

**UNIONVILLE-CHADDS FORD SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
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**SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**  
**Minutes**  
**February 21, 2006**

The February meeting of the Unionville-Chadds Ford School Board was held on Tuesday, February 21, 2006 in the Unionville High LGI Room. Mr. Swayze, Vice-President, called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

The following members were present R. Bruce Swayze, Kathleen Brown, Karen Halstead, 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, Rick Hostetler, Rich Hug, John Nolen, Dr. Jim Price, Bruce Vosburgh, Gail Wolfel, Lexi Crampton, student representative, community residents, members of the press, and Denise Miller, recording secretary.

Mr. Swayze stated that he would be acting as Board President in Mr. Baker's absence. Mr. Baker sent his greetings. As mentioned at last month's meeting, he is unable attend tonight's meeting due to work obligations. This is the second and final Tuesday meeting of the year. He is hopeful that we can address this in the future. It is a significant frustration to be unable to attend. Mr. Swayze stated that Mr. Murray was also unable to be here this evening due to business in western Pennsylvania.

Mr. Swayze stated that the Board had met to discuss personnel matters on Saturday, January 28, 2006, Saturday, February 4, 2006, and Tuesday, February 7, 2006. They met in Executive Session on Monday, February 13, 2006 following the Work Session to discuss litigation, real estate, and personnel matters. The Board also expects to meet in Executive Session on February 27, 2006 to discuss personnel matters.

Mr. Nick O'Neil, East Marlborough Township resident, provided a presentation regarding the grading system at Unionville High School. He stated that he was not here to talk about grading standards. Most people have moved here because of them and the education here is first rate. His discussion centers around the grading scale and how it affects our kids. The current system goes back 20 years when colleges were getting 50-100 less applicants than today.

**CALL TO  
ORDER**

**MEMBERS  
PRESENT**

**RESIDENTS'  
COMMENTS**

**UHS Grading  
Scale:  
Presentation-  
Nick O'Neill**

UHS Grading Scale (Continued)

Mr. O'Neill provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the following points:

- Current Grading System

- 92-100 = A = 4.0
- 83-91 = B = 3.0
- 73-82 = C = 2.0
- 62-72 = D = 1.0
- 0-61 = F = 0.0

- System Fallacy

○ Bob - <b>Unionville</b>		Betty – <b>Unionville</b>
▪ 1 <sup>st</sup>	85%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 90%
▪ 2 <sup>nd</sup>	85%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 90%
▪ Mid-term	72%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 95%
▪ 3 <sup>rd</sup>	85%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 91%
▪ 4 <sup>th</sup>	85%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 91%
▪ Final	73%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 95%

Final Grade B	Final Grade B
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- Competition Fallacy

○ Betty - <b>Unionville</b>		Suzi – <b>Henderson</b>
▪ 1 <sup>st</sup>	90%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 90%
▪ 2 <sup>nd</sup>	90%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 90%
▪ Mid-term	95%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 95%
▪ 3 <sup>rd</sup>	91%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 91%
▪ 4 <sup>th</sup>	91%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 91%
▪ Final	95%	▪ 1 <sup>st</sup> 95%

Final Grade B	Final Grade A
Graduating GPA = 3.0	Graduating GPA = 4.0

- Survey Results

Penn State, Gettysburg, Princeton, Duke, Boston U., William & Mary, University of Delaware, Lynchburg, Northwestern, Cornell, Pitt, Bucknell, UNC, Stanford, UCLA, Berkley, Georgetown, Carnegie Mellon, Harvard, Lehigh ...

- Majority of PA High Schools surveyed rely on:
  - 90-100% = A-, A, A+
  - 80-89% = B-, B, B+
  - 70-79% = C-, C, C+
- Majority of colleges surveyed said:
  - Prefer 70, 80, 90% baseline
  - Prefer transcripts include absolute numerical (ex. 86%)
  - Cannot equate UHS's high B's to another school's low A's

**RESIDENTS' COMMENTS**

**UHS Grading Scale: Presentation- Nick O'Neill (Continued)**

## UHS Grading Scale (Continued)

- Boston University
  - “...unless the transcript specifically shows that a student earned a 91.4% in a class, which would not likely be provided in the record, YOU have a system in which the students can fall through the cracks...”  
*Liz DeDoster, Admissions Coordinator*
- Bucknell University
  - **“A percentage point grading system would alleviate any problems.** Many high schools report percentage points, i.e., a 92% rather than a letter grade of A. **This system is easier to decipher.”**
- Dartmouth University
  - “Numerical values would be very beneficial...”
- Cornell University
  - “The UHS system seems to be unorthodox when comparing to other schools. If letter grades are shown on the transcript, most schools show an A+ or A-, not just simply an A.”
- Unionville has a spectacular football team – 10-0. Would anyone suggest that we award ourselves 4 points for a touchdown while the opponents receive 6 points per touchdown? **Why do we do that to ourselves academically?**

Mr. O’Neill stated that the Board is willing to address this subject but feels it may take more time. He asked the Board to give Mr. Fulginiti the financial and other assistance to put a 70-80-90 plus/minus grading system in place that includes numerical grades by next September. He thanked the Board for allowing him to present this information.

Mr. Swayze thanked Mr. O’Neill and stated that Dr. Kenney would address this topic later in the meeting.

Melissa Jacono, Birmingham Township resident, inquired as to whether there was a consensus regarding the 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum at the middle school. Dr. Kenney stated that there was agreement on one extension course in the English Department in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We will have a consistent curriculum across the grade levels and consistent assessments for next year.

Keith Knauss, East Marlborough Township resident, stated that children learn at different rates because they are either naturally bright or because of the amount of time and effort they wish to invest in a subject. Some students will learn faster in math or science. Some students will learn faster in the humanities.

