

AGENDA



**Addison Central School District
Communications and Engagement Committee
Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 12, 2023, 4:45 pm - 5:45 pm
49 Charles Avenue, Middlebury VT & Virtual Connection**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

Link to join Webinar

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87962755706>

- A. Call to Order Upon Reaching A Quorum
- B. Public Comment
- C. Action: Elect Committee Chair
 - 1. Establishing a Regular Meeting Time
- D. Approve Minutes of February 9, 2023
- E. Committee Discussion:
 - 1. ACSD Voicemails
 - 2. Draft of Board Update
 - 3. Engagement with ACSD "Friends of" School Groups
 - 4. Communications around Superintendent Search
- F. Other Business
- G. Adjournment

***Public Comment Guidelines:**

Public comments are encouraged and welcome at each regular board meeting during the period designated for public comment. Comments are limited to three minutes per person. Citizens will be called to make their statement by the board chair. Public comments regarding personnel, students or legal matters will not be heard by the Board.

MINUTES



**Addison Central School District
Communications and Engagement Committee
Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 9, 2023, 9:00 am - 10:00 am
49 Charles Avenue, Middlebury VT & Virtual Connection**

ACSD District Vision and Mission

OUR VISION

All students will reach their full academic potential and be prepared for success as engaged citizens.

OUR MISSION

To provide an innovative, rigorous, and supportive educational community that inspires a passion for learning and cultivates empathy and responsibility.

In-Person Attendance

Brian Bauer; Joanna Doria; Lindsey Hescok; Mary Heather Noble

Remote Attendance

Mary Gill

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

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<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88125919678>

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching A Quorum

Meeting called to order at 9:10 a.m.

B. Introductions: Board Member, Administrators and Staff

Emily Blistein, ACSD Director of Communications & Engagement also present.

C. Approve the Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda.

Move: Brian Bauer Second: Joanna Doria Status: Passed

D. Public Comment

No public comment.

E. Recommendation to Approve Minutes of January 12, 2023

Brian Bauer abstained.

Motion to approve the minutes of January 12, 2023.

F. Committee Discussion:

1. Engagement with ACSD "Friends of" School Groups

Mary Heather Noble thanked Mary Gill for emailing contacts for each of the ACSD schools "Friends of" parent groups. We have heard back from Cornwall and MUMS -- both have regular meetings, and we can try to have someone from the Committee attend their March meetings.

Joanna Doria asked if Shoreham was included in the email -- she didn't see the rep's email on the list. The group also discussed how to reach MUHS parents, since there is not a "Friends-of" group there -- most parent involvement is through athletics and other activities. In the future, the Committee may want to consider having a table at back-to-school nights at MUHS and other showcase event evenings.

Mary Gill will resend the request to Shoreham and other school groups who haven't yet responded so we can try and follow up. Emily Blistein said she would alert school principals that the Board is hoping to connect with the Friends-of groups so they are aware. She wants to make sure they don't feel subverted -- and that it's clear the Board is attempting to foster two-way communication with the community to solve for the challenges around the limitations of public comment in official Board meetings. Emily suggested having a scripted statement at the beginning of these visits, so attendees understand the parameters of the discussion: Board members are present to answer questions about Board work and listen to concerns, but will direct issues regarding school operations to the appropriate administrative staff. Joanna Doria volunteered to craft a statement that can be used for each visit.

Lindsey Hescocock stated that these visits will be a good opportunity for us to educate parents on the Board's role and the Board's work -- and invite people to participate in Board meetings. She also emphasized the importance of the C&E Committee relaying school community questions/concerns back to the full Board. Mary Heather agreed and asked if it might be good to develop a rhythm of including such information in regular committee updates.

Brian Bauer suggested that the committee take care to summarize public statements in a positive manner, so that feedback isn't characterized as complaints.

To Do:

Mary Gill will send follow-up email to Friends-of contacts.

Mary Heather will schedule visits with MUMS and Cornwall Friends-of meetings.

Joanna will craft opening script for visits with Friends-of parent groups.

