MINUTES

Addison Central School District
Communications and Engagement Committee
Committee Meeting
Thursday, December 14, 2023, 8:15 am - 9:15 am
208 Charles Avenue, Middlebury VT

ACSD District Vision and Mission

OUR VISION
Our vision is for all ACSD students to reach their full learning potential, have a sense of belonging in our schools, and enrich our community and the communities where they live in the future.

OUR MISSION
Our mission is to provide high-quality, equitable, and varied learning environments that inspire a passion for learning and growth among our students.

In-Person Attendance
Mary Heather Noble
Remote Attendance
Tricia Allen
Not In Attendance
Ellie Romp

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching a Quorum Meeting called to order at 8:18 a.m.
B. Introductions: Board Members, Administrators and Staff
   Emily Blistein, ACSD Director of Communications & Engagement also present.
C. Public Comment - Agenda Items No public comment.
D. Recommendation to Approve the Minutes of October 25, 2023 Motion to approve the minutes of October 25, 2023.
   Move: Tricia Allen Second: Mary Heather Noble Status: Passed
E. Committee Discussion:
   1. ACSD Voicemails

Mary Heather Noble reported that she has been checking ACSD Board voicemails on a weekly basis, and has only received one message in the last week. It was a parent of a child who was involved in an incident that was in the process of being investigated, and she was trying to get in touch with the Superintendent. Mary Heather said that she left a message on the parent's voicemail to acknowledge receipt of the message and invited the parent to call back. Mary Heather also forwarded the information to Barb Wilson, Tim Williams, and Nicole Carter.

Tricia Allen took the opportunity to provide some feedback/requests she had received from community members:

- Someone asked for a posted copy of the full year ACSD calendar that is not a PDF format, so they can view it easier on their phone.

- Another person asked about the proper process for voicing concerns about the ongoing kindergarten class behavioral issues at Mary Hogan School. Tricia advised them on the organizational structure to follow -- if not satisfied with the responses from teacher and principal, then they should reach out to Interim Superintendent Tim Williams, followed by Board Chair Barb Wilson if necessary.

- Tricia also met with the Mary Hogan Student Council as part of her Ilsley Library work, but they also asked about how they might get onto a Board agenda to discuss issues of concern. Tricia also advised them on the chain of commend to follow.

2. Community Engagement for meeting Dr. Baker & Strategic Plan

Mary Heather reported that she had met with Barb Wilson and Emily Blistein to discuss the plan for introducing Dr. Wendy Baker to the community, and as reported at Monday's Board meeting, they had agreed to have Barb work with Emily and Dr. Baker on those plans, so the Communications & Engagement Committee can focus on communications around the Strategic Plan and Budget Outreach. Mary Heather noted the importance of doing some public education & outreach around the FY25 budget before the March vote, so this is the priority.

Tricia wondered if Central Office could reach out to building principals to make sure that each school's student council is included in Dr. Baker's introduction tour. Mary Heather said that she would be sure to share with Barb and Emily.

Tricia also noted the importance of tailoring some of the budget outreach communications to a 4th-grade reading level, and wondered if we might think about creating some materials to share with the 4th & 5th grade students. If they can understand the materials, then that will be a good starting point for some of the audiences in the community. She volunteered to assist with this effort.

Emily Blistein mentioned having a 1-2 page info sheet with some graphics to illustrate some of the key budget points -- keeping the information basic and high-level. Some of the essentials:

- ACSD needs to keep the budget below a 10% increase or faces strict financial consequences from the State.
- Act 127 has restricted special education and student service funding, so the budget is reflecting these structural changes.
- Main budget drivers include a 16% increase in healthcare expenses, new pupil weighting formula from the state, and unknown salary increases for teachers & staff due to in-process negotiations.

Emily is also currently drafting the District's Winter newsletter, which includes the welcome plan for Dr. Baker, the Strategic Plan, recent racial justice work, links for information re: professional development during in-service early release days, and a heads-up about additional info to come about FY25 budget.

Mary Heather suggested touching base with the Finance Committee to let them know what the C&E Committee is thinking so they can provide the essential content to include in our outreach efforts. The group discussed upcoming meeting dates to map out when to have information to put into outreach materials.

Dec 18th -- Finance Committee Meeting (Mary Heather will ask to be added to agenda)
Jan 8th -- Board Meeting, final draft of FY25 budget
Jan 10th -- Next C&E Committee meeting
Jan 22 -- Board Meeting, anticipated approval of FY25 budget
Early Feb -- send out outreach materials, post FY25 slide show recording, schedule & advertise public meeting for FY25 budget info.

To do between now and Jan 31:

- Give Finance Committee deadline for essential content to include in outreach materials
- Draft 1-2 page budget pamphlet,
- Draft FY25 Budget FAQ sheet
- Work w/Finance Committee on slide show recording (?)
- Choose Feb dates for public meeting/virtual webinar
- Draft Winter Board Update that includes budget outreach opportunities

F. Public Comment - Any Topic

No public comment.

G. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Tricia Allen Second: Mary Heather Noble Status: Passed

*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.