

Glenbrook District 225
Communications Committee Minutes
September 3, 2010

Members Present: Bob Boron, Steve Caliendo, Gary Freund, Karen Geddeis, Steve Hammer, Mike Riggle, Hillarie Siena, Joel Taub, Marianthi Thanopoulos, Brian Wegley, Rosanne Williamson, Paul Pryma.

Communications Guidelines

The guidelines seek to provide staff with clarification regarding numerous communication activities including communication with the media and student photo use procedures. These guidelines will continue to be developed in the coming year with revisions distributed to staff on an ongoing basis. The guidelines will also be posted online.

Student photo use will be protected for those items that are of a personal nature, occur in the classroom or during school hours. A one-time Special Photo Release Form has been developed under the review of legal counsel for special purposes so that the district can continue to promote the positive accomplishments of our students. This form will also be used electronically so that parents may offer permissions via email.

It is understood that public events and performances are open to media photos, interviews, and maybe be freely used by district staff.

Update on Publications

The monthly *Connections* newsletter was sent electronically for the first time in August. For now, parents will receive it via e-mail and through the post office. A survey will be used this fall, along with some informal focus groups, to determine the feasibility of moving the publication into an electronic-only form. Parents who don't have email could still be sent print copies via mail.

There was a significant cost savings because it was designed in-house. The goal is to have *Connections* received during the last week of the month. A customized list of Board Members can be created in Alert Now so that they too can receive *Connections* and other publications electronically.

The goal is to produce the community newsletter twice a year, in the fall and spring. The idea is to have it be a publication with a district-wide identity, i.e. The Glenbrooks, carrying news pertinent to District 225, with an insert dedicated to each school, targeting Glenview and Northbrook. It was suggested that the news be more timely and include information that would educate the community regarding the district's fiscal responsibility. Possibly have a column in the newsletter, "From the Board of Education," detailing how the taxpayer's money is being spent. It was recommended that our communication be more proactive in addressing some of the common misperceptions of the district.

The group discussed translations for publications. Both schools contain students who speak over 20 different languages. The district will need to look at the number of people who have a real language barrier, with no family member speaking English, in comparison to those who have at least one family member who is conversant in English. Also, the district will need to determine the real percentage of people receiving their information electronically and how many students have internet availability at home.

Review of Research and Communications Audit Proposal (JT)

Karen submitted a Communication Audit Proposal Summary from Jasculca/Terman (JT), a public affairs firm. The proposal describes the four components of the audit and their costs. JT's projected cost of \$21,750 offers a comprehensive but basic approach to the research aspect of the communications plan. JT has established a relationship with The Glenbrooks. One component is a community telephone survey. To make this survey more effective, it is important that people be informed (possibly through district publications and the media) before this will take place and encourage their cooperation in responding. Karen also plans to conduct some informal focus groups with parents and staff to gain a deeper perspective on current communication tactics.

If approved, the communications audit would be conducted over a 12-15 week timeline this fall. It is possible that some initial research findings may be presented to the Board in November or December with the communication plan draft presentation in January.

The communications audit proposal will be presented to the Board at the meeting on Sept. 13.

Social Media-Discussion and Demonstration

A small group comprised of the Superintendent, principals, instructional technology coordinators, web content consultant, and directors of technology and public relations met to begin the discussion on the utilization of social media. The general district philosophy is that the website is semi-static and provides a good base for information, and social media is dynamic and interactive. The group will be meeting throughout the fall to set user guidelines for social media and access our liabilities. Twitter and Facebook are the two outlets that will be focused on; however, the guidelines should be loose enough to cover all forms of social media. In general, the district plans to start basic with social media, allowing for only one-way communication for now. There will be much discussion throughout the coming months to determine the best course of action for moving forward.

Summation

- Continue to work with JT
- Continue to pursue our social media needs
- Committee guidelines are ready to be released
- We are working on our October community newsletter

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.