

Communications Committee Minutes

October 2, 2015

Present: Steve Jensen, Joe Phelan, Deirdre d'Albertis, Laura Schulkind, Deirdre Burns

1. Breakfast with the Board

- All agreed that this morning's event continues to be an important way to connect personally with faculty and staff. Good to hear about the largely positive start to school unrelated to transportation issues.

2. Web site.

- The committee continues to look at various aspects of the web site.
- Looked at new guidance office page. Steve is working with the enthusiastic guidance office staff to continue to develop, but it looks great. Considering adding a "crawler" at the top of the page with time sensitive information. Scholarship page needs to be populated but will be an important resource for students.
- A couple of questions are on the "Ask the District" link. Steve added a message that the questioner will remain anonymous when the questions are posted. Adding a date to the answers will be helpful.
- Need a Food Service link that includes a link to My SchoolBucks and any newsletters that Larry Anthony produces.
- Club pages are organized well and a great resource. Steve to add live email address links for advisors.
- Steve took great pictures from the PTSO picnic, which was terrific community event. Can use some throughout the web site.
- A letter to parents will go out soon encouraging them to check out the site and its new features. The committee thanks Steve for all his work in getting the site to where it is. There are countless details to attend to and we are gratified by the progress.

3. School Start Time Comm communications

- Discussion of the School Start Time Committee's communication plan.
- All parents will receive a brief (2 question plus comment box) survey about start time. Questions not yet developed.
- A sampling of students will be surveyed (8th grade?) in social studies classes. RHS still examining how to conduct a student survey.
- Communication with Student Council as well.
- Mr. Lackaye may pose the issue to the Debate Club for a point/counterpoint debate.
- Feedback from staff through a voluntary after school meeting and perhaps a survey.
- No informational video will be made.
- Will make a specific link to this topic in an announcement of our first "Coffee with the Board." Looking to schedule this in the first two weeks of November. Joe will look at the school calendar and suggest a date.
- Tentative date set for a community meeting on the topic, which will include a report from the Start Time Committee: December 8 at 6:30, before the BOE meeting that evening.

4. Bus issues

- Brief discussion around transportation problems. It was noted that communication from the district is critical during such a challenging time. Also discussed the problem of misinformation on social media. Is there a way to address this? Joe, Deirdre d'A. and Laura will be attending the NYSSBA pre-convention communications workshop. The committee will examine lessons learned from our own experiences, and from the workshop, at a later meeting.

5. Board goals that relate to this committee.

- CDEP communications: Joe is attending PTSO meeting next week - will share information about CDEP planning. It was suggested we send a notice to parents when ELA curricular documents are approved and posted. More to discuss on this.
- Tax levy cap and the 2016-17 budget. Need to reach out to community groups in January/February.
- Advocacy goal. Should there be an ad hoc board committee? Or is this goal better located in the Communications Comm? Deirdre d'A. noted the importance of sharing with parents the various ways to advocate on behalf of our schools at the state level; communicating options about testing, etc. other than "opting out." Also to give feedback to the BOE about their concerns so we can effectively advocate on behalf of our community. The committee decided we should discuss the various dimensions of advocacy at our November 6 meeting. What are the issues of concern to us? Where/how to direct advocacy efforts? Other board members would be welcome to attend.

Next meeting:

Friday, November 6, 9:30am.

Agenda: Board advocacy goal, continue to look at web site progress.

Submitted by Deirdre Burns