



GENEVA COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 304
FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

TO: Kent Mutchler, Superintendent
CC: Board of Education, Bonnie Johnson
FROM: Kelley Munch, Communications Coordinator
DATE: August 6, 2014
RE: Public Forum Debrief

On July 14, 2014, the Board of Education held a public forum for the purpose of connecting with and engaging the public. Board members fielded questions from community members and also asked questions of those in attendance to gauge their stances on various issues facing the District. This memo is meant to provide an overview of the forum and discuss future actions.

Attendance and Set Up:

In total, there were six Board members, 16 community members, and two District administrators in attendance. Board members were seated individually at tables, and community members were encouraged to sit with a Board member for one-on-one or small group discussion. Feedback on this new format was positive, with community members expressing support for the informal, more intimate format. Several attendees indicated that a presentation-based forum and structured, large group Q&A can be intimidating, making the more personal format more conducive to open discussion.

Topics of Conversation:

Many conversations were held between Board members and community members. The majority are represented by the following categories:

- Curriculum and questions about the implementation of the Common Core
- Nutritional content of school lunches
- Professional development for teachers and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- The future of technology in our curriculum/classrooms
- Class sizes and how the decision is made to add class sections
- Lengthening the school day or adding days to the calendar to increase classroom time
- Increasing department budgets and adding stipends for athletics at the high school
- Property taxes, District expenses, and the economic position of Geneva residents
- The process for donating items to schools
- Transparency at Board meetings
- Foreign language at the elementary level

Follow-up Action:

Following the forum, Board members shared their conversations with each other to ensure that the community members' comments reached the entire Board. In addition, many citizen questions, comments, and suggestions were passed along to various District administrators for response or consideration. Due to the quality of the interaction with community members, Board members have expressed an interest in holding a similar forum in the fall. District staff members are currently looking into possible dates and times for the forum. Once scheduled, the next forum will be communicated to residents via 304Connects, the District website, local media, and the District's social media accounts.