## RESIDENTS’ COMMENTS

### UHS Grading Scale: Presentation- Nick O’Neill (Continued)

We recognize this basic fact at the high school by providing up to four levels of challenge in each of the core subjects (general studies, academic, honors, and advanced placement). You can find a rich selection of courses listed in the high school Course Selection Guide. Parents and students are free to choose whichever level of challenge is appropriate for them. The teacher is able to tailor the course pace and material to the needs of the target segment of learners with different levels, which leads to a better education.

Mr. Knauss commented that in contrast, the middle school continues to inefficiently address the wide range of learning rates by refusing to offer choice. Students are placed in classes without regard to how fast they wish to or can learn. He stated that the middle school leadership has a hard time admitting that classes with different levels of challenge would be the most efficient and effective way to deal with different learning rates. Choice is logical and supported by research and literature. He asked the Board what makes the very practical and important concept of choice so hard to implement at the middle school.

John Thaeber, East Marlborough Township resident and President of the Fielder's Group, commented that he had attended the School Board Work Session and heard the presentations by Curt Baker and Pat Clark regarding athletic fields and primarily the stadium field. He stated that the School Board is missing the point; the fact that the stadium field is inadequate to accommodate Kennett and our football teams, varsity soccer night games, and field hockey, which can't even play on the field. The school has unbelievable academic standards but on fields, we are shortchanging our kids in athletics and for use by the marching band. We try to play 10 football games and all of the varsity games but it is unable to support that amount of play.

The feeling was that the Board agreed during discussion about inadequate fields and that the stadium would not be moved but the decision was made that we would not even look at an RFP to put turf on the field. The \$800-900,000 numbers that were bounced around were fictional numbers. Avon-Grove spent \$1.5 million to put their three turf fields in last year; most of those cost \$500,000-\$600,000. An RFP would provide a real number and unless it is requested before the next Board meeting, it could not be completed by next fall. The reasons given were that we are conducting a facilities study and we will know. It is obvious there is a problem and we should get an RFP, which would be money well spent. Also, the private side of the community could work with turf manufacturers, putting logos on the field to raise funds, etc. We're asking the Board to look at what the cost of an RFP would be and to look at this further.

Mr. Swayze thanked Mr. Thaeber for his comments. He hopes they will be able to move it along in the fashion that he would like to see. There is considerable doubt about that, though. It is a work in progress.

**RESIDENTS'  
COMMENTS  
(Continued)**

Daniel Nichols, UHS Junior/soccer player and Pocopson Township resident, commented that the field on which they play is built on a noticeable hill so there is a distinct advantage for the teams playing on the downhill roll. The ball takes lots of bounce and this reduces play significantly. The stadium field is a bit better for night games but it also has its shortcomings. Football did play well but they had a big offensive line, which took a toll on the field as well. The football, soccer and lacrosse teams are pretty competitive but the fields are pretty sub-standard.

Matt Kerr, East Marlborough Township resident, stated that the facilities at Unionville-Chadds Ford are deplorable and unacceptable. We don't need a study to see how much it is going to cost. Go to Avon-Grove, Garnet Valley, Downingtown-East, West Chester-Henderson and see their fields. Mr. Kerr commented regarding the need for a full-time Athletic Director and stated that Mr. Fulginiti indicated that we have 800 students in sports at the high school. There are also 300 students involved in sports at the middle school. We need some support for athletics. Patricia Nalls and Curt Baker sent information out about the Stanford report that states that athletics facilitate academics. We don't need to do a study – we already know. We need an Athletic Director who will facilitate the other things that were discussed.

Randy Bradley, Chadds Ford Township resident, commented that about three years ago, the School Board allowed other parents and he to form a non-profit organization to support fields. They spent numerous hours talking with East Marlborough Township, the Southern Chester County Soccer Association, Unionville Recreation Association and others. In the end, it died on a vine because they could not obtain support from the Board. The group looked at renting property behind the bus garage but the Board would not get behind it. Three years later, we are still studying what we are going to do. He asked that the Board step up to the plate. The idea behind the fields foundation was that they were going to get everyone's support collectively. Because of a lack of support from the Board, we backed off of it. He asked that the Board reconsider the position we are in and as with air-conditioning, it will only get more expensive as time passes by.

Carol Catanese, Pennsbury Township resident, commented that she is supportive of Mr. O'Neill's position about our current grading scale. She feels that she shouldn't have to come to a Board meeting when a committee has already discussed this while they were working on the new report cards. During the course of that last meeting, there was never closure on the whole subject. We were led to believe something would be done and it has not been. Mrs. Catanese asked why we must have this grading scale when colleges don't use this. She commented that the School Board should not have to manage this; it should be from good management. Let's get it in place for the upcoming academic year.

Chris Bove, Birmingham Township resident, asked what was the advantage of the current grading system. He commented regarding our fields and stated that it takes eight month to one year to recover from ACL injuries. He hates to see anyone go through that because of the inability to have decent fields on which to play.

Doug Keller, East Marlborough Township resident, stated that he was lending his support to the grading system changes. The kids get a great education and test scores and this system does not show what they truly achieve. The current sophomore class will go into the most competitive college application environment ever and colleges aren't going to increase the number of spaces available for them. The number of applicants will not decrease in the next five years and a school of this quality should not be doing that.

Kevin Cattie, Pennsbury Township resident, stated that he was new to the school district this year. The academics are fantastic. All three subjects that were brought up tonight make sense. He suggested that we at least put the numeric grade in place. He is in favor of choice for the middle school but stated that we may not be able to do that for September ... Mr. Cattie feels that our fields are sub-par as well as the inside conditions. The fields definitely need to be upgraded, particularly for the safety of the students. He suggested that we at least put a request for proposal out there.

Pam, a Pennsbury Township resident, commented that she hopes the Board acts on the grading system and the fields.

Cathy Adams, East Marlborough Township resident, commented that she is happy to see these items on the table. She asked whether we were thinking that if we have a 91 now and go to the other system it will become an "A" or if a 92 would become the equivalent of a 90. She referred to comments from her friend and teacher regarding the things that a student would need to do for an "A" in her course, whether the number is a 70, 80, or 90.

