

IT IS THE MISSION OF THE SCHODACK CENTRAL SCHOOLS
to develop our students to become "...active, reflective, creative learners. In our schools, they will engage in rewarding work and practice behaviors that are intelligent in both an academic and a practical sense. Students will develop the attitudes, skills, and understandings that will allow them to fulfill their potential and to function successfully in their individual and social roles."

SCHODACK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
1216 Maple Hill Road, Castleton, New York 12033-1699

February 16, 2012

Maple Hill High School Library

Present: J. Andrew Fleck, Michael Hiser, Paul Puccio, Mary Yurista, Christine DiGuilio, Michael Charsky, George Warner, Bruce Romanchak (arrived 6:10 pm) and Lisa Lafferty (arrived at 6:12 pm).

Also present: Robert Horan, Monica Kim, Jason Chevrier, Donna Watson, Michael Bennett, Ron Agostinoni and Michele Reickert.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES – REGULAR

1. Meeting called to order by Board President, J. Andrew Fleck at 6:04 p.m.
2. Christine DiGuilio moved for approval of present agenda. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
3. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
4. Reports/Presentations:
 - a. Questar Services to the District – Jim Baldwin and Gladys Cruz

Mr. Baldwin spoke about two issues effecting schools.

 - i. Common Core Standards ("CCS") and the development of assessments aligned with CCS. If someone had told you five years ago that 47 states would agree to common standards in ELA and Math, everyone would have told you they didn't know what they were talking about. The adoption of the standards happened quickly. Too many students starting college are in need of remediation and feedback from the business community nationwide was that students were not prepared for the challenges and rigor of work. In New York, CCS replaces the current learning standards in ELA and Math. NYS is part of a consortium, Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers ("PARCC") a number of states have come together to develop high school assessments that are going to test for college and career readiness. NYS Board of Regents will be faced with the decision of whether to substitute those multi-state assessments for NYS's traditional regent examinations.
 - ii. Data Systems to support instruction. In the last ten years, we have really only scratched the surface of the data that can be made available to us when it comes to how our students are doing. The State, through the Race to the Top grant, will be creating a statewide data system. It will be a one stop shop for information on

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- students, thereby helping districts in making decisions in allocating resources at the board level, policies, and expectations, how a principal addresses needs within a building, and what a teacher needs to do working with individual children.
- iii. Great Teachers and Leaders: Teacher certification is going to be overhauled; teachers applying for certification in NYS will be required to submit a video of them teaching which will be evaluated by master teachers. Content area will be much heavier. Once the APPR situation is settled, there will be focus on a teacher career ladder, which will create different levels of teaching and compensate based on those levels.
 - iv. Treatment of low achieving schools: Not an issue in Schodack but the state has had an accountability system for in place for a number of years. Persistently low achieving schools have been allowed to continue being low achieving, but the board of regents has staked out their territory and said those will either be closed or faculty and staff will be substantially changed there will be some restructuring of those schools and there will be more of that happen as the next few years unfolds.

Mr. Baldwin also spoke about the district services side of Questar. He mentioned their Saturday morning workshops for board members and superintendents, business officials, and district level instructional leaders to talk about various aspects of support to component school districts. For next year, they are initiating a centralized business office. They will have a centralized human resources administration service and will begin working on a transportation service.

Gladys Cruz talked about the Race to the Top (“RTTT”), and explained that there are 19 districts that pooled resources together to form the RTTT network team. Each district has three people assigned to them: a specialist in Mathematics, a specialist in ELA literacy and a person who is a data analyst. These individuals hold workshops on CCS and support the districts in implementing the CCS and using data to drive instruction. Teachers from the region have been brought together for regional curriculum mapping. In the past, every district used to do their own mapping but with the CCS we have the opportunity to pool people together. APPR support to the districts has been done in many ways: there are 10 approved blueprints for teacher evaluations and 6 approved blueprints for principal evaluations, Questar has done a comparison chart of the various blueprints, offered support in facilitating the selection of a rubric and also provided evidence based observation training to our region, approximately 95% of administrators in the region have gone through the training as well as some districts receiving rubric specific training.

