Meeting convened: 7:03 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 9:25 p.m.

Members present: Mrs. Rich, Dowd
Messrs. Hayes, Trotta, Kryzanek, Evans, Tuffo

Members absent: Mrs. Holbrook, Mrs. McSweeney, Mr. Powers

Administrators present: John F. McEwan, Superintendent
Ruth Gilbert-Whitner, Assistant Superintendent
Sharon Andrew, Director of Business Services
Mildred O’Callaghan, Administrator of Special Education

STUDENT ADVISORY REPORT

Mr. Derek Harrington reported on student news and activities. Progress reports were issued last week and parent teacher conferences are being held this week. The infinite campus student software continues to work well for both students and faculty. WHTV News will be reporting on the benefits of the program soon. All fall sports team are doing very well and the women’s soccer team continues to dominate the league with a 10-0 record. The Varsity and JV Volleyball teams took part in the Making Strides for Breast Cancer Walk on Sunday, October 5th and raised $1,007.61.

Last Friday, October 3rd, Invisible Children, a foundation aiding Ugandan children, visited W-H and delivered presentation in the current issues in Uganda and how students could help. Quickly, the Invisible Children Club or ICC was formed at Whitman-Hanson and over 150 students joined, making this one of the largest clubs here at Whitman Hanson. In additional community service programs, Habitat for Humanity will be building book cases, picnic tables, and arts & crafts on October 25th at the Park Ave School in Whitman. Habitat also has a building project scheduled in the month of December in Hingham. Lastly, Student Council will be hosting the South Eastern Massachusetts Association of Student Council (SEMASC) Roundtable here at Whitman-Hanson on December 11th.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 12, 2008 SC meeting

Mrs. Rich motioned; Mrs. Dowd seconded; voted to approve the school committee minutes from the regular school committee meeting held on September 12, 2008. The motion carried 5-0-2. Mr. Evans and Mr. Trotta abstained.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Chinese Guest Teachers

Mrs. Ruth Gilbert-Whitner introduced Mr. Wang Baoping and Mr. Li Mingxing. Both men are participating in Chinese Guest teacher programs with the Whitman-Hanson School
District. Mr. Li is teaching Mandarin and Chinese culture at the high school level. He is sponsored by the College Board and Hanban program and lives in the Wuhan area of China. Mr. Wang teaches high school in Xian and is currently teaching Chinese language and culture to elementary level classes, focusing on grades 3 through 5. Both guest teachers expressed their delight and commitment to be in America and part of these wonderful exchange programs. Comments on the enthusiasm and achievements the Whitman-Hanson students are showing were very positive.

The superintendent reported that 64 people will be participating in the trip to China in April 2009 for an educational tour with the school district. Several administrators and teachers will share in the experience.

Mrs. Whitner announced there will be a reception honoring Chinese guest teachers currently in exchange programs in Whitman-Hanson and Brockton schools at the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School on October 28.

MCAS results

The annual MCAS results were presented by assistant superintendent, Mrs. Ruth Gilbert-Whitner. NCLB (No Child Left Behind Act) is due for re-authorization after this year's presidential election and we should see changes in AYP with an impact to MCAS. The presentation included specific data by subject and grade level versus last year and nationally.

Mrs. Whitner explained basic terms related to MCAS and subgroup testing concerns and their affect on the Whitman-Hanson school district, where there is concern at both middle schools and Duval and Conley elementary schools. Similar issues exist in most schools across the state, however subgroup labels may change in the future due to the imminent NCLB reform. The assistant superintendent will provide a link to the website for the AYP position paper entitled “Facing Reality” to school committee members as requested.

Parent Forum

Dr. McEwan reminded the committee the second annual parent forum will be held this month. This is a good opportunity to meet with parents, share ideas, and hear how they feel about education and improvements are needed. The district budget, new programs, and the new student software program, Infinite Campus, will all be on the agenda. The director of technology services is here tonight to give a brief on access policy and forum on infinite campus. The superintendent will announce the Parent Forum to be held on October 22, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. at the high school.

