

B. Financial Status of Corporation

Dr. Lovejoy discussed the financial status of the Corporation. The Board was asked in January 2009 to approve \$6.7 million in loans. The Corporation paid back \$4.7 million. In June, the Corporation had to borrow \$3 million and in July, they sought another \$1 million. The Corporation paid back \$1.5 million leaving a debt balance of \$2.5 million. Currently, the General Fund has approximately \$900,000, but the Transportation Fund is \$127,000 in debt. Dr. Lovejoy also explained that the Corporation lost \$500,000 due to student reductions and state reductions. If we do nothing, we will be \$2.5 million to \$3 million in debt by the end of 2010. The total cuts for the Corporation would be \$1.8 million.

C. Enrollment Projections

Mr. Emsweller discussed enrollment projections and comparisons from 2003-2004 and 2009-2010. Class size projections have declined. A major factor is the decline in enrollment. The Corporation is projecting a decline in enrollment at the North Putnam Middle School, and Bainbridge Elementary for 2010-2011.

D. Teacher/Student Class Size Ratios with Reductions (2010-2011)

Mr. Emsweller discussed teacher/student class size ratios with reductions for 2010-2011. Mr. Emsweller noted the Corporation is considering reducing the number of sections for each grade level. For example, instead of five sections for grade six there would be four sections. This would mean class sizes would increase, but classes will not have more than 30 students. The Corporation has looked at ways to reduce the student population at Bainbridge Elementary by changing attendance areas.

IV. CERTIFIED STAFF REDUCTION CONSIDERATIONS – ACROSS THE CORPORATION

A. Special Area Teachers, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Athletics, and ECA

Dr. Lovejoy discussed possible reductions in certified staff for special areas, general education, and special education. Wages and benefits were considered when looking into reduction of certified staff. Dr. Lovejoy discussed issues with Old National Trail teacher contracts and North Putnam contracts for special education teachers. The Board is considering reducing seven general education teachers and three special education teachers.

Dr. Lovejoy stated that the Corporation is not eliminating all athletics. One proposal under consideration is to have the high school athletic director handle the middle school and the high school. They are looking at reducing the number of assistant coaches in all sports. Another proposed plan is to close the swimming pool except during the four months of swim season. Dr. Lovejoy noted that they have not considered eliminating band, choir, or the dance team.

V. CLASSIFIED POSITIONS

The Board discussed the possible reduction of hours for instructional assistants, custodians, and secretaries. These positions would be reduced by 15 minutes at the beginning of the day and 15 minutes at the end of the day.

VI. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

After reviewing teacher contracts, Carl Blau discussed other opportunities for cuts. He noted that the Corporation provides \$50,000 life insurance to retirees with the Corporation paying the premiums for the life insurance. Companies do not provide this to retirees anymore. He suggested moving personal leave from four days per year to two days. We allow five days bereavement for a death in the immediate family. Carl Blau suggested lowering the bereavement leave.

Andy Beck suggested a freeze on increment pays and looking at rotational purchasing on items such as buses and computers. Community members need to understand that the Corporation pays \$188,464 a year for extra-curricular activities. The average teacher's salary is \$42,000 per year. Eliminating some of the extra-curricular programs could help save teaching positions. The Board has considered \$56,624 in extra-curricular reductions.

VII. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

The meeting was opened up for comments from the community. Several concerns were expressed by parents over reducing teachers, increasing class sizes, and eliminating arts, music, and extra-curricular activities. One parent commented that band, music, and sports provide lifelong skills for children. Another parent commented that teachers do not make a lot of money and there is a big difference between teachers working 184 days and getting paid for 184 days. Patrons voiced their concerns that there is a he lack of communication between the Corporation and the community. People felt they would not have known about this meeting had it not been for the "rumor mill". Dr. Lovejoy noted that another Board Meeting Work Session would be scheduled for parents who were unable to attend or did not know about this meeting. Notification for the next Board Meeting Work Session will be sent home with students, sent in an Instant Alert, and posted on the North Putnam website. Dr. Lovejoy commented that the Board is gathering information and has not begun making final decisions as of yet.

One parent noted she was surprised at the information provided during the meeting. The parent felt that benefits for teachers should be reduced. A major concern is the increased class sizes. Parents feel the children would not get the attention they need to learn. Teachers would not be able to meet state requirements with larger classrooms. Larger classrooms will cause families to move out of the school district and no new families would move into the community. Another concern is making sure students pass ISTEP+ with changes in classroom sizes and curriculum.

David Basan, North Putnam High School Teacher, noted that by changing a few Technology Education class titles and descriptions more money could be brought into the Corporation. Kate Skirvin discussed the Agriculture Program. She discussed the amount of money paid per student for taking designated Agriculture classes. The Corporation receives additional educational dollars for each of the students. Agriculture classes generate approximately \$61,664 for the Corporation. Ms. Skirvin noted the agriculture department received a grant from the Future Farmers' of America (FFA) Chapter in the amount of \$8,000.

Linda Patrick, North Putnam Middle School Teacher, thanked the School Board for allowing patrons to be involved in the reduction in force process. She knows these are very difficult times; the School Board cannot be blamed for the hard decisions ahead. The Indiana Teacher's Association has sent suggestions to Governor Mitch Daniels regarding ways to save jobs and programs. Ms. Patrick stated that everyone needs to work together and voice their opinions to legislators. Marsha Davidson, North Putnam Middle School Teacher, distributed contact information for legislators in Putnam County and surrounding counties. Ms. Davidson urged the audience to contact their legislators about reduction in force in the school corporations.

Dr. Lovejoy thanked patrons for their comments and assured them that every consideration is being made in deciding reduction in force. Debbie Sillery reminded the audience that Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Central Office.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjournment.

Debra Sillery, President

Jon Buser, Member

Carl Blau, Vice-President

Charlie Boller, Member

Mark Hoke, Member

Dale A. McGaughey, Member

Andrew Beck, Member