Christine DiGuilio asked if there would be any additional state aid to go along with the new requirements, Mr. Baldwin answered no, and continued that there is some conversation that there may be additional aid but given the time frame with the Governor’s budget and the conversation, he feels it is low level conversation and unlikely to happen. George Warner thanked Mr. Baldwin for his articles he writes bringing clarity to these kind of situations. Mr. Warner also expressed concern over

endangering the viability of a school with a 96% graduation rate whose kids go on. Mr. Baldwin commented that when money was flowing freely, it was easy to add additional dollars to school aid, but if you look at school aid as sort of a macro view, the reality is that poor districts are treated generally poorly in the formula. Mr. Warner expressed that State Ed. is still tied to seat time to issue a diploma, and that it is 2012, and Schodack has kids that can get through the seat time requirement much quicker. We are willing to change, State Ed is the dinosaur. Mr. Baldwin replied that State Ed. is not going to walk away from seat time without assurance of the quality, and that people and schools need to keep pounding away, go to the legislature, go to the regents meetings, and write to the members of the board of regents. Districts have to look at the way they are doing things and find ways to do it different. Schodack and Ichabod's conversations are a good thing, are there efficiencies that can be realized? There are a number of districts regionally that are losing population, we are at a point where the capacity in the system is exhausted, fund balances are getting exhausted and it is tough decision making time now. Bruce Romanchak asked Mr. Baldwin what has been done to reduce the cost of services that Questar offers to districts. Mr. Baldwin replied that services have been reduced over a period of years. Boces over the last 10 years has reduced administrative positions, embarked on a program of vacancy control, does that vacancy need to be filled and by whom. Paul Puccio asked to what extent can schools experiment with change and take risks. Can schools afford to be bold enough to take risks and go outside traditional education? Mr. Baldwin replied that Commissioner Steiner and now Commissioner King have said they would entertain waivers, but Commissioner Mills would not consider them. Mr. Warner asked Mr. Baldwin if he would consider having Questar drive an initiative to get Distance Learning into the schools in this area. Mr. Baldwin replied that Questar operates based on what the districts want. Gladys Cruz explained that there are a lot of courses that will be offered in this region. They are also looking into an academic satellite program so that if a district is offering a specialized program, Questar could offer the program through Questar and share them as a coser. Mr. Horan stated that Schodack is fortunate that they got involved in Distance Learning early on and are going on the 6th year. Other schools are coming here to tour our Distance Learning program; there is an interest by other districts now. Ron Agostinoni talked about a program collaborating with HVCC, Averill Park, and Saratoga using portable Distance Learning equipment. He also mentioned that our students are doing labs that are being done in college. Mary Yurista expressed concern about not teaching students skills to give them the ability to work with other people and that we would need to find the right balance.

- b. 2012 – 2013 Preliminary Budget Presentation – Monica Kim & Robert Horan
Mr. Horan began by again thanking everyone for coming to the meeting. He expressed that it is very important that residents and employees get educated about the budget. He stressed that the presentation is a starting point and that no definite decisions have been made. He also stressed that a 2% property tax cap does not mean a district will only raise their tax rate or levy by 2%, there is a formula that all towns, villages and schools must use and then

