen minutes on a general overview of what the project consisted of in terms of square footage, classrooms, what it will be used for, grant funding, other funding, the schematic layout, the site plan layout, the rear yard setbacks, etc. He said that the Planning Board did ask about the Central-Five concept versus a neighborhood school and he told the Planning Board that when the school was designed so that it can be used either way. Mr. Damato said that if it is the board's desire in the future to return Central-Five to a neighborhood school, it can be done. He said that the plans were very well received by the Planning Board and there were only a few questions and comments made by the Planning Board. Mr. Damato said that he told the Planning Board that he welcomed their comments. Mr. Perkins said it would have been helpful if the board had known in advance that Mr. Damato was going before the Planning Board. Mr. Damato said he appreciated the criticism. Dr. Jakubowski said that he felt it was time for the board to seriously start thinking about what it believes is in the best interest of the district as to whether or not Central-Five will remain as it is or return to a neighborhood elementary school. He said that there will be a lot of planning that will need to be done if Central-Five becomes a preschool through grade 5 school again. Dr. Jakubowski said that there have been some questions as to whether the district would be better served if the system was elementary – preschool to grade 5; grades 6 and 7 all at Kawameeh; grade 8 and 9 all at Burnet and grade 10 through grade 12 at Union High School. He said that this would not alleviate busing issues. Dr. Jakubowski said that if Central-Five was returned to a neighborhood school, the district's deficiencies in transportation would no longer exist but he could not recommend the district going up to two miles for transportation at the elementary level. He said that the district no longer needs a central school to be an integrated community any longer. Mrs. Gaglione asked about the district's compliance regarding transportation. Ms. Dunn said that the district is just below the transportation efficiency rating. She said that the district is currently at 1.16 and it should be at 1.20. Mrs. Gaglione asked what the consequences were if the district is not at the efficiency rating. Ms. Dunn said that the ultimate penalty would be no transportation or a reduction in transportation aid. Mrs. Gaglione asked how much money that would be. Ms. Dunn said that she would have to read the regulation to get the formula. She said that the County Superintendent was very impressed because the district is really not that much under. Ms. Dunn said that

the biggest issue was the courtesy transportation which is 1.5 miles versus 2 miles at the elementary level. She said for maximum efficiency the district would have to route 72 students on a 54 passenger bus, because it is assumed that not all of the 72 students would be riding the 54 passenger bus.

Mrs. Gaglione said she did not know if the board was aware but her children ride the bus home from the high school and a few weeks ago she became aware that there is a bus short and the students are either told that they cannot get on the bus because there are too many students or there are three students sitting in a two passenger seat and there are some students sitting on the floor. She let it go because she thought that there may have just been a shortage for that day, however, it has been an ongoing situation. Mrs. Gaglione asked why this was the situation and whether or not it will continue. Ms. Dunn said that it was not an issue with buses but it was a staffing issue. She said that on a regular basis the transportation is down 5 or 6 drivers each day and the district is having trouble hiring substitute drivers. Ms. Dunn said that there are extra buses available but there are no drivers. She said that the drivers have been "squishing" the runs and sometimes there are two or three route together on one route. Ms. Dunn said that if the bus becomes overcrowded the drivers are not supposed to allow the students to come on the bus and the students are to be instructed to wait for the next bus. She said that students should not be sitting on the floor of the bus. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the students would have to wait until 4 o'clock to come home. Ms. Dunn said that in the morning there are enough vehicles and drivers and even if there is a shortage of drivers, the district has the availability to put other people on the road. She said in the afternoon, especially at the high school, there are at least 5 to 7 buses doing afterschool activities. Ms. Dunn said that there is a shortage of buses for all of the school runs in the afternoon. She said that there have been days when there are 10 to 12 drivers and aids absence and the transportation supervisor, the transportation dispatcher and other non transportation staff have been filling in driving buses. Ms. Dunn said that the district has been advertising for bus drivers. Mrs. Gaglione said it was her concern that if the district gets the students to school that they also be able to get home safely. Mrs. Dunn said that the drivers should not be letting too many students on the bus. She asked Mrs. Gaglione to give her the bus number so that she could address this situation on Monday with the driver. Mrs. Gaglione said that the safety of the students going home from school should come first and if necessary, the afterschool groups will have to be late to their events. Dr. Jakubowski said that the Union County Athletic Association because of frustration with school districts being late all of the time have established a policy that within 15 minutes of the time the team arrives at the site it must be ready to start. He said that he received calls from many of the coaches who were concerned that the students would not have time to warm