Mr. Craig Finley addressed the committee. The Infinite Campus student software program was deployed on August 1 and was ready for the opening of school. A great deal of positive feedback has been received. Part of the system includes a module already released to students to view their progress in real time. Connected with this application is a parent viewing portal. Mr. Finley has drawn up a policy and participation form to be approved by the committee. Technology services plans to roll out a sign up and training opportunity for parents on the same night as the parent forum. This timing will allow technology services to enroll parents onto the parent portal and will include a short training session and question and answer session for attending parents/guardians. Currently, only students at high school level have access to this portal. After the night of
the parent forum, this portal will be district-wide and available at all grade levels. Only parents/guardians with legal access to student’s information will be allowed access to the portal. The director of technology will provide a copy of the Infinite Campus Parent/Guardian Portal Acceptable Use and Safety Policy to our legal department for review.

Approval of Infinite Campus Parent/Guardian Portal Acceptable Use and Safety Policy
Mr. Kryzanek motioned; Mr. Tuffo seconded; voted to approve the Infinite Campus Parent/Guardian Portal Acceptable Use and Safety Policy pending review of the district’s legal department. The motion carried 7-0-0.

Mr. Finley presented the committee the October 1 Enrollment figures. Total district enrollment is 4467 and does not include the Community Evening School. This reflects an increase of .72%. Mr. Finley noted that enrollment at the Conley Elementary School is up 6.2%, and, conversely, enrollment at the Indian Head School is down 6.2%. The director of technology will develop additional October 1 enrollment detailed reports including the total number of teachers by grade report and class count.

Superintendent’s Goals
Dr. McEwan presented his 2008-09 school year goals to the committee. One of the main objectives is to insure the transition in the superintendent of schools position is a smooth transition.

OLD BUSINESS

Teacher’s Contract Unit A
The evaluation piece was reviewed by the members of the school committee.

Approval of Walkthrough Document for Teacher’s Evaluations
Mrs. Dowd motioned; Mr. Kryzanek seconded; voted to approve the Unit A Teacher’s contract walkthrough evaluation document. The motion carried 6-0-1. Mr. Trotta abstained.

Administrative Assistants (School Secretary’s) Contract Unit C
Mr. Evan motioned; Mr. Kryzanek seconded; voted to ratify the Unit C Administrative Assistant’s contract. The motion carried unanimously 7-0-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Van Drivers Contract Unit D
Mr. Kryzanek motioned; Mr. Trotta seconded; voted to ratify the Unit D Van Driver’s contract. The motion carried unanimously 7-0-0.

The superintendent announced that the Cafeteria Workers Food Services Department contract and the Crossing Guards contract have been accepted.
**Field trip requests**

The women’s cross country team is scheduled to participate in the Brown University Cross Country Championship held in Rhode Island.

Mr. Evans motioned; Mrs. Dowd seconded; voted waive the nurse requirement and approve the out of state field trip request for the high school women’s cross country team to Brown University, Rhode Island to participate in the Brown University Northeast Cross Country Championship on October 18, 2008. The motion carried unanimously 7-0-0.

The high school foreign language department is interested a student trip to Quebec and Montreal during the April 2009 school vacation. Students will leave from the high school and travel by bus.

Mr. Kryzanek motioned; Mr. Trotta seconded; voted to waive the nurse requirement and approve the out of state, overnight field trip request for high school foreign language students to the cities of Quebec and Montreal from April 20 to April 24, 2009. The motion carried unanimously 7-0-0.

Mrs. Pat McCarthy, Director of the Whitman Council on Aging, requested the school committee allow her office to provide all Whitman and Hanson resident’s information regarding fuel assistance. The committee agreed.

**Facilities Subcommittee**

Mr. Tuffo reported there are a number of projects currently being worked on in the district. A new hot water heater needs to be considered at the Conley School as the current unit has failed a number of times. The facilities committee has recommended replacing the hot water heater with a new dedicated unit.

