

Transcript from June 25, 2020 Special Board Meeting
Recognitions of Retirees, Years of Service and Tenure
And the Alan Lichstein Award

DT	Dick Testa, Board President	LD	Larry Dake, Asst. Superintendent
NW	Nicole Wolfe, Superintendent	TR	Toby Riddleberger, Director of Facilities
SW	Sharon Wells, Board Member	JO	Joseph Ozvold, Board Member
JT	James Truillo, Board member	LT	Lowell Taylor, Board Member
PR	Pamela Riddleberger, Asst. Superintendent		

DT Welcome everybody. Before we start the board meeting we are going to do some recognitions and to do the recognitions I would like to turn it over to Dr. Larry Dake.

LD Thank you Mr. Testa. We typically do an in person celebration at the first June board meeting for our retirees, our tenured teachers and administrators and also those earning their 25, 30 or 35 years of service, with certificates and gifts, which you can see here in front of me. With this years situation we are not able to do that, so , we are going to read their names and here and recognize them and thank them for many years of work. First our retirees, those that are still employed with us and who have put in many great years of service and those who are receiving tenure and hopefully have many more great years to come as well. Our retirees, which covers not just those this spring, but anyone within the last year. We have had several. So I will read their names at this time. Marie Aske, Teacher Aide, Alicia Boyce, Principal of CFJ, Theresa Brozovic, Social Studies Teacher, Denise Consol, Elementary Teacher, Marie Finkelman, English Teacher, Suzanne Greer, Music Teacher, Wendy Gounalis, Teaching Assistant, Marilyn Hewitt, Cook, Jantina Koster-Cibula, Teacher Aide, Debra Liburdi, Teacher Aide, Timothy Lowie, Principal of JFS, Lauren Maisano, Reading Teacher, Cindy Morford, Teaching Assistant, Denise Munson, Special Education Teacher, Greta Myers, School Psychologist, Robert Rarrick, English Teacher, Kathleen Rose, Elementary Teacher, Eric Sampson, Custodian, Ilene Severance, Teacher Aide, and Kim Vojitsek, Teacher Aide. So they are all of our teachers who have retired in the last calendar year, after many long years at Union-Endicott. We also have several individuals achieving their 25 year of service this year. That list includes, Jodie Alapeck, Christine Combs, Donald Edson, Paige Franey, Claudia Hite, David Mancini, Carmin Mirra, Kathleen Nedbalski, Polly Peterson, Kimberly Sprague, and Karen Stuart. We also had five individuals reach the 30 years of service threshold, and they are Ralph Mancini, Thomas Mullins, Lisa Ricci, Jeffery Rinde and Kathleen Rose. So let's congratulate those folks as well. And then finally those that were approved for tenure at the June 1st board meeting, Jacqueline Albrecht, Amanda Atkinson, Mary Ann Bass, Anthony Battilana, Eric Bill, Elyse Wilson, Karen DiGennaro, Ashley Dray, Kelly Eurillo, Michael Howell, Jessica Loy, Catherine O'Boyle, Nicole Osborne, Douglas Peters, Cheryl Ruspantini, Heather Wunders and Larry Dake. So I would like to congratulate all those employees for their many years of service and those who were approved for tenure at the June 1st board meeting. Every join me in applause. And now I will turn it over to Pamela.

PR And so, we have another award that we give out annually, and this is the Alan Lichstein Outstanding Employee Award. This award annually recognizes a current Union-Endicott

School District employee who exhibits the qualities of character, embodied in career of Alan Lichstein, a teacher and administrator who contributed 37 years of distinguished service as an outstanding leader. Now, the person who gets this award has been employed by the District for at least five years, and exhibits many of the following qualities of character. The first is being fair and impartial. They treat all with respect, dignity and compassion. The second is that they are accessible to all and that they are a careful listener. The third is that they have high ethical standards, and the fourth is that they are a life long learner and driven to master new ideas and help others to do the same. The fifth is that they are a disciplined, dedicated, hard worker. They are devoted to core mission of educating students for the future and finally that they are a contributor to the greater community. Now nominations are made by people in the District and this particular person, had multiple nominations and the committee went through and they read through everything and the award that they will getting is an actual plaque, I don't know if you can see it. I am holding it up. It is a plaque that they will have for their home that basically lets them know that they received the award. It has all of the characteristics listed and their name will also be added on the plaque in the District Office main lobby. Their name with join it. And so for the 2019-2020 school year, the recipient of the Alan Lichstein Outstanding Employee Award is presented to Denise Munson, who is one of our retiring teachers who teaches kindergarten and first grade students, 12:1:1 classroom, at TJW. So let's congratulate Denise Munson.

