

4.3.4

Communications Committee Meeting

October 18, 2017

Attendees: Liz Raum, Jaclyn Savolainen, Laura Schulkind, Joe Phelan, Steve Jensen

NYSSBA Recap

Laura and Joe reviewed the Communications sessions attended at the NYSSBA convention with the members. The first focused on ways to be responsive to our community while being responsible to our school's mission when addressing communications issues that arise in the District. We will try to get a digital version of the session presentation to share with the committee members as we work through the many communications opportunities in our schools.

The second was a discussion of managing "chaos" on social media, particularly in the event of a crisis, i.e. fire in a building, etc. The session provided suggestions for communicating with staff and the larger community while dispelling false stories that can seem to overtake online communication.

The last was a discussion of managing a school's online identity and ways to promote the successes in your District.

Social Media Presence

We spent the remainder of the meeting discussing if and how Rhinebeck should develop a stronger social media presence. Joe pointed out that, due to our size, there are a few people doing multiple jobs to communicate which decentralizes the "message." We must be aware of the pitfalls and benefits of any online communications.

- How does a school "own" its message?
- How does a school monitor online chatter to address issues?
- Who is responsible?
- How do we promote the District as the "voice of authority?"
- What financial and personnel resources are required?

The consensus of opinion seemed to be that it was time for RCSD to more fully engage with social media, but we want to make sure that it is done well and appropriately. Steve will reach out to his colleagues at area BOCES to determine if we could set up a consultative session to learn more about effective uses of social media in a school setting. Joe cautioned that, once we're in it, we can't retreat, so the plan for implementation needs to be solid.

Coffee with the Board

The committee would like to host 3 Coffee with the Board sessions this year. As a reminder, we host a 9:00 session at Chancellor and an evening session at the MS/HS Library at 7:00.

We would like to host an early November session, once the first LRP survey has been released. The topic could be about "what's important about a Rhinebeck education." We would like the second session, in mid-winter, to discuss our students' social and emotional well-being. The District's School Climate survey will have been conducted and responses compiled, so we will be able to target more specific questions. Finally, we will host the third session in the spring to open discussions around the budget.

November 9 Agenda

- continued social media discussion
- Chamber/Realtor outreach
- continued LRP projects as needed

Respectfully submitted by Laura Schulkind