

BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 64

Minutes of the Committee-of-the-Whole: Communications
held at 6:30 p.m. on September 19, 2013
Field School - North Gym
707 N. Wisner, Park Ridge, IL

Board President Anthony Borrelli called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. Other Board members in attendance were Dathan Paterno, John Heyde, Vicki Lee and Terry Cameron. Board member Scott Zimmerman was absent. Board member Dan Collins arrived during the meeting at 7:55 p.m. Also present were Superintendent Philip Bender, Assistant Superintendents Joel T. Martin and Lori Hinton, Business Manager Becky Allard, Director of Special Education/Pupil Services James Even, Director of Facility Management Scott Mackall, Public Information Coordinator Bernadette Tramm and one member of the public.

Board President Borrelli stated the purpose of the meeting was to have a wide-ranging discussion regarding the District's communications outreach. Dr. Bender began by noting that communications is a shared responsibility and that Board members, the administrative team, principals, teachers and many others are vital to the task of linking District 64 with staff, parents and taxpayers each and every day. He noted that communications encompasses more than just the website or email blasts, but rather it addresses how stakeholders learn about and feel connected to District 64 on an ongoing basis.

Ms. Tramm then called upon different administrators to update the Board on the current capacity of the District's communications and to highlight some of the most important tools already in place. Dr. Hinton began with a review of some of the outreach teachers utilize; Assistant Superintendent Martin reviewed school-based communications; Dr. Hinton then discussed communications from several departments regarding student learning and pupil services; Ms. Allard reported on communications activities of the Business Office; Dr. Bender reviewed District-level communications and communications through his office; and Ms. Tramm then reviewed key Board communications activities, especially those focused on Board meetings including videos and Board Brief highlights. Board members and administrators discussed each area in turn and reached consensus on several areas of improvement, including: providing a more consistent experience for parents across the District to access information about classroom/team learning activities by supporting teachers to more fully utilize available technology tools; similarly providing a more consistent experience for parents across the District about schools through school newsletters, email messaging, and coordination with school PTO/As; defining whether additional support is needed for outreach to families speaking languages other than English; expanding the quantity and depth of information regularly provided to all members of the community, and expanding opportunities for inviting stakeholder input; and on expanding awareness of the Board's consensus goals and improving access to Board meeting news and reports.

Ms. Tramm then reviewed a community engagement spectrum suggested from the Illinois Association of School Boards, which identifies several different levels of outreach that reflect how much input and participation from the community the Board is seeking on a particular topic. The level of public participation increases through the

four stages: inform, consult, involve and collaborate. She provided examples of the kinds of subjects that would benefit from a deeper level of engagement. Board members and administrators identified several ideas for further action.

Ms. Tramm then presented two versions of a graphic depicting the Board's recently adopted consensus goals; the Board requested that version 2 be brought forward for further discussion at an upcoming Board meeting.

Discussion then moved to a specific review of the District's website. Ms. Tramm outlined various options for improving the design, shared an initial evaluation by an outside firm and briefly related how the website currently is operated. The Board discussed having a functional analysis completed by an outside consultant to identify desired features and pinpoint areas for improvement. There was Board consensus to pursue this option. Ms. Tramm then previewed a new "Fast Facts" page on the website to provide key metrics presented as infographics about District finances, student learning, facilities, and other areas, as recommended previously by a Community Finance Committee study group. Board member Collins presented a new proposal for a three-page operating plan document, including a macro economic summary, strategy summary, results and forecasted projections. The document is intended to help track Board goals in a handy format, and may also be used on the website. Administration will work to advance the draft in coming months, with a target of having the final version available to coincide with the District's annual update to financial projections at the February 10, 2014 meeting.

In the interests of time, a discussion about electronic delivery of the Board packet and how packets are presented on the website was deferred; it was recommended that the topic be presented to the Board via memo at an upcoming regular meeting. A discussion on branding also was set aside due to time constraints.

Administration will provide the Board with a detailed list of the proposed communications activities that received consensus support at the meeting and the timelines that were proposed.

Board President Borrelli adjourned from the Committee-of-the-Whole at 9:38 p.m., and following a brief break, resumed as a special Board meeting.

President

Secretary