

UNIONVILLE-CHADDS FORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
740 Unionville Road
Kennett Square, PA 19348
Telephone: (610) 347-0970; FAX: (610) 347-0976
Web Site - www.ucfsd.org

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Minutes
January 17, 2006

The January meeting of the Unionville-Chadds Ford School Board was held on Tuesday, January 17, 2006 in the Unionville High LGI Room. Mr. Swayze, Vice-President, called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**CALL TO
ORDER**

The following members were present R. Bruce Swayze, Kathleen Brown, Karen Halstead, Edward Murray, Dr. Corinne Sweeney, Timotha Trigg, Edward Wandersee, and Dr. Therese West. Also present were Dr. John Kenney, District Superintendent, Dr. Brenda O'Hern, Robert Cochran, Thomas Marinelli, Maria Schwab, Jim Fulginiti, Rich Hug, Charlene Stone, Bruce Vosburgh, Gail Wolfel, Lexi Crampton, student representative, community residents, members of the press, and Denise Miller, recording secretary.

**MEMBERS
PRESENT**

Mr. Swayze stated that he would be acting as Board President in Mr. Baker's absence. He commented that Mr. Baker had expressed his apologies for the absence due to Tuesday meetings that conflict with work obligations, which he is unable to change. Mr. Baker also mentioned that his participation at Board Work Sessions, committee meetings, etc. would continue uninterrupted.

Keith Knauss, East Marlborough Township resident, commented regarding the Middle School Action Plan. He stated that as he understood the situation, middle school reform started over a year ago in response to parents' concerns that the program did not provide an adequate level of challenge for a substantial number of students (too much fluff in the curriculum, too much emphasis on emotional/social development, too little emphasis on academics, and too much busy work labeled as homework).

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS**

The need for change was supported by the Patton Middle School Study (done by professionals a year ago), parent feedback, national test score results, academic research and the academic literature. A recent book entitled, *Mayhem in the Middle: How Middle Schools Have Failed America, and How to Make them Work*, by the Education Chancellor of Florida describes American middle schools as places "where academic achievement goes to die." He commented that this may be a bit extreme, but it's not far off from the experience of his two students who attended the Patton Middle School. He hears the same comments from many parents whose children have experienced our middle school – expectations were low, kids were bored, and there was too much busywork. He stated that it's too late for

his children, but he is hoping there can be some change in the middle school curriculum that will benefit today's elementary school students who will become tomorrow's middle school students.

We should recognize that our student population can easily handle and deserves an academically challenging curriculum. The average school in PA has about a third of its 5th grade students labeled as advanced performers according to PSSA results (UCF has two-thirds of its students as advanced performers in reading and three-quarters as advanced performers in math; over double the number of an average PA school). Mr. Knauss's point is that all of these kids are bright, have natural talent, come to school well prepared and have a strong support system at home. The vast majority of students deserve and need an academically challenging middle school experience.

At one time middle "schoolism" was the rage and had many active supporters. The concept was once bolstered by research that is now discredited. Today, the preponderance of evidence points to middle "schoolism" as a failed concept. He hopes that the entire middle school will eventually embrace academic excellence for all, eliminate fluff courses, set high expectations and adopt a no excuses attitude toward learning. However, if the whole school cannot be reformed, he would ask that parents who want a challenging curriculum for their children be given that choice. A good start would be the ability to choose honors courses in every major subject area in 6th, 7th and 8th grade. (the high school has four levels - general studies, academic, honors and AP). Parents who are happy with the current middle school curriculum could continue with the current curriculum. Parents who feel that a challenging curriculum is best for their child would have the option of honors courses.

Mr. Knauss interjected an important point that this is not a criticism of the effort put forward by the PMS teachers or its leadership. They are dedicated, hardworking professionals. He is criticizing the lack of choice and believes that parents should have the ability to choose among programs that best fit their child's needs. There is no choice at PMS now.

He commented that it would be nice to ask our customers – the parents – their opinion. This very topic – in the form of a survey – was discussed during the Curriculum Committee meeting last Monday. The group came to the consensus that they were unsure what the parents wanted and a survey was suggested. Mr. Knauss heard a valid concern that a survey would cause delay and might be expensive. He also heard the opinion that teachers are the professionals and they should make these types of decisions. He commented that teachers should have an important voice in the process, but the customers, the bill payers, the ones who have the responsibility for their child's development, namely the parents, must also be listened to and they, through their elected representatives on the Board should determine the direction of the district. He also heard the concern that parents might want too

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

many options and the Board wouldn't be able implement all of them. Although this is a possibility, we should get the information first before we declare a problem. He stated that he also heard some concerns that were troubling, the most troubling being that the issues were too complex and the parents couldn't be relied upon to make a good decision.

