

UNION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORKSESSION AGENDA
MAY 13, 2008

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

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

ABSENT AT ROLL CALL: Mr. Gary Abraham and Mrs. Linda Gaglione, President

In the absence of Mrs. Gaglione, the meeting was called to order by Mrs. McNeil 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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mrs. McNeil asked each board member to review the minutes of the Organization Meeting of April 29, 2008 to be approved at the regular meeting next week.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Damato stated that all communications have been referred to the appropriate committee for action.

Dr. Jakubowski stated that there were be additional communications that will be included on the regular meeting agenda next Tuesday. He said that they would be sent home in the Friday packet.

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

Mr. Figueiredo presented the education/student discipline committee agenda. He stated that the committee had met earlier in the evening and met with two of the assistant principals from Union High School; Mr. Kloc and Mr. Shaw. Mr. Figueiredo said that the committee received a lot of information from them. He said that Mr. Kloc expressed interest in meeting with the other assistant principals so that a structured plan could be set up for the next school year. Mr. Figueiredo said that the committee asked Mr. Kloc and Mr. Shaw what problems

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

they saw at the high school such as discipline problems or problems in the hallways. Both of them said that there is a higher rate of discipline problems with the ninth graders coming to their office and they said that this was to be expected. Mr. Figueiredo said that the assistant principals will be following the same group of students through the grade levels in the high school and this allows the assistant principals to develop relationships with students and parents. He said that many of the problems come down to classroom management issues. Mr. Figueiredo thought there may be a need for professional development instruction regarding classroom management offered during a staff development day or have the issue addressed at a faculty meeting. He said that Mr. Kloc and Mr. Shaw did mention that there are certain teachers that have a higher incidence of discipline problems.

Mr. Figueiredo said that Mr. Kloc and Mr. Shaw are monitoring in the hallways approximately two periods per day. He said that the subject of bringing back the Sundown program was also discussed with Mr. Kloc and Mr. Shaw but done differently than it was before and making counseling a part of the program to try to reach the students that are chronic problems. Mr. Figueiredo also thought that there had to be an attempt made by the guidance counselors to reach out to students who have problems. He said that Mr. Kloc and Mr. Shaw both commented that some students only see their counselors when it is time to schedule classes for the next school year. Mrs. McNeil said Mr. Kloc and Mr. Shaw commented that they wanted to get more involved with classroom observations. Dr. Jakubowski said that no one says that the assistant principals cannot evaluate a teacher even though it is not a part of their job description. He said that the reason it was not made part of the job description was because the district needed to establish something different than what a Vice Principal's duties are. Dr. Jakubowski said that all of the assistant principals have an administrator's certification and they have the ability to go into a classroom and observe at any time and write up a formal observation report. He said that he would meet with the assistant principals to clarify this point that there would not be an issue with the Association regarding this matter. Mr. Manochio thought it was a good idea for the assistant principals to do classroom observations. Dr. Jakubowski said that since it is not a part of their job description, the assistant principals are not required to do observations. He said that the Vice Principals are required to do a certain number of observations during the school year because it is part of their PIP's and their goals. Dr. Jakubowski said that when the positions were established, there was no defined set of plans until late and he felt that defining the positions this year would be a very good idea. Mr. Figueiredo said that the assistant principals have been in the positions for one whole year and they know

