

MINUTES

**Addison Central School District
Communications and Engagement Committee
Committee Meeting
Tuesday, January 21, 2025, 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.

In-Person Attendance

Mary Heather Noble; Tricia Allen

Remote Attendance

Laura Harthan

Not In Attendance

Ellie Romp; Joanna Doria

A. Call to Order Upon Reaching a Quorum

Meeting called to order at 4:34 pm.

1. Introductions: Board Members, Administrators and Staff

Emily Blistein, ACSD Director of Communications & Engagement present in person. Wendy Baker, Superintendent dropped in briefly.

B. Public Comment - Agenda Items

No public comment.

C. Recommendation to Approve the Minutes from 1-7-25

Motion to approve minutes from 1/7/25 committee meeting.

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

D. Committee Discussion:

1. Newsletter Drafting

Tricia Allen, Mary Heather Noble, and Laura Harthan reviewed the draft Winter 2025 Board Update. They made some revisions to streamline the text a bit so the update is easier to

read on a phone and more accessible to readers. Committee updates were also revised for consistency in point of view and not implying any decision-making actions on matters that the full board has yet to take. Tricia will share the revised draft with the full Board on Feb 10th, and hopes to have the update distributed via S'more later that week. Emily Blistein confirmed that the format will include a call-out box with links to the FY26 budget, Annual Meeting date, and Who Do I Contact form. She also suggested including an embedded clip from a budget presentation. The Committee may also consider attaching the 4-page budget summary that Emily is producing this week (modeled after last year's format).

Wendy Baker stopped in to request the Communications & Engagement Committee's assistance in communicating to Town Clerk offices that the ACSD budget information being provided to member towns will be district-wide, and not just school summaries for their respective towns (as has been done in the past). The Committee members discussed this requesting, confirming that it seemed inline with the Board's recent discussions around making sure town clerks are provided with District-wide information to inform voters on the complete budget (and not just that for their town school).

Mary Heather suggested drafting some language to inform Town Clerks and their respective voters that the change in how the ACSD budget information is shared & presented in Town Reports is a result of the way the ACSD budget has been reorganized -- it is no longer focused around cost centers, but has been developed in a more transparent, equity-informed manner that organizes expenses into expense types (blocks), and that voters need the full District summary to be informed about the budget.

The Committee agreed to develop language around this to accompany the information that Darcie will be providing to Town Clerks for their Town Reports. Laura noted that the rationale should also be included in the 4-page District-wide summary to be included in the reports so that voters can also understand why the information looks different than in past years.

2. Budget Clips/Blurbs for Budget Website

Tricia Allen informed the committee that MCTV helped to create video clips of the budget presentations, and that the clips are getting many hits on the website. People are watching them, so this is positive. She asked whether the Committee wanted to produce additional video with MCTV, or what additional outreach should be done.

The committee members discussed whether additional videos would be worth the effort, or whether it would be best to focus on distributing the information and resources that already exist. Laura Harthan and Mary Heather Noble asked about how to widen the Board's net with this effort. A review of budget-related C&E plans:

Board Chair Op-Ed: Tricia reported that Barb Wilson had some questions about the timing for her Op-Ed in the Addison Independent. The Committee agreed that aiming for either the Feb 20th or Feb 27th issue would be good -- Feb 27th is closer to Town Meeting Day, but many ACSD families will be on break and may be out of town. Emily Blistein suggested checking in with Addison Independent editors to give them a heads up about Barb's intent to submit an Op-Ed for one of those issues, and seeing what they think would be best. Tricia will email Barb about that plan.

Winter 2025 Board Update with budget links: to be sent via S'more after Feb 10th board meeting.

FY26 Budget Book (60-70 pages): Digital version on budget page of ACSD website; printed copies to be distributed to all ACSD schools, libraries, and Town Clerk Offices (with Board member assistance).

FY26 Budget Summary (4 pages): To be sent to Town Clerks for inclusion in Town Reports, and emailed to voters via town listservs. Print copies of budget summary also to be distributed to all ACSD schools, libraries, etc. (with Board member assistance). Other places to consider: Middlebury Rec Center, Memorial Sports Center.

Front Porch Forum posts: Emily will be timing this effort so ACSD can do 2 in February.

Laura Harthan asked if the District has a protocol for reaching the more marginalized community members within ACSD. Emily provided some details about translating and modifying text to more easy-to-understand language for certain audiences. It is an ever-evolving process, but they consult with the Multi-Lingual Team to make continuous improvements. Mary Heather asked about also delivering translated budget summary sheets at Open Door Clinic -- this is a question for the Multi-Lingual Team.

TO DO:

Mary Heather will circle back with Barb about the Board Chair Op-Ed to make sure that is clear, and inform her about the plan for distributing District Budget info to Town Clerks.

Emily will complete the 4-page FY26 budget summary this week and work with Marr Corrente to complete the full Budget Book. She will also create a draft Winter 2025 Board Update/S'More email for the Committee to review so it can be easily revised & sent after Board approval.

Mary Heather will draft language to include with the 4-page budget summary to be provided to the Town Clerks, explaining why this information is being presented in this new way. She will also check the Google drive for a Budget book drop-off sign-up sheet so board members can help distribute materials.

Next meeting is scheduled for Feb 18th, 2025 -- Budget communications will remain on the agenda.

E. Public Comment - Any Topic

No public comment.

F. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:41 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.

DRAFT