In conclusion, Mr. Knauss believes the evidence is overwhelming in support of middle school change. If the board is uncomfortable making a change without survey data, he would ask them to move expeditiously to gather the information and move forward.

Mr. Knauss stated that he would be happy to speak with anyone one-on-one or before a group regarding these ideas. He will be speaking at the Middle School PTO meeting on Feb 2nd. He would also speak at any or all of the elementary PTO groups if invited. He would even give a Power Point presentation to the board. If there is some downside to the idea of choice he'd love to hear it (His phone number and email address are in the school directory).

Mr. Knauss also commented regarding fiscal restraint, stating that if he reads the tea leaves correctly, all school districts in PA will soon be subject to a back-end referendum. That back-end referendum will require voter approval of any school tax increase above inflation. With the looming back-end referendum as a backdrop and because next year's budget is in the planning stages, he would ask that the school board focus on academic achievement, but give equal footing to efficiency.

The past six years do not provide a picture of efficiency. Spending by the school board has increased from \$9,000 per student in 1999 to \$14,000 per student in the current year. That's an increase of two and one-half times the rate of inflation. Mr. Knauss stated that he has heard excuses that the spending was driven largely by factors outside the board's control – health care costs, energy costs, special education mandates and retirement costs to name a few. However, to the contrary, the *majority* of the spending increase can be tied directly to the board's policy of uncontrolled hiring. In 1999, we educated 3800 students with 481 employees. In 2005, the student population has remained virtually the same, but we had hired an additional 117 employees. We now have 598 employees. He asked board members to answer this question silently. Have you ever received a document listing the total number of employees, what they did and where they worked? If the answer is no, he would suggest that the board is not exercising adequate control over hiring.

In a labor-intensive industry such as education, the number of employees drives the budget both directly (through salary and benefits) and indirectly (through building and energy expenditures). He asked that the board pay special attention to the headcount during future budgeting cycles. If there is some wonderful new program the board wants to add, he asked that the board cut an existing marginal program so as to hold the headcount constant. (make a possibly difficult trade-off instead of just adding to our tax burden). In the future, he asked that hiring and employee metrics be a prominent part of any budget document, budget presentation or anytime a new position is created.

There will be a time when the board will need to ask the electorate for an above-inflation increase through a voter referendum. He encouraged the board to get their house in order and practice fiscal restraint now so the voters will have reason to approve tax increases in the future.

Katie Donovan, East Marlborough Township resident, commented regarding the accelerated math program being brought down into third grade. She suggested that the Board track students to see what percentage are remaining in the honors classes and how well they do in them. Mrs. Donovan asked whether we were setting students up for failure if they are not consistently succeeding on that track and stated that there should be data for this.

Mrs. Donovan stated that she had heard that some Board members questioned the validity of the Climate Study. All Board members were involved with the methodology that was used and spent \$30,000 for the study. It is troubling to hear that Board members question the validity of the study because they may not like what they heard.

Mr. Swayze thanked Mrs. Donovan for her comments and stated that he would not be surprised if there is not already a plan to track students who are in the accelerated math program. Speaking for himself and other Board member, Mr. Swayze stated that the Climate Study results were, at the very least, a yellow caution flag. The Board has taken notice and is getting a plan moving.

Carrie Dickman, East Marlborough Township resident, stated that decisions have unintended negative consequences at times. She addressed a recent one and stated that to remedy it would cost nothing. Specifically, the usage fee structure for the gym and high school facilities for summer sports camps was changed from a modest \$400 per week to \$4,000 per week if they are left in place for this summer. The basis behind the fee changes was because it is a money-maker for the coaches. She doesn't think you could find anyone else to come in for the money they make. The camps provide a great community service. Other programs are in north Philadelphia, etc.

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

Athletics are great co-curricular activities for the kids and they have to be academically eligible and behaviorally competent to participate. They get kids into great colleges. Kids who play for Division 3 schools need the camps. A few kids from Division 3 went to schools such as Johns Hopkins, Juniata, William & Mary, Washington & Lee, M.I.T., Princeton, etc. These kids received academic scholarships. Coaches sat in on the admissions decisions at the schools. Mrs. Dickman stated that everybody has perfect scores when going to M.I.T. and Princeton. Athletics are what these kids can offer. We want our kids in highly-selective schools where their U-CF education continues.

To stop the camps because the coaches make a small amount of money is an absurdity, especially in light of the way the policy is written. The parent groups from each sport could take over running those camps based on the policy and pay only the \$400 fee, which they would then pay to the coaches. The coaches don't want to do this. They are caring and ethical professionals. The camps can't continue if you keep these fees. The original fee structure pays for custodial staff, liability insurance, etc. The only complaint was that the coaches made money. The \$20 per hour they make is less than we would be willing to work for. It's a community service you will shut down if you keep that structure. She asked that the Board consider amending the policy.