G. Communications around Superintendent Search

Mary Heather Noble asked Emily Blistein to provide a brief summary of the work that she and Dr. John Gratto have done to initiate the Superintendent Search process. Emily reported that they have scheduled stakeholder forums for ACSD teachers and staff, parents & caregivers, and other ACSD community members. Students will be using the online survey form and will also be having discussions with some of the Individuals & Societies teachers.

People will be able to provide their input either through the online survey, an in-person or virtual stakeholder forum. We have a variety of options over the next 2 weeks. All of the options will be centered on the same 4 questions (What makes our community a good place to live? What makes this a good school district for students and staff? What are the issues that a new

superintendent needs to know about when he or she comes into the district? What skills, qualities, and characteristics does the new superintendent need to be successful?).

Communication done so far:

- All-District Email
- Ad in the Addison Independent
- Article in the Addison Independent

Coming soon:

- Info in Principal emails over the next few weeks
- Posts in Front Porch Forum
- Posting Flyer copies of the Addy Indy Ad at all ACSD schools and member town offices and libraries

Brian Bauer expressed concern about the virtual meetings, and suggested that they should instead be in-person. He is worried about people actually coming to the forums. Emily acknowledge the concern but mentioned that the past community forum we held for the strategic planning work was pretty equally attended in-person and online. Having both provides more options for people.

Lindsey Hescocock asked for clarification around the designated meeting times for certain stakeholder groups -- does that mean parents can't attend the meetings scheduled for teachers?

Emily and Mary Heather clarified that anyone can attend whichever meeting works for their schedule -- they were just structured in this way per Dr. Gratto's recommendation (people feel more comfortable sharing their input when they are among their peers, and tends to generate important considerations). Meeting times for teachers were chosen to be most convenient for them (lunchtime and right after school); meeting times for parents & caregivers were scheduled for evenings.

There was some discussion around clarifying that all are welcome at any meeting to alleviate any confusion. Emily will modify any future communication around this. Lindsey also asked about sending flyers home with kids. Mary Heather noted that the ACSD community is already being targeted with the direct email communications, and suggested focusing efforts on reaching folks beyond the schools as well. Some ideas: Sending a pdf of the ad to member town select boards to forward to their respective residents. Posting hard copies of flyers at the Co-op, rec center, post offices, libraries, etc.

Brian Bauer asked what will be done with the feedback -- Emily responded that Dr. Gratto will be compiling it and reporting it back to the Board to incorporate into the Board's drafting of the position description and hiring process.

Mary Heather noted that the effort is very time sensitive -- we need to push to get the word out so people can participate in the process and inform the Board's work on the position announcement. The goal is to get the announcement out the first week of March so we have an opportunity to get high quality candidates. We will likely need to schedule a special Board meeting to synthesize all of the input along with our own into a position description.

To Do:

Mary Heather will reach out to Selectboards with a PDF of the Superintendent Search Process Ad so they can share with residents.

Mary Heather and Joanna will post on Front Porch Forum; Mary Heather will ask Suzanne Buck to

post in Shoreham & Bridport FPF.

Emily will update the flyer to clarify that all are welcome at any stakeholder forum that fits their schedule. She will send to school admin to post at each school. Other committee members will distribute flyers through town. Brian will post at Middlebury Town Offices and Isley Library; Mary Gill will post at Co-op and Midd Rec Center; Joanna will post at Ripton Town offices, Ripton Community Center, Ripton General Store, Rikert and the Snow Bowl; Mary Heather will post at East Middlebury Cornwall, Weybridge and Salisbury. Joanna will ask Barb Wilson to post at Shoreham locations. Mary Heather will ask Suzanne Buck to post in Bridport.

H. Other Business

Lindsey Hescock brought up two matters:

1. She mentioned that she had received the email from Shoreham Elementary School about the counseling services available to all students, and wondered if other schools might be able to follow suit.
2. Lindsey also noted that the Feb 28th board meeting would be the final meeting for 3 outgoing board members, and might also be the final meeting for 2 others who are running for contested seats. She wanted to know if the Board would be acknowledging the service of outgoing board members. Mary Heather noted that Feb 28th might not be they final board meeting, as we may need to schedule a special Board meeting to work with Dr. Gratto on identifying the Board's preferred superintendent qualifications.

I. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Joanna Doria Second: Lindsey Hescock Status: Passed

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