



Hastings Public Schools

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 200
1000 11TH STREET WEST
HASTINGS, MN 55033-2597
Phone (651) 480-7000
Fax (651) 480-7004

Community Collaboration Committee Purpose Statement:

The Community Collaboration Committee is a link between the Hastings School District and the ISD200 community. The committee focuses on identifying avenues to continuously improve the district's communication process for increased transparency and to better articulate the district's goals with its stakeholders. The committee seeks opportunities for shared learning, knowledge, awareness, experience, and growth to create a stronger, more united community.

Date & Time: Wednesday, April 22, 2026 at 4:30–5:45 P.M.

Location: Hastings Public Schools District Offices

In Attendance: Elaine Mikel-Mulder, Matt Bruns, Philip Biermaier, Dr. Kristine Wehrkamp Herman, Kari Gorr, and Lyndee Humble

Meeting Overview

The April 22 Community Collaboration Committee meeting opened with a review of the April 1 Community Collaboration Night event. Committee members shared that the event was well received, with positive feedback from community members, teachers, and parents. The group expressed enthusiasm for maintaining the momentum built from the event and discussed observations, responses to the evening's format, and priorities for future engagement.

Reflection on the April 1 Community Collaboration Night

The committee collectively affirmed the success of the March 11 event. Key observations included:

- Broad enthusiasm from teachers, parents, and community members; attendees expressed a desire to keep the momentum going.
- The Homerun Leadership® app format was praised for generating structured input and for allowing anonymous responses.
- Community members flagged a desire for dialogue and action steps beyond data collection, asking: "What's next?"
- A teachers' union representative specifically raised the desire for back-and-forth dialogue with board members, not just input through an app.

Key Discussion Topics

1. Need for Back-and-Forth Dialogue

A recurring theme from April 1 was the desire from staff for direct, reciprocal dialogue with board members — not just anonymous input. The committee discussed what that could look like:



BRIDGE TO SUCCESS

Hastings Public Schools

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 200
1000 11TH STREET WEST
HASTINGS, MN 55033-2597
Phone (651) 480-7000
Fax (651) 480-7004

- Hold a separate, staff-focused Community Collaboration event designed around structured small-group dialogue between staff and board members.
- Breakout groups (pairs or small clusters) were strongly preferred over large all-group formats to keep dialogue substantive.

2. Proposed Staff-Focused Event

The committee discussed hosting a dedicated staff and board dialogue session with the following proposed structure:

- Open with a brief welcome and overview of meeting norms, framing the intent: to build relationships while honoring the expertise and professionalism of staff, and to clarify the board's role versus administration's role.
- Use the Homerun Leadership® app to gather input on the top topics staff most want to discuss with the board; use the AI sorting feature to surface themes and remove items outside board purview.
- Break into small groups (elbow partners or pairs), with board members distributed among groups rather than placed in a single front-facing panel.
- Reconvene as a large group to share out from breakouts and discuss pros/cons of proposed action steps.
- Work toward identifying one clear action step that reflects the will of the group, which can then be brought to the full board.

3. Central Theme: Trust and Relationship Building

After extended discussion, the committee aligned on trust and relationship building as the primary focus of the e questions for the staff event:

“What does trust look like to you, and what is one actionable step we can take together to build it?”

This question was chosen because:

- Trust was the top concern raised in the April 1 event and in the district's perception survey.
- It is a topic the board has an ability to control (unlike budget or staffing decisions that belong to administration).
- Addressing trust authentically is seen as the foundation for progress on all other concerns raised (communication, diversity and inclusion, board presence, etc.).
- Board members acknowledged the trust challenge run both directions, and that honest, structured dialogue is the appropriate place to begin addressing it.

4. Governance vs. Management Clarity

A recurring sub-theme was the need to help staff understand what the school board controls versus what falls under administrative authority. The committee discussed:

- Incorporating a brief, accessible explanation of board roles at the start of the event.
- During large-group debrief of breakout inputs, visually sorting action steps into “board can act on this” vs. “this belongs with administration” — helping staff understand why the board may not respond to certain requests, without appearing dismissive.
- Board members expressed a need to feel confident and comfortable saying: “That’s a great idea, but that’s managerial — here’s where it should go.”



Hastings Public Schools

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 200
1000 11TH STREET WEST
HASTINGS, MN 55033-2597
Phone (651) 480-7000
Fax (651) 480-7004

Event Planning & Proposed Dates

The committee aligned on a two-track event plan before the end of the school year:

Staff/Board Dialogue Event

- Proposed date: Tuesday, May 26, 2026, 4:00–5:30 P.M. (after staff contract day ends at 3:45)
- Venue: High school lecture hall
- Format: Homerun Leadership® app for initial question input; elbow partner discussions; small breakout groups with board members distributed among staff; large-group debrief
- Focus question: Trust and relationship building
- Goal: Surface actionable steps; not required to reach a formal decision that night — action steps to be brought to the full board at a subsequent meeting

Community Collaboration Night

- Proposed date: Monday, June 8, 2026 at 6:00 P.M.
- Venue: High school lecture hall
- Format: Similar to April 1 event; focus on running all the way through Homerun Leadership® questions 1–6, including action steps (questions 5–6)
- Audience: Broader community (not staff-focused)
- Focus: Build on April 1 themes; advance to action step identification

Future Events

- A follow-up session tentatively planned for late September or early October 2026 to review what was acted upon and generate new questions based on community input gathered over the summer.

Confidential Community Input Channel

To sustain community and staff engagement between events, the committee agreed to establish a dedicated email address for ongoing input:

- A Community Collaboration email account will be set up prior to the May 26 staff event.
- Submissions will be compiled into a shared Google Doc accessible to all committee members and to keep inputs confidential.
- The email will be promoted as confidential; input will be used to inform questions at future events.
- A third party (other than the Board) will champion the email account and manage intake.

Action Items

- Finalize and distribute flyer for May 26 staff event, including guided questions on the flyer
- Prepare written agenda for May 26 event detailing format, timing, and board member roles



BRIDGE TO SUCCESS

Hastings Public Schools

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 200
1000 11TH STREET WEST
HASTINGS, MN 55033-2597
Phone (651) 480-7000
Fax (651) 480-7004

- Confirm venue and tech setup at high school for May 26 (internet, PA system, screens, iPads)
- Set up Community Collaboration email account and shared Google Doc before May 26
- Confirm June 8 community event date and reserve high school lecture hall
- Draft questions for June 8 community event; consult with Dave Webb (Homerun Leadership®) on question framing for advancing to questions 5–6, as applicable
- Brief remaining board members on the May 26 format and goals prior to the event (Done at 4/22 Board Meeting)

Next Community Collaboration Committee Meeting

To be determined based on event outcomes

The committee will reconvene following the May 26 staff event and the June 8 community event to debrief outcomes, review input received via the community email channel, and develop questions for the fall 2026 Community Collaboration Night.