Mr. Swayze thanked her for the comments and stated that there has been discussion in committee recently and it will continue to receive consideration.

Matt Carroll, East Marlborough Township resident, commented that he has two sons in grades 8 and 10. He had sent an e-mail to Dr. Kenney and Mr. Fulginiti last night on behalf of the Unionville Sports Council and the Positive Coaching Alliance. He stated that there is a large group of people who believe that the student athletes' experience would be greatly enhanced by creating a new, full-time District Athletic Director position. Over the past few years, some committee members have discussed this with Mr. Vosburgh, Mr. Bertrando, Mr. Dickens and Dr. Price. Overall, the feeling is that a full-time Athletic Director is warranted.

He is relatively new to the school district, having moved from Pittsburgh. He is not disappointed that academics are the top priority here. His sons have been very involved with athletics and with that, many conversations. Virtually all are feeling that athletic supervision is in dire need. Mr. Carroll offered these three points:

1. Facilities/fields are deplorable (as mentioned in the Climate Study);
2. Lack of outreach to the community for support and resources ;
3. No cohesion between the high school and middle school athletic programs.

This should be a top priority in upcoming budget meetings. Mr. Carroll hopes the School Board and administration will take this matter very seriously. The time has come to make a good program great.

Jose Robertson, Birmingham Township resident, stated that he had attended the Work Session on Monday evening where there was discussion of rearranging meetings for Board members. He suggested also that during the Climate Study, there was feedback that there was a lack of trust/secretcy in the community. He doesn't blame anyone on the Board for this assessment but feels it may be due to the process the Board takes in making a vote on a particular issue. For example, last Monday, they met and placed issues on the table which gives the community less than a week to respond. Also, the minutes from last Monday were not posted for anyone to review. It would be better to post the minutes on the internet as quickly as possible. If there were no decision on those issues until the following month, it would allow the public to review the minutes, address any Board member to whom they need to ask questions, and allow the public to come to meetings. It also buffers you since the Board would be able to say it has been posted for more than a month.

Keith Knauss, East Marlborough Township resident, stated that all school districts in Pennsylvania would soon be subject to a back-end referendum that will subject all school districts to a vote for expenditures over a certain index. He suggested that the Board focus on the academics and also efficiency.

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mr. Swayze to approve the Minutes of the December 5, 2005 Reorganization Meeting (pp. 3.a.1-3), the December 5, 2005 Regular Board Meeting (pp. 3.a.4-14), and the January 9, 2006 Work Session (p. 3.a.18).
Motion carried (8-0).

The following committee meeting minutes were reviewed:

1. Curriculum Committee – December 14, 2005, January 4, 2006, and January 9, 2006 (pp. 3.a.15-17)

Mr. Swayze requested that the secretary file the committee meeting minutes.

The following financial statements and reports were reviewed:

1. General Fund Treasurer's Report – November, 2005 (p. 3.b.1)
2. 2005-2006 GF Function Revenue Analysis with Details of 6100's and 7000's as of November, 2005 (p. 3.b.2)
3. 2005-2006 General Fund Function-Object Expenditure Analysis as of November, 2005 (pp. 3.b.3-5)
4. Category Expenditures Analysis – November, 2005 (p. 3.b.6)
5. Capital Reserve Fund Report – November, 2005 (p. 3.b.7)
6. Capital Projects Fund Reports – October, 2005-revised and November, 2005 (pp. 3.b.8-9)

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

**MINUTES
APPROVED**

**FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS**

Financial Statements and Reports (Continued)

7. Outstanding Projects Summary – November, 2005 (p. 3.b.10)
8. Construction Project Reports – November, 2005
 - a. Unionville High School HVAC Project (pp. 3.b.11-12)
9. Unionville High School Activities Balance Sheets – September and October, 2005 (pp. 3.c.1-4)
10. U-CF Cafeteria Service Profit and Loss Statements – October and November, 2005 (pp. 3.c.5-8)

Mr. Swayze requested that the secretary file the financial statements and reports.

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mrs. Halstead to approve the Bill List for January 3, 2006 in the amount of \$2,221,031.92 (pp. 3.d.1-18).

Motion carried (8-0).

It was moved by Dr. West and seconded by Mrs. Halstead to approve the 2005-2006 January Budget Transfers as on the attachment (p. 3.b.1-a).

Motion carried (8-0).

Mr. Wandersee reported that the Facilities Committee had met on January 13, 2006. This was an input session where people talked to the committee about a couple of projects. They received a very nice presentation from Steve Parks, a landscape architect, regarding the pros and cons of natural and artificial turf. Mr. Parks indicated that he prefers natural turf but there are advantages to artificial turf. The cost ranges from \$700,000 to \$1 million per field, depending on the type of turf that is selected. You might have 260 uses per year and that boils down to \$350-375/use. There was no action on this item.

