

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Ellington, Connecticut

Communications Committee Meeting Minutes

The Communications Committee of the Ellington Board of Education met on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 in the School Administration Building.

Attendees:

Administrative Team Members: Dr. Scott Nicol, Dr. Erin McGurk, Mr. Mark Wursthorn

Board of Education Committee Members: Ms. Tracey Kiff-Judson, Mr. Dan Keune, Ms. Kristen Picard-Wambolt

Guest Speakers: Mr. Michael Nash, Ms. Jenna Dhandapani, Mr. John Collins

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Ms. Kiff-Judson.

Agenda Items:

Discuss the use of Social Media as a Communication Tool, Guest Presenters – Mike Nash & Jenna Dhandapani

- Ms. Dhandapani and Mr. Nash presented updates on how we are using social media and technology in the district including: online parent opt-out for use of pictures/student work, professional development, and student training (digital student portfolios and digital competencies continuum including digital citizenship).
- Currently, there are 130 teachers on Twitter. We are experimenting with Instagram and expanding use of classroom blogs.
- To see the chain of classroom updates from teachers using Twitter, go to Michael Nash on Twitter, and subscribe to his list “Ellington Teachers.”
- The group discussed how to cross-reference posts so that information on Twitter can feed Facebook and possibly Instagram.
- The group noted the different audiences that are targeted by using different platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- The group decided not to take the filter off “Friends of Ellington Public Schools” that prevents comments at the present time. This might be reconsidered going forward.
- Mr. Keune raised a concern about capacity to keep various sites current. Dr. Nicol pointed out that for Twitter, most of the content is managed by teachers currently who understand policies and appropriate content. Mr. Collins mentioned that if we plan to have students contribute in the future, we need to put some guidelines in place.
- Currently access to Twitter and Facebook using school WiFi is limited to teachers and administrators (not students).
- Next steps:
 - Educate parents on sharing practices.
 - Redesign website to include social media mashup pages.
 - Develop common use hashtags such as #ellingtonshines in posts to promote consistency with Ellington Public Schools brand.
- Mr. Collins commented on the positive way that educators are using social media that can be a model.

Communication Plan – Full-Day Kindergarten

- Mr. Keune provided an update on conversations he has had with Board of Finance (BOF) members to update them on the Full-Day Kindergarten. Dan has talked to all but one BOF member.
- On December 1, 2015 at 8 PM, there will be a presentation to the Board of Finance to give an overview of the project.
- On December 16, 2015 there will be a presentation to the Board of Education on the financial analysis.

Old Business

- None.

New Business

- Mr. Keune asked Dr. Nicol to report on a conversation with Bob Rader from CAFE. They discussed doing brainstorming sessions as needed, rather than annually. One topic might be Encouraging Innovation, with Bob Rader to facilitate.
- Dr. Nicol asked if a Communications Committee member would like to volunteer to work on the website redesign. Both Ms. Picard-Wambolt and Ms. Kiff-Judson expressed interest. Dr. Nicol will determine if there is space for both to participate.
- Ms. Kiff-Judson requested that the book shared by Dr. McGurk entitled "The Power of Branding" be added to the agenda for the next committee meeting.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

- The next committee meeting will take place at 1:00 PM on Tuesday, December 1, 2015. Regular committee meetings will be scheduled on the first Tuesday of each month at 1:00 PM in the administration building.
- A motion was made to adjourn, and the meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.

1st. Kris Picard-Wambolt

2nd. Dan Keune

Minutes submitted by: _____
Tracey Kiff-Judson, Communications Committee Chairperson