

MINUTES



**Addison Central School District
Communications and Engagement Committee
Committee Meeting
Tuesday, October 15, 2024, 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm
49 Charles Avenue
Middlebury VT
05753**

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.

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching a Quorum

Meeting called to order at 4:34 p.m.

1. Introductions: Board Members, Administrators and Staff

Tricia Allen, Mary Heather Noble, and Laura Harthan all present. Emily Blistein, ACSD Director of Communications & Engagement, joined remotely later in the meeting.

B. Public Comment - Agenda Items

No public comment.

C. Recommendation to Approve the Minutes from October 1, 2024

Motion to approve the minutes of the 10/1/2024 committee meeting.

Move: Laura Harthan Second: Mary Heather Noble Status: Passed

D. Committee Discussion:

1. Board Engagement Via Website

Tricia Allen, Laura Harthan, and Mary Heather Noble reviewed the draft "Who Do I Contact" webpage that she created in response to the last committee discussion. The committee likes the organization with the drop-down boxes to inform users who to contact for each specific type of question or concern (e.g., classroom-level, school-wide, or district-wide). Specific suggestions:

- Each drop-down should have links for each of the suggested contacts so users do not need to find emails and phone numbers from elsewhere on the website. The superintendent, student services director, and teaching & learning director should be linked to their profile with their direct phone numbers.

- The Committee noticed that Dr. Baker and Courtney Krahn do not have complete information with phone numbers in the Staff Directory.
- The link to the Staff directory redirects users back to the "Who Do I Contact" page and needs to be corrected.
- The list of ACSD schools with links and phone numbers is helpful -- the Committee suggests adding the word "Office" so it is clear that the listed phone number is for the Superintendent and other District leaders.
- The Committee would like to have the "Who Do I Contact" page listed in the dropdown box for the School Board tab, so folks can find that if they go directly to the school board.
- The Committee also agreed that the "About the Board" landing page for the school board is too wordy, and it would be better if the landing page was a new page with 1) a group photo of the board, 2) contact email and phone number, and 3) the calendar of board meetings. The About the Board page can remain, but just not be designated as the landing page. The "Who Do I Contact" page could then be linked to this new landing page if someone needs to reach out to the school board.

The Committee then discussed the process for managing input from Board emails. Tricia, Laura, and Mary Heather agreed that emails addressed to Board@acsdvt.org should be automatically forwarded to all board members, and that senders should receive an auto-reply that states their question/comment has been directed to all board members and will receive further attention as needed. The group discussed who should take accountability for the follow-through -- the C&E Committee? The Executive Committee? They decided that as a matter of procedure, it makes sense to have the Board Secretary (or their designee) direct incoming emails to the appropriate recipients and close the loop with the sender. Board members should be bcc'd on the response so all know that the loop has been closed.

Tricia asked about formally typing these details up for a procedure document -- all agreed that this would be good for general board procedure and board member training purposes. Mary Heather agreed to connect with Emily Blistein independently to review the specific feedback on the "Who Do I Contact" page.

2. Ideas for Public Engagement

Tricia Allen reported that 6 board members have indicated their availability & interest in attending the District's FY26 budget development meetings on October 22nd. She received some pushback from a few board members about her request for folks to attend meetings outside of their member towns. Tricia and Mary Heather both recalled that Dr. Baker had specifically requested this of board members, to demonstrate that we represent all towns and not just the town in which we live. Tricia will assign board members to the meetings in each town.

Emily Blistein noted that the community budget survey has been sent, and will be sent again in School Newsletters this Friday 10/18. She asked how Board members would be reporting back on the feedback received during the 10/22 budget development meetings -- does the survey format work for that as well? Mary Heather suggested having Board members encourage participants to fill out the survey and also provide a meeting summary to Dr. Baker and Chip Malcolm (Chair of the Finance Committee) so they can process the information at their 10/23 committee meeting.

Tricia also follow-up on her prior idea to incorporate more student voice into Board work. She suggested inviting the current student reps to the next C&E Committee meeting to develop some ideas for engagement with student stakeholders. Mary Heather and Laura both supported the idea.

Laura Harthan also shared that she had sent an excel file with all ACSD Policies that have some C&E Committee responsibilities. This can serve to inform the committee's efforts to develop C&E procedures for the Board.

Agenda items for next C&E Committee meeting:

- follow-up/completion of "Who Do I Contact" page
- continuation of C&E procedures for the Board, based on existing ACSD Policies
- conversation with student reps re: getting more student engagement with the ACSD Board

Mary Heather suggested touching base with the Finance Committee to begin thinking about when the C&E Committee should begin its budget outreach efforts (e.g., what kind of communication, what the timeline might look like, etc.). Laura Hartha suggested focusing efforts on general education materials to help voters understand how the budget impacts taxes, what ACSD can control and what it can't, etc.

E. Public Comment - Any Topic

No public comment.

F. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Move: Laura Harthan 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.