All Applause

PR So I do know that Denise is on the call, and so Denise you have the ability, I think that we can let you, if you would like to say a few words on receiving this reward.

PR Maybe we can't let you talk at this particular moment. We are in a webinar and not in a zoom call. So, Denise I will get to talk to you later on, and I will share your sentiments with the Board afterwards. Also on the call, so everybody knows, is Irene Lichstein is also on the call. She always makes an effort to be at this particular meeting with everybody. We really do appreciate that and I am getting news that they can hear, we just can't hear her. So that's great, I'm glad that they can hear you. So congratulations Denise and thank you Irene for being on the call. We really do appreciate it. And I will it turn it back over to Nicole.

NW I'm just Just let me look on the chat. They are just saying that they can hear Denise. I just wanted to congratulate Denise and... well deserved and I know that many teachers are on here today. So congratulations to everyone who is being recognized and thank you to all the TJW teachers who are here to support Denise as well. So, we are going to move to the regular board meeting. I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Testa.

DT Ok. I want to express my congratulations to everybody who got recognized today. We hope to see you again soon. You retirees. Still some openings for substitutes, so if you want to sign up we will be glad to have you back. I would like to ask you now to please stand to salute the flag. Before we salute the flag, I would like to ask for a moment of silence for Betty Crativille, who was an aide at LWW for many years in West Corners. She

passed away recently, so I would like to ask for a moment of silence to honor her. (pause)
Thank you. Please remove your hats and join me for the pledge to the flag.

All Recite the Pledge.

DT Thank you. I would like to read the mission statement of the Union-Endicott school district. The mission of the Union-Endicott school community is to develop students who are responsible, self-directed, involved, life-long learners. The students, staff, parents and community encourage learners to develop a deeper understanding of self, a respect for others and an understanding of their place in world community. And I would also like to read this statement here. During the hearing of visitors, if you have a question for the Board of Education, please add it to the chat, your name and address are needed if you want your questions or comment read at the meeting. With that, I would like to ask the clerk to take the roll.

SR Dr. Martin and Mr. McIver are absent. And here in the boardroom we have Joe Ozvold, Lowell Taylor, Dick Testa, Jim Truillo and Dr. Wells.

DT Thank you. I now have to read the following statement. I, Dick Testa, President of the Union-Endicott Board of Education have confirmed with counsel that this meeting is being held in accordance with Executive Order 202.1, originally issued by Governor Cuomo on March 12, 2020 and extended by Executive Order 202.28 on May 7, 2020. These Executive Orders suspend provisions of the Open Meeting Law to the extent necessary to allow any public body to meet and take any action authorized by law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings, and authorizing such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service. This meeting is being held remotely via ZOOM virtual meeting software. The public has the ability to view or listen to this meeting live via the ZOOM app, web browser and by telephone. This meeting is being recorded, and will be transcribed at a later date. This brings us to Agenda item number three, Consideration of Addendum items. Do we have anything today? No. Nothing there. Ok. It brings us to the minutes of the last meeting. I would like to ask for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2020 meeting. Mr. Truillo and Dr Wells. Any questions or changes to the minutes? All in favor.

All Aye.

DT Opposed? Passed. First hearing of visitors. Is anybody signed in?

NT Toby can you tell us if any has signed in for the first hearing?

TR Nobody has signed in.

Dt Ok. Good. Thank you. There will be another hearing of visitors later in the meeting. If anybody wants to sign in. It brings us down to the Financial Treasurer's Report.

NW Do you want me to go from here?

DT Yes please.