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

what issues have to be addressed. He said that Mr. Shaw would be doing a classroom observation tomorrow because the teacher has requested that he observe her class to give her some ideas about her interaction with students. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district's ratio between students per guidance counselors is the highest in the county. He said that the counselors probably spend very little time seeing students on a regular basis which is very unfortunate. Mr. Manochio commented that the assistant principals spend approximately two periods observing in the corridors each day and did that mean that they were locked into their offices for seven periods per day. Mr. Figueiredo said that they are in the hallways for two periods and one period is their lunch break. Mr. Manochio thought that they should be spending more time in the hallways. Dr. Jakubowski said that the assistant principals are in the hallways alot. He said that part of the practice is that the assistant principal goes to the classroom and speak to a student about a "pink" slip rather than the student going to the office if there is a problem. Dr. Jakubowski said that the assistant principals do spend most of their days handling discipline problems as each of the assistant principals have over 600 students that they deal with. Dr. Jakubowski said it had been a difficult year because one of the assistant principals was out for about a three month period due to illness and some of the discipline had to taken over by the two Vice Principals. Mr. Ruhl said that he has had conversations with the assistant principals and they have commented that there is a pattern with certain teachers repeatedly sending students to the office with discipline problems. Mr. Figueiredo said that the committee asked Mr. Kloc and Mr. Shaw about the security at the high school and specifically about the security cameras. He said that they commented that the cameras are working but not proactively and there was only monitoring on an "as needed" basis and tapes are reviewed if a specific incident occurred. Mr. Figueiredo thought that the board should look into a more proactive camera security system where the cameras could be monitored. Dr. Jakubowski said that the principal and the vice principals already have this system in the school. He said that he would speak to Mr. Gibbons about this issue. Mr. Figueiredo said that Mr. Kloc and Mr. Shaw thought that the cameras only tape what is occurring in the area and then the tapes can be reviewed if a specific incident occurs. He said that due to Mr. Shaw's military training, he would like to have a "mock" incident occur in the future to see how the students and faculty react. Mr. Figueiredo said that this would be coordinated with central administration, the police department and local authorities as has been done in some other school districts. He felt that this would be a good exercise to see where the school's vulnerabilities are and the district can rectify them. Mr. Perkins asked if there was any discussion with regard to fire drills. Mr. Figueiredo said that fire drills were not discussed. Mr. Ruhl said that the high school is required to have two fire drills per month. Dr. Jakubowski

EDUCATION/STUDENT DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

said that every school is required to have two fire drills per month. He said that the schools make central office aware of when the fire drills take place and they are monitored on a regular basis. Mr. Perkins asked if the schools were subject to a prescribed amount of time in between fire drills. Dr. Jakubowski said there was not and in the winter, sometimes the fire drills are done at the end of the school day when the students were being dismissed or if it is a very nice day in the winter there may be two in the same day. He said that there was no regulation except that there be two in each month. Mr. Perkins said that the board could adopt a policy to establish a certain amount of time between fire drills. Dr. Jakubowski said it was very rare that there would be two fire drills done in one day. He said that he also encourages the elementary schools to do a drill after school is out because there are aftercare children in the school and it is necessary for those students to know what to do in case of an emergency. Dr. Jakubowski said he hoped, especially at the high school, that over the course of the school year, drills would be done at different times when students are in different class periods in different areas of the building. Mr. Manochio thought that having two drills in one day would disrupt the classes. Dr. Jakubowski said that he thought it would be better to do two in one day than having a drill the same day and time each month. Mr. Ruhl agreed with that.

FISCAL AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mr. Helmstetter stated that the committee met earlier in the evening and he presented the Fiscal and Planning Committee agenda. Mr. Helmstetter noted that Ms. Dunn had distributed the Purchasing Manual for 2008-2009 to all board members for their review. He said that regulations are changing. Ms. Dunn said that these manuals have already been distributed to the principals and supervisors. Mr. Manochio referred to the Bob O'Dell Scholarship and asked who that individual was. Dr. Jakubowski said that Bob O'Dell was a track coach, physical education teacher and guidance counselor at Union High School for a number of years from the late '50's through the mid '70's.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. Ruhl said that the committee met and he presented the Operations Committee agenda. He said that there would be several resolutions added to the regular agenda regarding projects that were being sent to the Department of Education in Trenton for review and approval. Mr. Ruhl said that the field turf project was scheduled to begin right after graduation so that it could be completed in time for the first home football game and the bleacher project would hopefully be started at the conclusion of the football season. Mr. Manochio asked if the board has selected a vendor or the type of turf that will be used. Mr. Magliacano

