Date: May 12, 2010 – Long Range Planning Workshop

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Place: WISD Annex Conference Room
112 S. 6th Street
Waco, Texas 76701

Call to Order: Allen Sykes called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m.

Quorum: A quorum was present and due notice had been published.

Board Members Present at Meeting: Allen Sykes, David Schleicher, Pat Atkins, Alex Williams, Larry Perez, Angela Tekell

Absent: Norman Manning, Debbie Luce

Attorney Present: None

Presenting Staff: Dr. Hernandez

Discussion:

Communication

Dr. Hernandez stated that the purpose of this meeting is to have the Board address their thoughts and concerns regarding internal and external communication and to discuss more effective ways of communication throughout the district and the community.

Pat Atkins addressed the importance of communication of opportunities and successes of Waco ISD to the community and parents. He stated that administration needs to look at existing methods and strategize ways of getting information out to the media. He suggested that we look for opportunities to have information sessions from folks in the community who interact with kids and their families in poverty situations and who may not be exposed to the internet and media coverage, perhaps working with the Poverty Solution Group.

Alex Williams stated he has a concern the district has a good system in place but is telling nobody. We need to have a policy or training to have people accentuate the positive and have other means of doing it other than computers. He believes that many of the families in Waco do not own a computer.

David Schleicher suggested there be more customer service on the webpage. It is hard for parents to navigate on the WISD website to find links, for example, to add money to
their child’s school lunch program. He also suggested looking at the possibility of placing certain forms, for example, registration forms, on the website. He made the suggestion that the entire district have voice mail which would help parents better communicate with the campuses. Dale Norwood stated actions are in place and are ongoing regarding looking at better communications methods through the website. Currently, Mr. Caffey and Mr. Norwood are looking at options in content management systems.

Allen Sykes stated the District should constantly reinforce positive issues and achievements. Mr. Caffey stated that his department works very hard displaying positive events and achievements of the students and staff of Waco ISD on the website and Channel 17. He mentioned that disbursing stories throughout the day on Channel 17 rather than during the “Inside Waco ISD” segment might get better exposure.

Larry Perez stated there needs to be improvement on press release of information to the media. Mr. Caffey stated Principals communicate by email to public information with requests for media coverage. In some cases, the media sees stories on the website or Channel 17 which are expanded by the media. He mentioned the possibility of sending a link to the newspapers and all three TV stations.

Allen Sykes asked if the district has something in place that addresses protocol on internet communications and inquired about global (mass) emails. Dr. Hernandez stated that each year employees must sign an agreement that they received the employee handbook which addresses district policy. Sheryl Davis said First Class is the internet mail system used by the district is the common method of communication between staff. Various groups are maintained which allows for mass emailing. The “News” folder is used for general communication to employees and the “Bulletin” board can be used by employees for garage sale type items, etc., which site is closely monitored for content.

Mr. Sykes suggested improvement of communication between the District and representatives at higher education programs and local businesses about what opportunities are available for our students. Dr. Avery stated that counselors are working to get that type of information out to the students.

Terri Patterson suggested having a bullet list of good things happening in WISD be distributed on a regular basis to community agencies, businesses, churches and also be sent home to parents in student backpacks.

Mr. Perez stated the District needs to better communicate with people that cannot speak English. Dr. Hernandez stated that Alfredo Loredo is willing to translate Board meetings as he has done in the past. Ms. Davis suggested placing posters in areas targeting certain audiences, which suggestion was made in the CRSS training attended by the Board members.

The next long range planning meeting will be held on June 9th. The first draft of the strategic plan will be on the agenda. Mr. Perez suggested a future agenda item be
communication between students. The communication issue will be revisited again in six months.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.