

4.2.5

Communication Committee Meeting Minutes

November 8, 2017

Submitted by Jaclyn Savolainen

Attendees: Stephen Jensen, Joe Phelan, Jaclyn Savolainen, Laura Schulkind, Elizabeth Raum

This committee spent most of the meeting discussing the logistics of what would be involved in implementing and maintaining a district presence on Facebook, in order to help us decide whether or not to do so. By the end of the meeting, there was a general agreement that the logistical and practical hurdles can probably be overcome, and that the positives outweigh the negatives.

Facebook and Surrounding School Districts

Stephen shared with the committee the research he has conducted regarding usage of FB by Dutchess, Ulster, and Orange county school districts and BOCES.

Out of the 38 districts he canvassed, 22 had FB pages and 16 didn't. There was one district that said they had a page but Stephen couldn't find it. Another district had individual school FB pages but no unified district page.

In Dutchess county, 8 out of 13 districts use a Facebook page in some form.

- **With FB:** Arlington, Beacon, Pawling, Pine Plains, Poughkeepsie (not kept current), Spackenkill, Hyde Park, Wappingers
- **Without FB:** Dover, Red Hook, Rhinebeck, Webutuck, Millbrook (although some student organizations have pages)

Generating FB Content and Controlling Comments

Stephen has started calling individual districts to ask about how they handle comments and who maintains the page, but he is waiting to hear back from most of them. Other questions to ask: how are you feeding your FB page, how many people have administrative access, do you use FB ads?

Joe noted that we would not want to get rid of the district website (if we started using FB) even though there would be some crossover in content, but it would be great to have an easy way to forward or announce district webpage additions over to FB. Stephen will check with Ed Schindler, who designed our district website, to see if we have the capacity to automatically post Tweets to FB, which would help minimize workload and, if not, to develop same. Maybe we can get Steve Boucher's tweets to go to FB, too. Stephen expects we will have to rely on limited "crowdsourcing" (principals, coaches, librarians, etc.) for content. Laura brought up the use of a shared folder for posting content to go through someone for vetting before posting. The district has a centralized list of students whose parents have chosen not to allow their photos to be shared. Joe said that public events that anyone can attend (like the circus or sports games) do not require photo release forms.

FB allows admins to hide or delete certain comments, and can shut down the ability of other accounts mentioning your organization/business page to appear on your timeline. Laura also mentioned the presentation at the NYSSBA conference about "187 words" (setting up a filter to catch practically every comment and require it to be approved before going live).

Jaclyn brought up the possibility of using FB advertisements as a way to promote district news, surveys, and events. You can target by age, by location, by interests, and other filters in order to push content out to FB users who may not already follow or "like" a particular page. That way you don't rely solely on FB algorithms to get content onto personal feeds/timelines. Ads also go to friends of those people who like your page. It is easy to set up ads (FB often created suggested ads using content from your posts) and there isn't a minimum budget but it probably requires a credit card.

Other Business

Laura noted that Tuckahoe does a recap of their progress on goals in April. Is it worth communicating our state of board goals and plan for the rest of the year at some point? If we have meaningful content to report, then it may be worth considering making some form of public communication.

This week Joe received four responses to the postcard mailing from people who wanted to find out more about opportunities for getting involved in Long Range Planning.

Joe also got a spreadsheet with countywide house sale data disaggregated by school district. He will share this information with the full board.

Laura noted that we need to follow up with realtors. Maybe this committee can come up with the questions we want to ask them? This seems like a good crossover between Communications and the LRP committees. Some possible questions:

- Who are realtors mostly seeing – families, retirees, weekenders?
- What questions do customers ask the realtors about our school district?
- Do you think people would want a promotional/informational brochure about the school district?