

Communications & Community Outreach Subcommittee Minutes
Conference Room School Administration Building
July 2, 2010

Present: Laurie Graham, Laurie Slap
Absent: Dan Scharfman

Meeting was called to order at 8:05

1. Communications Discussion:

Committee members in attendance discussed

- How to get input from constituents?
 - Forums: both face to face and on-line w/ anonymous postings?
 - Use Belmont Budget (or format) as means of interactive communication: post questions and responses
- How can the SC/SD do things differently: what does consolidation/restructuring mean
 - Follow the model of the Warrant Committee by seeking input from all members of the SC and the Community?
 - Need data/analysis to back up decisions
- How to get information out to community?
 - Quarterly reports?
 - Listserve?
 - Column in BCH
 - Column In Belmont Patch
 - Work with PTO/PTAs and all Principal listservs
- What to communicate?
 - Important to be out ahead. For ex: SC/SD publish salaries; BMLD ~ loss of green and playing space, safety issues
- Outreach to other SC: how do they do things?
 - Models of Communication?
 - ✓ Sub-committee (what is the charge?)
 - ✓ Office of Communication?
 - ✓ How communicate? Listserves, newsletters (including working w. PTA/PTO), web-site, stand-alone web-site (no school resources/who pays)
 - ✓ Who decides what the messages are; who writes?
 - ✓ Discuss w/other SC:
 - Dan S; Cambridge, Concord, Lexington
 - Laurie G: Arlington, Bedford, Watertown
 - Laurie S: Wayland, Weston, Winchester

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am

Submitted: _____

Laurie Graham



Communications & Community Outreach Subcommittee Meeting

Friday, July 22, 9:00 – 10:30 am

Conference Room School Administration Building

Present: Laurie Graham, Dan Scharfman

Absent: Laurie Slap

Observer: Franklin Tucker

Meeting called to order at 9:10

- Committee members in attendance discussed available means of getting information out to the public. Anything we do communicate we need to have the capacity to drill down to a granular level to provide the detail and analysis that lead to decisions.
 - Possible agenda item for retreat and/or a workshop meeting: What is allowable to post?. Concern about inadvertent violation which limits ability to inform people and can lead to lack of trust and perception of lack of transparency
- Suggestion that communications fall into broad areas but need to have protocol for how to get information out, especially if there is an immediate need (Hot Topic):
 - News and Information: New HR and Finance Directors; Policy Manual completed and on line; SD web-site
 - Hot Topics: Bullying and Harassment Task Force, Freshman Sports
 - Community Topics: Budget, Community Dialogue
 - What are topics the SC/SD think are important
- Listening to/ engaging with the community is important (inbound communication) to identify what information people are looking for and to provide opportunities for feedback.
 - Identify groups to meet with; get on agendas for LWV, Rotary, PTO/PTAs, etc.
 - Micro-conversations, series of small groups
 - Opportunities for residents to meet w/ a SC member (rotating basis) ½ hr before SC meeting
 - How can we best engage those citizens not connected to the schools
- Perhaps immediate focus should be on Big Question: How can we be better prepared for topics that come up?. Need to have infrastructure in place for bi-directional communication and then prioritize topics.
- Discussion of how to productively and proactively interact with the media.
 - Provide content
 - Respond to queries as appropriate
 - Who should be the media contact/point-person? Is there an established hierarchy?

Meeting adjourned at 10:40

Submitted:

Laurie Graham

