

POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Audrey McCarthy, Nick DeKanter, Cheryl Sweeney, Bruce Menin, Chair, Supt. Susan Vicarro

Excused: N/A

Old Business/Previous Action Items: Review of Comments from Ad Hoc Committee on School Committee Communications

Responsible	Action Item/Task	Due Date
1. Cheryl Sweeney	Provide a summary of Ad Hoc Action Recommendations	

Notes from Previous Action Items:

1. These minutes reflect Policy Subcommittee meeting of August 4, 2014, prior to School Committee Retreat; the purpose being to review the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on School Committee Communications and forward recommendations and actions to the full SC for their review and adoption.

New Business: Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations

Topic Report: Review of Recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Sub-Committee of School Community Communications

1. The revised Website will use surveys, School Committee will have a drop down menu; SC will work on a FAQ for who we are and what we do. Beta to SC – Nick will rep
2. Four meetings (two per semester); set for SC meeting nights, set topics (survey staff, parents to get topics). 6:30 pm to 8pm, followed by abbreviated SC- importance of background info would be on website for the topic. **Note this involves rescheduling of SC meeting to begin at 8:00pm, and reduction of agenda to essential items.**
3. Public ('open') Conversation will be held an additional 3-4 times a year, "advertised"- 6:30-7:30 pm, followed by SC meeting. These Conversations will be "open ended". We need to create a structure/format- so it isn't dominated by individuals; we should seek to minimize SC dialogue focus more on attendees- (possibly add snacks/food to encourage a more social atmosphere. Start Conversation by asking attendees for topics- (mindful of time available). **Note this involves rescheduling of SC meeting to begin at 7:30pm, and reduction of agenda to essential items.**

4. We will continue with one public comment per meeting; we will develop a new protocol to allow for the Chair or Vice Chair to ask the Supt or the SubCom chair to respond to info request, or follow up response to the comment or question asked by the public.
5. School Committee Email response: The SC will create an auto-response that commits to a full response within two days; we need to get clarification from attorney Paige Tobin about any issues regarding the Open Meeting statutes and deliberation/sharing of emails; pending that we will further develop criteria for responding; any individual response should be forwarded to Vice Chair (issue is ensuring we are all informed about what is being said)
6. Introductory letter to Parents about the role of the School Committee will be developed and sent out to parents at the beginning of school year.
7. Explore use of Tax bills as mechanism for info distribution

Responsible	Action Item/Task	Due Date
Policy Sub-Com (Bruce)	Recommendations presented to the SC for action/approval	8/25/14
Bruce	School Committee will develop an FAQ for the website	9/15/14
Nick	Review Beta of Website	9/5/14
Policy Sub-Com, Administration	Policy will plan, schedule 2 "Topic Conversations" to run between 6:30-8PM of SC meeting nights during the first semester. Survey of staff, parents, community to identify topics to be done thru website	9/15/14
Policy, Administration	3-4 additional Public Conversations will be scheduled and publicized; these will run from 6:30pm to 7:30 pm	9/15/14
Policy Sub-Com	Create a structure/format for 60 minute Public Conversations	9/15/14
Bruce, Policy	Create a new protocol for Public Comment, post along with agenda for SC meeting, onto website	9/2/14
Policy	Create a transitional protocol for School Committee responses to community emails.	9/2/14
Policy	Create introductory letter to parents to be distributed to parents at the beginning of the school year	9/1/14
Policy	Explore use of tax bills as an additional means of distributing information to the community, such as district goals and updates	9/30/14

Additional topics for further discussion:

1. Explore the use of social media as a means for better SC communication with the community
2. Consider SC development of a Blog