Mrs. Adams stated that it's a nice idea to keep everyone performing at an academically-high level with regard to changes at the middle school. She doesn't want to see the kids put under too much pressure or getting lost on the rise to that academic level.

Linda Worczak, East Marlborough Township resident, commented regarding two things we all want - safety and providing the best future we can for our kids. She stated that we should provide the best we can provide and we are not doing that now in U-CF. When coming here from California, she looked for that but now she finds it to be a very competitive school district but we are not giving them the same opportunities as children from other school districts. She applauded Mr. O'Neill's initiative and she agreed with it 100%. She also supports the fields issue, particularly regarding safety.

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mr. Wandersee to approve the Minutes of the January 17, 2006 Regular Board Meeting (pp. 3.a.1-18 revised).

Motion carried (7-0).

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mrs. Halstead to approve the Minutes of the February 13, 2006 Work Session (p. 3.a.19).

Motion carried (7-0).

The following committee meeting minutes were reviewed:

1. Facilities Committee – January 13, 2006 (pp. 3.a.2.1-2)
1. Curriculum Committee – February 13, 2006 (pp. 3.a.2.3-4)

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 – December, 2005 (p. 3.b.1) and January, 2006 (p. 3.b.12)
2. 2005-2006 GF Function Revenue Analyses with Details of 6100's and 7000's as of December, 2005 (p. 3.b.2) and January, 2006 (p. 3.b.13)
3. 2005-2006 General Fund Function-Object Expenditure Analyses as of December, 2005 (pp. 3.b.3-5) and January, 2006 (pp. 3.b.14-16)
4. Category Expenditures Analyses – December, 2005 (p. 3.b.6) and January, 2006 (p. 3.b.17)
5. Capital Reserve Fund Reports – December, 2005 (p. 3.b.7) and January, 2006 (p. 3.b.18)
6. Capital Projects Fund Reports – December, 2005 (p. 3.b.8) and January, 2006 (p. 3.b.19)
7. Outstanding Projects Summaries – December, 2005 (p. 3.b.9) and January, 2006 (p. 3.b.20)
8. Construction Project Reports – December, 2005 and January, 2006
  - a. Unionville High School HVAC Project (pp. 3.b.10-11 and 3.b.21-22)

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

The following activity account reports were reviewed:

1. Unionville Elementary School Field Trip Account – September 29, 2005 through January 27, 2006 (pp. 3.c.1-2)

**MINUTES  
APPROVED**

**FINANCIAL  
STATEMENTS**

Activity Account Reports (Continued)

2. C. F. Patton Middle School Activities Accounts – October, November, and December, 2005 (pp. 3.c.3-5)
3. Unionville High School Activities Balance Sheet – November 30 to December 31, 2005 (pp. 3.c.6-7)
4. U-CF School District Cafeteria Service Profit & Loss Statement – December, 2005 and January, 2006 (pp. 3.c.8-11)

Mr. Swayze requested that the secretary file the activity account reports.

It was moved by Mr. Wandersee and seconded by Mrs. Halstead to approve the Bill List for January 26, 2006 in the amount of \$2,121,660.90 (pp. 3.d.1-21).

Motion carried (7-0).

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Dr. West to approve the February Budget Transfers as on the attachment (p. 3.e.1).

Motion carried (7-0).

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mrs. Halstead to approve the Self-Certification Application for the Hillendale Elementary School Chiller Replacement as on the attachment (p. 4.a.1).

Mr. Wandersee stated that the cost of \$200,000 would be taken out of the Capital Reserve budget.

Motion carried (7-0).

It was moved by Mrs. Halstead and seconded by Mrs. Trigg to approve the Self-Certification Application for the Unionville High School/Patton Middle School Water Project as on the attachment (p. 4.a.2).

It was noted that the \$250,000 cost would be taken out of the Capital Reserve budget for this year.

Motion carried (6-1). Mrs. Brown voted nay.

It was moved by Dr. West and seconded by Mr. Wandersee to approve the Change Orders for the High School HVAC Project (Nos. PC01 and HC01) in the total amount of \$38,254.51 as discussed at the February Work Session and as on the attachment (p. 4.a.3).

Motion carried (7-0).

**BILLS  
APPROVED**

**BUDGET  
TRANSFERS**

**FACILITIES:**

**Self-  
Certification/  
Hillendale  
Chiller  
Replacement**

**Self-  
Certification/  
High School-  
Middle School  
Water Project**

**Change Orders  
– UHS HVAC  
Project (Nos.  
PC01, HC01)**

**3.a.8**

Mrs. Brown stated that there were no voting items for Curriculum tonight. She commented that they met many times in the last month on curricular issues and stated that the courses Dr. Kenney discussed would be going to Curriculum Council next week. We may have some items for Board discussion at the March Work Session.

**CURRICULUM**

Mr. Cochran, Director of Business & Operations, stated that there were two action items for Finance this evening. The first item was discussed at Work Session and replaces all of the high school copiers. This will be a savings of approximately \$450 per month and we will have new and better equipment.

**FINANCE:**

It was moved by Mr. Wandersee and seconded by Dr. Sweeney to approve the Lease/Order Agreement with Lanier Worldwide, Inc. for the lease of photocopy equipment for Unionville High School as listed in the attached Order Agreement for a total monthly cost of \$4,346.68 (pp. 6.a.1-6).

**UHS Photocopy  
Equipment**

Motion carried (7-0).

Mr. Cochran commented that the second item of business is a request from the Chester County Assessment Office and Tax Claim Bureau. It includes a parcel of leased land, including a cabin that washed away in the 1990's, and removes the total amount of \$2,230.51.

It was moved by Mrs. Brown and seconded by Mrs. Halstead to approve the removal of tax liens in the total amount of \$2,230.51 for years 1994 to 1998 on Parcel No. 63-04-0104.01 as recommended by the County of Chester Tax Claim Bureau and Assessment Office as on the attachment (pp. 6.b.1-3).