NW So, we have the May Financial Treasurer's Report. Followed by the Administrators Written Reports. We have the May Facilities Use Report. Which is monthly report provided by Toby Riddleberger and the Facilities Office. As well as the Community School Civic Engagement Report. Which is a report of the Promise Zone. That has been provided by Jennifer Kazmark, Director of Pupil Services. Moving on to the Superintendent's Report. I have a couple of things to share. I wanted to just give an update on graduation and I also wanted to share correspondence that I have received from a student. So, this was from Kennedy Cook, who is one of our seniors, and she has written it to the School Board. And she says, thank you so much for all you have done for me as a 2020 graduating senior. Although it has been an unusual end to my years of school here at UE, you have truly made me feel loved and celebrated for my achievements. Thank you for the Chromebook that you gifted to me, it will help as I pursue higher education. Thank you for the yard signs and senior banner and most of all thank you for your constant support to make this graduation special. I am proud to be, and always will be, part of such of such an awesome tiger pride. Thanks again. Kennedy Cook. So I thought that was nice. So, thank you Kennedy, and then just the graduation update. So, today we sent out a message to our faculty, staff and families just to give them an brief update. We have had beautiful weather for quite awhile now, and as you look at the forecast it doesn't look so great for Saturday. So, we have some options. One option is we are working very closely with Doug Peters, who is our Earth Science Teacher, but he is also a meteorologist and he has been keeping us updated regularly. We also know that one option could be is that the weather will clear up and then it will be fine for Saturday. Another option is that Saturday is going to be spotty, we are uncertain so we are going to go on Saturday, and if it starts to rain we cut the graduation and those groups will come back on Sunday and finish at the time slot that they were supposed to be. And of course a third option is that if it is completely a wash out and there is no way that we can do Saturday, then we take the entire ceremony, all of them, and move them to Sunday. So I have Doug's latest forecast... Doug are you on the call and can you talk?

TR Yes.

NW I thought he was.

TR We won't be able to get him.

NW Oh.

DT Can they hear him?

NW So the latest forecast is that Saturday has trended wetter and less time to squeeze things in. There is a possibility of a thunderstorm in the morning which appears to be a possible thunderstorm complex coming from the upper great lakes. This is being watched. Behind that is the potential of redevelopment of showers and perhaps a few thunderstorms. There could be a stronger storm or two, but from my vantage point, the best chance will be south of us. The storm prediction center has an outlook of a border one marginal, with

a slight risk of Saturday, severe thunderstorms. With threat of gusty winds and hail. The further we get into the afternoon Saturday, the higher potential for thunderstorms. Confidence is increasing in that Saturday morning and afternoon will have a higher chance of being wet. I would like to see what the short range models show for late tomorrow. So we aren't going to make a decision until tomorrow. We will do so tomorrow afternoon. And a message will go out. Sunday, we are still under the influence of an upper low, which means a potential for spotty showers, but they will not last long or be very heavy and would again be most likely late morning, afternoon. We would see considerable dry time on Sunday. Mostly cloudy skies, with a spotty shower or two. Forecaster confidence is high. So, this is really helpful to have these kinds of reports. To have this on the spot information and although it might not be what we want to hear, at least, having the facts is helpful. So I wanted to share that with all of you. I have been working with Toby and his facilities team, the high school team and I will let you all know what it looks like, but as I read that, and there will be another tonight and another one tomorrow, it looks more likely that the full Saturday would just be replaced and put into Sunday. Do you have any questions? Thoughts? Ok. I am going to move it over to the Board President's Report.

DT Ok. Thank you. Couple things that I want to mention. First of all, our very first Tiger Ventures graduation was held the other night. The graduating class was small this year, but it was the first one. It was a wonderful evening. Good job by everybody involved. The kids were there with their families. I just want to thank everybody involved with that. It was a great evening and I'm sure those kids got some special attention and it was a great thing. We also have two people here at this meeting who will not be officially at board meetings in the future and I want to thank them for their service to the Union-Endicott School District. First of all, Dr. Larry Dake, who is going to be leaving us for Binghamton. I want to thank Dr. Dake for everything that he has done for UE in the years that he has been here and I wish you the best both at Binghamton and wherever you might wind up after that. Thank you very much. Second, I would like to thank Joe Ozvold who will be leaving the Board after many years of service to the UE district. I want to thank Joe for his service, to both UE and to his involvement with the PTA at TJW school. And also, many people don't know that many years ago Joe was the one who saved the District a lot of money by making the suggestion we combine LWW and AGM into one school at AGM which allowed us to temporarily close that building, but we had use for it all the time. And it was a good thing, because now we have it back. That was a great move and it makes a difference to UE then and now. So Joe, thank you very much for your contributions to UE. I have other people to thank but I will do it later. I do want to thank also Sue Reif for handling the election. It was not as much fun as it has been in the past. They counted 5,000 ballots. They had to get them all mailed out and it was not as easy as people think. The average person said, oh, look the budget passed. Well, it didn't get done in a few minutes. It was about seven hours to get those ballots counted. I thank you and your whole group of people who did it, for staying with that and doing it. And, finally I want to share an article that was in yesterday's paper about UE's Ashley Ciccarelli and Carson Quon, and they collected bottles for a project. I think it was part of their 20% project with Mrs. Krieger and they raised \$1,200 dollars that they donated to Mercy House. So, it is great to see seniors, any UE students doing things for the community. I thank them both for their efforts. And for everyone who contributed cans to make this a