This school district is threatened to be sued by Travelers Insurance Co. for a large sum of money regarding the Chadds Ford Elementary School construction. We are currently in mediation and need to hire an expert to prepare a case in this litigation. This \$50,000 fee is not unusual for situations of this nature. Travelers Co. has done their due diligence with their expert and we need to respond to defend what we feel is our righteous position.

It was moved by Mr. Wandersee and seconded by Mrs. Trigg to appoint Hill International, Inc. as Construction Consultant regarding the Chadds Ford Elementary School litigation at a fee not to exceed \$50,000.00, as on the attachment.

Motion carried (8-0).

**FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS
(Continued)**

**BILLS
APPROVED**

**BUDGET
TRANSFERS**

FACILITIES:

**Construction
Consultant/CF –
Hill
International**

Mrs. Brown stated that there were no voting items for Curriculum this evening. She reported that the Curriculum Committee met on December 14, 2005 and January 4, 2006 to discuss the Middle School options. The entire Board met as a committee of the whole on January 9, 2006 and no decisions were reached at any of those meetings.

Mr. Murray stated that Mr. Cochran provided a presentation on January 9, 2006 regarding the methodology of budget allocations per building, inflationary figures, reviews with the principals, and spending patterns. We try to keep this allocation at a reasonable rate and we have used this methodology for many years.

It was moved by Mr. Murray and seconded by Dr. West to approve the 2006-2007 Building Budget Allocations as on the attachments (pp. 6.a.1-5).

Motion carried (8-0).

It was moved by Mr. Murray and seconded by Dr. Sweeney to set the budget meeting and adoption dates as follows:

1. Budget Distribution and Presentation
 - a. Monday, April 10, 2006 (April Work Session) – 7:00 p.m. – District Office Large Conference Room
2. Meetings – 7:00 p.m. – Unionville High School, LGI Room
 - a. Monday, May 1, 2006
 - b. Tuesday, May 2, 2006 (as needed)
 - c. Wednesday, May 3, 2006 (as needed)
3. Tentative Budget Adoption
 - a. Monday, May 8, 2006 (May Work Session) – 7:00 p.m. – District Office Large Conference Room
4. Final Budget Adoption
 - a. Monday, June 19, 2006 (Regular Board Meeting – June) – 7:30 p.m. – Unionville High School, LGI Room

Mr. Wandersee encouraged members of the public, parents, and taxpayers to put these meeting dates on their calendar and to attend them. He stated that people don't come to the meetings but they affect each and every one of us in the room.

Mr. Swayze stated that an Executive session was held regarding personnel matters.

Dr. Kenney commented regarding two voting items on the January 9, 2006 Board Work Session agenda. One item was to approve the employment of Kurt Barker, who will be an Assistant Principal at Unionville High School.

CURRICULUM

FINANCE:

Building Budget Allocations 2006-2007

Budget Meeting Dates

PERSONNEL:

K. Barker- UHS Asst. Principal

Mr. Fulginiti, UHS Principal, thanked the Board and members of the community. He introduced Mr. Barker and his wife, Sarah. They have one child, Jack, and are expecting their second child soon. Mr. Barker was a biology/science teacher at Abington High School for seven years. The top objective on his resume is to develop new teachers into confident educators in a standards-driven environment and to empower students to succeed in an increasingly competitive academic environment. He has seen this wisdom shown already in the interview process.

Mr. Barker has had leadership responsibilities within his department at Abington, particularly with the Anatomy & Physiology course that has gained great respect and recognition from his colleagues and students. Mr. Fulginiti has full confidence that he will reflect great credit upon himself, our high school and the community.

Mr. Swayze commented that we now have a Kurt Barker and a Curt Baker in the district.

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Dr. West to approve the following personnel items (agenda items a. through l.):

- a. Professional Conferences
 - 1. Approve attendance at (11) Professional Conferences as on the attachments (p. 7.a.1-2)
- b. Retirement (0)
- c. Resignations (3)
 - 1. Deb Chacosky – Chadds Ford/Pocopson Elementary Paraprofessional, effective January 18, 2006
 - 2. Meggan Malone – Unionville High School Computer Applications Teacher, effective January 20, 2006
 - 3. Kathleen Ogden – Bus Driver, effective January 3, 2006
- d. Reclassifications (3)
 - 1. Deborah Yarnall – from Unionville High School Food Service Assistant (4 hours per school day) to Unionville High School Cook (6 hours per school day), effective January 2, 2006, at a salary of \$11.45 per hour
 - 2. Francois Guillonneau – from Patton Middle School Custodian to Floater Custodian, effective December 5, 2005
 - 3. Elizabeth Krapf – from Unionville/Hillendale Elementary Science Paraprofessional to Hillendale Elementary Grade Level Paraprofessional (5 hours per day x 182 days per year), effective January 2, 2006

