

Working Together

CONNECTION,
CHARACTER, AND
COVID

DAN STRAUSS, PARENT, FAR NORTHERN R.C. BOARD



Inclusion
and time
constraints



Situation

- ▶ Balancing the detailed work of a board with the need to make that information accessible.
- ▶ Making sure all their board members can be included, while still effectively doing the work of a nonprofit board.
 - ▶ Action items
 - ▶ Financials
 - ▶ Issues
 - ▶ Committee reports
 - ▶ ...



Complication

- ▶ Reality: board meetings have time constraints.
- ▶ There is a limit to how much time can be spent during a board meeting in making the materials accessible to all.
- ▶ PLUS: now we are remote!



Implication

If we do not do something...

- ▶ Then, due to time constraints, the board does not slow down to explain the significance of the information.
- ▶ We do not make it accessible and some board members feel excluded.
- ▶ We fail at inclusion. We fail at working together.



Position

▶ Inclusion is a “must have”.

▶ Connection.

- ▶ Build relationship. Working together on something important.
- ▶ Build empathy: paying attention, without distractions, listening.

▶ Character.

- ▶ Patience. Respect for all, at all times.
- ▶ Purpose beyond ourselves. Contribute to the shared Regional Center mission – the greater good.

▶ COVID/Remote – additional areas to consider

- ▶ Working remotely takes “agreeableness”. #1 factor with remote work. Considerate, cooperative, optimistic.
- ▶ IT Tech support and personal assistance with connecting available, if needed.



Actions

- ▶ **Before** the board meeting: [the heavy lifting!]
 - ▶ Distribute the board packets in advance. Use summary points, pictures, plain language, consistent formatting, and larger fonts. Continuous improvement.
 - ▶ Consumer Committee meeting before the board meeting. Cover the board packet. Listen to the input and do something with it. => Build relationship.
- ▶ **During** the board meeting:
 - ▶ Stay focused but tie back to points covered in the Consumer Committee meeting.
 - ▶ Work with individuals who bring up personal matters. Bring them back to their board member role. Demonstrate understanding and commitment to follow-up.
 - ▶ POV: knowing that everyone contributes. Really listening. Respect given at all times. Respect ≠ Agreement.
- ▶ **After** the board meeting:
 - ▶ Take-up individual concerns.
 - ▶ Follow-up on action items for credibility.



Benefits

- ▶ Facilitate inclusion for all board members.
- ▶ We get the detailed work of the board done in a timely manner.
- ▶ We are really working together.



Thank you!

- ▶ Listen and be patient
- ▶ Develop relationships
- ▶ Enjoy your time together



“The Key Is Not To Prioritize
What’s On Your Schedule, But To
Schedule Your Priorities.”

- STEPHEN R. COVEY

- ▶ Big thanks to Melissa Gruhler, Far Northern R.C. Executive Director, and Cindy Presidio, Executive Assistant.

Consumer Committee

BYLAWS - ADDENDUM E

Consumer Committee

The Consumer Committee shall consist of not less than three (3) members from the Board of Directors, each of whom shall also be a consumer. The Consumer Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Reviewing the Board packet in advance of each meeting.
2. Educating themselves on the issues and materials related to the action items identified in the Board packet and agenda.
3. To familiarize themselves on topics and issues being discussed in the other committees.
4. Providing input to the Board of Directors on the quality of services provided in the areas served by FNRC, as well as input on availability of services, obstacles to accessing services, and any changes that might affect the quality and availability of services.

The Chair of the Consumer Committee will be selected by consensus.