**Removal of  
Tax Liens –  
Parcel No.  
63-04-0104.01**

Motion carried (7-0).

Dr. Sweeney stated that Rudy Reif was hired as our new Assistant Principal at Unionville High School at the Work Session on February 13, 2006.

**PERSONNEL:**

Mr. Fulginiti introduced Mr. Reif and his wife, Debbie, who is a math teacher in Downingtown. He is ecstatic about his coming on board and about the high school administrative team being formed. Mr. Reif has a 22-year background in education, including health and physical education and the last 16-17 years as a counselor. He has a lot of administrative experience without the official title (i.e. curricular items, assessment and testing, student assistance, and overseeing those things that require sound management). Mr. Fulginiti welcomed him to Unionville-Chadds Ford.

**R. Reif -  
UHS Asst.  
Principal**

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mrs. Trigg to approve the following personnel items (agenda items a. through h. and j.):

- a. Professional Conferences
  - 1. Approve attendance at (21) Professional Conferences as on the attachments (p. 7.a.1-3)
- b. Retirement (1)
  - 1. Elaine Benke – Unionville High School Paraprofessional, effective January 31, 2006
- c. Resignation (1)
  - 1. Alicia Johnson – District Office Special Education Office Manager, effective February 8, 2006
- d. Substitutes (4)
  - 1. Karen Diehl - Music
  - 2. Linda Briggs – Elementary
  - 3. Catherine Weldon - Elementary
  - 4. Lauren Milley – Special Education
- e. Supplemental Contracts (8)
  - 1. Charlie Lewis – Assistant Track Coach
  - 2. Syd White - Assistant Track Coach
  - 3. Jennifer Croneberger - High School Varsity Softball Coach
  - 4. Kristen Carroll – Middle School Softball Coach
  - 5. Tabatha Gilbert - Indoor Track
  - 6. Josh Thomas - 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys' Baseball
  - 7. Ron Phillips - Mentor (Half Year)
  - 8. Judy Hurley - Mentor (Half Year)
- f. Employ (6)
  - 1. Joseph Kilpatrick – Unionville High School Computer Applications Teacher (TPE), effective January 23, 2006 at the Bachelors Step 1 salary level, pro-rated
  - 2. Tara M. Gruss- Chadds Ford/Pocopson Elementary School Health & Physical Education Teacher (LTS) for the second semester of the 2005-06 school year, effective January 23, 2006, at the Bachelor's + 24 Step 1 salary, pro-rated
  - 3. Cynthia Moore – Chadds Ford/Pocopson Elementary School Science Paraprofessional (5 hours per day x 182 days), effective January 23, 2006, at a salary of \$11.30 per hour
  - 4. Linda Miller – Unionville High School Secretary (7.5 hours per day x 260 days), effective January 26, 2006, at a salary of \$13.75 per hour

**PERSONNEL  
(Continued)**

**Professional  
Conferences**

**Retirement:**

**E. Benke**

**Resignation:**

**A. Johnson**

**Substitutes**

**Supplemental  
Contracts**

**Employ:**

**J. Kilpatrick**

**T. Gruss**

**C. Moore**

**L. Miller**

Personnel - Employ (Continued)

5. Rhoda Isenberg – Unionville High School Paraprofessional (7.0 hours per day x 182 days), effective February 3, 2006, at a salary of \$11.24 per hour
  6. Kenneth Pratt – Part-time Bus Driver, effective January 31, 2006, at a salary of \$14.35 per hour
- g. Leaves (8)
1. Karen Amoss – Pocopson Elementary School Grade 2 Teacher, eight-week Maternity Leave, effective approximately April 27, 2006, per her physician's statement
  2. Dawn Oldenski – Unionville Elementary School Grade 3 Teacher, eight-week Maternity Leave, effective approximately March 31, 2006, as per her physician's statement
  3. Amy Simonds – Pocopson Elementary School Grade 1 Teacher, eight-week Maternity Leave, effective February 20, 2006, per her physician's statement, followed by a four-week leave per the FMLA
  4. Susan Pacella – District Speech Pathologist, eight-week Maternity Leave, effective approximately April 12, 2006, per her physician's statement
  5. Sherri Hwang – Unionville High School Math Teacher, eight-week Maternity Leave, effective approximately March 24, 2006, per her physician's statement
  6. Christina Rissmiller – Unionville Elementary School Grade 3 Teacher, six-week Maternity Leave, effective approximately May 12, 2006
  7. Jennifer Spisak – Patton Middle School Team Teacher – six-week Maternity Leave, effective approximately May 12, 2006, per her physician's statement
  8. Michele O'Kane – Hillendale Elementary School Grade 4 Teacher, Maternity Leave, effective approximately April 12, 2006
- h. Reclassification (1)
1. Kathryn Lange – from part-time (5 hours per day) Food Service Assistant to full-time (5 hours per day) Food Service Assistant and Food Service Courier (1 hour per day), effective August 29, 2005
- j. Create Position (1)
1. One-on-One Paraprofessional Aide for a Special Education Student at Patton Middle School (7 hours per school day)

**PERSONNEL  
(Continued)**

**Employ  
(Cont'd.)**

**R. Isenberg**

**K. Pratt**

**Leaves:**

**K. Amoss**

**D. Oldenski**

**A. Simonds**

**S. Pacella**

**S. Hwang**

**C. Rissmiller**

**J. Spisak**

**M. O'Kane**

**Reclassifi-  
cation:**

**K. Lange**

**Create Position-  
One-on-One  
Para./Special  
Ed. – M.S.**

In response to Mrs. Halstead's question, Mr. Fulginiti stated that the high school paraprofessional is not a new position but replaces Mrs. Elaine Benke's (retirement) position. In response to her question regarding agenda item h., Mrs. Wickersham responded that the additional hour makes Ms. Lange eligible for benefits.

