

Prairie Grove Consolidated School District 46
3223 IL Route 176
Crystal Lake, IL 60014
Minutes
Community Relations Committee/Legislative Committee
May 5, 2010

The Community Relations/Legislative Committee meeting was called to order at 5:12 pm.

Members Present: Vickie Marconi, Mischelle Yantis, Hadley Tidler, Vic Wight, Dr. Mary Fasbender, Dr. Lynette Zimmer.

Vickie Marconi volunteered to preside and act as Secretary for the meeting.

The committee discussed the need to effectively reach out to our area legislators especially during the current situation with the state budget crisis. It was suggested and agreed that all interested committee members receive the SSNews legislative update Dr. Fasbender currently sends to all Board Members as an effective tool to keep members up-to-date with legislative issues.

The committee discussed past goals and protocols documented in previous committee minutes. The committee agreed that protocols are in line with stated purpose of the committee and the committee goals as outlined.

The committee discussed the survey sent out in 2007; it was concluded the survey was targeted to area businesses, and only two (2) responded. Committee members felt that the survey needed more questions (up to 10) to effectively reach out to all stakeholders. The goal for the survey is to broaden the feedback to the district. The committee agreed to potentially revise and send out a new survey in the fall of 2010.

Committee members stressed that more frequent two-way communications was needed.

Committee members suggested a pamphlet to be available at the district offices and at board meetings for stakeholders who may have questions. These pamphlets will explain the rights and responsibilities of citizens, including the Board's policy for participation in meetings. Dr. Zimmer offered to provide an example of a pamphlet currently used District 79 as a template for developing one for District 46.

Dr. Fasbender stated that in a recent discussion with a state legislator, Pamela Althoff, the issue of the possibility of available grants may be as way to begin the process to move the school bus access to Valley View Road. It was suggested there likely would be a need for the district to do a traffic study, for IDOT purposes, to be considered for grant requirements.

Committee members discussed ways to bring the public in when events are held at the school, for example: when parents attend PTO events, open houses etc. The question was: Can we also have public information sessions during these events? Members discussed the difficulty a parent may feel while trying to attend to children and also listen to the information being presented at the same time.

Dr. Zimmer suggested a Community Information Night be held in October (Fall 2010) and/or possibly in the Spring 2011. The concept of a Community Information Night event forum is the Board and Administration present district information to the public. There would be no requirements for other staff members to attend; which has been a difficult experience in the past for planning additional evening events.

The committee discussed the potential of a Community Information Night with regard to presenting important information such as the Strategic Plan Up-date, any curriculum changes and other district initiatives. It was also suggested that the district partner with Honor Society students and/or the Student Council to assist with child supervision during this, and possibly other events, as these groups are usually looking for opportunities to earn service hours.

Several committee members suggested the need to review the Strategic Plan in order to reaffirm it to all stakeholders as the guiding document for the district. It was also discussed that the Administrative team would expand action plans over the summer; the up-dated Strategic Plan could be presented at the Community Information Night in October (Fall 2010).

Committee members discussed the issue of expanding the Parent Advisory Council. It was suggested that many parents are willing to help out, but are unsure as to how, or where, to get involved. It was discussed that the PAC is an important committee at both attendance centers, and can/should be utilized to the fullest potential.

The committee discussed the importance of directing questions to the correct person. The district needs to address the confusion about where to go to when someone has a question or a concern. It was discussed that community members often go directly to Board members; it is Board policy that Board members direct the community member to the District Superintendent or the building principle for their customer concerns. Educating the community of the correct procedures for directing questions and getting correct information can be addressed through the District Information Pamphlet, Community Information Night events, and also on the district website.

The committee discussed the possibility of a Principal's Coffee or a Community Coffee as a possible forum to receive District level questions from the public other than at Board meetings. This type of meeting could include current hot topics, issues and could also include equal time to engage with the public in a either round-table or conversation style format.

Future actions:

The committee agreed to hold Community Relations/Legislative Committee meetings on a quarterly basis.

The committee agreed that the Community Relations/Legislative Committee would meet again during the 3rd week in August to prepare for the Community Information Night event in October. (Fall 2010).

The committee agreed that the focus for the committee currently is to hold a successful Community Information Night event in October (Fall 2010).

The Community Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.