up before a game or match and this may cause an increase in injuries, etc. Dr. Jakubowski said that he spoke to Ms. Dunn to see if something different could be done regarding transportation for sporting events. He said that he has also instructed that if more than one team is going to the same town for events, that teams go on one bus rather than splitting teams to try to alleviate the problem.

Mrs. Gaglione said she has spoken to Dr. Jakubowski about the district possibly going to an outside contractor for custodial and maintenance services. Mr. Manochio asked if Mrs. Gaglione was talking about privatization. Mrs. Gaglione said she was and she was not sure that the district should not start looking at this issue again to make sure that the district can get the quality and control. She said that she knew there were several companies that provide this service and she has met with them in the past along with Mr. Damato. Mrs. Gaglione said that these companies would consider rehiring all of the district's present custodial and maintenance staff. She said that the company would come into the district and go through a custodian's day with him to evaluate how long certain tasks should take and then the company would come up with a "task orientation". Mrs. Gaglione said that she would like to get individual board member's opinions on this. She asked Mr. Damato if it would be possible for the district to go out to several companies to get a districtwide review. Mr. Damato said that it would be possible to ask companies to come in to look at the district's operation without obligation but in order to award a contract like this, the district would have to bid for the service and draft a specification. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the board could have two companies give us an evaluation or did the board have to start with one. Mr. Damato said that any number of companies could be asked to evaluate the department. Mrs. Gaglione said that she would at least like to have two companies come in to review the operation of the custodial staff and see what the results would be. Mr. Helmstetter said that the board has discussed this issue in the past and he was dead set against this. Mr. Manochio asked if there would be a charge for a company to come in to do an assessment. Mr. Damato said that the company is ultimately looking to get the district's business and they are very happy to evaluate the operation and give an assessment in writing. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district went through this several months ago with ARAMARK on the issue of privatization of custodial and maintenance services. He said that the concept is that the company will provide the district with a service and in many cases, they will hire existing district employees at a lower rate than what they are presently being paid. Dr. Jakubowski said that the employees would now be working for the outside company and would no longer be covered by the district's health benefit plan, etc. and there certainly would be a cost savings to the district at least up front. He said that at the end of two or three years the company can raise the fees

