Communication Committee Meeting Report – Meeting date 9/14/21

Attendees: Eric Scherzer – BOE member
          Allison Silverstein – BOE Member, Communications Committee Chair

Discussion Points:

1. Update from Nina
   - Dr. Ponds was unable to attend as prior meeting was running late. Committee Chair advised that his attendance was not necessary for this meeting as it would be focused on BOE communications
   - Ms. DeRosa gave a brief update on the survey. Edits are almost finalized. Potential push out date in late September/early October was mentioned since parents are inundated with beginning of school year communications. Discussion as to whether survey would be sent out by PTAC or District. District will follow Committee suggestion. It was agreed that either way, PTAC should be mentioned as they put a lot of the work into developing the survey and deserved credit.

   i. BOE Committee members discussed. Agreed that District to push out the survey to reach all families as PTA mailing list is less comprehensive. Agreed that it is important to credit PTAC efforts and recognize parent input into survey

   - Issues with Hotmail – BOE Member Allison Silverstein advised of issues with Hotmail user emails and confirmation that this is a pervasive issues for Hotmail users. E-Mails from teachers and Genesis were not being received by users and it also appeared that emails sent to montclair.k12.nj.us addresses from Hotmail users are not being received. Ms. DeRosa inquired as to whether Ms. Silverstein had received response to her email sent to Chris Graber and to Ms. DeRosa advising of this issue. Ms. Silverstein advised that response was not received, and Ms. DeRosa advised that she would follow with Mr. Graber at Senior Staff meeting on 9/15/21.

      i. This was discussed in Committee. Committee will follow for update on work-around/fix of issue. Committee agreed to request that parents be informed of the issue to make sure they aware of missed communications going back to beginning of school year.

2. Concerns regarding Board communications
   - Discussion regarding member desired updates from District

      i. Updates regarding larger issues that occur at schools in District that are shared with members of that school community but not brought to attention to BOE
1. Noted that Principal weekly updates are available on school websites, but it may still be helpful to have broad update on larger issues at regular intervals (i.e. – weekly, bi-weekly, etc.)

ii. Updates as to responses given to public inquiries/concerns sent to all Board Members e-mail list

1. Issues are placed on member radar but then with no updates given, it appears that caregiver concern was not addressed. Committee discussed that either periodic updates (i.e. – weekly, bi-weekly, etc.) advising briefly that responses were given/issues were addressed or being copied on responses to caregiver e-mail will alleviate concerns and avoid misinformation.

- Discussion regarding obtaining feedback from individual BOE members regarding their concerns and suggestions for improvement of communication amongst BOE
- Mention of finding a space where individual BOE members can bring up issues for discussion

i. BOE members give Board Comments at meeting that are spoken but not then discussed. Even if committees are the appropriate place for these discussions, having a clear place for these to be mentioned and then acknowledged would be helpful to avoid issues and promote more efficient meetings and effective communication.

Plan of Action:

1. Survey – District personnel will give update at next meeting as to progress.

2. Podcast – Communications Committee will follow for update at next meeting and inquire as to whether BOE assistance is needed.

3. Hotmail issue – Committee Chair to follow with Ms. DeRosa and/or Mr. Graber for update as to status. This will occur prior to next meeting as issue is more pressing and cannot wait until October.

4. Board concerns – Committee Chair will send message to Board President about topics discussed at this meeting. Committee Chair will also give update at next workshop meeting. Committee Chair will solicit feedback from other individual BOE members.

5. NEXT MEETING – October 20
Topics for future discussions:

- Board Communications strategies re: BOE to public
- Informing stakeholders about agenda items that will affect their interests/concerns
- Continued updates to meeting structure
- Updated Community Resources guides
- Obtaining and utilizing survey results