



BOARD OF EDUCATION
WHITNEY POINT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PO BOX 249
Whitney Point, NY 13862

Date: October 21, 2008

District Mission:

To provide an excellent education ensuring that all children maximize their potential, become contributing citizens, and pursue lifelong learning.

District Beliefs:

- All children possess unique qualities and come to school eager to learn and be successful.
- We respect all people within our community and treat them with dignity at all times.
- Learning is a partnership that includes school staff, parents, family and the community.
- Knowledge allows for critical thinking and effective decision-making.
- Purposeful and intentional change is a constant that leads to educational improvement and positive results.
- Compliance with state and federal regulations is critical to school district success.

Meeting Called to order at 7:07 PM

		<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
James DiMascio	President	X	
Sara Benscoter	Vice-President	X	
Stephanie Champney	Member		X
Kathleen Driscoll	Member	X	
Mary Ellerson	Member	X	
Thomas Tasber	Member	X	
Mary Hibbard	Superintendent of Schools	X	
Laura Lindsley	District Clerk	X	
Patricia Kuenecke	Director of Curriculum and Instruction	X	

Others in attendance: Gerald Mackey, Tom Ellerson, Hamilton Cadwell, Jo-Anne Knapp, Terri Wood, Linda Burghardt, Steve Burghardt, Dick Ballard, Joy Rupert, Jen Briglia, Evette Banks, Dan Sweeney, Jo-Ann Sexton, Kim Becker, Lisa Materski, Ed Arseneau, Dennis Driscoll, Dale Dean, Bruce Tytler, Morgan Jones, Nick Gerst, Shane Barrett, Mike Lynch, Keith Wittig, Jeff Isaacs, Steve Morgan, Murphee Hayes, Gene Jordan

Mrs. Hibbard recommended Board approval of the Minutes from the Board meeting held on October 7, 2008.

Moved by Mary Ellerson

Seconded by Kathleen Driscoll

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained

APPROVED

Commendations

Mrs. Hibbard commends:

- The High School staff, students and administration for the Open House held on Thursday, October 19, 2008.

Mrs. Hibbard thanked all for their support at the event.

- The Gridiron Club, Music Boosters, High School staff, students, administration and the many volunteers for the very successful night football game and Homecoming events last weekend.

Mrs. Hibbard stated the events were well attended and thanked all for the work in a successful weekend.

- Edna Ford for her recognition as the Broome County Teachers' Federal Credit Union's District Employee of the month.

Mrs. Hibbard thanked Edna (Kathy) Ford for going above and beyond call of duty.

- The Caryl E. Adams Primary School for its Beddy-Bye Story Times on October 2nd, 9th and 16th.

Mrs. Hibbard stated the event was a great success.

- Faculty members who are creating new extra-curricular opportunities to engage students: Andrew Palmer-Rock Climbing Club, Nancy Wallace – Forensic Science Club, Diane Murtaugh – High School Newspaper, and Kris Gilbert, Jessica Williamson, and Nancy Summers Tri-M Music Society for High School students.

Mrs. Hibbard thanked the staff for the new student opportunities and clarified the Tri-M is Modern Music Masters, which provides another platform for music students.

- Barbara Heinle for her willingness to work with all of the TRA chorus students until Ms. Ryder, the new vocal music teacher, can report to work.

Mrs. Hibbard explained and thanked Mrs. Heinle for coming forward with a great solution.

- Mrs. Hibbard commends the Board of Education members for their service to the Whitney Point Central School District. Attached is a proclamation from Governor Paterson in recognition of School Board Recognition Week, October 20 – 24, 2008. Please see copy of Proclamation.

Mrs. Hibbard expressed her thanks and the thanks of the entire district for the Board's commitment.

Correspondence

Letter from Brian Aingworth regarding IAC league membership

Policies

Laptop Computer Policy – first reading

Mrs. Hibbard clarified no action is required with the first reading.

Comments from the Public

Gerald Mackey discussed the IAC's potential realignment to alleviate travel mileage concerns for districts.

Mr. Mackey spoke in favor of moving to IAC league and the opportunities for the district and the athletes.

Dale Dean commented about his children's discouraging athletic experiences. He further stated the move to IAC would be positive for the district and students.

Mr. O'Conner also spoke in support of moving to the IAC and need to support the kids.

Hamilton Cadwell stated the move to the IAC would be positive allowing students to be competitive.

Steve Morgan also offered support of the move to the IAC as best for the students to be competitive. He stated it provides an opportunity for new life in the athletic program recognizing it is a beginning of process but a great start to rebuild.

Gene Jordan commented on the move to the IAC as aligning the district with more appropriate schools, a chance to begin to put the pieces of athletic together. Mr. Jordan stated the move to out of the STAC is supported by the coaches he knows.

