

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
UTICA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING – September 26, 2023 – 7:00 P.M.  
Administration Building – 929 York Street – Kernan School**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Joseph H. Hobika Jr, Presiding; Danielle Padula, Robert Cardillo, Tennille Knoop, James Paul, Jason Cooper

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Donald Dawes

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Dr. Kathleen Davis, Acting Superintendent, Steven Falchi, Joseph Shields, Esq., Mike Ferraro, Andre Paradis, Erica Schoff, Sara Klimek, Pam Smoulcey, Trina Falchi, Judeanne Rockford, Vinny Perrotta, Hiram Rios, Heather Mowat, Kathy Hughes, Paris Rich

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT: Kler Kler Gay Moo



**Public Comment to the Board of Education**

President Hobika, Jr. called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. After the NJROTC Color Guard presented the Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance, Board Clerk Kathy Hughes conducted roll call. All members of the Board of Education were present with the exception of Donald Dawes.

President Hobika, Jr.: We're going to take the agenda a little bit out of order today. I just wanted to welcome everybody to our first school year meeting. Its been a fairly turbulent past 12 months. I believe the district has navigated those 12 months with distinction and that is because we have some high-quality employees, administrators, teachers go went above and beyond.

**Certificates of Recognition to Utica Police Officers and Utica City School District Security Personnel**

The Board of Education and Acting Superintendent presented certificates of recognition to the following Utica Police Officers and UCSD security personnel: Jeff Lynch, Fran Donato, Hannah Stenson, Jeff Jalonack, Jovan Couvertier, Isiah Patterson, Captain James Holt, Officer Jake Penree, Sergeant Kyle Piersall, Officer Zachary Ambrose, Bruce Klaus, Devin Lindsey, Danielle Boyd, Joe Plado, Dylan Antalek, Javon Evans, and Danielle Washburn.

**Questions from Board Members**

President Hobika, Jr.: We wanted to take the opportunity to recognize our latest set of distinguished employees. We are going to present certificates to each of them, as a result of their participation in the incident that took place on September, 9, 2023. I am not sure if Jeff Lynch is here today, we are just waiting for him to come in. Welcome Jeff. We want to give you this certificate of recognition for your bravery and your acts and frankly what you have been saying and doing after the incident. We want you to know that we really appreciate your efforts. Do you want to say something? You don't have to, but I don't know if you might want to say something.

Mr. Lynch: I just want to say thank you. Thank you to everyone.

President Hobika, Jr: I'd like to call up Hiram Rios, our security director. I just have to say about Hiram that he has conducted himself with the highest regard of professionalism. He has faced a number of thorny situations during his term and he has acquitted himself quite well and I want to thank you on behalf of the staff, students and the parents of our district.



## Discussions

### Capital Project Update – Jeffrey Kloetzer, Stieglitz Snyder Architecture (SSA)

Mr. Kloetzer presented an update on the Capital Project.

### Questions from Board Members:

None

### Project Cost and Building Aid Update – Mike Visconti, Fiscal Advisors Marketing, Inc.

Mr. Visconti presented an update on project cost and building aid.

### Questions from Board Members

Dr. Davis: I know some of the Board members have asked when is our next project, when can we do the playgrounds when can we do these other upgrades and thing that are happening. I asked Mike to come today and let you know when your debt drops off, what the scope of your next project can be and what that looks like it will just give you some general idea. We will be collecting information, doing surveys and getting feedback over the next month to determine the needs in every building. We'll be asking teachers, administrators and parents what are their thoughts? What would they like to see for the next project?

President Hobika, Jr.: When you are talking about the next project, we haven't picked that project, you're just saying basically we would have up to \$161 million to spend on something?

Mr. Visconti: Correct. No scope has been identified at this point in time, but what was asked of us was to look at timelines and size. So, by looking at your retiring debt and the building aid. You're building aid ratio which is 98%, which is fantastic. You're able to achieve that project and keep the debt low. Which is also your local share, and that's keeping taxes neutral.

President Hobika, Jr.: Which is a good thing.

Mr., Visconti: Yes, if you had capital reserves that would be cash you would be able to put toward a project that number would grow. But right now, all the assumptions are pure borrowing, no cash.

Dr. Davis: I just have a comment. Thank you, Mike. You got my call on the 30<sup>th</sup>. He was on vacation with his family and he put his family aside and took care of business for the district, which was way beyond scope. So, I appreciate you. Thank you.

Mr. Cardillo: I saw that we're not eligible for any aid for culinary for the concession stand, right?

Mr. Visconti: Yes, that's correct.

Mr. Cardillo: What if there was a culinary program with the CTE and we use some kind of a relationship between CTE and teaching students culinary?

Mr. Visconti: Yes, we've seen that happen. What you would actually need is to physically have a teaching station within that building. So, you would actually have to have students in that facility and in that structure and you're educating them there. The CTE program would have to be approved by SED. Once SED approves that, they can change that designation. That project is a 7018, I think project number. So, the seven designates for 70 projects, no building aid. Whereas district wide 799 would be eligible for building aid. But if you had a program that was actually approved by SED and was CTE, it would be eligible.

Mr. Cardillo: Just looking to find more money.

Mr. Visconti: Yes, absolutely.

Mr. Cardillo: Thank you.

President Hobika, Jr.: I was wondering if the next time you come, would you come with a glossary of terms that you could pass out because of all the acronyms and the numbers it's.

Mr. Visconti: I thought it was a joke when I was first hired for my company with all the acronyms and I say it like its common knowledge, so I do apologize. SED is State Education Department. CTE is a Certified Technology and Education, so there's a ton of acronyms, so I apologize.

President Hobika, Jr.: No, you don't have to apologize. We're going to have to probably put that up on our website in case anybody watching wants to know what all that stuff means.

