

IIC
Community Town Meeting on Education
Steering Committee
JP Jones Community Development Center
November 2nd 11-1pm.

Attending: Tori Foote, Eileen Cummings, Roxa Hawkins, Paul Reichardt, Jack Wilbur, Carol Lee Gho, Rick Caulfield, Wayne Gerke, Cathy Hughes, Steve Levey, Brenda Holden, Randy Cheap, Jennifer Schmidt, DeLaina Storhok

Reviewed progress since last meeting

The date is settled for January 26th at the Friends Community Building on 30th Ave.
The News Miner is supportive of our idea and will help us with the pull out and articles.

Discussions centered on

How will we get people to give up a Saturday to come to this?

- Need to design ‘carrots’ to get people to want to come on Saturday- more discussion about especially getting young people to attend. Also explored the YouTube video concept and how to engage that generation. (Torie sent this link to those that did not have it). Discussed having something at the school announcements and to present at the Government classes in high school and maybe the education classes at the University.
- “The Big Question” is the real draw. Thought of highlighting discussion topics like: Are we producing Dropout Factories? (Too negative?)
- Tech-a-thon, Career Pathways and Transitions,
- Build on what other groups are planning-the Middle school focus, etc.
- Planning and designing the Pull out piece for the paper and hopefully a series of news article building to the day would be the best. Jack will speak with the Early Childhood Development Commission to discuss the possibility of collaborating on the pull-out piece, since they plan to do one in January.

Brenda shared how the day will look to so we have a clear idea how to shape the question (this to be done at the next meeting).

Round table on why we are here (paraphrased):

Wayne Gerke: This is a good opportunity for input from the community on the Secondary School review planned for this year.

Roxa Hawkins: Nice to hear from the possible broad spectrum of community members and hear what their passions are and possible next steps.

Kathy Hughes: All of this conversation impacts my department.

Jack Wilbur: Glad to be invited and to represent the business. The connections with education and the community are important and exciting.

Steve Levey: Structures within schools dictate outcomes to the community are important and the possibility to impact those is critical.

Rick Caulfield: Fairbanks is prime to make significant strides in the broadest sense. We have huge assets and are a good size to undertake this type of dialogue and I am excited to be part of it.

DeLaina : likes the broad range of the topic and how important it is to bring the community to the table for input.

Carol lee Gho: know this process works I have been a part of a few with good results. Other summits helped push native issues in a positive way. The action plan is important for follow up.

Torie Foote: I am seeing this as a good way to engage the community into a dialogue about education and to review all our systems with possibly good funding outcomes. Since almost every leader throughout the state is new we have an opportunity to adjust or revamp how we do what we do.

Eileen Cummings: The connections and communication with the community are important not just for early childcare but for the whole spectrum. I am glad to be part of this.

Randy Cheap: I see this as an important way to get our kids into lifelong learning. I went from Prep school to construction so I wonder if connections to work could be better from our schools than they are.

Paul Reichardt: I would like to see how we can have a bigger community dialogue about how to improve the success of the students at the University. High school is a critical transition and how can we enhance that transition?

Jennifer Schmidt: A major focus for the school district is to find out what is going well in middle school and what can we do better. Also how to help the parents to ease the transitions and improve the outcomes. Secondary math improvement and career and technical education are also a focus.

Tasks and Suggestions:

Torie will explore food and email if there are choices.

Torie will contact News-miner and each PI group for the different bodies on our committee to start a process of designing mail outs and the pullout for the paper.

Wayne Gerke will help us put information for students into the schools when we have something ready for them.

Need to discuss childcare on site and how to have it staffed.

Torie has raised \$3,000 of the \$9,000 projected need-does anyone have ideas on the remainder?

Next Meeting:

November 30th, Friday noon-2pm.

JP Jones Center



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Preview of Open Space Technology format proposed for Fairbanks Town Meeting on Education

Room set-up

- Chairs in a large circle (or circle within a circle, depending on numbers)
- Easels with flipcharts, markers and clusters of chairs for break out groups around the edges of the large room
- 2 or 3 cordless microphones

Opening the meeting

The facilitator will open with the *big question* being considered and an explanation of the process of an Open Space meeting. The big question offers the framework for small group session topics that address aspects of that question.

Participants will nominate discussion topics to place on the agenda wall, with the understanding that nominating a topic obligates that person to participate in that breakout session. (We calculate how many breakouts will work for the number of people that show up that day, and can adjust as we go.)

During the breakout sessions, people decide which ones to attend; we encourage people to move from one session to another if that meets their needs better than staying with a single topic. Everyone will know how much time is available for discussion. Breakout groups self-facilitate, identifying someone to take notes on an easel pad and someone willing to report out to the large group. The facilitation team will circulate among groups to assist as needed.

If time allows, each group will give a brief verbal summary at the end of the breakout session. Facilitators move this along rather quickly to allow time for the next round. Sometimes the flow of ideas is so intense, one group will decide to keep meeting into the next round; we will help to make that work. In some settings it works well to announce that the self-serve lunch can be carried back to a group if it wishes to continue working a little longer.

Example of the agenda wall



Moving from discussion to potential action

Perhaps plan on two rounds of breakout group discussions before lunch, with a third round after lunch to focus on what people want to do next. Participants could suggest topics or themes for a final set of breakouts where people commit to next steps (i.e. initial group members; next meeting; will research info on...; will set up an informative meeting with the following key people...).

After the meeting

Someone could type up flipchart notes from all breakout sessions for the website. Action plans, if developed, could be shared with appropriate groups, providing a framework for moving forward as appropriate.

Assumptions:

- The focus of the event is discussions rather than educating people with presentations, or responding to presentations. The News-Miner insert and vendor-style display tables at the event will serve as the venues for *show and tell* about what programs, services and initiatives exist at present.
- Describing the process and framing the big question are the keys to setting the tone for a positive meeting, as well as assuring that everyone is welcome to work in a creative and proactive manner about the topics related to our *big question* that most interest them.
- We honor those who attend by maximizing the time to share and exchange ideas.
- Participants share responsibility for what is talked about and what happens next. (If someone has an idea that no one else wants to talk about, no one will show up at the breakout session. As facilitators, we try to ensure no breakout topic drifts into a gripe session. Floating facilitators will help redirect where needed, but usually group members help each other stay on track.)
- It is ok that there are no guarantees of results or pre-determined conclusions – the power of this approach lies in the knowledge and energy that will be in the room.