In response to Mr. Wandersee's question regarding agenda item j., Mr. Marinelli stated that the hourly rate would be approximately \$11-12 per hour for the one-on-one paraprofessional.

Motion carried (7-0).

It was moved by Dr. Sweeney and seconded by Mrs. Trigg to approve the following personnel item (agenda item i.):

i. Cater Rate

Approve the Cater Rate for the 2005-2006 School Year as follows:

- a. Cater Rate I - \$21.00
- b. Cater Rate II - \$15.00

*The cater rate is the hourly rate paid to the food service staff for special functions that take place after regular school hours. This was slated to be included in the August, 2005 Board agenda with the other pay adjustments, but was omitted by mistake.*

Motion carried (7-0).

Mrs. Halstead reported for Transportation regarding:

1. Winter - Let's hope the remainder of the winter is mild so that our buses can safely transport our children to school.
2. Sad News – One of our van drivers, John Clendenin, lost his battle with cancer on January 26. John worked for us for about two years after he retired from full-time employment. His wife, Mary, has been a bus driver and food service employee with the district for almost 30 years. We extend our condolences to Mary and her family.
3. Accident – A very tragic incident that involved one of our buses occurred on the same day. Driver Teresa Riale started her afternoon secondary route and saw a car approaching her bus out of control. It began to slide and roll over a number of times, ejecting the driver from the vehicle. Ms. Riale was able to stop her bus and stay out of the direct path of the car. The car did slightly impact the school bus causing very little damage, and did not affect the driver or students. The young woman driving the car did not survive. We commend Teresa for her quick action and calm control throughout the ordeal. Also, thanks to Dot Shaw, Holly Hopkins, the high school and middle school Principals and Assistant Principals, Bob Cochran and Tom Marinelli who all assisted either in their respective buildings or at the scene of the accident.

**PERSONNEL  
(Continued)**

**Cater Rates –  
2005-06**

**TRANSPOR-  
TATION**

Transportation Report (Continued)

4. Mrs. Halstead also spoke with a family whose youngster rides a special education bus. They were extolling their driver for being particularly caring. They thanked the driver and our Transportation Department.

Dr. West stated that there were no action items for Communications this evening. She commented that there is an expanded Communications Subcommittee of three people that started with this new Board. They held their first meeting a few weeks ago and are trying to improve the communications with all stakeholders. She hopes to have something more substantial to report next month.

Mrs. Trigg stated that she had expected to vote on Policy No. 246 - Student Wellness – this month. However, the state has issued some revised guidelines requiring us to move some things from one place to another. We will not vote at this time until the state completes their revisions. The earliest vote would be in March. The policy is available for review on the district's website.

Dr. Kenney commented that the Wellness Policy is governed by the federal government. We are ahead of the game and had 13 people on the committee to try to come up with a policy that would be reasonable in Unionville-Chadds Ford. In January, 2005, the Administration established a Wellness Committee, which held meetings, gathered information, and produced a draft Policy that is now under review by the Administration and the solicitor. The Superintendent anticipates that the Policy will be presented to the Board for a First Reading at its March meeting. The current members of the Wellness Committee are:

- o Kathy Allaband – Cafeteria Manager
- o Gaila Ciccarone – District Resident (Member of the Public)
- o George Claypoole – Elementary Physical Education Teacher
- o Bob Cochran – Director of Business
- o Ian Crampton – Student
- o Suzanne Davis – Elementary School Nurse
- o Lisa Fiorani – Emotional Support Teacher/504 Coordinator
- o Jim Fulginiti – High School Principal
- o Lynn Majarian – PTO Representative (Parent)
- o Edward Murray – School Board Member
- o Charlene Stone – Elementary Principal
- o Maia Walter – Parent (Nurse Practitioner)
- o Marie Wickersham – Supervisor of Food & Nutrition Services (Committee Facilitator)

The very earliest that we would ask for approval would be in March or April but we're trying to avoid changing the policy several times.

**Transportation  
(Continued)**

**COMMUNI-  
CATIONS**

**BOARD  
POLICY**

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

Mrs. Trigg stated that we also had the first reading of revised Board Policy No. 210 (Pupils – Use of Medication) this evening. This is a technical revision to include forms with the policy. We will vote on the approval at the March Board meeting.

Lexi Crampton, Student Representative, provided her report regarding:

1. UHS Musical – *Beauty and the Beast* will be performed on March 9, 10 and 11
2. Student Congress – They experimented with a new method of obtaining student opinions. During all three lunches, they had a table with open-ended surveys and donuts available. They encouraged students to comment on issues that were important to them:
  - a. The abysmal state of our athletic fields, as well as the need for more bleachers in the gym;
  - b. Thefts at the high school, particularly in the locker rooms during gym classes;
  - c. Too much focus on the PSSA's and other standardized testing in the classroom ;
  - d. New Classes – A.P. Physical Education. Honors calculus and new language classes;
  - e. Grading Scale – Students had strong opinions and although some of them differed, most favored a 10-point grading scale.

Dr. West reported for the Center for Arts & Technology/Special Education/Intermediate Unit in Mr. Murray's absence. She did not attend the I.U. meeting but did attend the meeting of the Chester County School Authority on January 18, 2006. They primarily set dates for subsequent meetings. They will work to try to locate alternative funding at the county, state and federal levels to offset the costs for construction of the CAT-Southern Campus building. They are hoping to see \$5-10 million from alternative sources.

Mr. Wandersee reported for Legislation:

1. The House of Representatives and General Assembly are firmly rejecting the Senate Bill revision regarding tax reform by a vote of 197-0. It is sort of unusual to have an impasse by the actual houses.

They are going to go out to a conference committee with the revision of the latest tax reform bill. They're hoping to have a rewrite of that through the conference committee with a full presentation to the full House and Senate for a vote in the first two weeks of March. It's hard to believe that they're going to come to a conclusion. The House wants to give more property tax credit to homeowners; the Senate is a little less on property tax credit but more on local options to determine how much property tax credit will be allowed per school district.