Mr. Visconti: Absolutely, and feel free to reach out. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

President Hobika, Jr.: Appreciate it, thank you.

### **Club/Team Updates – Vinny Perrotta, Director of Physical Education and Athletics**

Mr. Perrotta gave an update on clubs/teams.

### **Questions from Board Members**

President Hobika, Jr.: Vin by the way, thank you very much for continuing to keep the pressure on all the other schools that don't want to play us.

Mr. Perrotta: I appreciate that. Dr Davis was instrumental in that she was very supportive in the whole process and really made sure our students didn't suffer for that incident. Thank you.

Mr. Knoop: I do have a question, so, 2 questions. One – where are the kids bowling this year? So where do they go?

Mr. Perrotta: So, Pin-O-Rama is now going to become a car wash so Pin-O-Rama is gone. We're working right now with Vista. So far that is our only avenue. It's not going to be what it used to be. We are looking at probably 1 practice a week and 2 matches. It is really going to hurt the bowling programs locally.

Mrs. Knoop: That stinks. The other question I have and I know I have talked to you before, and that is interest in the community for a girl's tag football team.

Mr. Perrotta: Correct

Mr. Cardillo: You were reading my mind. I just saw it on ESPN.

Mrs. Knoop: Oh really? This is a very big thing so how are we have we looked into see if we have any participation?

Mr. Perrotta: Yes, so currently the department chair, Jason Anguish, at Proctor put out a questioner in class to see what kind of interest we have in the sport.

President Hobika, Jr.: What sport is that? I'm sorry.

Mr. Perrotta: That's flag football.

Mrs. Knoop: For girls.

Mr. Cardillo: Girls flag football, it's a big deal. I saw it on ESPN the other night, and its great.

President Hobika, Jr.: No, I am all for flag football. I just wanted to know something about the bowling I thought you were still asking a question about that, I apologize. I wanted to know if we had any space available in the district where we could maybe put a couple bowling alleys in and have our own space.

Mr. Perrotta: Well I know that Pin-O-Rama, last I heard was selling lanes. They took the lanes out and they were for sale, the last I heard.

Mr. Ferraro: So, they already sold them.

Mrs. Knoop: They already sold them? That could be are next project.

Mr. Perrotta: That would be a great project Mike.

Mrs. Padula: I have a question because you are talking about football. Is there a powderpuff game this year?

Mr. Perrotta: I did hear that there was one being planned. I don't have any information on it.

Mrs. Paula: Ok it was really adorable last year. I was just wondering if there was a date? They liked it. If you get one would you tell us?

M. Perrotta: Yes, yes, I think that would be a great fundraiser if someone took that over. It could be a good fundraiser for one of the clubs.

Mrs. Padula: It was really, really nice last year.

President Hobika, Jr.: I just was wondering, who are we playing for our homecoming game?

Mr. Perrotta: CVA.

President Hobika, Jr.: Ok, and they have committed to actually come in the afternoon?

Mr. Perrotta: We haven't really discussed it, but that is what's on the schedule. We'll probably be discussing that shortly. We have a couple of weeks for that game, but usually when it gets closer that's when everything gets sorted out.

President Hobika, Jr.: Ok, thank you.



### **Presentations**

#### **Smart School Update – Dr. Kathleen Davis, Acting Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. Davis presented a Smart School Update

#### **Questions from Board Members**

President Hobika, Jr.: For the first time in at least the 6 years that I've been on the Board we are actually going to go through the budget process and discuss how we are going to do it in public.

President Hobika, Jr.: May I just ask one question about that committee you were talking about. How is that constituted, who makes the selections?

Dr. Davis: So, we will go to each union representative and ask for volunteers, student council, student government at the high school to get volunteers aboard. I would defer to the Board President on that. So, the leaders in each organization. We would talk to those leaders, community, we would put out a survey and ask for volunteers of parents or community members who want to sit on that committee.

President Hobika, Jr.: I believe that Jason is going to want to be on that.

Dr. Davis: Is he, he's excited about it?

President Hobika, Jr.: You can see it in his face. Look at him he's beaming.

Dr. Davis: Well, we can make that happen, I'm sure.

President Hobika, Jr.: I think just operating under your tutelage has increased our ability to have smart schools because you have educated not only the Board but the administration and everyone along the way and how this is supposed to be done and I want to thank you for that.

Dr. Davis: Thank you.

#### **Budget Update – Dr. Kathleen Davis, Acting Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. Davis presented a budget update.

### **Questions from Board Members**

Ms. Mowat: So, two different things happened this year, both kind of anomalies. First is the city of Utica opted to change when their assessment roles were going to be set. You pay the end of the fiscal year, for the city that has always been March. They changed that calendar year, that year, and that caused a twofold spin ahead. I don't want to call it assessments, but we have an equalization ratio here and I don't know if you're familiar with what equalization, it's across the state. So, in some parts of the city where you may have a \$40,000 house and you're being taxed on a \$40,000 assessment, you may be in another part of the city where you have \$100,000 house and you're being charged on a \$40,000 assessment. The state goes through and equalizes that. Each year over the past decade, our numbers have been dropping dramatically and this affects the STAR rebates that we receive as a school district. Joe is nodding his head because he's seeing it other places. So, what happened is that combined with assessments are down in the city for the first time, probably in a decade. So, every year your assessments have been going up and even though the equalization has been going down. You haven't really noticed much of a difference even though the tax levy was zero. This year we had two things happening. Number one, year assessments came down slightly and number two because the city opted to change when the assessment rules were set. It actually took two equalization years into play. I know it sounds kind of confusing, but it was pretty alarming because I didn't realize that, the city didn't realize it. The assessor was startled by it and he had to call and explain to us why all of a sudden, we were getting calls from taxpayers because we did not raise our tax levy. We did not. It really had to do with how much of the STAR rebate is coming back to us. We've done a lot of explaining, but this was basically a city function, not a school district function, and Joe if there's anything else you want to add?

