

## MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC/COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Region 14 Public/Community Relations Committee was held on Wednesday, February 18, 2015 in the conference room of the Central Office, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, CT.

The following members were present: Committee members Maryanne Van Aken and Janet Morgan; also, Superintendent Anna Cutaia-Leonard; Board members Mike Devine and George Bauer (6:50 pm); community members Patti Knowlton, Adele Taylor and Linnea Marquis; and clerk Deb Carlton.

Committee chair, Carol Ann Brown, was called away on personal business; therefore, Ms. Van Aken called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm and adjourned it at 7:00 pm.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard shared a communications audit idea with the committee; a download she acquired that provides a standards based rubric to help the committee create a baseline of communications, both what we have and what we need. It identifies the three types of communication: internal, with parents and families, and marketing or branding the district. She recommended getting a baseline of information in order for the board members on the committee to develop goals for better communication and better tools with which to communicate. She would like the committee to understand where we are now in order to decide where we go next. She suggested different messages at different times of year, which would become cyclical, and warned against communicating only during budget season.

She will send a PDF copy of the download to the board members on the committee for review.

She felt the list of tools Ms. Brown had left for the meeting could be used to help identify the communications tools of choice for our different audiences. Ms. Van Aken asked who had prepared the list and was told it came from Ms. Marquis, who then offered a critique of the information available, and not available, on NEAT TV, and the importance of that communication tool to inform the public of what is going on in the schools.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard disagreed strongly, and explained the purpose of NEAT TV as a teaching tool at Nonnewaug High School. She does not feel it is a constructive use of the committee's time to focus each meeting on NEAT TV. The board members present felt the district's website should be considered the primary source information about what is going on in the schools. Better use of the local newspapers to publicize our efforts was also seen as necessary.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard suggested the board members on the committee review the rubric, and she will develop a 10 question survey for the next meeting.

Asked if she knows of other school districts that do communication well, she replied that Wallingford does; however, there had been limited interest so far in investigating their methods.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Maryanne Van Aken*

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Public/Community Relations Committee