

Newport Public Schools
Wellness Subcommittee
Minutes from March 27, 2008

I. Opening

Dr. Ambrogi called the meeting to order.

Members Present:

Dr. John H. Ambrogi, Superintendent
Mr. Arthur Bell, Jr. Supervisor for PE/Health Instruction
Mrs. Becky Bolan, Parent
Mrs. Lenny Phelan, Newport Hospital
Mrs. Meg Edward, Parent
Dr. Tom Galvin, School Comm.
Ms. Kerry Clougher, Parent
Ms. Barbara Ring, Teacher
Mrs. Amy Donnelly Roche, Director of Student Services
Mrs. Jan Watkinson, School Nurse Teacher
Mr. Richard Ratcliff, Parent
Ms. Denise Kelly, School Nurse Teacher
Mr. Peter Millinazzo, Newport County YMCA

Members Absent:

Ms. M. Jane Barry, Retired Nurse Educator
Ms. Jeannette Bessinger, Parent
Ms. Donna Johnson, Parent
Ms. Judy Smith, RN, Newport Hospital

II. Superintendent's Update

Dr. Ambrogi explained the background and progress that this committee has made, introduced our new members, and thanked everyone for attending.

III. Upcoming Request for Proposal

Twenty-five school districts statewide will be selected for a grant to provide additional fruits and vegetables at schools in which fifty percent of students qualify for free meals. These fruits and vegetables would be in addition to meals provided, and might be used as snacks and/or incentives. The contact person is Mr. Steve Carey, Nutrition Specialist in RIDE's Office of School Improvement, and he expects that an RFP will be opened within the next two months.

IV. Parent Input

Dr. Galvin shared plans for conducting a parent survey regarding student wellness. The purpose of the survey will be to solicit interested family members in making our schools a healthier place to be.

The group discussed the use of *Survey Monkey*, an online data collection tool, with a ConnectEd phone messaging system to encourage participation. Dr. Ambrogi noted that he would be happy to use this system in addition to the online tool, and to follow-up with a letter as well. Mrs. Donnelly Roche stated that she would have any letters and surveys into Spanish and other frequently spoken languages. A subcommittee agreed to convene to address this action item. The subcommittee members who volunteered are Dr. Galvin, Ms. Bessinger, Mr. Millinazzo, and Ms. Phelan.

V. Feedback from Schools

Dr. Galvin shared the individual school's responses to the School Health and Wellness Checklist he disseminated last month. He stated that more information is needed than was collected through the checklist.

The discussion that followed involved several suggestions. Several members thought these results indicate a need for conducting a focus group or groups to bring people together and clarify our prioritized concerns regarding wellness. Another suggested that there is a wealth of information to cull in these results, and that we could bullet the most frequently mentioned concerns from which to build our parent survey.

We will work from the results of this survey to increase knowledge and develop consistent implementation of healthy practices across all schools and classrooms. The subcommittee just established will convene a “focus group” with each school principal, our business manager, and the school nurse teachers or one other school staff member per building.

VI. Additional Discussion

A. Staff Wellness

Mrs. Kelly provided feedback that Blue Cross/Blue Shield staff wellness program has not yet come to fruition. Dr. Ambrogi expressed dismay and noted that Ms. Eames, the district’s human resources coordinator, will follow up with her contact person at BlueCross/Blue Shield on his behalf.

B. Lunch Contractors

Dr. Ambrogi announced that a state-wide bid has been awarded to Aramark. The details are still being developed, and Newport will keep our options open until more information is available.

VII. Follow-Up Needed

<i>What</i>	<i>By Whom</i>	<i>By When</i>
a. Call Blue Cross/Blue Shield regarding next steps with implementing staff wellness opportunities, as agreed.	F. Eames	04/15/08
b. Convene “focus group” with each principal, our business manager, and the school nurse teachers or one other school staff member per building.	T. Galvin, J. Bessinger, L. Phelan, P. Millinazzo	05/01/08
c. Add checklist for wellness policies and explanation of healthy ways to celebrate birthdays, etc to student handbooks and agendas.	All Principals	06/01/08
d. Follow-up regarding state-wide contract for nutrition and any related policies news.	J. Ambrogi M. Saunders	05/01/08

VIII. Future Meetings

The next Wellness Committee meeting will be scheduled by Drs. Galvin and Ambrogi.

IX. Adjournment

Dr. Galvin concluded the meeting.