success. So thank you to everybody there. With that, we will move on the Board Advisory Teams. Equity. Mr. Truillo.

JT Last week Jenn Kazmark was introduced as our next BAT Equity Team facilitator. The team also discussed several avenues to enhance the equity work around the current national and local conversations. We had building based equity teams comprised of students, staff and stakeholders to report on the teams work. There was a follow up on the attendance data from the 2019-2020 school year and Briana, one of our juniors, shared effort to institute Black Student Union at UEHS next year. The team is supportive and will look to help the initiative. And lastly, Larry, thank you for your tremendous leadership over the last four years. You will be missed. Thank you.

DT Any other BAT Team reports? Ok. Move on to Old Business.

NW Alright. I have one item for Old Business. I just wanted to let you all know what has been going on with the Italian Club. So there was supposed to be a Italian Exchange Trip that was going to take place and of course you remember with the pandemic... a lot of the virus manifested out of Italy and that was hit hard. So there was no way that our students could have gone to no matter what. There have been issues that have arisen since then regarding the fact that families have paid for their students to participate in this trip. The travel company itself shut down for a period of time. It is not a US travel company, it is an Italian Travel company, which contributes to the complications. They are the original company that we went with, so we have been with them for 40 years. So, one of our Board Members, both of your sons, were going to participate in that trip. And so, he has been working on this, but would you like to give an overview of what has been going on and where we are at now.

LT It is a two part situation. The students paid for an insurance policy, a policy that we have had in place forever, and no one has ever questioned it. The insurance policy is based on an individual person not being able to make it. That is, if my son got sick, and he could make it, he would have been reimbursed in full, but will all policies, there is fine print that no one sees, and the word pandemic is there. If there were a reason that the whole area shut down, there is zero coverage. We have had an argument with them, through emails, and basically said that the only way... you have to request a claim to get the denial. Whether it will be some or it or any of it, you have to put the request in. But you can't put the request in until you show what your losses were. Because we haven't settled with the travel agency who has been paid in full, 100% across the board. I need to sit down with the travel agent, until just recently, we were under the impression that they didn't speak English. But now we have been told they do. The status is with me and the travel agent needs to let us know what they will refund. Their initial position was that they would refund 30% of it and the rest of it was incurred costs that can't be refunded. But we don't have any of that in writing. They claim that the Italian's policy is that you have to pay one night of the hotel that you were staying at. But because they were going from area to area, essentially everywhere they are going is one night. We might get 35% back, but none of it is settled. Once they get settled, then we can refer back to the insurance company and say that we only got reimbursed \$500, we want to put a claim in for the balance of the costs. They will most likely reject it, but we can submit it.

