The December 8th Board of Education meeting was preceded by a walk-through of the High School facility. The Board noted areas where improvements had been made and questioned various aspects of future projects. After reporting on various meetings that had been held in the last few weeks, the Board moved into hearing reports. The first report was in the form of a student produced video. This 8 minute video chronicled the Community Beautification Project. The project included all 1400 district students in some way during the 2003-2004 school year. The various projects tackled included producing murals in each building, planting trees in the community, making improvements at the Town Park and developing a garden around the Elementary School flagpole. All of these projects were coordinated by Assets Coordinators Cathie Abdunnsa and Carol Verbridge.

The next report to the Board was the presentation of the academic achievement report for the first quarter of this year. Each building principal highlighted various aspects of the report. These highlights included the following:

- 58% of Elementary students in this building are considered high achievers
- Kindergarten students’ reading levels have increased compared to this same point last year
- 61% of Middle School students are considered high achievers
- 44% of High School students are considered high achievers
- Conversely, the number of students failing classes at the High School first quarter is significantly less than it was last year at this time.
- District-wide, the overwhelming majority of students who are receiving Academic Intervention Services (AIS) are passing their core classes.

The Board expressed pleasure over the noticeable improvement and thanked all involved for their part in this success.

Another major report to the Board was the presentation of the District-wide Special Education data. This presentation by Pupil Personnel Services Director, Wanda Miller, highlighted the number of students who are classified and the types of services those students receive. Especially noteworthy is the fact that the number of students classified District-wide has decreased from 16.4% in 2001 to 13.9% in 2004. This can be attributed to the fact that students are receiving support services, such as AIS, early in their school careers and also to the increase on the types and frequency of intervention services available.

The Board also reviewed a written report submitted by Athletic Director Jim Newby. This report highlighted the number of students participating in athletics in the High School this fall (148 students) and the numerous awards these athletes received.
School Superintendent, Maria Ehresman updated the Board on the status of sales tax sharing between the county and the school districts. Although the sales tax revenue will stay with the district for the 2005-06 school year, a move is underway to take back this revenue over the next three year period (2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09). The Board of Supervisors is scheduled to vote on this issue at their December 21st meeting at 9:00 am. Mrs. Ehresman urged residents and Board members to attend the meeting on the 21st to show support in favor of the schools continuing to share this revenue source. At present, Williamson receives over $400,000 annually from the sales tax collected across the county.

After completing several first and second readings of policies, and approving the budget calendar for the 2005-2006 school year, the Board recessed to Executive Session.