however much they want to. Dr. Jakubowski said that the down side to this is that many of the people who are custodians and maintenance workers live in the community. He said that he spent a lot of time discussing this issue with ARAMARK and if he thought it would have been beneficial to the district, he would have moved forward. Mr. Damato said that the fear is always to dismantle the entire custodial operation including the employees and then have a third party come in and do the job. He said that the district would have no control over the escalation of costs because it is controlled by a bid. Mr. Damato said that it would be a similar situation to the district's solid waste removal costs which have grown dramatically. Dr. Jakubowski said to have an independent company come in and see what the costs would be, etc., certainly would not be the worst thing to do. He said that the last time that this issue was discussed all of a sudden there was a greater concern from people who were working about their responsibilities. Mr. Damato said that he wanted to stress that this would be a long term commitment. Mr. Magliacano said that the district owns a lot of equipment and would the district have to turn over the equipment to the new company. He said if there are repairs to make on that equipment, which would be responsible for the repairs. Mr. Magliacano said that the district uses a certain type of cleaner, paper towels, etc. and the new company will be bringing in their own products and the district may not be satisfied with those products but the district would have no control over that. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the district could contact another company besides ARAMARK. Mr. Damato said he did not think that ARAMARK ever submitted a written proposal to the district. Dr. Jakubowski said that they did. Mrs. Gaglione asked Ms. Dunn how hard it would be for her to put together a report which indicates how much the annual cost for custodians is along with benefits and overtime which is associated with board functions and not those associated with the athletic department. She asked if Ms. Dunn could just give her a figure for overtime that is associated with work and how much is associated with basketball games, PTA functions, snow removal, etc. Ms. Dunn said that it will take time because right now there is one custodial overtime account for independent locations and that would mean that she would have to go through every single time sheet and compute the dollars allocated to whether it is an in-house function or an outside function. She said that she could give the board a figure which was the total amount of overtime. Mrs. Gaglione asked if an outside company would also be able to take over the maintenance department and do outside work. Mr. Damato said that they would be able to monitor any snow removal, litter control, etc. He said that ARAMARK does have both operations and you can contract either/or or both. Mrs. Gaglione asked if the board wanted information for both custodians and maintenance workers. Mr. Manochio asked why Mrs. Gaglione was taking up this issue at this

time and if there was something specific that she sees that she is not happy about. Mrs. Gaglione said that there was something that she sees that she is not happy with. Mr. Perkins asked if Mrs. Gaglione could share that with the board. Mrs. Gaglione said that she did not think that every custodian was doing their part in every building. Mr. Helmstetter asked if it would be helpful for someone to say to an individual "do your job better". Mrs. Gaglione said that when she was a student, every custodian that worked was proud of their building and they wanted to do a good job because they wanted to keep the children and the employees clean and happy. Mr. Helmstetter asked if Mrs. Gaglione to "sit" on his custodians to do a better job. Mrs. Gaglione said that she has been in the district for 17 years watching what was going on. Mr. Manochio asked Mrs. Gaglione if she meant that services to the schools has declined. Mrs. Gaglione said that she did not think that the quality was where it should be in the district. She thought that from a business perspective it was necessary to have an independent company give the district an assessment of the services. Mr. Ruhl said that maybe all that needs to be done is to go down the "chain of command" because he does see the lack of pride in some of the schools that he has visited. He said that teachers have approached him about issues in their buildings. Mr. Figureido said that the food service in his district has been privatized for a few years and he said that it has been chaotic and the quality has deteriorated. He said that the administrators are not the bosses of the food service workers. Mr. Figureido said that people from the food service company telling the building administrators how they need to run the cafeteria schedule, what has to be done and what will not be done. He said the quality has deteriorated. Mr. Figureido said that there has been talk in his district of privatizing the custodial services next year. He said that in his particular school there are conscientious, good custodians who are going to quit because they will be taking a cut in pay. Mr. Figureido said that this is demeaning to an employee that has worked diligently. He said that what will end up happening is that the administrators will lose control of that aspect of their building. Mr. Figureido said that it is an initial cost saver but when the contract is renewed the costs skyrocket and the employees do not get better. Mrs. Gaglione wanted to know who is responsible for the custodians in a particular building. She knows that the building principal has a say but then there is the head of the custodians. Mrs. Gaglione asked who are the custodians pleasing? Are they pleasing the building principal? Or are they supposed to please central office? Dr. Jakubowski said that the custodians report to the building principal. He said in terms of transfers, it would be the Director of Operations and Maintenance through the Superintendent's Office who would be responsible. Dr. Jakubowski said that the principal is involved with the evaluation of the head custodian and the head custodian evaluates the custodians who work under him. He said it is the head custodian, during the course of the day, who instructs the custodians what to do. Mr. Tatum said