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

said that the district will be installing "Field Turf" which is the brand which is lead free but the project still has to be sent out for bid. Dr. Jakubowski said that the Department of Education would have to approve the project before the bid can be sent out.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Mr. Manochio said that the committee has met with the Superintendent earlier in the evening and he presented the Personnel Committee agenda. Mr. Manochio asked about the job title "Director of Information Technology" and if that title might change. Dr. Jakubowski stated that he believed the title was pretty close to where it was going to be. He said that the individual in this position will be responsibility for technology/student information. Mr. Manochio asked if this job description would be sent home to the board before the regular meeting next week. Dr. Jakubowski said that he had two job descriptions that he was going to incorporate into one and the board will vote on it next Tuesday. Mr. Figueriedo asked if the music related positions listed on resolution P-1 were budgeted. Dr. Jakubowski said that they were. Mr. Figueriedo asked what the extended school year was as it referred to resolution P-6. Dr. Jakubowski said that the extended school year will be held at Hannah Caldwell Elementary School and it is for students with disabilities. He said that many disabled students have an extended school year indicated in their IEPs. Dr. Jakubowski said that for years the district would send these students out of district and pay exorbitant fees to have the students do an "extended school year" in other places. He said that a few years ago, Ms. French instituted an "extended school year" program in-district, using Hannah Caldwell because it is air-conditioned. Dr. Jakubowski said that many of the district's special education teachers work the program and some of them work as the teacher assistants. He stated that the Special Education Supervisors oversee the program. Mr. Figueriedo asked if this program was separate from the students who are sometime over at Rabkin Field. Dr. Jakubowski said it was a different program. Mr. Manochio asked if the students attend for the entire six weeks or do they split the time. Dr. Jakubowski said that the students attend the entire six weeks. Ms. Dunn said that it could not be called "extended year" if the students did not attend the entire session. Dr. Jakubowski said that parents are looking for services over the summer months and this program is more cost effective than when students were sent out of district.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Administrative Positions - Dr. Jakubowski said that he had met with all principals and supervisors earlier in the day. He said that the needs for the next school year were discussed. Dr. Jakubowski said that at Kawameeh and Burnet the district is in need of at least one English teacher in each building and a gifted and talented is needed to replace Mr. Canarelli who is retiring. He said that some of the positions have been posted for already. Dr. Jakubowski said that the high school is in need of two English teachers, one Social Studies teacher, two art teachers, one Spanish teacher, one Math teacher, one Guidance Counselor, possibly one Science teacher, a German teacher, a physical education teacher and at least, one Home Economics teacher. He said that a Home Economics teacher is also needed at Kawameeh because the person who presently works there is ill and will not be returning in September. Dr. Jakubowski said that there are also five individuals needed for special education, most of them child study team members. He said that a posting is in the process of being created for all of these positions and it will be advertised. Dr. Jakubowski said that he has hired two individuals; one is a replacement for an English teacher who is retiring at Kawameeh and one as a replacement for the media specialist position to replace Joan Garthwaite at Kawameeh. He said that he would be meeting with some other individuals before the end of the week and it is possible that next Tuesday, he will have additional names for personnel resolution P-1 for consideration by the Board. Dr. Jakubowski said that in terms of the administrative positions, he said that the district has posted for a Language Arts/Social Studies Supervisor K-8, predominantly Grades 6-8. He said that Mr. Tatum has done the initial interviews for this position and has given him four names of candidates that he will be meeting with. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district has also posted for three reading specialists to work between two elementary schools each (Franklin/Washington, Connecticut Farms/Livingston and Hannah Caldwell/Battle Hill). He said that he will be using Title I funds for this position and that is why he has done the break up in this fashion. Dr. Jakubowski said that he has received applications from several very good candidates, all who have Masters degrees in Reading. He said that the reading specialist will focus on first grade. Dr. Jakubowski said that once a Director of Curriculum for preschool to grade 5 is chosen that individual will take a hard look at the district's language arts program; he said right now the Open Court