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submit the calculations to the Comptroller for review (first time ever this has been required). He further explained that a tax levy is all of the money that a school district can collect, everyone puts money into the tax levy; the tax rate multiplied by individual assessed value is what each homeowner and business contributes to the levy. Hannaford challenged their assessment and received a \$10.4 million reduction in assessment as well as a refund of \$190,000 for prior taxes paid. The result is that now Hannaford does not have to contribute \$205,000 to the tax levy, which results in everyone else paying more. Monica Kim explained how the Hannaford reduction in assessment would have affected the tax rate if it happened for the current 2011-12 school year. The tax rate would have gone from \$19.40 to \$19.75 per \$1,000 of assessed value having a 4.83% increase instead of the 2.99% increase we actually had for 2011-12. There are various factors influencing the 2012-13 budget: reduction in aid, Hannaford settlement, retirement costs, health insurance costs, expired (ing) contracts. The following reductions/eliminations are being considered: refinance debt, possible reduction in TRS, applying for grants offsetting salaries, .4 FTE reduction to Business Office, reduction to 10 month typist positions, reduction of 4 days to Management Confidential staff, reduce automotive mechanic position, reduce Art and Music programs, reduce French, HS Math, HS Social Studies, School Psychologist, Social Worker, Reading Specialist, one Librarian position, reduce and reallocate Teacher Assistant support district wide (eliminate 7.0 FTE TA positions), mentor stipends, summer planning for CES, tutoring, Highly Able Learner (HAL), reduce Risk Management Services, eliminate library periodical purchases for one year, all library book purchases at all three buildings, district wide references/periodicals, BOCES programs (reduce/eliminate), Enrichment/Odyssey of Mind, district wide supplies, Library Automation, Co-Curricular by 30%, Athletic opportunities, after school bus runs, equipment and Groundskeeper from 10 months to 9 months. Chris DiGiulio commented on the pension costs, businesses in the private industry are looking at freezing defined benefits, we need to find another more appropriate means for pensions. Monica Kim stated that overall, the district is looking at a 1.5 million shortfall for the 2012-13 budget. Mr. Horan gave an example that over the past 3 years, cumulatively the district had a shortfall of 1.3 million, this year alone the shortfall is 1.5 million. Bruce Romanchak questioned how the reductions to structural programs were determined, Mr. Horan answered that if it is a non-mandated program, it is considered for reduction.

5. Board Discussion. Paul Puccio asked Mr. Horan if there was any follow-up from HVCC on whether our students are in need of remediation upon entering HVCC. Mr. Horan answered that he had asked for the information and had not heard back yet. He did say that in the last two years none of our students have needed remediation and that Ron Agostinoni has been working with Ted Hennessey and the Math department as far as a Compass test, which will tell us if our kids are in need of remediation. Mr. Puccio also spoke about the recent Merger Steering Committee meeting and said that on the financial side, there were two significant things that showed up, miscellaneous revenue including federal funds were excluded from their analysis and they did not take into consideration for either district the allocation of fund balance. The conclusion that was reached at the meeting is that the scenario presented is not an ideal scenario for either district, additional time is needed to talk about other alternatives. Michael Hiser asked Mr. Horan if he had a date for a meeting with State Ed. he had mentioned at the previous meeting. Mr. Horan answered that he has

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a meeting February 29th.