when he was a building principal, he met with his custodians on a monthly basis and told them what needed to be done on a day-to-day basis. He said when he needed the support of central office that is when he contacted the Director of Operations or the Superintendent. Mr. Tatum said that he did evaluate the head custodian and the head custodian had an input in the evaluations of the those custodians who worked for him or her and then the evaluations were brought to him. He said the evaluations would be discussed and "signed off" on the evaluation. Mr. Tatum said that when he met with a custodian, he would always tell him or her that when an evaluation was received from the head custodian, if indeed, the head custodian and the custodian had agreed on the evaluation as long as he did not see anything in error, then he gladly signed the evaluation and submitted them to central office. Dr. Jakubowski said that the building principals have even more "say" than they ever had before regarding the transfer of custodians. He said that sometimes transfers are made because people do not get along; he said that there are building principals who may not like the head custodian in their building. Dr. Jakubowski said that he believed that the evening custodial staff needed to be monitored either by the head custodian of the building or by the Director of Operations on a regular basis. He said this was his recommendation. Dr. Jakubowski stated that Mrs. Gaglione should get a consensus of the board as to whether they wanted to move forward with having the department evaluated by an outside vendor or if the board would like to see some changes as to how the department is monitored. Mr. Tatum said that when he visits a building and he sees something that he feels is out of order, the first person he addresses is the building principal because he believes that the building principal should be the one to be responsible to address the head custodian just as he did as a principal and then he makes sure that he advises Mr. Magliacano so that he is aware of everything that he sees in a building that he has a concern about. Mr. Tatum said that Mr. Magliacano then follows through with the custodial staff. Dr. Jakubowski said that there is no question that there are employees who do not take as much pride in their work as they did at one time. Mr. Manochio said that he would hate to indict the entire group for what a few individuals are doing. Mrs. Gaglione said that she thought something had to be done either through privatization or corrective action. She said that it was not fair for the individuals who were working diligently to be picking up another individuals workload. Mr. Manochio thought that Dr. Jakubowski's idea to monitor the evening custodial staff on a regular basis was a good idea. Dr. Jakubowski said that at the next head custodians' meeting, he would like to speak to the group and advise them that the board had a lengthy discussion at the mid-year Planning Session about once again looking into privatization of the department. He said that the head custodians should be

walking through their buildings each morning to monitor what was done the night before. Dr. Jakubowski said that custodians do not get tenure. He said he would like to try it this way first. Mrs. McNeil said in her district there have been some problems and there is now a log so that if a teacher has a problem it is written in the log and the head custodian has to come to evaluate the problem. She said that this allows the building principal to be aware that the custodians are on top of the problems. Mrs. McNeil said that she would not like to have the district give up control of the department. Mrs. Gaglione asked the board if they would agree to take Dr. Jakubowski's suggestion to see if there is a change and if the board feels that the issue should be taken up again in May, then the board will move forward to get an assessment from an outside vendor. The board agreed. Mrs. Salazar thanked Mrs. Gaglione for bringing up this issue for discussion. She felt that the monitoring of the situation was necessary.

Dr. Jakubowski brought up an issue that arose from the publishing of a photo in the Suburban News. He said that the DARE officers met with the students in the photo to talk about whether the students were displaying "gang" signs or not. Dr. Jakubowski said that Mr. Tsirikos also met with the students and their parents. He said that the person who took the photo works for the Suburban News and she requested that the paper publish the photo.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Moved by Mr. Perkins, seconded by that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss the following subject matters, contract negotiations and personnel matters 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.

- AYE: Mr. Abraham, Mr. Figueiredo, Mr. Helmstetter, Mr. Manochio, Mrs. McNeil, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Ruhl, Mrs. Salazar and Mrs. Gaglione
 - NAY: None
 - ABSTAIN: None
- MOTION WAS CARRIED

THE BOARD RETURNED TO PUBLIC SESSION AT 1:00 P.M.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no further business before the board, it was moved by Mr. Ruhl, seconded by Mrs. McNeil that the meeting be adjourned at 1:00 p.m. All present voting yes.

Respectfully submitted

JAMES J. DAMATO
BOARD SECRETARY