Mr. Kryzanek motioned; Mr. Trotta seconded; voted to approve the transfer of $1,873.71 from the Whitman interest line, $2,363.94 from the Whitman Middle Building Repair balance, $2,422.00 from the Whitman Middle Energy Project balance and bill the town of Whitman $3,040.35 to cover the cost of adding a new dedicated hot water heater at the Conley Elementary School. The motion carried unanimously 7-0-0.

**Negotiations Subcommittee**

At this time the Unit B (Assistant principals and Department Heads) and the Custodial/Maintenance contracts are still under negotiations.

**Legislative Update**

Mr. Evans reported the biggest news at this time is what kind of impact that the Question #One Ballot question will have on the state of Massachusetts and the effects of the elimination of the state income tax. Mr. Evans feels this is a very important issue that the community needs to learn about and requested a Phoenix Project meeting scheduled prior to voting day. The committee agreed upon a meeting date of October 28 and felt it
important to invite the local legislators. Mr. Evans further requested that the school committee make a stand and officially oppose the ballot Question #One.

Mr. Evans motioned; Mrs. Dowd seconded; voted to oppose Ballot Question #One, a ballot initiative that would eliminate the state income tax. Passage of Question 1 would cut the state budget by 40%, cause massive reductions in local aid to cities and towns, and result in drastic reductions in school programs. The Committee urges the residents of Whitman and Hanson to vote No on this ballot question. The motion carried unanimously 7-0-0.

Mr. Evans wanted to express his special thanks to Glenn Koocher for encouraging the Ethics Commission to determine that it is not a violation of the State Ethics law for a School Committee to take a vote on a ballot initiative that is relevant to its work. The legislative representative will look into a location to hold the Phoenix Project meeting to discuss the Ballot Question #One. The superintendent will identify any ethics violations, if applicable. The school committee vote opposing Ballot Question #One will be posted on the district website.

North River Collaborative Subcommittee
Mrs. O’Callaghan reported in Mrs. McSweeney place. The Collaborative was recently awarded the $100,000 Safe and Drug Free Grant. The Executive Director decided to appoint two interim assistant directors Nancy Verseckes and Kathy Dowling to share the position until further notice.

Phoenix Project Committee
The Phoenix Project Committee will meet on October 28, 2008 in a location to be determined.

Park Avenue Subcommittee
The committee needs to schedule a meeting with the Facilities Manager, Ernie Sandland.

Superintendent Search
The superintendent reported that two applications have been received for the position of superintendent of schools. One candidate is a very strong in-house applicant. There are several directions the committee can go in to continue the search. They include; a) interview the current applicants only, b) conduct a nationwide search using MASC at a cost between $7,500 to $10,000 or NESDEC at a cost between $15,000 to $20,000 or c) advertise in the local newspaper for more applicants. The superintendent recommended to the committee that they interview the in-house applicant and, if satisfied, move forward with transition. The committee discussed these options and decided they would like to advertise in the Boston Globe and possibly put together a superintendent search subcommittee. Several of the school committee members felt including some administrators teachers, and community members would be helpful with the search.
It was the consensus of the committee to meet prior to the Parent Forum scheduled for October 22, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. to further discuss the superintendent search. Details for the search will be worked out at that meeting.

**Advertise in the Globe**

Mrs. Rich motioned; Mr. Trotta seconded; to approve advertising the position of the Superintendent of Schools in the October 12, 2008 edition of *The Boston Globe*. The motion carried 6-1-0.

The Superintendent informed the committee he is recommending a budget freeze due to current budget constraints until further notice.

**Budget Freeze**

Mr. Kryzanek motioned; Mrs. Dowd seconded; to implement a budget freeze effective immediately until further notice. The motion carried unanimously 7-0-0.

Mrs. Rich motioned; Mr. Trotta seconded; to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. The motion carried unanimously 7-0-0.

Minutes by Michelle K. Kelley

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Secretary/Clerk