PERSONNEL:

**K. Barker-
UHS Asst.
Principal**

**Professional
Conferences**

Resignations:

D. Chacosky

M. Malone

K. Ogden

**Reclassifi-
cations:**

D. Yarnall

F. Guillonneau

E. Krapf

Personnel (Continued)

e. Substitutes (7)

1. Meghan Kelley – Mathematics/Science
2. Donald Bonawitz – Social Studies
3. Patricia Kuders - Elementary
4. Susan Losak – Elementary
5. Tara Gruss – Health & Physical Education
6. Terri P. Cruse – Support Staff
7. Patricia Regan – K-12 Teacher or Support Staff

f. Supplemental Contracts (9)

1. Gail Harting - Winter Concert Chaperone
2. Clare Geleta - Winter Concert Chaperone
3. Joseph Sudimak - Band Concert Chaperone
4. Susan Sudimak - Band Concert Chaperone
5. Steve Tulleners - 9th Grade Boys' Basketball Coach
6. Ryan Marcinson - 7th Grade Wrestling Coach
7. Danielle DiNicola - Dance Ensemble Coach (1/2)
8. John Coombe - Boys' Tennis Coach
9. Cathy Cipollini - Half-Year Mentor for Cathy Calderone

g. Employ (6)

1. Jaime Jacobs - Hillendale Elementary School Grade 1 Teacher (LTS), effective January 2, 2006, at the Bachelor's + 24, Step 1 salary, pro-rated
2. Andrew Moister – Unionville High School .6 Health & Physical Education Teacher (LTS), effective January 2, 2006 through June, 2006, at the Bachelor's Step 1 salary, pro-rated
3. Kim Crossman – Patton Middle School .6 Health & Physical Education Teacher (LTS), effective for the second semester of the 2005-06 school year
4. Donald L. Dollar – Patton Middle School full-time, 12-month Custodian, effective December 19, 2005, at a salary of \$12.22 per hour
5. Amanda Combs – Unionville/Hillendale Elementary Science Paraprofessional (5 hours per ay x 185 days), effective January 2, 2006, at a salary of \$11.30 per hour
6. Steven Iezzi – Unionville High School Athletic Trainer (8 hours per day x 220 days), effective January 30, 2006, at a salary of \$24.15 per hour

h. Leaves (2)

1. Kevin Brode – Unionville High School Emotional Support Teacher, six- to eight-week Paternity Leave, per the doctor's note
2. Patricia Chern – Chadds Ford/Hillendale Elementary General Music Teacher, eight-week Maternity Leave, beginning approximately March 14, 2006, as per her doctor's note

**PERSONNEL
(Continued)**

Substitutes

**Supplemental
Contracts**

Employ:

J. Jacobs

A. Moister

K. Crossman

D. Dollar

A. Combs

S. Iezzi

Leaves:

K. Brode

P. Chern

Personnel (Continued)

- i. Discharge (1)
 - 1. Maria Salazar – Pocopson Elementary Custodian

- j. Other (1)
 - 1. Diana Canipe – Employ as Patton Middle School Custodian, effective December 5, 2005 and Resign as Patton Middle School Custodian, effective December 7, 2005

- k. Sabbatical – Professional Development Leave (2)
 - 1. Sue McDermott – Unionville High School Health & Physical Education Teacher, effective for the spring semester of the 2006-2007 and the spring semester of the 2007-2008 school years
 - 2. Frank Mitchell – Patton Middle School Guidance Counselor – effective for the spring semester of the 2006-2007 school year

- l. Tenure
 - 1. Jason Palo – Award tenure, effective the second semester of the 2005-2006 school year, for the successful completion of three full years of teaching in the Unionville-Chadds Ford School District

Motion carried (8-0).

Mrs. Halstead reported for Transportation regarding:

- 1. Visits to PTO Parents – Have been held with two members of Mrs. Wolfel's Safety Committee at Hillendale Elementary and Patton Middle School. They will meet this week with Chadds Ford parents. A Short presentation about the Transportation Department and safety programs was given. Many questions were asked and they are looking forward to the opportunity of meeting with Pocopson and Unionville Elementary parents in the future.
- 2. Meeting with Bus Drivers – Mrs. Halstead met with the drivers recently. She has known many of them for years and plans to meet with them again.
- 3. PA Dept. of Education Meetings – Mrs. Wolfel has attended meetings recently to discuss changes in the School Bus Driver Training Program. A task force made up of pupil transportation professionals from Pennsylvania periodically reviewed the program and they're always looking at ways to improve training and instruction to new and current bus drivers.
- 4. Vehicle Standards – The department has also recently completed changes to the Standards. It's quite a lengthy document that includes all of the standards that must be met in the manufacturing of school buses and school vehicles.