6. Meeting open for public discussion. Paul Puccio expressed that it is early in the process, the board recognizes that the budget process hurts and asked that everyone digest the information and be aware that there is time to work at the budget. Vicki Roberts asked for an explanation of partial FTE (.1 or .4 FTE). Mr. Horan explained that at MS and HS a .8 FTE would be 80% of day teaching, example: teaching 4 classes a day instead of 5 classes and at the elementary school, it goes by the amount of time, hours and minutes that are spent with students. Laura Cook expressed that the Legislature really needs to know the impact and hopes that everyone advocates to the state. She also expressed that past investments are showing in Schodack and hopes that is kept in mind when we are talking about Schodack and the state of education as a whole. She asked about the health insurance refund that was received and if it was something we would get again. Monica Kim and Bob Horan explained that it was money refunded from cost savings over a period of time. Laura Cook asked about the TRS contribution number and how it affects the numbers. Monica Kim explained that the Tax Levy Cap formula only allows an exemption of TRS that goes over a 2% increase and that it is still a benefit since the prior calculation of the levy had TRS going up. Laura Cook expressed that there is concern over changing the pensions and investments, that a transfer cost may be involved and a concern over the management of the plan. She also asked about the levels of the reserves that was shown in the presentation and if there were any mandates. Mrs. Kim answered that the only mandate the state has is the maximum amount a school can hold. She also explained that auditors may suggest how to decide what reserve categories schools should have. Christine Fowler asked what costs / salaries were included in the Instruction category on the estimated expenditures slide and if salaries for transportation and maintenance were in that number. Mrs. Kim answered that salaries for transportation and maintenance were within the individual categories for transportation and maintenance. She asked for clarification what employee benefits included. She felt the impression earlier in the meeting was that it is not. Employee benefits are benefits for all employees and retirees. Dawn Gerain asked if the comptroller can be asked what our reserve fund should be. Monica Kim answered that we could ask but they will only tell what the maximum is. Ms. Gerain also asked if we had looked into the centralized business office and what potential cost savings could be. She also spoke about a discussion at the Community Budget Advisory Team meeting regarding links on the website for community members to link to government officials to advocate for the school. Jennifer Phelps asked if there could be a list of the mandated requirements posted so the community would see what the schools are up against. People need to have a quick link so they understand what you have to work with. Rachel Cramer and Jeremy Hempstead, high school students spoke on behalf of the art programs and how important they are to the students. To some students, the teachers and other students are their families. Andrew Fleck thanked them and stated that their comments will be taken into consideration through the budget process and the proposals are difficult for everyone. Robin Perry spoke and expressed that we need to be innovative and to have a plan to move forward. Michael Hiser asked if it would be worthwhile to have a local columnist write something about a high performing district always ahead of the curve that is now facing dead man's curve.
7. Policies:

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- a. Video Cameras in Schools – 2nd reading. Moved by consensus to third reading.
8. Consent agenda:
- a. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of Treasurer’s Reports for the month of January 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - b. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of Revenue and Budget Status Reports for the month of January 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - c. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of Extra-Classroom Activity Report for the month of January 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - d. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of Claims Auditor Report for the month of January 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - e. Paul Puccio moved for approval of recommendations of the district Committee on Special Education regarding 2011-2012 students: 000011406, 000113535. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - f. Paul Puccio moved for approval of recommendations of the district Committee on Preschool Special Education regarding 2011-2012 special education services for students: 000114058, 000114059, and 000113785. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - g. Paul Puccio moved for acknowledgement of a donation from South Schodack Volunteer Fire Company in the amount of \$200.00 to support the Maple Hill Middle School Community Charities Account. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - h. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of a donation from Castleton Kiwanis Club in the amount of \$200.00 to help offset the costs of a field trip for advanced art students to Guggenheim Museum in NYS. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - i. Paul Puccio moved for approval of an in-kind donation and waiver of the fees outlined in Board Policy 3-208, Use of School Buildings and Athletic Facilities, for the use of the Maple High School auditorium by The Southern Rensselaer County Rotary to hold a community wide AED/CPR training to be taught by Ron Annis / Top Form, Inc. on March 24, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - j. Paul Puccio moved for approval of a resolution authorizing Schodack Central School District to participate in a Cooperative Energy Purchasing Service (NYSMEC) for Electricity, commencing May 1, 2012 for a term of at least one year and no more than three years at a commodity price not to exceed \$0.085 per kWh. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.