Mr. DiMascio asked that the Board allow a change in the agenda to the New Business item regarding the audited financial statements as Mr. Mickelson is here to present.

1. New Business

a. Audited Financial Statement

External Auditors presented the 2007 – 2008 audited financial statements of the Whitney Point Central School.

Mr. Mickelson reviewed the 2007-2008 financial statements that carry an unqualified opinion on the audit of the business operations of the district. No material weaknesses with the exception of a significant deficiency in capital assets, in which his staff and district management has discussed and will be meeting to plan a for a resolution. Mr. Mickelson complemented district management on resolving many of the prior year findings and has no issues of concern to communicate to the Board. Mr. Mickelson stated the Executive Summary indicates the district devotes \$.76 of every dollar to instruction, a high figure that not many can achieve.

Asked to comment, Mr. Mickelson spoke in regards to the NYS Comptroller's report issued today (10/21) regarding districts in the State that have been identified as over-reserved the employees benefit reserve in excess of liabilities. 251 schools are identified including Whitney Point. Mr. Mickelson stated that the liability being recognized is the Comptroller's perspective of only recognizing unpaid vacations. Mr. Mickelson's opinion is that the district is prudent in the reserve with no real excess as the district reserves against the long-term absences beyond just unpaid vacations. The long-term absences liability is stated in the financial statements in excess of 1 million dollars. The district's financial plan protects the district allowing it to attempt to keep the future tax rate stable.

Mrs. Hibbard recommended Board approval of the 2007-2008 financial statements as presented by Ciaschi, Dietershagen, Little, Mickelson and Company, LLP. Certified Public Accountant Consultants, External auditors.

Moved by Sara Benscoter

Seconded by Kathleen Driscoll

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained

APPROVED

2. Old Business

a. Renovation Project

Mrs. Hibbard and Mrs. Lindsley provided updates on the current Phase I Renovation Project.

Mrs. Hibbard stated that after two years many of contractors are leaving, just skeleton crews are on-site. The district is offering tours of the High School renovations for the public, tomorrow (10/22), and all are welcome.

b. IAC Presentation

Ms. Hayes presented further information regarding the rationale for the Athletic Action Committee's recommendation that the district pursue a change in league affiliation.

Mrs. Hibbard stated the information is in response to questions raised after the last Board meeting. Ms. Hayes shared information learned as a member of a State committee that conversations are occurring at the State level as to how districts throughout the State will fund and support athletics.

Ms. Hayes provided the Board with mileage/time documentation based on an estimated schedule for Whitney Point's participation in the IAC. She re-reviewed the information compiled from the sub-committee used in considering the IAC.

In reviewing the information, Kathleen Driscoll expressed concern about students needing to leave school early due to the increased travel time to events. Ms. Hayes stated early release occurs now in the STAC league.

Thomas Tasber questioned coaching salaries and if they would need to be increased to cover the additional time in traveling to IAC schools. Mrs. Hibbard stated the salaries are contractual and could only be changed through negotiations. Ms. Hayes stated the district's coaching salaries are more similar to schools in the IAC.

Thomas Tasber asked if the coaches are aware of additional time requirements to travel to IAC schools. Ms. Hayes responded that most coaches are in favor of the league change.

Mrs. Hibbard recommended Board approval for the Whitney Point Central School District to move forward with the application process for membership in the IAC.

Moved by Mary Ellerson

Seconded by Sara Benscoter

Sara Benscoter stated the move to the IAC would be in best interest of the students though the financial information appears incomplete. The additional travel time could prevent parent support of athletic teams when away. Sara Benscoter noted that the committee did a wonderful job based on their task but administration has not provided the financial information for the Board to make an informed decision.

Mary Ellerson commented that parents will travel to support teams when their children are competing. Mrs. Ellerson too complimented the committee.

Thomas Tasber feels information is incomplete and that it seems to favor a decision, that it has not been an impartial presentation, the data was strong to one side. Mr. Tasber is in favor of sports but concerned about the travel time to IAC schools and its impact financially, instructionally, and on students ability to participate, stating the district needs to build on its coaching and athlete skills at lower levels to achieve success. Mr. Tasber spoke of the success of the district's music programs and that they should have been reviewed as examples to build a successful athletic program.

Mrs. Hibbard stated the recommendation of a league change is the start of the building blocks of improvements to the athletic program.

Mr. DiMascio commented the recommendation comes from the Athletic Action Committee, which was formed to seek improvements to the district's athletic programs.

Sara Benscoter, neither for or against the IAC, reminded all that the district's profile as a rural school has be included in the consideration and the decision should be based on the information and financial facts. Again complimented the committee for a phenomenal job.

Mary Ellerson asked what more could be presented for a decision?

