The January 12, 2011 meeting of the Williamson Central School District Board of Education opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Under Reports to the Board, John Fulmer reported that the Eighth and Fifth grade students are paired together for Olweus activities and he commented that a lot of club activities are occurring after school each day. He also recognized Deanne Kuter for her service in the lunchroom each day where she shows great patience and the ability to address the many situations that come up with the students. Wanda Miller highlighted Alison Maloney and her class for their Winter “Feastival” and reported that scheduling of annual reviews is underway. Anne Ressler commented that the Elementary School’s Reading Incentive Program will be revamped and the 6+1 writing in-services are continuing. She highlighted Peggy Donahue for her work with a student in her class where she has implemented many creative strategies. Ellen Saxby reported that 16 students took the English 11 Regents exam and the mid-term schedule is being finalized. She commented on training that was held at the Middle School for SuccessMaker which is a reading intervention program that is being implemented with struggling readers. Doug Lauf recognized Jeremy Stringer and Jessica Warchocki for their Holiday Concert that was very well-attended. He also commented on training that he is participating in with teachers from the high school on the implementation of positive behavior intervention strategies. He thanked Ellen Saxby for her work at the high school and specifically with the management of all aspects of mid-term scheduling. Wendy Havens highlighted the work of Marisa Pennetta who has arranged for 30 students to participate in shadowing experiences so far this year. Maria Ehresman reported that the government surplus food that the district has typically received over time has been cut dramatically. She also stated that she gave High School students snack coupons for achieving honor roll status in order to support the school lunch program. She commented on the positive PTSA meeting that was held last night.

Board Committee Reports included updates on the holiday concerts, PTSA and Policy Committee which was followed by Superintendent Ehresman’s review of the history of the homework grading policies in the district. She indicated that there will be a meeting of the Grading Committee next week to review several of the grading procedures including differentiation across the grade levels. John Fulmer and Doug Lauf presented examples of student grades and how they are weighted in gradebook.

Superintendent Ehresman read an article emphasizing the importance of early intervention as an introduction to the proposal for changing the Kindergarten entrance age from December 1st to January 1st. She indicated that there are anywhere from two to twelve students in the district with a December birth date. By changing the entrance age by one month, we would be able to reach these additional students. For students with a December birthday, there would be several
options—Kindergarten, UPK or Good Start. The board agreed to the change and will amend the policy at their next meeting.

Gary Barno reviewed the current budget including the significant budget shortfall due to reductions in state aid. The total aid lost in this year was $1.2 million. Health insurance and retirement costs continue to grow. State aid has gone from over 50% of the district’s budget to 40%. The district is potentially facing a significant budget shortfall again this year. The Board will do a budget review at each of their meetings starting in February and ending with the adoption of the budget in April. These sessions will be at the beginning of the 6:30 Board meeting and will have a public participation at the end of the presentation so that the public can comment on what is presented. All are invited to attend.

The Board approved a number of CSE cases and reviewed the Treasurer’s Report. Under the Consent Agenda, the board approved a number of substitutes, a volunteer and the coaching appointments of Rich Rozzi and Ian Thomas for Junior High Girls Basketball. They also approved the following appointments and changes in appointments:

- Stephanie Gowan as a Long Term Substitute for Nancy Shay, Special Education Teacher, High School
- Carol Smith, Elementary School, part-time 1:1 aide
- Change for Erica Wendler from Elementary School Monitor to probationary Teacher Aide
- Change for Titus Wilson from Probationary to Permanent Full-Time Cleaner, Middle School
- Change for Ben Minier from Probationary to Permanent Part-Time Groundskeeper

Under Old Business, the Board approved the second readings of Policy 5721 - After School Activities Run and Policy 5772 - Alcohol and Drug Testing for Bus Drivers. Under New Business the board approved a stipend for Barbara Bush, Bus Garage for additional duties, Bert Peters and Kathy Seyna as surrogate parents for unaccompanied/homeless youth with disabilities, the appointment of Tori Kolyer, Petty Cash Custodian, Elementary School and approved the Williamson Central School District Extra Classroom Activity Funds Audit for the Year Ended June 30, 2010.