

**Regional School Unit No. 5**  
**17 West Street, Freeport, Maine 04032**

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**Durham**

**Freeport**

**Pownal**

**Communications Subcommittee Report**

Date: May 18, 2009

Committee: Communications

Chair: Betsy Peters

Meeting Date: May 18, 2009

Members Present: Kristen Dorsey, Jen Kaplan, Betsy Peters, and Shannon Welsh

Agenda Items and Discussion:

Future Search: The Future Search will be rescheduled to August 27 5:00-8:30; Friday, August 28 3:00-8:30; Saturday; August 29 8:00 a.m. – noon. Shannon will contact Mary Jane to confirm her availability for these dates. Personal invitations will be extended in mid-July with the deadline of July 15<sup>th</sup>. Participants will be sent written invitations as a follow-up confirmation.

The list of attendees will be distributed to Board members for feedback. A communications email will be created that is forwarded to each of the subcommittee members. There will be a deadline of May 27<sup>th</sup> for feedback to be considered by the subcommittee at their meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Future Search has one component focused on the history of the three units and a second component that is future oriented. The suggestion was to bring in Duke Albanese or some other presenter to frame the future of education (21<sup>st</sup> Century) as part of the future orientation component.

Website: An agenda distribution list sign-up will be created for the RSU website. Agendas and other public notices will be distributed to those who request to be added to the list. People who want to unsubscribe will be able to use the same address to ask to be removed from the list.

Press Releases: Shannon is primary drafter of a press release with Betsy as primary editor. If there's a particularly difficult release, Betsy will send to the full committee for review. Betsy will send it to Laurie who will approve it for release. At the time of release, Shannon will send the final release to the Board in advance of releasing it to the

public. The e-mail to the Board will include the timing of the release to give Board members time to review the materials in advance. All press calls are directed to the Chair or the Superintendent. Shannon will contact a reporter from Portland Press Herald to try to improve accuracy of information.

Communications Procedures: Shannon will create a “Communications Procedures” document to give to new Communications members or to other Board members for informational purposes.

Goals: Members reviewed progress on goals established in February. We have met the immediate goals and most of the mid-term goals that had the expected completion date of late summer 2009. Subcommittee reports will be posted on the website under each subcommittee with a link from the calendar. The subcommittee will consider using right hand links to topics of press release (budget, laptops, etc.).

Policy on Broadcast of Meetings: The Communications subcommittee recommends that anything to do with budget be broadcast but not workshops in general. Information will be provided with the agenda release to inform the public that a meeting will not be broadcast. This recommendation will be made to the Policy subcommittee for addition to the B policy on broadcast.

Budget Communication: Members discussed the importance of informing the public about the budget adoption process. A handout will be developed for distribution to the Board and the public outlining the process and the public’s involvement in the process.

Members also suggested posting the budget articles with the Board recommended amount. After the Annual Budget Meeting, we will include the amounts approved at the meeting. If there is a discrepancy, a description will be included to explain why a change was made. This will help to inform the public prior to the budget validation referendum.

Subcommittee members recommend that Board members be assigned to act as “Budget Advocates” when budget is finalized. Advocates will be prepared to speak to that warrant article when questions arise at the Annual Budget Meeting. Administrators will provide additional information, as needed.

The committee discussed whether the Annual Budget Meeting could be broadcast live via the website. This could either be audio alone or video/audio. Shannon will check with Jeff to determine whether this is feasible.

#### Recommendations /Decisions:

##### Future Search:

- Recommend Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-8:30 p.m.; Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-8:30p.m.; and Saturday; August 29<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. – noon;
- Create [communications@rsu5.org](mailto:communications@rsu5.org) for feedback;
- Distribute list of attendees to Board members for feedback with a deadline of May 27<sup>th</sup>.

Website:

- Create a link on the website for people who wish to receive the Board agenda or other notices sent to them electronically.

Communications Procedures

- A document will be created that describes procedures/expectations for press releases and other methods of communication.

Policy:

- Recommend that the B policy on the broadcast of meetings reflect that anything to do with budget be broadcast but not workshops in general. Information will be provided with the agenda release to inform the public that a meeting will not be broadcast.

Next Steps:

In June, consider transition to July 1 organizational date and what changes may need to occur to the website. Use the June 1<sup>st</sup> meeting to brainstorm ideas and ask Jeff Brazee to join the June 15<sup>th</sup> meeting. We need to add the Curriculum Office and include space within that area for information on grants.

Next Meeting:

Monday, June 1, 2009 at 7:00 a.m.

Press release recommended?

Not at this time

Submitted by: Shannon Welsh