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ITEMS

Administrative Positions

program is used in the first grade and another reading program is used in grades 2-4. Dr. Jakubowski said the time has come to take a hard look at the reading program and as students have more needs, there should be continuity from kindergarten through grade 5. He said that the reading specialists will be working predominantly with first graders who are at risk and they will be providing professional development to teachers. Dr. Jakubowski said that the reading specialists will also work with kindergarten students. He said that his goal is to set up a program that is similar to the AAP program and the specialists will provide a tutorial service. Dr. Jakubowski said that the gifted and talented program for grades 6, 7 and 8 is a very good program that is part of the Core Curriculum Standards and he has received a few good applicants for this position. He said that he has also received applications for the Elementary Specialist position which would cover Math/Science to replace Ms. Czajkowski. Dr. Jakubowski said that these are some of the positions that the two new directors will oversee. He said in terms of other administrative positions there is a need for another twelve month supervisor for special education because the district needs to put 504 and INRS as part of special education. Dr. Jakubowski said that these programs are presently being handled in the guidance department at Union High School and this takes away time from the students. He said that in the future any students that are being sent out of district will have to go to the Executive County Superintendent and justify why that student needs to be sent out of district. Dr. Jakubowski said that the focus is that all students should be coming back into their home districts to be educated. He said that sending a student out of district will become more difficult. Dr. Jakubowski said that the district is attempting to the best of its ability to educate all students in-house. He said that Ms. French has brought back many programs. Dr. Jakubowski said that next year there will be a combined preschool class of regular and special education students as a pilot program at Washington School. He said that this was part of the special education monitoring. Dr. Jakubowski said that he has told the supervisors so that they clearly understand, all high school supervisors will be high school supervisors and there may be several departments combined under one individual. He said that this will give the high school principal much more control over daily activity because individuals are not traveling between buildings. Dr.

Administrative Positions

Jakubowski said that the only supervisors who will remain districtwide will be foreign language, health/physical education, art/music and industrial arts. He said that each supervisor at the high school that has a combined department assignment will have less people to evaluate than they have right now. Dr. Jakubowski said that the two K-8 supervisors will be housed at Burnet and at least for next year until the addition is finished at the Administration Building the two Directors of Curriculum will be housed at Union High School. Mr. Manochio asked if Kean University still offers a degree in industrial arts. Dr. Jakubowski said that they do not offer a degree anymore. He said that virtually no colleges offer degrees in teacher of industrial arts and this is one of the reasons that the district no longer offers mechanical drawing as a course. Mr. Manochio asked if there are students who want to take this course. Dr. Jakubowski said that eighth graders can choose if they want to take the course but in both sixth and seventh grade the courses are offered as exploratory cycles and Union is one of the few districts left in the State that still offers such a wide variety of elective areas such as home economics and industrial arts. He said that it is getting harder to find individuals to teach these courses. Mr. Manochio thought that colleges were making a terrible mistake because students today cannot use a hammer or a screwdriver. He said that this is where the creative mind starts as students creating things with their hands. Mr. Manochio said that there would be no one to take over the jobs that use screwdrivers and hammers. Dr. Jakubowski said that right now at the high school because of all the academic requirements that are needed for graduation, if the district did not create a nine period day at the high school, students would not be able to take any elective courses such as cosmetology and allied health and the business program, which is absolutely one of the finest in the area, would have been eliminated. Mr. Manochio asked Dr. Jakubowski to explain to the board about the new hiring regulations. Dr. Jakubowski said that the new regulations say that a district can budget only to hire a replacement teacher at Step 1 without approval from the Department of Education. He said that he does not know how long getting such an approval will take. Dr. Jakubowski said that individuals leave one district and go to another many times for money. He said an individual would not even contemplate changing districts if they had to start at Step 1. Dr. Jakubowski said that there is an appeal process but he did not know how long something like that would take. He said that there was no longer an education