**Policy  
(Continued)**

**No. 210, Pupils-  
Use of  
Medication, rev.  
- First Reading**

**STUDENT  
REPRESENTATIVE  
REPORT**

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

**LEGISLATIVE  
REPORT**

Legislative Report (Continued)

Those are basically the two frames of minds we have here. There might be a small compromise that the E.I.T. (Earned Income Tax) would be increased .2% (two-tenths of a percent) to go to school districts to help mitigate the property tax increases.

2. Teacher Strikes – A new Bill outlawing teaching staff strikes is getting more attention but nothing more definitive has been put forth at this time.

Dr. Kenney provided the Superintendent's report:

1. Grading Issue – We have been hearing about this for about a year and a half. This was one of our goals for next year. We want to hear from various sides on this issue. If we change to allow 90-91% as A's, those who have a 95-96-97% grade and also had A's may feel that they now have to compete with U-CF students for admission to a college whom they may not have had to compete with previously.

We have looked at percentages and there are pros and cons to that as well. It benefits the students when you use grades sometimes. The universities have some unspoken concerns to which they do not admit such as diversity issues, geographic, gender, ethnic issues and many others. They also have issues regarding legacy. Some select schools and colleges may also reserve spots for some who attend select private schools.

The last presidential election had Bush and Carey running for office. Both attended Yale. Both by their own admission were average students in high school, although their moms and dads should be proud of both of them. He wants to hear from various sides of this issue. Should we start this in the students' freshman, sophomore, or junior year? We don't want anyone to feel disadvantaged. The goal is to conclude this by next year and make a recommendation. We are open-minded on this issue as long as everyone feels they have been fairly represented.

Mr. Jim Fulginiti provided the Unionville High School report:

- Rudy Reif – Mr. Fulginiti commented regarding the quality of the person we have gotten and the good feeling he had during the site visit. People on staff commented regarding Rudy being the guy who held the glue in place that kept them together during the recent passing of Downingtown's Terry Muzze. Rudy said he felt that he could barely keep himself together. Mr. Fulginiti stated that this is what leadership is all about – the courage to keep moving forward and leading when you are going through that.

**LEGISLATIVE  
REPORT  
(Continued)**

**SUPER-  
TENDENT'S  
REPORT**

Superintendent's Report – High School (Continued)

- *Beauty and the Beast* – will be held on March 9-11, with a matinee on Saturday at 1:00 p.m. All seats will be reserved so please keep that in mind. Applications are available on the office counter.
- Academic Competition – We have made it to the finals at the County competition that will be held on March 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:00 on Boot Road in Downingtown!
- Used Book Sale – A huge effort by the folks that generates a lot of resources for the buildings
- Sports – Boy's Basketball – Home game tomorrow; Swimming – has done extremely well also
- PSSA's – Completed writing and the rest of the make-ups. He appreciates Ed Spang's help with the testing.
- Plan for PSSA for 11<sup>th</sup> graders in Math & Reading – March 21-22-23 – The dates may be shown differently on the calendar. We're trying to minimize the disruptions to the daily schedule with some major logistical changes. They will be posted on the high school website, discussed in class meetings next week, and communicated in letters to parents. We will have a modified schedule that has all classes meeting. The testing will occur from 8-10:00 in the morning.
- National Merit Finalists – A list is posted outside of the Counseling Center; these are students who scored in the top 1% on the SAT's and U-CF Finalists include Hahnah Allen, Erin Brady, Gregory Cannarsa, Nicholas Chisholm, Jared Kerntke, and Robert MacNguyen.
- Assistant Principals – Mr. Fulginiti thanked the School Board and the administration for providing Kathleen Feehery and Ed Spang in their interim positions. It takes everyone to make it work but he wanted to thank them publicly. Mr. Spang will finish his duties on February 28<sup>th</sup> and Mrs. Feehery will be staying beyond that time.

Mr. Bruce Vosburgh provided the Patton Middle School report:

- Science & Research Competition – was held on February 9<sup>th</sup>, organized by Mrs. Knauer and Mrs. Schuster; judges were organized by Mr. Anderson from UHS. These students will represent the middle school at the Chester County Science & Research Competition on March 9<sup>th</sup> at CAT-Pickering: 8<sup>th</sup> Graders – Craig Johnson, Zander Adams, Mike Agnew; 7<sup>th</sup> Graders – Casey Taylor, Tess Schiavello, Morgan Harbert, Natalie Guarino, Jonas Raider/Bill Miller; 6<sup>th</sup> Graders – Andy Romine, Kristen Nunn/Krista Diehl

**SUPER-  
TENDENT'S  
REPORT –  
High School  
(Continued)**

**Middle School  
Report**

Superintendent's Report – Middle School (Continued)

- String Fest – The following 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade students will represent us on February 28<sup>th</sup>: Andrew, Amanda and Christopher Chou, Audrey Kang, Stephanie Zhang, Karuna Doraiswamy, Conner Coates, and Raul Larsen
- Spelling Bee – will be held on February 22<sup>nd</sup>; the winner will advance to the County Bee on February 27<sup>th</sup>
- PTO – will host the Harlem Wizards on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at UHS; it's sold out for the third year in a row!
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Girl's Basketball – beat our women's faculty in a close match last Friday afternoon
- PSSA – writing assessments were completed by all 8<sup>th</sup> graders last week
- Middle School Plan – the PTO hosted a discussion on February 2<sup>nd</sup> with 120 parents in attendance. It was suggested that we meet again in the evening – this session will be held on March 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the M.S. auditorium, hosted by the PTO.
- Course Selections – 8<sup>th</sup> graders have completed them and they have been sent to UHS for processing.
- CAT Brandywine – Presented their programs to 8<sup>th</sup> graders on February 10<sup>th</sup>
- PSSA Tests – for all 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders – will take place March 21-23 for Reading and Math. Letters were sent home last Friday with web addresses that parents could access for more information.
- Spring Open House & Special Area Showcase – will be held on March 8<sup>th</sup>
- Reader's Digest National Word Power Challenge – Karina Dabundo (7), Lauren Faux (6), and Audrey Kang (8) qualified to go to the state level of this competition. They were our grade level winners and passed a state qualifying exam. The competition will be held on March 20<sup>th</sup>; winners will go on to Florida in April.
- Math Counts Competition – Mark Leipold, Matt McKeeman, Savy Leiser, Jason Silverman, Wes Wright, Brian Chang, Shubo Yin, Thomas Yang and Michael Wu participated in this competition on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Ten 6<sup>th</sup> graders will compete on March 4<sup>th</sup>.
- PA Educational Technology Expo/Conference – Ali Schmelzle, Savy Leiser, Sara McWilliams, and Hanna Haskel are presenting there today in Hershey with teacher, Robin Martin on "How to create a podcast in the classroom."