- NW And each student who was participating, the family paid how much per student?
- LT \$1,300, but they did fundraising to the tune of somewhere around \$250 each. So, out of pocket it is somewhere near \$1,000. As of right now, one of the proposals that they are pitching to the travel agency is give us 50% credit and 50% cash back and give a credit towards next years group. And when they pay their deposit, that deposit would go back to last years families. And if they say no, then possibly give us a 100% credit that way we are not out anything, and the parents are not out of anything and they don't have to wait a year, till next October to get the money. Next year when they pay for the trip, other than what the incremental cost for airline and hotels.
- JO I got a call from one of the grandparents. Two things that I would like to relay. Could you possible write up a note on where you stand and send it out to all the parents. Thank. The other thing is ...
- NW To the group, right?
- JO Yes. The other thing that she said was her check was cashed two days before they canceled the trip. To me, that sounds like that they knew it was going to get canceled, so let's cash the check and get that money. That is what she told me.
- LT Two days before the trip was actually to go?
- JO No canceled. In other words her check was cashed and then she received the note from us that the trip was canceled. I don't know.
- LT That could have been the case. That would not have been out of line. We had not formally canceled. There was a window that if something change, when we canceled in terms of the refund. We were personally holding off until the end. If we canceled earlier, then we were out altogether. There was some twist in there. That could have been the case.
- NW We have tried to search for other options in how we could help these families. We have contacted out District's attorneys. We have contacted our insurance. The agency that works with our insurance company to see if there is any coverage that we have that could help these families. The problem is that the contract is separate contract with the families and the company itself. It is not a contract with the school district. We are not able to recoup that money. The attorney views that as if we would be gifting money to people. And we are not allowed to do that. That is what the hold up has been on our end. This is the best avenue to pursue for now. If we could do something creative with it with next year's group, maybe that could be an option. It is still in process. I think that people may think it is a done deal and that they are not getting any money back, but we are still working on it. And that is my only Old Business. Do you have an item for Old Business?
- PR Just a quick thing. We think that we have the sound fixed and so Denise is on and we are going to try her again. Denise Munson, can you hear us and can we hear you?

- DM I can hear you.
- PR Awesome. We can hear you.
- DM I am actually kind of glad that I had a moment to take it all in and gather thoughts. I am just so honored and humbled at receiving this award. It has been a wonderful career and I am just so lucky to work with so many people. It is not a one and done deal in special education. I have had so much support from aides, to related service providers, speech, OT, PT, psychology. The social worker. The other Gen Ed. teachers. Administration. Everybody. It takes a real village to help these kids. I always have gone from the thing that every child can learn. It's just my job to find out how. I could never do that alone. I am just feeling so blessed that I was able to work with this district and hopefully will be back, at least as a sub, at some point. Thank you all so very much. What an honor.
- All Thank you and congratulations.
- NW Ok. Then I am going to turn it back over to you for New Business. Do you have anything.
- DT I don't have anything. Does anybody have anything? Ok. That brings us to the resolutions. I need a motion to approve resolutions 20-6-G40 through 20-6-G72. Motions please. Mr. Ozvold and Mr. Truillo. Any questions on these? Comments? I want to thank the Strauss' for their donation. That's it for those. Any other discussion? All in favor.
- All Aye.
- DT Opposed? Passed. Resolutions... motion for resolutions 20-6-C17 through 20-6-C38. Motions please. Dr. Wells and Mr. Ozvold. Discussion, comments. I'm sure I have some in here ... there are a couple I want to mention. I want to thank Jacqueline Albrecht, C21 who is leaving us as an Elementary Teacher to spend time with her child. I would like to congratulate to Suzanne Stevenson who is leaving us to take a position as principal at Chenango Valley. I want to wish her the best of luck in the future. Thank her for everything that she has done for UE. And I think that there are some others in here... I also want to thank the Beattys, I see that they are both leaving us after many many years. We are going to miss them. And everyone who is not going to be with us next year, thank you for all that you have done for UE. So, with that said. All in favor?
- All Aye.
- DT Opposed? Passed. Resolutions 20-6-NC8 through 20-6-NC34. Motions please. Mr. Ozvold and Mr. Taylor. Questions, comments? All in favor?
- All Aye.
- DT Opposed? Passed. Ok. Announcements. Obviously graduation. We will know tomorrow exactly when that will happen. And the upcoming board meetings on there. That brings us to the second hearing of visitors. Toby, is there anyone who wants to speak.

TR No one signed on.

NW Can you read it? I can't see it.

TR Dear fellow respected educators and Board of Education. Thank you for my recognition and the for the opportunity to serve our UE children at our UE school district. I am filled with a quarter of a century of tiger pride. Sincerely, Christine Combs.

All Thank you.

NW I am going to ask if Doug is still on there? Did he leave?

TR Doug is not there.

DT Ok. That brings us to I need a motion to approve recess into executive session to hear a discussion on a ETA Memorandum of Agreement and Assistant Superintendent Position. Motion. Dr. Wells and Mr. Ozvold. Ok. Thank you. Thank you for tuning into today and stay tuned for the graduation announcement tomorrow.