



HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
“A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE”

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

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Community Relations Committee Meeting

5:30 PM - August 23, 2022

Village BOE Conference Room 138 or Google Meet

Vice President Zhang, Board Members Wall, Reddy, Hammer, and Dr. Cascone attended virtually.

The meeting commenced promptly at 5:30 PM and concluded at approximately 6:30 PM.

I. OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Cascone updated the committee with regard to the proposed approach for selecting a strategic action plan partner. Board Member Wall volunteered an alternate approach for the committee's and board's consideration following the competitive contracting model. The idea would be for the entire board to participate in the process in a special public meeting. Both Board member Wall and Board Member Reddy concurred that having a plan which was actionable and did not simply “sit on a shelf collecting dust“ was important. The committee recommended raising this question for public discussion amongst the board at the August 31 board meeting to gain consensus as to the preferred approach for moving forward.

B. Public Relations Support (Board Member Wall)

Board member Wall requested an update from the committee with respect to the district's public relations approach in light of the non-renewal of the previous public relations consultant. Dr. Cascone shared that he would be meeting with the four Schedule B appointed staff members responsible for school-based public relations. He further volunteered that he would be working with this group to develop a more cohesive approach to public relations, as well as to ensure that the positions were being leveraged to their full intent as outlined in the

job descriptions. Cascone shared his high level of confidence that in the event of high profile, critical public relations issues that effective messaging and public relations responses can be developed working in consultation with board counsel, the board, and available resources at the state administrators association and school boards association.

II. NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

A. [Policy #1511](#)- Board of Education Website Accessibility

Dr. Cascone shared that Policy #1511 would be undergoing a first reading by the board at the August 31 board meeting. This policy is one of the number of policies that are slated for update through Strauss Esmay's alert number 228. Committee members shared that they had not been able to gain access to the document. Dr. Cascone subsequently modified the privacy settings of the document accordingly and encouraged board members to review in advance of the board meeting and provide any feedback with regard to the edits to the policy.

B. Vocational Bussing

Dr. Cascone provided the committee with an update on the status of vocational bussing. Mrs. Carducci has secured additional buses thus enabling the district to restore service to vocational students at the level afforded last year. The cost of the additional bussing, approximately \$160,000 was also shared. Mr. Wall raised a financial question with regard to the purchasing mechanism by which these routes were procured, Dr. Cascone invited Mr. Petrizzo to the meeting to answer the question which was done so to the satisfaction of the committee. This agenda item will be explored further from a financial standpoint at the finance and buildings and grounds committee meetings later in the week. Dr. Cascone expressed his interest and intent in communicating this to the vocational students families on the afternoon of Wednesday, August 24 and indicated that he would first speak with the Board President and would share the draft correspondence with the board prior to doing so with the community.

C. September 1st Meet and Greet with Mrs. Barrett and Farese

Dr. Cascone shared the details for the September 1 meet and greet and ice cream social which will be held to welcome the new Village School principal, Mrs. Tricia Barrett and assistant principal Ms. Alicia Farese. He also shared that he had sent a Robo call home to the families on the evening of Monday, August 22 and shared the registration flyer that same afternoon.

III. ITEMS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Board member Reddy re-introduced the premise of starting a Hall of Fame in Holmdel to acknowledge community members and alumni who have made outstanding contributions either in academics, their professions, the arts, and athletics. Dr. Cascone indicated that he would follow up accordingly with administrators in district to advance this conversation accordingly for long-term planning.

Board Member Wall shared concerning information with the committee with regard to a troubling trend involving rainbow fentanyl which is causing the death of many young people in the United States. He proposed for the consideration of the administration messaging to parents on these dangers, as well as students. Dr. Cascone indicated that he would add this to his principal agenda meeting for later that week, in order that principals can share accordingly with guidance counselors, student assistance counselors, and health education teachers. Dr. Cascone indicated that substance abuse prevention awareness would certainly make for a valid focus of one of the parent engagement seminars scheduled for this year pursuant to the corresponding district goal.

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 @ 5:30pm