**SUPER-  
TENDENT'S  
REPORT –  
Middle School  
(Continued)**

Superintendent's Report – Middle School (Continued)

- Citadel's Heart of Learning Award – Six faculty members were nominated for their innovations and enthusiasm in their classrooms to inspire others to want to learn: Young Choi (Music), Sheri Edwards (English), Shannon Freehart (Social Studies), Tom Hoover (Math), Joanna Stump (Geography), and Jewel Thacher (Guidance).
- Child's Play 2005-06 – Meg Boeni (6) will have her story performed there on March 3<sup>rd</sup> at Delcastle Technical High School in Wilmington, DE. This is a professional traveling theater group for young audiences that takes stories/poems written by school children and transforms them into live plays, dances and songs.
- PhysicsQuest 2005 – Mr. Dissinger's 6<sup>th</sup> grade science classes were awarded a certificate for correctly locating Einstein's hidden treasure. The American Physical Society has decided to make this an annual public outreach project.
- Chester County Honors Band – participants include: Sarah Christofides, Glen Burkhart, Megan Hughes, Brittany Baumeister, Clay Burkhardt, Kathleen Insetta, Greg Trevorrow, Perry Xu, Adam Cantini, Kristen Kershaw, Craig Johnsen, Anna Cantini, Andrew McIntyre, Ryan Collins, DJ Kountz, Jesse Kober and Agatha Carlin. Mr. O'Rourke will host the honors band rehearsal tomorrow from 1-4:00 p.m.

Clif Beaver, Unionville Elementary School Principal, provided the Elementary School Report:

- Welcome to Rudy Reif – they were colleagues at Downingtown.
- PSSA's – Writing will finish up tomorrow
- Hillendale Elementary –
  - Spelling Bee Winner – Jeremy Waterkotte
  - Penny Drive – Has been completed – great job
- Pocopson Elementary –
  - Early Literacy Night – February 1<sup>st</sup> – Children came to the library with Ms. Sara Ernst (Librarian) and Mrs. Carole Cavanaugh (Reading Specialist)

**SUPER-  
TENDENT'S  
REPORT –  
Middle School  
(Continued)**

**Elementary  
Report**

Superintendent's Report – Elementary Schools (Continued)

- Chadds Ford Elementary -
  - Envirothon – Five 2<sup>nd</sup> graders will participate; congratulations to teacher, Donna Hayden.
  - PTO – Dr. Kenney met with them on February 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss various issues.
  - Song Fest – Two students represented Chadds Ford at the Rose-Tree/Media School District.
  - Spelling Bee – Congratulations to Jack Bubes who will compete in the Chester County Spelling Bee on 2/27.
  
- Unionville Elementary –
  - Citadel Heart of Learning – Two teachers were nominated: Janet Dadds (Kindergarten) and Don Silknitter (Grade 5 Teacher)
  - Who's Who in American Education – Don Silknitter has been included for the fifth time!
  - PTO Meeting – The February meeting was attended by Board members, Karen Halstead, Kathy Brown and Dr. Corinne Sweeney. They responded to questions in an informal setting.

Dr. Kenney thanked Rudy Reif for his willingness to work with us.

Keith Knauss, East Marlborough Township resident, commented that no one disputes the observation that our fields are in less than optimum condition or the statement that artificial turf would be an improvement. However, there are two complicating factors:

1. Outside recreational groups are heavy users of our fields and significantly affect their playing condition. Until they pick up their fair share of the expense or find alternative facilities, any expenditure for artificial turf will be problematic. The Board cannot ethically spend educational funds for recreational purposes. These groups must either fund their own facilities or look to the townships or the county for subsidies, not to the School Board. Mr. Bradley's 501(c) Fields Foundation made a nice try at a compromise but the group's proposal was one that our solicitor said was illegal for the Board to enter into. The statement that the Board was disinterested in a solution was inaccurate.

**SUPER-  
TENDENT'S  
REPORT –  
Elementary  
Schools  
(Continued)**

**RESIDENTS'  
COMMENTS**

2. The pot of money for educational purposes is limited. Any expenditures for turf fields must stand with other proposals. Is the expenditure of \$1 million the most efficient way to further the student body's education or would it be better spent on providing: Choice at the middle school; A teacher to help students meet the NCLB mandates; Better science labs at the high school; Reduced class size at the elementary level? We could also consider if maybe the benefit is so marginal that the best course of action is to keep that \$1 million in the hands of the taxpayer.

For these two reasons, he encouraged the Board to move with cautious deliberation.

Don Gilman, East Marlborough Township resident, stated that he supported the grading system revisions. While raising three children and having two now go through the college search, it would be nice to know that U-CF has higher standards but that is just not the case.

