

Action part 5 — community engagement

Over the past few weeks I have intermittently explained about the district's Strategic Action Plan, covering four of the five main goals: *Student Development, Learning Partnerships, Facilities and Technology, Professional Learning and Staff.*

The fifth one is *Community Engagement* with the overall goal being to maintain mutual self-worth and respect. It includes sharing of facilities, resources and developing partnerships with the community. USD 435's Board of Education and staff believe that community involvement is vital to the success of our schools.

To date we have established electronic communication via the newspaper, social media, and the web. We also utilize both radio and television as a means of keeping the public informed of school happenings. A communication tool, referred to as School Messenger, is used to inform parents and staff of school and district news via email and voicemail. Parents are also able to set up School Messenger accounts that allow them to track their children's progress. Of course, all of these efforts are ongoing with our administrative staff tracking and evaluating the success of each.

The Board of Education has also adopted a fundraising policy; this policy sets guidelines and standards for fundraising conducted within the community so students are presented with the skills and materials to represent their organizations in a positive manner.

In addition, we are in the process of seeking opportunities for students to give back to the community. Efforts to date include multiple undertakings at several schools including CTE (Career and Technical Education) student projects and benefit fundraisers. A CTE/AHS student produced logo has been adopted that allows us to brand student's works and contributions to the community. The CKFF parade was co-chaired by a couple of our FFA students, Morgan Rutter and Bailee Flora.

Developing a volunteer network is another goal that we will work on in the future. Although we already have many community volunteers that assist our schools, staff and students in many ways, developing a network would offer an organized way of allowing people to become involved in our schools.

Community engagement is a two-way street. When communities are involved with their schools and schools are involved in their communities, it is a win-win situation.

I hope you have a better idea of our schools system's ongoing plans. As always, please check out website for further information or contact any me or other school personnel if you have a question. (<http://www.abileneschools.org>)