**PERSONNEL
(Continued)**

Discharge:

M. Salazar

Other:

D. Canipe

Sabbaticals:

S. McDermott

F. Mitchell

Tenure:

J. Palo

**TRANSPOR-
TATION**

Mrs. Brown stated that the P.T.O. Advisory Committee would be meeting on Monday, January 30, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in the UHS Library Classroom.

Dr. West commented that she would be the Chair for Communications and stated that that were no action items this evening.

Mrs. Trigg stated that we were having the first reading of Board Policy No. 246 – Student Wellness (pp. 10.1.1-5 revised). They were instructed to develop a policy and figure out what it was going to include. The policy that has been developed addressed nutrition, physical activity and physical education. The document can be accessed on the district’s website at www.ucfsd.org by selecting the Policy Center option under Quick Links and advancing to Section 200, No. 246. We will vote to approve this policy at next month’s meeting.

Mr. Swayze thanked Mrs. Trigg for her review of the new policy.

Lexi Crampton, Student Representative, provided her report regarding:

1. Mid-Terms – This week marks the end of the second marking period and mid-term examinations.
2. Student Congress – This is a new high school forum for student opinion. They had met before school. A decision was made to make it more accessible for students by exploring other options during lunch or another time for meetings.
3. Canned Food Drive – Was a huge success in donating a mountain of cans to the hungry.
4. Middle School – As mentioned by Mr. Knauss regarding more choices at the middle school, it would be great to have new classes at the high school (e.g., Psychology/Philosophy) and we should consider an offering.

Mr. Murray reported for the Center for Arts & Technology/Special Education/Intermediate Unit. C.A.T. will hold a meeting tomorrow, the Chester County School Authority will meet at 6:00 p.m. tomorrow evening, and the I.U. meeting will be held at 8:00 p.m. There is nothing to report until February.

Mr. Wandersee reported for Legislation:

1. The Senate will meet to discuss SB-854 that was approved by the House of Representatives. The House and Senate leadership are attempting to craft a bill on property tax relief. On SB-854, the House of Representative expanded the items to be taxed in Pennsylvania; the Senate does not like this bill because they feel it is anti-business and would subject the following services to taxation:
 - Lodging
 - Personal Services (e.g. Attorneys’ Fees, CPA’s Fees)

**COMMUNI-
CATIONS**

**BOARD
POLICY**

**No. 246,
Student
Wellness -
First Reading**

**STUDENT
REPRESENTATIVE
REPORT**

**C.A.T./
SPECIAL
ED. / I.U.**

**LEGISLATIVE
REPORT**

Legislation (Continued)

- Recreational Services (e.g. Sports admissions, Admissions to Live Shows and Presentations, Physical Fitness Facilities, Bicycle Rentals, Golf and Country Club Memberships, Interior Office Building Cleaning Services, Detective Services)

Both the House and Senate versions include a back-end referendum that is similar to Act 72. This issue is probably not going to go away and we need to act responsibly in terms of budgeting.

2. SB-910 – The Senate Labor and Industry Committee is working on this bill that proposes to outlaw school strikes by adopting a form of the last beset offer package of arbitration. The bill was supported by parents and superintendents but was opposed by school boards and employee unions.

Dr. Kenney extended a Happy New Year to everyone and provided the Superintendent's report:

1. UHS Assistant Principal – He welcomed Kurt Barker and his wife, Sara. We look forward to your arrival here at UHS!
2. School Director's Month – January is when we recognize the 4,509 School Board members in Pennsylvania's 501 school districts. They embody the spirit and tradition of volunteerism in public education. In addition to overseeing multi-million dollar budgets and dealing with taxing and funding issues, school directors negotiate contracts, hire employees and guide many local district operations. Each individual serves as an example to our children.

Dr. Kenney thanked our School Directors and stated that there was a certificate of appreciation and a bag of goodies for each of them as a token of our thanks for their willingness to serve. There was a special honor for 846 Board members who have served on Boards for a long time – ranging from eight to 44 years! Dr. Corinne Sweeney has been serving the U-CF community for 12 years and will receive a certificate from the Pennsylvania School Boards Association. Congratulations!

Mrs. Charlene Stone, Chadds Ford Elementary School Principal, provided the Elementary School Report:

- Unionville Elementary –
 - Homework Club – Funded by the U-CF Education Foundation; select students join the Homework Club staff after school Monday-Thursday for extra support. The impact has been very positive.