Mary Valiante, East Marlborough Township resident, referred to Dr. Kenney's comments regarding a task force for the grading scale and stated that Mr. O'Neill has already begun the process. This should not wait until next year. The initial survey went to the high school list of families. Over 300 people responded and 21 of them were opposed to changing the grading scale. Since then, we have continued to send information to all families, not to only those who supported the change. She stated that there are considerations regarding diversity, gender, etc. at colleges but when it comes to an academic decision, we don't want our children disadvantaged in any way.

Mr. Swayze stated that the comment section of these meetings is just that – an opportunity for residents to make their comments. There are three major topics of concern and although we are fortunate, indeed, they are major concerns that are being addressed. He stated that individuals could also serve on related committees and attend various work sessions throughout the year.

Melissa Jacono, Birmingham Township resident, requested that people keep coming and expressing what they want. She asked the Board when they should come and when they would receive answers. Mr. Swayze stated that those questions could be asked individually to the respective person that they should be directed towards (the Superintendent, Principal, etc.). You could also be involved in the various committees where you can play an active role. Dr. Kenney stated that he has people calling and e-mailing to him all of the time and it's great to speak with them.

**RESIDENTS'  
COMMENTS  
(Continued)**

Dana Ely, East Marlborough Township resident, stated that she was concerned about the reasons that communications is a big issue. She stated that we have a committee and all of these people here. It's a wonderful opportunity to communicate and there is a room full of people to get information. She felt a lot of frustration in the audience.

Mrs. Brown stated that the reason there is not an answer is that there are dueling opinions. All nine Board members could all individually respond to each of the residents. This is not a forum for each of us to debate individual opinions. It's an opportunity for the Board to hear what the community has to say. Individuals could also call Board members and try to sway them. This is the reasoning as to why the Board cannot respond to you. Her own opinion is not necessarily the way the Board is going to vote.

Dr. O'Hern stated that you would see a letter grade and a percent grade on the next report card.

Mr. Swayze asked that residents continue to communicate, offer their opinions and thoughts and corrections on our thinking. This will be helpful in achieving the best outcomes. He stated that we all have to look at what other people are thinking and asked that we work very hard to weigh all sides, which is what the Board tried to do.

Mrs. Trigg welcomed Mr. Reif to the district. It's great to have you with the team. She thanked Robert Cochran and Marie Wickersham for their great job with the committee for the Wellness Policy.

Dr. Sweeney thanked Mr. Knauss for setting the record straight that the Board did not exercise an option for field development that found as illegal by our solicitor.

Mr. Swayze commented for Mr. Baker regarding the past months that have been very dynamic, including several challenging issues. These included the Organizational Climate Evaluation, common quality and assessment in the middle school and broadening the range of choices, the grading system and policy, and a review of the high school playing fields and administrative offices. We are hopeful that careful consideration and planning will elevate the district to new levels. He asked that we work together collegially as we move forward.

Mrs. Brown welcomed Rudy Reif and thanked him for coming. She also thanked everyone for coming out to share their comments and stated that it was nice to see so many people here. Mrs. Brown stated that the Facilities Study is more than just a fields study and involves all of the buildings, etc.

**RESIDENTS'  
COMMENTS  
(Continued)**

**BOARD  
MEMBERS'  
COMMENTS**

**BOARD  
MEMBERS'  
COMMENTS**

She thanked the residents who came out about the grading issue. This was the grading scale here in 1973 when she graduated from U-CF. She believes we will address some of the concern by putting the grade percent on the report cards. This should happen next marking period and we could see if people like that addition. She asked that everyone feel free to call or e-mail her.

Mrs. Halstead commented regarding Susan Beach's retirement from U-CF after many years at Unionville High School. She remembers Mrs. Beach when her own children went through school as always being the welcoming face at the counter and wished her well. Mrs. Halstead was at Unionville Elementary when Mr. Lipowitz's high school students came to read stories to Mrs. Dadds' Kindergarten students. It was wonderful to see some of her former students reading to the children and was a wonderful opportunity for them.

In response Mrs. Halstead's question, Mr. Vosburgh stated that the community chest is a nurse's account at the middle school. She commented that her children had gone through the school as it is and had wonderful teachers and some who may not have been so great. It was a wonderful coping tool for them when they went on through college, law school and work. We have to live with all personalities whether or not we like it. She truly appreciates the work of the middle school teachers, particularly the hard work they have been doing recently. We will all get better as time goes on.

In response to Mrs. Halstead's question, Mr. Cochran stated that about 26 residents are enrolled in charter schools, 17 of them in five to six cyber charter schools.

Mr. Wandersee responded to the comment that no one gets a response from Board members on comments. He personally welcomes all comments and stated that we don't necessarily have a position. We need to build a position and need your input. He'd like to see us get a rationalization on the grading issue and would look to the professional teachers and administrators for guidance. Mr. Wandersee likes choice for the middle school. He understands the athletic trainer issue also and the fields issue. We have stated this and he was the Board member who made the motion to work with Randy Bradley a few years ago. Mr. Wandersee stated that he does value the input and thinks about these things long after he leaves this building.

Dr. West welcomed Mr. Reif and is looking forward to his joining our team. She thanked the members of Boy Scout Troop 31 who were here this evening working toward their citizenship badge. Dr. West thanked Rob Conti-D'Antonio, Andrea LaPira and the teachers who worked on the mini conferences for inductees. She also thanked the Pocopson Elementary staff for putting together the program for School Board Appreciation in January where she spoke to students about School Board members and what they do.

Dr. West commented that she has 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in the district and has been involved for many years in the PTO's. She thinks the communications issues are very big but that's not to say we cannot develop something. She is thinking long and hard about how we can do better and hopes to have something substantial to say soon. She is on a mission to try to improve things.

Mr. Swayze welcomed Rudy Reif to the administrative team. The high school HVAC system is very much along its way, with the final classrooms to go on-line March 3-5. He thanked everyone for coming and for their desire and willingness to make this the best school district.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen M. Brown  
Secretary

**BOARD  
MEMBERS'  
COMMENTS  
(Continued)**

**MEETING  
ADJOURNED**