Mr. Shields: That's it.

President Hobika, Jr.: I just want to make a comment because our staff has been working very hard. Actually, and Kathy has been working very hard as well going through all of the financials, all of the projects, all of our expenditures. Working hard to get ourselves in a position so that we can sustain the programs and the progress that we are making. I want to thank the staff and Dr. Davis for this gargantuan effort. They are here on the weekends. They're here at night. They're here at the crack of dawn, working to make sure that our district is in sound financial footing as well as all the other projects. So, thank you for your efforts.



### **School Safety Update – Hiram Rios**

Mr. Rios presented his report for the Utica City School District's District-Wide Safety Plan.

### **Questions from Board Members:**

President Hobika, Jr.: Thank you Hiram. I just was wondering I don't know if I am letting out state secrets, but the camera systems we have around our schools now what's the quality of them if you don't mind asking?

Dr. Davis: I am sorry, can I talk on that? So, Mike is going to do a full report for the Board at the next meeting.

President Hobika, Jr.: Oh, ok.

Dr. Davis: Yes, he has actually has taken all of the, he has a database, and will give all his recommendations to the Board. We maybe talking about those in private, only because you don't to breach any safety issues.

President Hobika, Jr.: Oh, ok. We are not going to talk about the cameras at all.

Dr. Davis: In general, right, they will be upgraded.

President Hobika, Jr.: Ok, not all of them?

Mr. Rios: We still have a phenomenal system.

Mr. Ferraro: So, we did do a significant upgrade of the security camera system over the last year. We almost doubled the volume and we are continuing to still look at areas and continue to upgrade the system as we go. We have a pretty substantial system in place.

President Hobika, Jr.: Ok, thank you.

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**Announcements/Reports**

**Student Representative Report – Kler Kler Gay Moo**

Kler Kler Gay Moo presented a Student Representative Report to the Board of Education for September 2023.

President Hobika, Jr.: I was going to offer Kler Moo, who is not only the commander of NJROTC but also the student council president and the School Board representative, this is his first meeting. Well he has been here before in a different capacity. This is his first meeting as the student representative. I wasn't sure if you have a lot of work to do tonight, so I wanted to give you the opportunity to give your report now and get home and do your homework if that is what you want to do. Or you can hang out for a while, its up to you, whatever you'd like to do. Would you like to give your report?

Kler Moo: I will stay.

President Hobika, Jr.: Ok, then that is even better. Thank you.

Mrs. Padula: And if it gets too long, interrupt us and say you want to go.

President Hobika, Jr.: Thank you Kler.

**Questions from Board Members:**

None

**PTO/PTA, Shared Decision-Making Committees, Student Councils, CSE Chairs, Title I, UTA, UAA, UTC, Teamsters Local 182, SEIU Local 200B, M.V. Buildings and Trades Council**

Christine Golden thanked the UCSD Security personnel & Utica Police Department on behalf of the Utica Teachers Association.

**Questions from Board Members:**

Dr. Davis: Just on behalf of the district I want to thank all of you. I had the honor of meeting all of you, out in the buildings, at the games. You don't go unnoticed you do a great job. It's a layer of safety and security that we all appreciate and value. So, thank you for being here tonight. We do appreciate you.

Robert Cole presented a report on M.V. Buildings and Trades Council.

**Questions from Board Members:**

Dr. Davis: Typically, when the school district, in general, a school district acts on a contract and it goes back to the negotiation's tables at the negotiation table those discussions will happen. I know that our legal counsel has reached out to your legal counsel and is waiting for a call to start setting up dates.

Mr. Cole: We reached out we sent emails we are just waiting for a response from your attorneys for scheduling dates to move forward on it.

Dr. Davis: So hopefully we will have a date soon and we will be able to sit at the table and have those discussions.

Mr. Cole: Can you give us a reason why you rejected your own proposal?

Dr. Davis: At his point they can't discuss that right now because we are in negotiations. So, Joe, do you want to speak on behalf of the district since your firm is representing us?

Mr. Shields: The conversation should take place at the bargaining table. The Board voted and that's it. The Board had an obligation to vote whether to ratify or not, and they vote it down. So, now you're back at the table.

Mr. Cole: Well we are expecting the emails for start dates, thank you.

Dr. Davis: Thank you.

President Hobika, Jr.: Thank you for coming.



**Superintendent's Remarks:**

Dr. Davis: I have a comment. I just want to say in that section. I just want to extend our sincere appreciation to Mayor Palmieri for working with the district, on finalizing the contract for school security officers that will now be under their supervision. We will continue with our full complement, and they will be taking a leadership role in ensuring the safety of our schools. In collaboration with Hiram, who will still continue on with our security safety, security protocol here?

President Hobika, Jr.: So basically, under this new agreement, the Police Department. commands the police officers. Our head of security commands our red shirts.

Dr. Davis: That's correct

President Hobika, Jr.: And they work in conjunction with each other.

Dr. Davis: That's correct.

Mrs. Knoop: Can we also note that this was already in progress to, before September 9<sup>th</sup>? This is not a reaction to what happened in response to September 9<sup>th</sup>, this was something already in negotiations and being discussed and brought to the table prior to September 9<sup>th</sup>. This is not a reaction from what happened on that day. That is something that we have been working on for a while to kind of come together and make something that wasn't really correct before proper now.

President Hobika, Jr.: This particular discussion has been occurring probably since sometime in August, early August. It really was more of I guess a technical change in the way the police officers and the district were interacting to allow for better accountability and a better chain of command. That is what we were hoping to accomplish and hopefully we will have done that. Does anyone else have any comments, questions, discussion about the superintendent's report?



**Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Davis, Acting Superintendent presented the Superintendent's Report dated September 26, 2023 to the Board of Education for approval with the following adjustments:

- CORRECTION – Page 13      Conferences
  
- ADD – Page 15              Resolution Appointing Dr. Kathleen Davis as the Utica City School District Chief Emergency Officer
  
- Resolution Revising Board Policy #4500
  
- ADD – Page 16              Resolution Appointing Edward Gray Transportation Supervisor
  
- Employment Agreement between the Utica City School District and Edward Gray Transportation Supervisor
  
- Recall for Bus Drivers and Monitors
  
- ADD – Page 17              Change of Assignments
  
- Rescindments

President Hobika, Jr. asked the Board Members if there were any items that needed clarification before a motion was made on the Consent Agenda. At this time, he polled Board Members: **None**

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**FOR ACTION:****Volume LVIII****Report No. S – 117****SUBJECT:****Approval of Reserve Plan**



**SUBJECT: Agreement between the Utica City School District and the Oneida County Probation Department to provide Probation Officers for purposes of Initial Response Team (IRT) Services**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to approve the agreement between the Utica City School District and the Oneida County Probation Department to provide Probation Officers for purposes of Initial Response Team (IRT) Services effective September 26, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

**FOR ACTION: Volume LVIII Report No. S – 121**

**SUBJECT: Application for Funds: Stronger Connections Grant (SCG) 2023–2025 School Years**

Authorization is requested to approve the 2023-2025 school years budget under the Stronger Connections Grant (SCG) Program in the amount of \$3,600,000.

The grant will assist in the district maintaining previously ARP ESSER funded programs that address the ability to create safe and supportive schools/student physical and mental health through all topics under Section 4108 of ESEA. This includes antibullying and harassment, building relationships, trauma-informed instruction, violence prevention, etc.

**BUDGET:**

<b>Personnel:</b>	<b>\$1,015,159</b>
Social Workers – 7 Social Workers salaries totaling \$880,159 for 2 years	880,159
Student ELT – Social Worker hours – 3,375 hours x \$40/hour = \$135,000	\$135,000
<b>Supplies:</b>	<b>\$8,109</b>
Notre Dame Elementary- Program start up materials and replacement parts (years 2 & 3)	4,019
Classroom supplies and workbook materials	4,090
<b>Purchased Services: ICAN (Integrated Community Alternatives Network)</b>	<b>\$2,429,875</b>
Year 1 Salaries – 39.95 FTE = \$1,188,116	
Year 2 Salaries – 39.95 FTE = \$1,223,759	2,411,875
<b>Purchased Services: (Notre Dame Elementary)</b>	
Notre Dame Elementary – Martial Arts Instructor - \$3,000 x 3 years = \$9,000	
Notre Dame Elementary – Yoga Instructor \$3,000 x 3 years = \$9,000	18,000
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	<b>\$146,857</b>
Fringe – including FICA @ \$77,660; Retirement @ \$7,991; Health Insurance @ \$54,100; and Workers’ Compensation @\$7,106 = \$146,857	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$3,600,000</b>

This budget is predicated on New York State Education Department’s program approval and may be modified by the state based on funding.

**FOR ACTION: Volume LVIII Report No. S – 122**

**SUBJECT: Application for Grant: Universal Pre-Kindergarten Grant Program**

**Deadline:**

**September 31,2023**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to approve the application for funding in the amount of \$3,239,097 through the New York State Education Department to continue funding for the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Grant Program.

**BUDGET:**

<b><u>PERSONNEL:</u></b>	<b>\$170,188</b>
• Project Director	125,145
• Curriculum Development – 1 teacher x \$40/hr. x 20 hrs.	800
• Transition Team –1 teacher x \$40/hr. x 25 hrs.	1,000
• Secretary	43,243
<b><u>PURCHASED SERVICES:</u></b>	<b>\$2,719,319</b>
• UPK Postcards and Mailing	36,000
• Contractual Agreement with the following seven (5) agencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Head Start</li><li>○ Neighborhood Center / Conkling</li><li>○ North Utica</li><li>○ Notre Dame</li><li>○ Thea Bowman</li></ul>	2,614,800
• Agency Development – 25 hrs. 19 x \$40/hr.	19,000
• Agency Ready Registration hours – 100 hrs. x \$40/hr.	4,000
• Agency Mentors for New Teachers – 5 teachers x 8 hrs. x \$40/hr.	1,600
• Meetings with Teachers and Mentors from Agencies – 12 hrs. x \$40/hr.	480
• Memberships ASCD (\$89) & NAEYC (\$150)	239
• Academic Coaching Consultant 580 hrs. x \$50/hr.	29,000
• Wilson Resources Workshop	10,000
• Staff Development Space Rental – Delta by Marriott – 3 days x \$1,400	4,200
<b><u>SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS:</u></b>	<b>\$287,237</b>
• Teaching Strategies Gold online subscription	7,600
• Brigance Management (manual/ test) 525 x \$3	1,575
• Brigance Screens 600 x \$1.35	810
• Foundation/Wilson Resources	7,600
• Get Ready-for-K tote bags 1,000 x \$2.33	2,230
• UPK Gripper water Bottles 700 x \$7.143	5,000
• Creative Curriculum	1,616
• Lakeshore Backpack Transition to School 700 x \$15.53	10,871
• Lakeshore Reduce, Reuse & Recycle Kit 20 x \$335.96	6,720
• Lakeshore Getting Ready for Kindergarten 20 x \$4,323.10	86,463
• Lakeshore Building Kits 13 x \$5,691.80	73,994
• Lakeshore Clothes Kit 20 x \$2,985.15	59,703
• Barnes & Noble Books	<b>4,542</b>
• HP Pro All-in-One Printer 2 x \$920.00	1,840
• Toner for Printer 6 x \$370	2,220