**LEGISLATIVE
REPORT
(Continued)**

**SUPER-
TENDENT'S
REPORT**

**Elementary
Report**

Superintendent's Report-Elementary (Continued)

- Hillendale Elementary –
 - Grants – Hillendale was just awarded \$1,500 from the Suburban Philadelphia Arts in Education Consortium for the Artist in Residence Program. This project will occur in the spring and will involve all students in the school.
 - Chess Club – This will be year number three for the club and they expect about 80 students to participate.

- Pocopson Elementary –
 - January is Co-curricular Activities & Competition Month– They held registration for the Reading Olympics Program and hope to host two teams in this program where children read books. The group meets one per week and then attends the countywide event in the spring to answer questions about the books.
 - 2nd Annual Geography Bee – Grade 4 and 5 students competed in five rounds of questions regarding geography and world cultures.
 - National Spelling Bee – was held today; the winner will attend the county bee later this winter.
 - Ronald McDonald House – funds were raised for this program through reading. Ronald McDonald attended the kick-off Assembly!

- Chadds Ford Elementary –
 - December – The school collected clothing, books, and gloves for needy families in the area. The students spent a Saturday morning with their counselor and distributed items to the families, followed by breakfast at Hank's.
 - Packages for Service Members – Students also collected books, DVD's, food and other items for service men and women serving in Iraq. The PTO helped them with payment for postage costs.
 - School Board Visits – Five Board members visited Chadds Ford last week and talked to the students about their roles and answer students' questions.
 - Spelling Bee – Students put their spelling skills to the test and one lucky winner will travel to Chester County I.U. on February 27th to participate in the County Spelling Bee.

**SUPER-
TENDENT'S
REPORT
(Continued)**

**Elementary
Report
(Continued)**

Superintendent's Report –Middle School (Continued)

Mr. Bruce Vosburgh provided the Patton Middle School report:

- Winter Choral and Orchestral Concerts were held on December 3rd at UHS
- Winter Band Concert was held on January 10th at UHS
- "Dorothy" did a great job on December 19th!
- Mid-Terms – 8th graders completed the math and social studies exams on January 13th
- Course Selection – High school counselors will be at the middle school tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. for informal sessions with parents. There will be an evening program at the high school for students and parents for the course selection process at 3:00 p.m. in the UHS Auditorium.
- Giving Tree – A number of students worked with Mrs. Ann Ferron in December to refurbish bikes and provide toys and food to benefit the Kennett Community Center. It was a very moving experience in watching the children receive their new bikes, etc.
- End of Marking Period – this Friday; with report cards going home on January 27th
- Macbeth – January 26 – 27 – 28 at 7:00 p.m. each evening
- Science Fair – Thursday, February 9th; Coordinated with Mr. Anderson; high school honors students will be judges.
- Geography Bee – 8th grader, Duncan Kountz won our bee and took the State qualifying test.
- PSSA – Writing test will be given to 8th graders on February 14-15
- Harlem Wizards – will be playing at the middle school again on February 23rd
- Patton Dance Team – volunteer group organized by Janet Schuster is performing tonight at the Relay for Life kick-off. The relay will be held on June 2-3 at Unionville High School.

Mr. Jim Fulginiti provided the Unionville High School report:

- Report Cards – will be issued by the end of the month
- Course Selection – Thursday at 7:00 p.m.; This year, we encourage all parents to attend (from 7:00-8:00 p.m., 8th grade parents will meet with the departments who are presenting); in the Library we'll have representatives to respond to any questions that parents of upperclassmen would like to ask. He will provide an overview and some things he'd like to share with everybody. Hopefully, this will allow for more informed decision making.
- Futures Planning Meeting – January 28th

**SUPER-
TENDENT'S
REPORT
(Continued)**

**Middle School
Report**

Superintendent's Report –High School (Continued)

- PSSA Writing – February 13-14-15 – for 11th grade students
- Remediation Program – being implemented for students that leading up to the math and reading assessments on March 20-22; we're looking for some logistical changes to better utilize our space and to provide a better set-up for our program.
- Forensics Team – doing extremely well with their debating
- FBLA – Also doing wonderfully; about 12 students competed a few weeks ago and took a whole host of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place wins.
- Academic Competition – February 1 at Chester Count IU in Downingtown.
- Kevin Hovde is now a member of the 1004 Club – He is a leader on the court and a tremendous leader outside of basketball.
- Book Fair – February 24-25; this is a big fund-raiser for UHS

Katie Donovan, East Marlborough Township resident, commented regarding the field situation and consideration of U-CF joining the Ches-Mont League. If we do, we would be the only district without artificial turf fields. She stated that this is something we should consider.