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ITEMS

Administrative Positions

specialist at the county office and he felt that the district would wait forever to get approvals. Mr. Perkins said he did not think that Algebra II should be a requirement to graduate high school. Dr. Jakubowski said he agreed but those students who do not take the course will be required to take an exit test in each subject. He said that the superintendents have argued with the Commissioner of Education on this point but she sees this as an absolute and she said this is coming from industry because companies are saying that students need Algebra II. Mr. Perkins asked Dr. Jakubowski to ask the Commissioner for an example of where a student would use Algebra II. Dr. Jakubowski said that the Commissioner is a former Math teacher. He said that his organization has put this question to the Commissioner but he did not know if the New Jersey School Boards Association has contacted the Commissioner regarding this issue. Ms. Dunn said that many of the new regulations are coming from an individual who is on the education committee and are saying that students need the essential skills and students are not graduating high school at a level that they do not even have entry level skills. Dr. Jakubowski said that he was going to a conference tomorrow where the Commissioner will be speaking. Mr. Perkins said that there was an article in the Star Ledger several weeks ago written by a math professor from Rutgers who raised the same question.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Mrs. McNeil said that the board will be asked to approve the payment of bills at the regular meeting next Tuesday.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Dr. Jakubowski said that when the district originally sent in its third and fourth grade tests, he received a call that the testing center was missing some booklets. He said that Mrs. Moutis had every number of every booklet in the district so he immediately knew what school they were from and that they were unused booklets. Dr. Jakubowski said that it was the recommendation that the district not make a big deal about it. He said that there were people who were upset that the district chose not to tell any of the board members about this matter. Dr. Jakubowski said that two days later the booklets were found and they were returned to the testing center.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mrs. McNeil asked if the Student Advisory Committee would be required to attend board meetings. Dr. Jakubowski said that the Student Advisory Committee would not be required to attend Board meetings. He said that he meets with the Student Advisory Committee. Dr. Jakubowski said that he had started having someone from the Student Council from the high school attend board meetings to let the public know what was happening at the high school. He said that the Student Council is still very dynamic and does many things at the high school and he wanted to start having them come to meetings again. Dr. Jakubowski said that he would be reinstating the Student Advisory Committee meetings in September.

NEW BUSINESS

None

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Donnarumma wanted to know why the district was putting a metal roof at Hannah Caldwell. Mr. Magliacano said that there was already a metal roof on the building and it needed to be replaced. Mr. Donnarumma wanted to know what type of metal would be used. Mr. Magliacano said that it was molded, stainless aluminum.

Mr. Witte wanted to know what type of turf was being installed on the football field and how much it was costing the district. Mr. Magliacano said that the product is called "field turf". Mr. Witte asked why the district wanted to install this product on the football field. Dr. Jakubowski said that one of the reasons is that most of the districts in Union County have installed "turf" fields and there have been fewer incidents of injuries, etc. He said that the field gets too much wear and tear during football games and it cannot be used by other teams such as soccer and field hockey. Dr. Jakubowski said that this product is more durable. He said that the district was very fortunate this year and it received additional state aid and he felt this would be one opportunity for the district to do something which would be very productive for the students and for the school district. Mr. Witte asked if this was the type of turf that water drains right through. Mr. Magliacano said it was. Mr. Witte asked if a drainage system would be installed under the field. Mr. Magliacano said that a drainage system already exists which will be able to be utilized and there would have to be some adjustment to the base with sand and stone before the turf was installed but it would be a minor adjustment. Mr. Witte asked if there was a warranty on the product. Mr. Damato said that there was. Dr. Jakubowski said that he has seen many of the fields in the county and the state that already have this product installed and he believed that this is an appropriate way to go at this time.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Moved by Mr. Perkins, seconded by Mr. Helmstetter that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss personnel, litigation and negotiation 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. All present voting yes.

BOARD RETURNED TO PUBLIC SESSION AT 8:50 P.M.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no further business to be discussed before the board, it was moved by Mr. Ruhl, seconded by Mr. Manochio, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:55 p.m. All present voting yes.

Respectfully submitted

JAMES J. DAMATO
BOARD SECRETARY