**(Cont'd)**

• Color Toner 12 x \$231.91	2,783
• Black Toner 10 x \$167	1,670
• Binders, copy paper, color paper, post-its, pens, pencils, file folders 408 x \$24.51	10,000
<b><u>TRAVEL:</u></b>	<b>N/A</b>
• N/A	



**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 13**

**SUBJECT:**

**Change of Assignment**

It is recommended that the following change of assignment be approved:

Leighann Artessa

From: Substitute Food Monitor  
District-Wide  
To: Substitute Teacher Assistant  
District-Wide  
Salary: \$14.20 per hour  
Effective: September 27, 2023

**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 13**

**SUBJECT:**

**Resolution for Probationary Appointment  
Stephen Zumchak – Music Teacher**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION FOR PROBATIONARY APPOINTMENT**

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that Stephen Zumchak, who possesses Music, Professional Certification issued by the Commissioner of Education, is appointed to the position of Music Teacher in the tenure area of Music, to a four-year probationary term commencing October 2, 2023 and expiring September 30, 2027 unless extended in accordance with the law. The expiration date is tentative and conditional only. To the extent required by the applicable provisions of the Education Law, in order to be granted tenure, Stephen Zumchak must receive composite or overall annual professional performance review ratings of either effective or highly effective in at least three (3) of the four (4) years, and if he receives an ineffective composite or overall rating in the final year of the probationary period he shall not be eligible for tenure at that time. Stephen Zumchak's salary shall be \$69,596 or as set forth in Step L-12, MA-72 of the collective bargaining agreement.

**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 13**

**SUBJECT:**

**Resolution for Per Diem Substitutes**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent of Schools, that the following individuals are appointed to serve as per diem Substitute Teachers at \$100.00 per day, effective immediately:

- Marina Aceto
- Isabella Starsiak

**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 13**

**SUBJECT:**

**Resolution for Per Diem Substitutes**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to approve the following resolution:



**FOR ACTION:****Volume LVIII****Report No. P – 13****SUBJECT:****Mentors/Mentees for 2023-2024**

It is recommended that the following Mentors/Mentees for school year 2023-2024 be approved:

<b>Mentee/New Teacher</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Mentor</b>
Allison H. Alberico	Occupational Therapist	.9 Kernan/.1 Donovan	Connie Hosler
Jacob Anweiler	Social Studies	Donovan	Shaun Hadity
Frank Aurigema	Earth Science	Proctor	Andrew Boyd
Noe Ra Me Be	Elementary	Conkling, Grade 1	Anne Kent-Kwasniewski
Trisha Bobowski	Earth Science	Proctor	Cameron Jennings
Allie Bonacci	Guidance Counselor	Proctor	Bradley Gouger
Katrina Briody	ENL	.5 Jones/.5 Kernan	Audrey Kruger
Marissa Brown	Reading	Columbus	Michael Pagliaro
Edward Campbell	English	Proctor	Dennis Hahn
Jennifer L. Chambrone	Speech Pathologist	.6 Herkimer/.4 Charter	Catherine
Francisca Chandler	Special Education	Jefferson	Kimberly Shackett
Caroline Clowes	Special Education	Donovan	Tanya Hyde
Sarah Coleman	Speech Pathologist	Conkling	Katelyn Mootz
Joseph A. DeCondo	Physical Therapist	.8 Kernan/.2 WW	Marissa Hajec
Marangely Delgado	Elementary	Conkling, Grade 2	Rebecca Blaise
Debra Ellis	School Counselor	.5 Herkimer/.5 Jefferson	Melissa Halpin
Shannon Ferguson	Elementary	Watson Williams, Grade 3	Ashley Fellone
Breanna M. Forte	English	Donovan	Jessica Kokoszki
Allyson Greif	ENL	Jefferson	Mary Anne Wilkinson
Bonnie S. Harrington	Mathematics	Donovan	Amy Simon
Sara A. Harter	Special Education	Kennedy	Jamie DePerno
Aubree D. Jabour	Social Studies	Donovan	Gina Constantine
Kasandra Jardines	Elementary	Columbus, Grade 1 Bilingual	Hannah Smith
Heather Jaynes	Elementary	Albany, Grade 4	Andriana Liberatore
Matthew S. Jones	Special Education	Conkling	Laura McCabe
Sarah M. Jones	Speech Pathologist	Hughes	Calli Shrey
Maureen Judycki-Karwacki	Speech Pathologist	.6 Jefferson/.4 Albany	Kristy Martin
Ethan Kane	Social Studies	Donovan	Victoria Stutzenstein-Mankad
Jessica A. Keller	Special Education	Kernan	Michelle Campola
Shannon R. Kopcza	Physical Therapist	.7 Hughes/.2 King/.1 Charter	Beth Putney
Lauren Kozak	Physical Therapist	.8 Jefferson/.1 Columbus/.1 GH	Jessica Dodge

**FOR ACTION:****Volume LVIII****Report No. P – 13****SUBJECT:****Mentors/Mentees for 2023-2024**

(Con'd)

It is recommended that the following Mentors/Mentees for school year 2023-2024 be approved:

<b>Mentee/New Teacher</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Mentor</b>
Lisa A. Kuhn	Speech Pathologist	.5 Columbus/.5 WW	Rachel Nash
Daniel Macaluso	Mathematics	Kennedy	Stacey Bennett
Caitlin Mahoney	Speech Pathologist	Kernan	Erica Borek
Danielle M. Manolescu	Occupational Therapist	.5 Albany/.5 WW	Elaina Pacini
John Martello	Social Studies	Donovan	Adam Colone
Shawn P. McQueeney	Occupational Therapist	.8 Jefferson/.2 Columbus	Rene Mootz
Sarah E. Mineo	Elementary	Jones, Grade 5	Lisa Zaniweski
Merisa Muhic	Elementary	Kernan, Grade 4	Kathleen Yacco
Alexandra Murphy	Elementary	Jones, Grade 1	Michele Diliberto
Jenna Palmer	Elementary	Kernan, Grade 3	Tiffany Ziober
Steven A. Penge	School Counselor	Proctor	Marlene Ouder Kirk
Benjamin J. Phelps	Social Worker	Albany	Danielle Mancuso
Jennifer Phillips	School Counselor	.5 Jones/.5 Kernan	Annamaria Kelly
Michelle C. Roberts (Ziemba)	Occupational Therapist	.6 Kernan/.4 Charter	Nicole Laribee
Imane Sahbani	Elementary	Conkling, Grade 2	Bonnie Dawes
Lori Sieffert	Occupational Therapist	.9 Conkling/.1 Proctor	Elizabeth Graziano
Rachel M. Smith Zielinski	Occupational Therapist	.9 Conkling/.1 Kennedy	Allison Jones
Adrienne Sniezek	Elementary	Kernan, Grade 1	Kara Carcone
Taylor M. Torchia	School Psychologist	.5 Hughes/.5 Jefferson	ManLing Kwan
Sara E. Totaro	Occupational Therapist	Hughes	Allison Gates
Karen Trunfio	Special Education	Proctor	Kylie Marraffa

**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 13**

**SUBJECT:**

**Conferences**

**CORRECTION**

It is recommended that the following conferences be approved:

<b>NAME</b>	<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Louis Parrotta	Central New York Council for the Social Studies 2023 Annual Conference Syracuse, NY Approved by: K. Szczesniak & S. Falchi Allotted: \$168.00 from Budget Code: A2110-475-02-0000 Substitute Required	October 24, 2023

<b>NAME</b>	<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>DATE</b>
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Shawna Fleck	Data Analysis Technical Assistance Group Albany, NY Approved by: S. Falchi & A. Paradis Allotted: \$50.00 from Budget Code: A2070-400-00-0000 No Substitute Required	<del>September 26, 2023</del> September 29, 2023
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<u>NAME</u>	<u>CONFERENCE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Carole Rahme	Leatherstocking Regional School Library Conference Utica, NY Approved by: C. Clark & S. Falchi Allotted: \$75.00 from Budget Code: A2070-400-00-0000 Substitute Required	October 26, 2023

**FOR INFORMATION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 14**

**SUBJECT:**

**Rescindment**

**Teacher Assistant**

It is recommended that the following rescindment of employment be accepted:

Carina Felix

Teacher Assistant – Special Education  
Effective: September 19, 2023  
Reason: Accepted position outside the  
Utica City School District  
Notification Received: August 19, 2023

**Mr. Cardillo made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and seconded by Mr. Paul.**

There being no further discussion, **motion approved 6-0.**

**THIS CONCLUDES THE CONSENT AGENDA.**

**MOTIONS FROM THE FLOOR:**

**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. S – 126**

**SUBJECT:**

**Resolution Appointing Dr. Kathleen Davis as the  
Utica City School District Chief Emergency Officer**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby appoints Dr. Kathleen Davis to serve as the Chief Emergency Officer of the Utica City School District effective September 26, 2023.

**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. S – 127**

**SUBJECT:**

**Resolution Revising Board Policy #4500**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, section 103(16) of the General Municipal Law authorizes any officer, board or agency of a county, political subdivision or any district therein to make purchases of apparatus, materials, equipment or supplies, or to contract for services related to the installation, maintenance or repair of apparatus, materials, equipment, and supplies through a process known as “piggyback” purchasing; and

WHEREAS, “piggyback” purchasing is defined as purchasing through the use of an existing contract made by the United States of America or any agency thereof, any state or any other county or political subdivision or district therein, if such contract was made through competitive bidding consistent with state law and made available for use by other government entities; and

WHEREAS, use of “piggyback” purchasing does not negate applicable minority and women-owned business enterprise program mandates or the preferred source requirements of section 162 of the state finance law; and

WHEREAS, the Utica City School District wishes to adopt the option to use “piggyback” purchasing to allow the District greater flexibility and cost effectiveness in its purchasing decisions;

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education of the Utica City School District hereby authorizes Board Policy Number 4500 to be revised to allow the for the use of “piggyback” purchasing in compliance with section 103(16) of the General Municipal Law.

Dated: September 26, 2023

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Clerk  
Utica City School District

**MOTIONS FROM THE FLOOR: (CONT'D)**

**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 13**

**SUBJECT:**

**Resolution Appointing Edward Gray  
Transportation Supervisor**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby appoints Edward Gray to serve as Transportation Supervisor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education hereby approves an Employment Agreement establishing the terms of Mr. Gray’s appointment for the period commencing October 2, 2023 through June 30, 2026.

**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 13**

**SUBJECT:**

**Employment Agreement between the Utica City School  
District and Edward Gray, Transportation Supervisor**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to approve the Employment Agreement between the Utica City School District and Edward Gray, Transportation Supervisor effective October 2, 2023 through June 30, 2026.