Judy McClaskey, Birmingham Township resident, thanked the Board members for dodging all of the bullets. Their hearts are in the right place for putting in the many, many hours they do for our kids. She concurred with Mr. Knauss's comments regarding higher levels of learning in the middle school. Mrs. McClaskey stated that Lexi Crampton's comment regarding new courses at the high school were excellent. There could be a lot more that would make for a richer environment for our kids to be here. Mrs. McClaskey stated that anyone questioning the parents' support of diverse and higher academics should look at our elementary schools as an excellent example of how parent support is behind and driving the academics in our school district.

Mrs. McClaskey commented regarding the Organizational Climate Study that she doesn't know of anywhere you could go where everything would be peachy keen. If the pendulum has swung from those who have never felt they had a voice, it seems that voice is singing very, very loudly. She hopes we can find the balance point where we can all get along better for sake of the kids.

Tracy Cohan, Birmingham Township resident, commented regarding the U-CF Education Foundation's fund-raiser that will be held on March 4th. This is a dinner and a silent auction type of evening. A listing of where the funds are used can be found on their website. Your support would be greatly appreciated.

**SUPER-
TENDENT'S
REPORT
(Continued)**

**High School
Report
(Continued)**

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS**

Perk Musacchio, Pocopson Township resident, thanked the U-CF Education Foundation for funding the Homework Club. She hopes the Board members will join them on January 27th to see what goes on at Unionville Elementary School following the breakfast. Mrs. Musacchio extended an invitation to anyone who would like to come and help out with the Homework Club on Mondays and Thursdays.

Mrs. Trigg extended a warm welcome to Kurt Barker and has heard many positive comments. She stated that her telephone number and e-mail address were in the directory and she welcomes calls/e-mails. Happy New Year to everyone.

Mr. Murray commented that he was happy to attend the Chadds Ford Open House. It is always wonderful. He doesn't know how they get the teaching professionals to be that happy; their energy is truly amazing! Mr. Murray welcomed Mr. Barker and commented that it would be good to have someone of his youthful exuberance at Unionville High School.

Mr. Wandersee commented about referendum legislation, stating that there were 22 competing bills that they're whittling down to come to some conclusion. There will be some form of back-end referendum with an earned income/personal income tax very similar to what we had that was objected to by the majority of this population. In the future, we will mostly likely place on the election ballot a referendum item not to exceed a certain amount. It will be an interesting year again with another mandate from Harrisburg instead of leaving it to us.

Dr. Sweeney welcomed Mrs. Halstead and Dr. West to the Board. She announced that the School Board would hold a half-day retreat on Saturday, January 28, 2006 off site to begin to address the Climate Study - if anyone thinks the Board does not take this seriously. Dr. Sweeney welcomed Mr. Kurt Barker and stated that their loss is our gain.

Dr. West welcomed Mr. Barker and commented that she is glad he'll be joining us. She was one of the Board members who spoke with the children at Chadds Ford Elementary and thanked them very much. She will also meet with students at Pocopson and Unionville Elementary.

Mr. Wandersee welcomed Kurt Barker and stated that they had heard great things about him and are glad he's coming to U-CF. He commented that Charlene Stone did a great job with the students' question and answer session. It was a pleasure to attend. He stated that Mr. Murray is very well connected and we are evolving from a number of competing bills down to a couple of major ones. No matter which bill comes forward, it is going to have a back-end referendum that will be voted on for us.

**RESIDENTS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

**BOARD
MEMBERS'
COMMENTS**

Mrs. Halstead thanked the students at Chadds Ford Elementary. Rather than answering questions, she sang *Susie* Snowflake. She also plans to attend the student session at Unionville Elementary. She commented that she feels the Homework Club at Unionville Elementary is a wonderful idea and hopes the other elementary students will help those students who need extra time. The Forensics Team at the high school is totally parent supported and she applauds all who have been participating. Mrs. Halstead stated that the high school teachers would like to do a psychology/sociology course for Lexi and many of the other students - good thought. She welcomed Mr. Barker to UHS.

Mrs. Halstead stated that knowing the middle school and the difficulty we are having and talking to the teachers and parents, she called children over the weekend (not all gifted students). Many of them gave her very specific ideas of what they would like to see at the middle school. They are very good ideas that don't involve a whole lot. When asking students "What will you remember about the middle school?" they all responded that they would remember the teachers who taught them to love learning. If we have nothing else, that is a joy that we hope continues. She'll share the other students' ideas at a later time.

Mrs. Brown stated that she had had the opportunity and privilege to go to the Abington site visit and talk to a large number of people from Mr. Barker's district. She is impressed and delighted to have him here.

Mr. Swayze welcomed Kurt Barker as well and stated that he comes to us with a nice resume. We are delighted to have him joining us in the district. He welcomed our two new Board members and complimented Dr. Sweeney for 13 energetic years on the U-CF School Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen M. Brown
Secretary

**BOARD
MEMBERS'
COMMENTS
(Continued)**

**MEETING
ADJOURNED**