

Baldwinsville Central School District Key Communicators' Network Meeting Minutes – September 14, 2009

The Baldwinsville Central School District's Key Communicators' Network met for the first time Monday, September 14, in the cafeteria of Baker High School. In attendance were: Jeanne Dangle, Superintendent; Dawn Wilczynski, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction; James Rodems, Assistant Superintendent for Management Services; William McKee, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Matthew McDonald, Assistant to the Superintendent; Victor Jenkins, President, Board of Education; Kelly Cary, School Information Officer; Erin Altieri; Cheryl Belle; Jackie DePaulis; Nancy Wescott; Gary Williams; Audrey Gibbs; Elizabeth Chetney; Michele Cutie; Maureen Fleming; Bruce Quimby; Pam Youngs-Maher; Nancy St. Onge; Nancy Conely; Mary Dressel; Kris Duffy; Marilyn Laubacher; Kevin Wall; Kristin Wilburn; Michael Lotito; Charles Farrell; Abbe Guillet; Dorothy Micho; Kristen Ordway; Mark Rossler; Margaret Dwyer; Officer Michael Lockwood; Karen Mullarney; Diane Oad; Don Spaulding; Amy Stewart; Sally Dayger; and Karen Szakaly.

Superintendent Dangle asked the group what their sources of information about the district are. Members answered the district newsletter and website, "The Messenger," friends, their children, day care providers, television and radio, the district sign, the district's phone messaging system, PTA newsletters, the district calendar, and the state education department's website. Superintendent Dangle presented the group with data from a community perception survey that the district conducted in conjunction with Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc. (RMS) in January 2008. According to the survey, 81% of respondents agreed that the district communicates well with the community, and 77% said they receive their information about the district from the district newsletter, "The Beacon."

Superintendent Dangle asked the group to consider what are the upsides and the downsides of their sources of communication. The group discussed how well the district broadcasts information to the public. They felt the community is well informed for the most part, but the down side is communication is usually one sided. There is no vehicle for the voice of the community.

Superintendent Dangle then discussed the boundaries that constrain the district when disseminating information. These boundaries are:

- Ø Cost – Is the method of communication cost-effective?
- Ø Legal – There are instances when the district cannot release information to the public for legal reasons;
- Ø Contracts – There are clauses in staff contracts that prohibit the district from releasing certain information until a specified time;
- Ø Personnel issues – There are certain issues that the district does not have the right to share with the community;
- Ø Student privacy;
- Ø Board of Education action – The district cannot release information until the Board of Education has acted on an item or issue.

The group then broke into five smaller groups to discuss the following questions:

1. What are currently the most relevant issues in the community?
2. How can the district get accurate information out to the community?

Following are the groups' answers to question 1: **What are currently the most relevant issues in the community?**

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
▶ Overcrowding on buses.	▶ Overcrowding on buses.			
	▶ H1N1	▶ H1N1	▶ H1N1	▶ H1N1
	▶ Test results	▶ Test results – compare to other districts		▶ Test results – compare to other districts
▶ Student safety		▶ Security and safety	▶ Security – drugs, violence, behavior and impact of SROs	▶ Safety and security
	▶ Taxes, budget issues	▶ Taxes, budget info		▶ Budget issues – continuing excellence with depleting resources
			▶ Full day K – what is time line to begin	▶ Full day K
▶ Information to whole district when there is an issue at one school.	▶ Information to whole district when there is an issue in one school.			
			▶ Curriculum, program changes	▶ Curriculum, benchmarks, what's required to graduate, AP courses, college courses, academic standards
Everyday math – Parents need more information on the curriculum.	Open houses		Population trends	Bus stops – how determined
Inconsistent class sizes across district.	Athletic teams selections	Policies – i.e. Code of Conduct – actions taken, prevention of future problems, student voice needed	Budweiser issue	Challenges district deals with proactively
Consistency in teacher website		District needs to be responsive – provide follow up on issues		Tenure rumors, why employees are leaving
How are schools redistricted?				

Most common issue: H1N1 & Safety and Security – 4 groups each

2nd most common issue: Test results & Taxes and budget issues – 3 groups each

3rd most common issue: Over crowded buses, curriculum information, information disseminated to whole district regarding issue at one school, and full day kindergarten – 2 groups each

Following are the groups' answers to question 2: **How can we get accurate information out to the community?**

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
▶ Update website, make more user friendly		▶ Update website, make more user friendly	▶ Update website, make more user friendly	
▶ Town meetings	▶ More interactive communication – blog, focus groups, Q & A on website	▶ More interactive communication – community events, guest speakers, town meetings		▶ Community meetings
.	▶ Create a list serve	▶ Create a list serve to send out information to community members		
▶ Publish information about ConnectEd – some parents don't know what the system is.	▶ ConnectEd – send info to all parents when there is an issue or emergency in one school			
Be proactive on issues			Realtors meeting	Provide community with a flowchart on how to get info – who to speak with about what issue, all methods of communication district uses
Improve Beecon – special sections, list links on website for more information			Electronic newsletters	
Publish which news media district sends information to			Electronic focus groups	
			Information on renovations, educational costs, student successes	

Most common answer for providing community with accurate information: Create interactive communications – i.e. town meetings, blogs, events – 4 groups

2nd most common answer: Update website, make more user friendly – 3 groups

3rd most common answer: Remind parents what ConnectEd is , use it to inform all parents when there is an emergency in one building; create a list serve - 2 groups

Superintendent Dangle said she would use the information the groups provided to develop a Q & A for the district website and she will look at other ways to address the issues for the community. She said a page on the district website for the Key Communicators' Network will be established, and she will keep in contact with members through a monthly email message and more often when necessary. Members of the group can contact her at jdangle@bville.org with community questions and concerns.

The next meeting of the network is planned for January 19 at Baker High School.