**FOR ACTION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 13**

**SUBJECT:**

**Recall for Bus Drivers and Monitors**

Authorization is requested of the Board of Education to recall the following bus drivers and bus monitors to their position effective September 26, 2023:

Bus Drivers

Albania Liriano  
Miguel Ruiz  
Christopher Mishlaine  
Steven Seamer  
Ryshean Goodson  
Emmanuel Hilario

Viola Montas – Sub Driver  
Maureen LaPolla – Sub Driver

Bus Monitors

Rebeca Santana  
Michelle Dias—Lopez  
Heriberta Ruiz  
Arifa Avdic  
Alba Dominguez

Marelen Mendoza – Sub Monitor  
Elisa Ramirez-Duarte – Sub Monitor

**MOTIONS FROM THE FLOOR: (CONT'D)**

**FOR INFORMATION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 14**

**SUBJECT:**

**Changes of Assignment**

It is recommended that the following changes of assignment be approved:

Emmanuel Hilario Veras  
From: Bus Monitor  
To: Bus Driver  
Salary: \$22.44 per hour  
Effective: September 27, 2023

Miguel Ruiz  
From: Bus Monitor  
To: Bus Driver  
Salary: \$22.44 per hour  
Effective: September 27, 2023

**FOR INFORMATION:**

**Volume LVIII**

**Report No. P – 14**

**SUBJECT:**

**Rescindment of Employment**

**Teacher**

It is recommended that the following rescindment of employment be accepted:

Gerald Dischiavo

Music Teacher  
Effective: September 5, 2023  
Reason: Accepted position outside the  
Utica City School District  
Notification Received: September 15, 2023

## **THIS CONCLUDED THE SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT.**



### **Reports of the Special Committees**

#### **BOCES Report – President Joseph Hobika, Jr.**

President Hobika, Jr: So, I attended the BOCES meeting, I think last week. You know, as usual there's spirited discussion and there nothing really much to report that was controversial or otherwise. So, I will go back and take the advice of Dr. Davis and raise a couple issues that she feels would be helpful.

#### **BOCES Executive Board – Jason Cooper**

Mr. Cooper: So, we met in our executive board on Monday the 11<sup>th</sup>. Walking through our 23-24 program calendar and legislative calendar. Some key takeaways I think are in November, getting our regents reports from State Ed, Commissioner Rosa, and in March the school and community showcase, which I know is such a great opportunity for may to attend. Those dates are on the calendar and I definitely would encourage people to go and attend. You know, obviously this was my first time, but it seems as though track records are; it could be better. So, the more familiar faces there for our kids and all the kids, that would be great. The only other thing I'll say is, you know, it's always interesting walking in the room as a new person, but even more so when you're the new person following some events that occurred. There wasn't a person in there who didn't come up to me and say, I'm sorry, it could have happened anywhere and we stand with you guys. I told them all, and I am sharing this with you, I would bring that back to our collective district, so know, representatives from boards across our region, so to speak, are standing with us throughout everything and have done so. So that's all the report.

President Hobika, Jr.: Great, great report, Jason. Thank you.

#### **Audit/Finance/Grant/Insurance Committee – Donald Dawes/ Joseph Hobika, Jr./Tennille Knoop**

President Hobika, Jr.: We have had one meeting. Actually, tomorrow there is going to be a conference call with the external auditor. Just to talk about the timeline on deliverables. That will be at 8, I'm sorry, but that's when Dr. Davis said that the conference call could be. She is busier than us, I hate to say it, but she really is. But anyway, we are going to have a conversation about that because then were going to have to go over the raw report. Then we have some deadlines that we have to meet and we are going to have some discussions about a few things. I do have to say that our, again, I now I keep saying it but our staff is really working hard to identify all of these things. I'll just leave it as general as possible. There are just things that needed to be fixed and you know again, as I like to tell Dr. Davis, you know were basically learning what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, why it needs to be done, how it needs to be done. I really feel that even though we have some tremendously professional people here that know their stuff. I just think in general that particular approach is going to leave our district in a better place in the future. It does put an immense amount of pressure on everybody, but I don't think we're going to have to reclaim this ground over and over and over again. I know that you can just see how technical Heather is, just talking about the tax levy and all that great stuff. She loves it because its finance. You cannot know how much work our staff, our administrative staff has been doing in the last 8, 10, 12 weeks. I mean its crazy. So, I cannot thank them enough. So that's where we are at.

#### **Capital Projects/Buildings & Grounds/Health & Safety Committee – Danielle Padula/Donald Dawes/Robert Cardillo**

Mrs. Padula: Well we were going to have a great meeting today, but I had to cancel. So, I apologize, and I apologize I think I left a couple people off that email and they showed up, but we will reschedule soon. I gave Dr. Davis a rough agenda of what we were thinking of for next meeting.

#### **Career & Technical Education (CTE) – Danielle Padula/Tennille Knoop/Jason Cooper**

Mrs. Knoop: Just keeps getting better and better.

#### **PEAC Committee – Donald Dawes /James Paul/ Jason Cooper**

Nothing to report this month.

### **Policy Committee – Tennille Knoop/Robert Cardillo/Joseph Hobika, Jr.**

President Hobika, Jr.: We had a policy committee meeting earlier in the week, I think it was at 8 am. We actually went through our purchasing policies and also, we are going to be drafting up some clarifying regulations and providing some trainings and I think its going to help everybody. So that's where we're at. We have another meeting scheduled. Do you remember when it is? It's at 8:00 in another month or so, I think. This is all stuff that hasn't been visited in a long time and it really is going to make life easier for the staff and it's going to make life easier for everybody involved provided that we spend time basically training on it and all that. That is very important for us because we are in the oversight position that will help.