Kathleen Driscoll remarked that she is not against a move to the IAC but the costs are of concern. Everything must be looked at beyond sports, the whole picture must be looked at from instruction, to financial, to the travel time. Based on the lack of financial information Kathleen Driscoll stated she could not make a qualified decision at this time.

Ms. Hayes clarified that the IAC will be voting on the district's application on November 5th.

James DiMascio's opinion is to support the athletic committee as they have been asked to complete this task. Economics aside the committee has completed the task and the Board supported the initial presentation to the IAC requesting acceptance in to the league.

Ms. Hayes remarked that league scheduling, which is completed in December for the following school year, is driving the factor for the league to vote in November.

James DiMascio stated athletics is an emotional debate but that the Board must make its decision based on the information and facts provided.

Mary Ellerson commented the Board supported sending the athletic committee to the IAC and should not change their decision now, it would be a mistake to not support the committee.

Sara Benscoter requested a summary of financial information before the Board makes a decision.

Mrs. Hibbard asked if the Board would be willing to meet next Tuesday (10/28).

Ms. Hayes asked the Board to clarify the financial information requested. Sara Benscoter responded for the need of complete summary financial information.

James DiMascio stated the Board must investigate their fiduciary responsibility.

Mrs. Hibbard recommended the vote on approval for the Whitney Point Central School District to move forward with the application process for membership in the IAC be tabled and an additional Board meeting be scheduled for Tuesday, October 28 at 7:00 PM.

Moved by Kathleen Driscoll

Seconded by Sara Benscoter

4 Aye 1 Nay 0 Abstained

APPROVED

3. New Business

a. Committee on Special Education

Mrs. Hibbard recommended Board approval of the attached recommendations of the Special Education Committee.

Moved by Mary Ellerson

Seconded by Sara Benscoter

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained

APPROVED

b. Transportation Request

Mrs. Hibbard recommended Board approval of the request to provide transportation to Central Baptist Christian Academy for Haylie Jones and Hunter Jones. Please see attached request.

Moved by Kathleen Driscoll

Seconded by Sara Benscoter

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained

APPROVED

c. Warrants

Mrs. Hibbard recommended Board approval of the July, August and September warrants. The warrants are enclosed.

Moved by Kathleen Driscoll

Seconded by Sara Benscoter

It was clarified that staffing issues in the business office resulted in paperwork delays but the district's payments are occurring timely.

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained

APPROVED

d. Appointment

Mrs. Hibbard recommended Board approval of the appointment of Cynthia Burchell, Secretary to the Superintendent, effective November 17, 2008.

Moved by Mary Ellerson

Seconded by Kathleen Driscoll

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained

APPROVED

e. STAR Exemptions and Reassessments

Mrs. Hibbard recommended Board approval for the changes made in STAR exemptions and reassessments for the 2008 Whitney Point Central School District school taxes. See attachment

Moved by Kathleen Driscoll

Seconded by Sara Benscoter

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained

APPROVED

f. Budget Transfers

Mrs. Hibbard recommended Board approval of the final 2007 – 2008 budget transfers. Please see attached information.

Moved by Mary Ellerson

Seconded by Kathleen Driscoll

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained

APPROVED

Comments from the Public

Ed Arseneau asked for clarification of information beyond financial that the Board requesting. Sara Benscoter stated follow-up with the coaches, who is and not in support of the change. Mr. DiMascio commented the information is needed for the Board to be confident in their decision.

Hamilton Cadwell welcomes Mr. Tasber's comments and states he is invited to the Athletic Action Committee meetings.

Dick Ballard states there will be costs associated with the district staying in the STAC. More gyms, more fields, more coaches to name a few will cost more than the travel costs associated to the IAC.

Dale Dean spoke to the fact that he has coached youth sports but that the students cannot compete at the STAC level. STAC is not our piers, IAC is the best fit.

Terri Wood stated she saw no change in support when the district moved from SUS to STAC, no increase was seen when playing the closer schools. Terri Wood agreed that school work is concern but she has seen students rise to the occasion. Learning to balance athletics and academics is part of the experience and valuable to students as they move on in college and life.

Jared Sanford commented that students do not want to play for losing teams, participation will increase if teams are more competitive.

Executive Session:

For matters of personnel and contractual issues

FYI:

Backpack Program

Enrollment Report

Open House for the renovation of the Math/Science wing is rescheduled for October 22, 2008

Each school building will conduct lockdown and evacuation drill on October 24, 2008.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:20 PM

Moved by Kathleen Driscoll

Seconded by Sara Benscoter

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained

Executive Session

Executive Session called to order at 9:35 PM

Personnel and contractual issue discussed.

Executive Session adjourned at 10:15 PM

Moved by Sara Benscoter

Seconded by Kathleen Driscoll

5 Aye 0 Nay 0 Abstained



Laura Lindsley
District Clerk