

Communications Subcommittee Meeting, Superintendent's Conference Room
Meeting Notes for 3/10/08
Attendance: Nick deKanter, Stephanie Weaver

I. Communication Matrix

Currently, the School Committee does not have an annual communication plan. As a group, we have decided to focus on developing a matrix that includes the following:

Identifying:

- i. The various stakeholders w/in our community
- ii. The various messages/subjects we need the community as a whole to understand
- iii. The various methods available to reach those stakeholders

Basically this is what we need to say, when we need to say it, who we need to say it to & how we get the message to them. We also talked about a potential ballot initiative in the fall, and how that will play a role in timing. We've made tremendous progress in beginning the matrix and are working to refine and move on to priority messaging. Our goal is to meet again this week with Kevin and get his feedback.

The first "message" identified was to show "improvements we have made to show fiscal efficiencies." This list of items will be compiled by Kevin & Deirdre, and will be passed on to the entire School Committee for feedback. Ultimately this will be given to the City Council, via Joint Ed. This is slated to be completed by the next Joint Ed meeting, which takes place on April 7th.

These "messages" will also be added to the district web site. We will use KeyCommunicators to reach out to parents and various stakeholders w/in the community, with a link to direct them to the specific content on the website. Hard copies can also be made for distribution at the public library, City Hall, etc.

iv. New Actions

1. **Steph** – will compile initial spreadsheet of organizations/contact info
2. **Steph** – will send Nick and Kevin the initial list of improvements & ask Deirdre for financial data...this will then be passed on to all SC for feedback
3. **Nick** - to produce schedule in relation to ballot initiative

II. Messaging

a. Series of "School Specific" electronic news briefs

One of the biggest challenges we've been faced with is walking the fine line between showing the good things that are happening in our schools & making sure the community also understands what we are struggling with. Everything is not "OK."

In 1993, there was a booklet produced that had a detailed "bio" if you will, on each school. We're using that as a model of what we can do via e-mail. A six-part series on each specific school, including data that shows # of

administrators, # of teachers, # of students, etc., pictures and a summary of what is working & what we are struggling with. This was identified as being an effective way to really help the community understand the facts about our schools, and was also identified as being the most cost-efficient way to do so. Hard copies of these will also be made available for library, City Hall, schools, etc.. We realize not everyone has email, however, we don't have the funds to do mass mailings.

i. New Actions

1. **Steph & Nick**– to meet with Kevin on Thursday afternoon to discuss

Next Communications Sub-Committee Meeting: Hopefully we can fit another one in before the end of the month. TBD First meeting in April will take place on April 14th at noon, Superintendent's Conference Room.