### **Code of Conduct – James Paul/Danielle Padula/Jason Cooper**

We held a Code of Conduct meeting last week. First meeting of the year. We had a great turn out. Some new faces. We had some people that were accidentally left off, and I heard about it the next day. So, we are going to make sure they are on the list and the mailing next month. We actually tasked our members to look at the first 19 pages of the Code of Conduct. We broke it done in to 3 sections so we don't have to review the entire thing at the same time. We have some Hamilton students as well who are helping us. They are going to pull out the federal and state mandates that we just can't change. Kind of break it down into smaller polices so to speak to kind of work through. I actually just learned something today about the appeals. We are going to change a date, we are going to change that to 30 day for the Code of Conduct policy. We have a meeting scheduled for next month we will meet then and we will add those new members that actually asked to be on it that were missed last time. So, we are moving forward.

### **Communications, Equity and Outreach – Danielle Padula/Tennille Knoop/James Paul**

Mrs. Knoop: Danielle I am going to have you jump in on this too. So, we met for the first time this year. We had all of the AV coordinators attend the meeting. For everyone that doesn't not know your AV coordinators are the individuals at each school building who are assigned. They are the ones taking the pictures, the videos that you see. These are the people that are bringing it to our communication directors and putting it on social. We came up with a calendar this year we want to really make sure that all schools are getting the same attention and that there's a flow and everybody is kind of on the same page with that. So, we put together a calendar of some important dates that we want to make sure everybody is highlighting this year. AV coordinators last year we worked with them a lot to see what they needed and one of the things they all needed was new equipment, training, so they were given all brand-new equipment and cameras. They have training coming up so they know how to work with everything so we can get pictures developed faster, better quality. We have a couple ideas for some projects that we are discussing throughout the year we have a few dates coming up with a couple different things happening.

Mrs. Padula: October 2<sup>nd</sup> and I apologize we missed this before the school calendars were made. We are going pink for breast cancer awareness and taking strides together as a school. I believe Dr. Davis kind of left it up to the schools to how they want to do it. We suggested a walk or just walking in unison during gym or something. But really encouraging students to wear pink, raising awareness for breast cancer. In the spring we will be working on making our art show even bigger with more community involvement. Different showcases of our cultures and nationalities within each building. It's a beautiful event if you have ever been to it at Proctor. We are just excited and looking to make it bigger. I do have 1 little side note my friends at the Kernan food pantry reached out to me today and they are in need of some donations so the asked me if I would just make that recommendation for anybody who is listening or watching. They take donations you can just drop them off right in front of Kernan school. That is going very well. It is just a project that we have been very passionate about this past year. They did say that it is going off the shelves and they would like to restock. If anyone has anything in the next couple weeks just feel free to drop it off.

Mrs. Knoop: We also have another date coming up too. November 21<sup>st</sup>. Sleeping Heavenly Peace is a really big nonprofit in our area. For anybody who isn't from this area and for anybody who doesn't know who they are they are an organization that helps build beds for children who don't have beds. We take it for granted so much of where we sleep or a mattress on the floor but to have a child sleep in a physical bed brings so much to them. Including going into their academics, when they are coming to school well rested and they've has a place right, and a little space of their own. So, on November 21<sup>st</sup>, were setting up a district-wide PJ Day in honor of all of the workers and the volunteers and everyone that works in Sleeping Heavenly Peace. I think their numbers are like 92% of who they help create and build beds for our students in the area. So, we want to honor them and recognize them. We're looking into doing other things too that we can, possibly a national build day. Maybe just for Proctor teachers and students that can come out to their organization one day and do a build day. We have got a lot of great ideas coming up for the school year. So, if anybody had ideas, feel free to bring them forward to Danielle and I. We're always open, and James, I'm sorry, James is on that committee too. James will be happy too. It was a great session.

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**Financial Report**

**Budget Status Report – Kim Powers, Interim Treasurer**

There was no budget report this month.

**Internal Auditor Report – Paris Rich, Internal Auditor**

Mr. Rich: Good evening. Finished the audit of the payroll of 9/8, there wasn't any problems. The fringe benefit report that I said I was going to do, everything is perfect. My report matches there's, so there's no problems with that. Currently I am working with the external auditors and I check the transfers and everything is the policy. There is only one transfer, which went to the Board. So, any questions?

**Questions from the Board**

None

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**Approval of Minutes**

**Mrs. Padula made a motion to approve the following minutes; seconded by Mr. Cardillo.**

- August 8,2023 – Special Meeting
- August 14,2023 – Special Meeting
- August 22,2023 – Special Meeting/Public Hearing – Emergency Remote Instruction Plan
- August 22,2023 – Regular Meeting
- August 31, 2023 – Special Meeting/Public Hearing – Structured Response to Student Safety & Social Emotional Learning
- August 31, 2023 – Special Meeting

There being no further discussion; **motion carried 6-0.**

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**Continuing Business**  
None

◆◆◆◆  
**New Business**  
None

◆◆◆◆  
**Communication**

President Hobika, Jr.: I just wanted to know, all of our various programs, like Parent Square, have we issued instructions and everything else in multi-languages on how to use all that stuff?

Mr. Ferraro: Yes, all the directions are online and they can all be changed to a different language right online. We did mailers, some smart links to devices. But if you go online under the Parent Square you can change the language in the bottom right corner and it will translate all those directions to that language you pick.

Mrs., Knoop: How many languages.

Mr. Ferraro: There is 44 in there.

Mrs. Padula: I have a question about Parents Square. Are we going to do the community facing piece where, if you don't have a child in the school, but you want to receive updates, like if you live in Utica, did you see that feature?

Mr. Ferraro: So were getting the people that are enrolled up to speed and all loaded in, which takes a little time to get people loaded in. Then we are going to expand on that system as we move forward.

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**Adjournment**

**Mrs. Knoop made a motion to adjourn the September 26, 2023, Regular Meeting; seconded by Mrs. Padula.**

**The September Meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.**

There being no further discussion; **motion carried 6-0.**

Respectfully transcribed and submitted,

STEPHANIE LYNESS  
Assistant Board Clerk