

Town Meeting Minutes
Rochester School for the Deaf (RSD)
Thursday, November 13, 2008

Dr. Harold Mowl welcomed everyone to the meeting at 6:30 p.m. He informed the group that he would like to have a discussion that can lead to new efforts and what we can do to improve upon what RSD is already doing.

There was discussion pertaining to working with other schools for the deaf or schools serving deaf and hard-of-hearing students to increase the critical mass of students to participate in sports and other after-school activities. Many ideas were shared including a school merger, establishment of a magnet school, and working on recruitment by educating school districts and new parents.

A question was raised regarding RSD's technology. Mr. Anthony Di Giovanni informed the group that RSD has up-to-date technology throughout the campus. He explained that RSD is going through a grant process to upgrade and expand the campus's technological infrastructure.

Mrs. Denise Stappenbeck informed the group that teachers are working on developing Web pages for their classes. Homework and class syllabi could be posted on these pages. One ongoing concern is parent involvement. For example, Mrs. Stappenbeck offered a workshop regarding social networking on the Internet. Since only two families responded, the workshop was cancelled.

There was discussion as to how to reach out to parents and get them interested in RSD. One suggestion was to do more advertising of the RASA program. Another was to educate the school districts and their parent representatives for IEP meetings. RSD also needs to better educate medical professionals because they are not well-informed about RSD.

There was discussion about establishing a statewide parent group where information can be easily shared and recognized. One parent volunteered to lead this effort by starting an interest group for parents on the networking site *Facebook.com*.

There was brief discussion about our public relations efforts. Ideas included having a reference CD for RSD, a TV program/ad campaign showing our kids interacting with each other, and a 'Myth/Fact' section on the RSD website. It was also suggested that we advertise our graduates' successes.

The next Town Meeting will be held on May 7, 2008 at 6 p.m.