

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION
Communications and Outreach Committee
June 10, 2020

Committee Attendees: Karen Moran, Chair; Tony Holt
Administrative Attendees: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent

Meeting called to order by Karen Moran at 6:04pm

Engagement with Parent organizations

As part of the committee's outreach efforts, Ms. Moran proposed that the committee consider reaching out to the district's parent/teacher groups to form a connection with the Superintendent and Board of Education. This could serve as a way to understand their challenges, stay informed about their efforts, and highlight their work. It also poses the opportunity to involve more of our parent/guardian stakeholders to engage in the work of the Board.

Ms. Moran also discussed the book *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family/School Partnerships* and how it could serve as a resource for the committee and our PTO's. Dr. Willett discussed his experience with the book and has used it during other discussions with staff.

Following is a description of the book:

*Many studies demonstrate that students with parents actively involved in their education at home and school are more likely to perform better, enroll in higher-level programs, graduate from high school, and go on to post-secondary education. **Beyond the Bake Sale** shows how to form these essential partnerships and how to make them work.*

It includes tips from principals and teachers, checklists, and a great resource section. Beyond the Bake Sale reveals how to build strong collaborative relationships and offers practical advice for improving interactions between parents and teachers, from ensuring that PTA groups are constructive and inclusive to navigating the complex issues surrounding diversity in the classroom. Written with candor, clarity, and humor, Beyond the Bake Sale is essential reading for teachers, parents on the front lines in public schools, and administrators and policy makers at all levels.

The committee discussed ways to convene this group such as inviting PTO representatives to our BOE meetings on a rotating basis, or having quarterly zoom meetings similar to Dr. Willett's coffee hour that would include a 30 minute check-in for our parent groups. An advantage to the latter is recognizing the limited time parents have to attend meetings, and embracing the zoom meeting could be a way for them to participate when childcare can be a challenge.

Ms. Moran offered to reach out to the PTO groups to make the initial connection and gauge interest.

Communications Policy & Strategy update

The committee reviewed current communication strategies during the COVID shutdown, including Dr. Willett's daily updates, coffee hour zoom meetings, as well as how the individual schools have been each providing their updates.

Other business - none.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58pm by Karen Moran.