- k. Paul Puccio moved for approval of a resolution authorizing Schodack Central School District to participate in a Cooperative Energy Purchasing Service (NYSMEC) for Natural Gas, commencing May 1, 2012 for a term of at least one year and no more than three years at a commodity price not to exceed \$0.8160 per therm. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
- l. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of bid from Thomas Svingala, American Martial Arts in the amount of \$350.00 for four wrestling mats, pursuant to a surplus bid opening February 1, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
- m. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of bid from Goold Orchards in the amount of \$100.00 for ten (10) 25 inch televisions, pursuant to a surplus bid opening February 1, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
- n. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of bid from Bornt Family Farm in the amount of \$367.00 for Bus #83 (1998 Ford 20 passenger - VIN #1FDSE37F3WHA69025), pursuant to a surplus bid opening February 1, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
- o. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of bid from Dado's Inc. in the amount of \$851.00 for Bus #87 (2000 International 65 passenger - VIN #1HVBBABWOYH344467), pursuant to a surplus bid opening February 1, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
- p. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of bid from Don Brown Bus Sales in the amount of \$4,500.00 for Bus #92 (2002 International 65 passenger - VIN #1HVBBABN42H517513); and \$6,000.00 for Bus #94 (2003 International 65 passenger – VIN#4DRBRABN13B955083), pursuant to a surplus bid opening February 1, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
- q. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of bid from ISLA Bus & Truck Sales in the amount of \$1,000.00 for Bus #88 (2000 International 64 passenger - VIN #1HVBBABN2YH344468); and \$2,005.00 for Bus #90 (2001 Ford 30 passenger – VIN#1FDXE45F31HB11533); and \$2,000.00 for Bus #93 (2001 Ford 20 passenger – VIN#1FDSE35F21HA16109), pursuant to a surplus bid opening February 1, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
- r. Paul Puccio moved for acceptance of \$1.00 from Castleton Fire Department for Bus #91 (2002 International 65 passenger – VIN#1HVBBABN22H517512), pursuant Board Policy 4-206 Disposal of Property. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
- s. Paul Puccio moved for approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between Schodack Central School District and Schodack Central School Faculty Association to add club advisorship (6th Grade Class Advisor) to Appendix C Extracurricular Compensation Schedule, effective February 17, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
- t. Paul Puccio moved for approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between Schodack

Central School District and Schodack Central School Faculty Association to add club advisorship (7th Grade Class Advisor) to Appendix C Extracurricular Compensation Schedule, effective February 17, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.

- u. Paul Puccio moved for approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between Schodack Central School District and Schodack Central School Faculty Association to add club advisorship (8th Grade Class Advisor) to Appendix C Extracurricular Compensation Schedule, effective February 17, 2012. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
 - v. Paul Puccio moved for acknowledgement of a donation from Concerns U in the amount of \$500.00 subsidy for the 8th grade field trip to go into the Class of 2016 account. Michael Charsky seconded. All present in favor.
9. Resignations/Appointments
- a. Michael Hiser moved for approval of coach(s)/Advisor(es):
 - i. Lisa Beerle – Dramatics Advisor. Bruce Romanchak seconded. All present in favor.
 - b. Approval of volunteer assistant coach(es): None.
 - c. Michael Hiser moved for approval of non-instructional substitute(s): Kathleen Snedacker, Crystal Pauli (School Nurse - pending fingerprint clearance). Bruce Romanchak seconded. All present in favor.
 - d. Michael Hiser moved for approval of substitute teacher(s): Brian Gadzinski, Tara Stasack and Erin Walsh. Bruce Romanchak seconded. All present in favor.
10. Meeting open for public discussion.
11. Action items. Draft 2 of the budget, Monica to give the Board an idea of where we stand this year with spending and revenues. Keep looking into a central business office and other options. Mr. Horan stated that other options for substantial savings would be to close the middle school, stop door to door bus service, and/or go to half day Kindergarten. Michael Charsky expressed that he would like to see less fund balance used.
12. Executive Session: Mary Yurista moved to enter executive session to discuss contract negotiations, an employee disciplinary matter, and the Superintendent’s mid-year review. Michael Hiser seconded. All present in favor.
13. Adjournment. Having no further business before the board. Michael Hiser moved to adjourn at 10:55 pm. Lisa Lafferty seconded. All present in favor.