

Minutes of the Community Relations Committee of the Board of Education
Regional School District 14 www.ctreg.org
Monday, February 11, 2019

In attendance were: Janet Morgan, Pam Zmek, Carol Ann Brown, and BOE clerk, Natascha Schwartz.

Also in attendance were Wayne McAllister and Mark Harutunian.

Missing: Dave Lampart

Ms. Zmek called the meeting to order at 4:17pm.

Dr. O advised the committee that he would like to do something with NEATV, potentially giving the channel a meaningful name to make it more enticing for people to watch. Dr. O asked Mr. Mark Harutunian, a Video Production, Technology Education teacher from Simsbury Middle School to talk with the committee about how he can help the district in using NEATV more.

The committee had a roundtable discussion regarding NEATV and how it's currently being used. Ms. Brown commented that a lot of the information is very outdated except for the BOE and Building committee meetings. She advised that community members she's spoken with seem to enjoy watching the Building committee meetings stating that they feel informed of how their money is being put to use. Ms. Zmek asked Mr. Harutunian if there is a way to combine NEATV and YouTube together to capture most audiences to which he replied yes. Dr. O mentioned that his vision for the district is to have all modes of communication overlap, so that there will not be any gaps and the communications will be more cohesive. The committee as a whole said that they would like to see more viewable and informative information, rather than just meetings. The committee had a brainstorming session with Mr. Harutunian on how to reach more of the community using NEATV. Mr. Harutunian also suggested that the region think of purchasing a sound absorbent drop ceiling for the production studio. He went on to show sample videos of Simsbury High School Trojan's News productions, so that the committee could see what Region 14 could do going forward.

Mr. Harutunian, Natascha Schwartz, and Wayne McAllister left the meeting at 5:35pm.

Dr. O advised that reporters are being invited to many District events and that he's happy with the great coverage the Region is getting in both local papers. The Committee also discussed recent items in the newspapers, which are being submitted by Principals, Maria Duncan and other district employees.

There was significant feedback from community members who attended Dr. Olzacki's, Superintendent's Advisory Council which took place on January 28, 2019. The Committee discussed specific feedback, which included the notion that, while it was felt there is a lot of information being communicated by the district, the information sent should be more organized. Attendees indicated they want "more information, but in fewer places." Other comments made were that Facebook was not a favorite amongst people attending because of the highly negative nature of some postings. Feedback from people attending the Advisory Council also felt that Twitter can also be a vehicle for negativity and Dr. Olzacki said many people commented that they don't do Twitter for that reason.

Dr. Olzacki is working with Matt Lawrence, a former player for the Baltimore Ravens, to hold a leadership camp for students in both Nonnewaug High School and the Woodbury Middle School. Matt Lawrence founded Lawrence International, a nonprofit organization that focuses on helping youth gain leadership potential through sports and education. Dr. Olzacki has a meeting this Wednesday with Mr. McAllister, Principal Luby, Mr. Curtin, Principal

Nemec, and Mr. Altieri to schedule this event. The committee anticipates this will greatly benefit kids in our district and will be exciting for the region as a whole.

The committee discussed holding another Community Forum and it will tentatively be held at the end of October 2019. The committee anticipates the format will be very similar the two previous forums which were well received. According to a vast majority of the surveys completed by attendees, the format was well received and attendees felt the event was well run. The committee also discussed ideas for the central question to be put out to the public at the Forum. It was suggested that the forum discussion center on communication. The committee will reach out to one or two community members to help with invitation lists, with the hope of reaching out to as many members of the community as possible to attend. Possible venues were discussed including using the MES cafeteria or the NHS media center.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:58pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Natascha Z. Schwartz
Regional School District 14 Board Clerk

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Natascha Z. Schwartz, Board Clerk, 2/14/2019