AGENDA

Addison Central School District
Communications and Engagement Committee
Committee Meeting
Thursday, November 3, 2022, 9:00 am - 10:00 am
208 Charles Avenue, Middlebury VT & Virtual Connection

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

Link to join Webinar
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88251691790

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching a Quorum
B. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff
C. Approve the Agenda
D. Public Comment
E. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of September 15, 2022 and October 6, 2022
F. Committee Discussion
    1. Board Voicemail Messages
    2. Community Engagement for Strategic Plan
    3. Ongoing Communication/Engagement Work
G. Other Business
H. Adjournment

*Public Comment Guidelines:
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MINUTES

Addison Central School District
Communications and Engagement Committee
Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 15, 2022, 9:00 am - 10:00 am
208 Charles Avenue, Middlebury, VT & Virtual Connection

In Attendance

Brian Bauer; Joanna Doria; Mary Heather Noble

Not In Attendance

Lindsey Hescock; Mary Gill

Please click the link below to join the webinar: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89483706972

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching A Quorum

Meeting called to order at 9:07 a.m.

1. Introductions - Board Members, Administrators and Staff

   Emily Blistein, ACSD Director of Communications also present.

B. Approve the Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda.

Move: Joanna Doria Second: Brian Bauer Status: Passed

C. Public Comment

None.

D. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of June 27, 2022 and Sept. 8, 2022

Motion to approve the minutes for both the June 27, 2022 and September 8, 2022 committee meetings.

Move: Joanna Doria Second: Brian Bauer Status: Passed

E. Committee Discussion:

1. Board Voicemail Messages

   Mary Heather Noble reported that there have been no Board voicemail messages since Monday, September 12, 2022.

2. Upcoming Board Communications

   Mary Heather Noble said that she will prepare and provide a draft for the next Board Update at the next committee meeting, after getting content from Committee Chairs.

3. Community Engagement Opportunities

   Mary Heather Noble revisited the committee's idea to have a board presence at upcoming

community events. The full board seemed supportive of trying the idea to cultivate informal conversations.

Emily Blistein reported that she has made arrangements to have a table at the Shoreham Apple Festival on Sunday, September 18th, and that Jamie McCallum offered to come with. She will have flyers with QR codes and information about paraprofessional and custodial staff vacancies, as well as opportunities to substitute and volunteer in the schools. She will also do the Thursday Markets from 3-6 p.m. into October, and a few Football games. Mary Heather offered the use of her tent, table & chairs for the effort, and will make a sign-up spreadsheet to send to the full Board so interested Board members can attend.

Brian Bauer and Joanna Doria asked about how we will be helping direct people through the volunteer screening process. Emily said that Gail Leach (HR Director) has worked with the Sheriff's office to get new ACSD hires fingerprinted & background checked next week, but that session is full. We will need to get a new list of volunteers who need to be checked and reach out to the Sheriff's office to organize another group check.

The committee discussed having a sheet with a few key questions for people to prompt discussion -- How do you prefer to get your information about ACSD? How would you like to engage with the Board in the future? -- and perhaps include some options, such as virtual or in-person office hours, Q&A sessions right before regular Board meetings, ACSD Board presence at Town Meetings, etc.

The committee also discussed finding a way to make sure that anyone who wants to receive ACSD emails can be somehow added to the Powerschool system. Mary Heather asked the committee about considering other engagement opportunities after the fall -- meeting folks at recycling center, during story times at different library locations, etc. Brian Bauer indicated that the group probably has enough to do now. Joanna Doria suggested town meetings, and mentioned that an ACSD presence at Ripton's upcoming Town meeting before their vote might be helpful. Mary Heather indicated that the full Board should probably weigh in on that.

Mary Heather asked the committee about making arrangements to have Board members appear at the "Friend of" elementary school parent groups to field questions/receive feedback. All agreed that this would be an easy way to engage people. Mary Heather will get contacts for all the schools to offer the suggestion.

The committee also talked about the importance of being in-person in different towns -- perhaps we should prioritize having this committee come early to the Board meetings to offer an informal Q&A/conversation opportunity prior to the official meetings. There was discussion about the tension between wanting to open up conversation and still preserving time during Board meetings for routine Board work. Brian Bauer said that he senses a resistance to community engagement -- it doesn't happen now the way he thinks it should, and cited the process for selection of book materials as an example. He brought it up during the Board meeting when the materials selection policy was being discussed and approved, and felt that the Board should have specifically provided for parental involvement in the book selection process. There is no oversight. He also complained that the agendas are driven by Central Office and not the Board. Mary Heather clarified that Board meeting agendas are set by the Executive Committee. Joanna suggested that Brian's book selection example was a missed opportunity for the District and Board to engage the community. Mary Heather attempted to differentiate between the Board's role in setting policy and the Administration & Staff's role in school operations -- but eventually stopped the conversation as too off-topic.

To do: Mary Heather will help Emily with materials for upcoming events, and will send an

email to Board members to sign up to assist.

F. Other Business

Joanna Doria asked Emily Blistein for clarification on the process of getting volunteer applicants entered into ACSD's system and vetted through the Sheriff's office, particularly for people who don't use computers. Emily explained that we may need each school's office to assist some volunteers with the application as needed.

G. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:12 a.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Joanna Doria Second: Brian Bauer Status: Passed

H. Next Committee Meeting: Thursday, September 29, 2022, 9:00-10:00AM

Next meeting date to be determined. Mary Heather will send an email to all committee members to determine whether Thursday, September 29th or Monday October 3rd is better.

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MINUTES

Addison Central School District
Communications and Engagement Committee
Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 6, 2022, 9:00 am - 10:00 am
49 Charles Avenue, Middlebury VT & Virtual Connection

In-Person Attendance

Joanna Doria; Lindsey Hescock; Mary Heather Noble

Remote Attendance

Mary Gill

Not In Attendance

Brian Bauer

Please click the link below to join the webinar: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82251513141

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching A Quorum

Meeting called to order at 9:15 a.m.

B. Introductions: Board Members, Administrators and Staff

C. Approve the Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda for October 6, 2022.

Move: Mary Gill Second: Joanna Doria Status: Passed

D. Public Comment

Molly Witters of Ripton expressed her appreciation for the Communications & Engagement Committee and the work that it does. Noted recent vote in Ripton and expressed interest in being involved in ACSD, specifically thinking about local advocacy and how to get more people involved in our schools. She is happy to serve as a liaison in this way. She shared some feedback she's had from people in her community -- that the process to become a volunteer is confusing and cumbersome. People are intimidated by the process. She is wondering if there is a way to streamline the process for people, perhaps get the word out about a volunteer fair that is coordinated with the Sheriff's Department and allows people to complete all the necessary steps in one event. Secondly, she is wondering how the District can empower local advisory groups who already have some agency in their communities to again serve as liaisons between school and community, and district and community.

E. Approve Minutes of September 15, 2022

The group realized that only two of the three board members who attended the September 15, 2022 committee meeting were present to approve those minutes. May Heather Noble tabled the vote until the next committee meeting, when Brian Bauer can be in attendance to vote.

Motion to approve minutes of September 15, 2022.

Move: Joanna Doria Second: Mary Gill Status: Tabled

F. Committee Discussion:

1. Board Voicemail Messages

Mary Heather Noble reported that there were no messages on the Board Voicemail system as of September 5, 2022.

Mary Gill asked if the committee should share the responsibility of checking the messages. Mary Heather had shared the instructions for checking voicemail messages with the committee, but indicated that it's not burdensome for her to continue doing it. She checks every Monday and also right before our committee meetings. Joanna agreed that for consistency sake, and as long as it's not burdensome to do so, Mary Heather should continue checking for the committee.

2. October 2022 Board Update

Mary Heather Noble shared a draft of the October 2022 Board Update for the committee's initial review. She is still awaiting introduction content from Victoria, which she has suggested contain an update on the Board's strategic planning, as well as an acknowledgment of Ripton's return to ACSD.

Mary Gill confirmed the policies that the Policy & Governance Committee is bringing forward to the full board for discussion. She said that all but Policy A-21(Public Participation at Board Meetings) have already been adopted and have just been recently updated. Policy A-21 is new to us. Mary Heather asked about an email the committee had received from Jamie McCallum about ongoing community engagement outside of Board meetings -- is the Policy Committee hoping to codify additional community engagement into policy? Mary Gill clarified that she hopes to have those specific aspects of Board practices established in a procedure document instead, and mentioned the draft procedure document that the Communications & Engagement Committee had proposed last year. Mary Heather said that she would forward the document to the committee again.

The group discussed some elements of Policy A-21 and other engagement ideas that have already been considered. Joanna mentioned for the record that the Vermont Statute governing the right to attend public meetings --1 VSA Section 312 (h)-- states that it's best practice to allow people to comment on Board topics as they are being discussed by the Board. She also said that some people have school-specific questions that may not pertain to Board-level work, but that we should have a platform that can direct people questions/concerns to the appropriate place. How can we use our community to create a local advisory group to help that effort (referencing Molly Witter's comment)? Joanna also emphasized that some people want to get involved but need to learn how to navigate the volunteer process. Lindsey Hescock shared her experience with attempting to sign up for volunteering at Mary Hogan and MUMS -- inconsistent responses. She asked if it is within the Board's scope of work to establish common communication standards. Joanna asked where this conversation should land -- Central Office? Emily Blistein as the Communications Director?

Mary Heather suggested that these are operational matters that should be referred to Central Office and the school principals. She believes the Board can set the expectation re: volunteering & community engagement at the schools but we won't necessarily get directly involved in constructing the systems for the schools. The group continued discussion about the volunteering process. Mary Heather will loop Emily into the conversation. Significant efforts have been made to move things in the right direction, and there is still work to be done to make the process more consistent and streamlined.

Joanna asked a question about the distinction between policy and procedure -- Mary Gill said that the Policy Committee is trying to coordinate the two, but typically the Board sets policy and the administration creates procedures to implement the policy.

Lindsey's feedback on the draft Board Update:
- Create bulleted update for the Strategic Plan working group.
- Put the Committees in bold font and perhaps link them to the committee descriptions on the website.
- Include the work that the Communications & Engagement Committee has done around volunteering.
- Add locations of Board meetings, calling attention to those in our smaller community schools.

3. Ongoing Community Planning

G. Other Business

None.

H. Next Meeting Date: Thursday October 20, 2022 9:00-10:00 a.m.

The group decided to maintain a regular meeting schedule of every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month.

I. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Mary Gill Second: Joanna Doria Status: Passed

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