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COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 26, 2019
Central Office
5:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Champagne
Jim Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Jen Magri

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mike Wilson, Superintendent
Pat Boyle, Board Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Ms. Harmeling called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:00 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. DISCUSSION

A. Discuss the mission of the Communications Committee:

- Examine all methods and modes of district communications including tools, frequency, timeliness, content, ownership and effectiveness.
- In conjunction with all stakeholders develop a district wide communications plan to be submitted to the Board for approval, including the recommendation of policies, processes and professional development to ensure effective communication.
- Surveying of staff (all bargaining units), students, athletes, parents and the public's perceptions, regarding communications and areas for improvement should be included.
- Progress reports will be due to the board monthly with the goal of a 2019-2020 communications plan launch.
- Findings where improvements can be made immediately will be shared and subsequently implemented as they are identified.

Ms. Harmeling went over the bullet points with the committee. Mr. Garofolo wanted to know what exactly the problems are and how are we failing to address them. Ms. Magri said the most common complaint is I send e-mails and no one gets back to me. Ms. Harmeling felt the timeliness of sharing general information could be improved, have more proactive communications. Parents want to know the process and don't want to be cut out of the loop. An example of this is when a child's teacher is going out on an extended leave, often the parents are the last to know. Mr. Champagne stated he didn't just want to throw out information. It was discussed on who should respond to a parent. Mr. Champagne felt if it was a classroom problem, the teacher should let the parents know, if it deals with discipline or a school wide issue an administrator needs to make the call. District information should come from the district. It was also discussed that there is no continuity among the schools. Some schools and teachers use "Remind", some use Twitter, some text, some use google classroom or e-mail.

B. Discuss priorities and specific tasks to accomplish the mission of the Communications Committee. Sample plans and Communications section of the proposed Strategic Plan:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oUr-BNCCmM3A1-k7gCHRdF5bt4OT0aiubhCZ0tTN9EA/edit?usp=sharing&ts+5c58b331>

Sample Plans:

https://www.brookfield.k12.ct.us/sites/brookfieldps/files/uploads/081617_final_brookfield_public_schools_communications_plan.pdf

[http://www.cantonschools.org/filestorage/184/795/797/3262/Canton Public Schools Communication Plan 2016-2019.pdf](http://www.cantonschools.org/filestorage/184/795/797/3262/Canton%20Public%20Schools%20Communication%20Plan%202016-2019.pdf).

[http://www.ledyard.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_111100/Image/Rev.%20Communications %20PlanMarch%2-2-16%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.ledyard.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_111100/Image/Rev.%20Communications%20PlanMarch%2-2-16%20(2).pdf).

https://www.somers.k12.ct.us/UserFiles/Servers/Server_61294/File/District%20Info/CommunicationsPlan/Communications%20Plan.pdf

After the discussion, the committee felt the first step should be to do a teacher survey and find out what types of apps and communication platforms they currently use with the parents. Have the administrators and Mr. Dyer put together what is currently used by the schools and district, i.e. newsletters, website, Facebook, Twitter, PowerSchool, etc. Once the data is compiled, survey the parents to find out where they go to get most of their information and concentrate on those areas. If only 2% are using a newspaper, don't use that, use a more effective means of communication. The last survey should be to the public to see what they would like to see addressed as far as communication is concerned. Ms. Magri suggested we use the Seymour Town Website when we are ready for this piece. After all data is accumulated then we can start to formulate a plan. Once the plan is in place present it at Meet the Teacher night or at PTA meetings. The goal is still to have some things in place for the beginning of the school year.

IV. **INFORMATION**

A. **REPORTS**

1. Chairman's Report
None
2. BOE member comments
None
3. Administrator comments
None

V. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo /sec. Mr. Champagne) to adjourn the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Magri

Submitted by:
Pat Boyle