

MEETING OF THE WELLNESS SUBCOMMITTEE

Pawtucket School District

School Administration Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room

286 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

Call to Order

The Wellness Subcommittee Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

by Joanne Bonollo,

Committee Chair. Ms. Bonollo welcomed attending members Linda

Mendonca, Karin Wetherwill,

Raymond Pita, Miriam Plittand Ken Bowdish. Superintendent Deborah

Cylke and Ronnie Cremonini

were also present.

Public Participation - None

Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes 2/23/11

Review and Redraft District Wellness Policy

Karin Wetherwill and Superintendent Cylke handed out policy samples from school districts

locally and nationally. In consideration of redrafting the Pawtucket School District's Wellness Policy,

a general discussion and brainstorming session followed.

The topic of PE/Health requirements was initiated by Ray Pita. By September 2012, all

districts must have PE/Health curriculums aligned with state statutes.

There is some concern that the

curriculum requirements will not be fulfilled. Ms. Bonollo asked about

a time frame to format a PE/Health curriculum for PSD. Overall, the program is minimal and definitely could be enhanced, but staffing needs to be increased to accommodate an improved PE/Health curriculum.

With regard to PE/Health, Superintendent Cylke introduced the idea of "modeling" after

Montgomery County School District, Maryland. She suggested to the Committee, even if a small fee

were involved, it would be beneficial for Pawtucket School Department PE/Health teachers to have

access to an established, integrated curriculum which could readily be utilized. Normally, curriculums

are not proprietary. The Committee favored the template from Montgomery County, and Mrs. Cylke

will look into the cost of a pilot program.

The Superintendent asked about school administrators supervising lunch, and brought up the

idea of "grazing" (2 nutritional breaks - one in the morning and one in the afternoon) versus a lunch

break for high school students. A registered dietician could work with providers to offer nutritious

food that would encourage stable blood sugar levels throughout the day. This method offers quick

service to the students.

Karin Wetherill voiced concern regarding the idea feeling Pawtucket School District works

hard to serve well-balanced and nutritious foods, and she is not in favor of implementing packaged foods back into the system.

The committee reviewed Olathe School District's (Kansas) Wellness Policy, which focuses on

employees/adults with the belief that good health trickles down to students/children. Adult wellness

not only benefits the employee, but the employer with decreased absenteeism and reduced

healthcare costs evidenced by lower insurance premiums.

Discussion continued along the line of employee wellness; Washoe County's (Nevada)

Wellness Program was presented by the Superintendent; Karin Wetherwill brought up various Rhode

Island Park programs, and Miriam Plitt mentioned "Shape-Up Rhode Island."

The discussion turned to utilization of the Internet. The Superintendent has asked IT to

construct a new website for PSD via an outside company (i.e., School Wires). The district is seeking a

user-friendly template for staff, parents and students as well as the Wellness Committee. This could

be a great tool to expand the Committee's communication. It was

suggested for Committee

members to formulate ideas for design layout and content.

Mrs. Cylke discussed the benefits of having a Wellness Coordinator.

The position itself could

be likened to that of a grant writer. If the savings returned is a few million dollars, the salary of this

position is more than justified.

It was decided that Committee members were to review all "sample" wellness policies and

return to the next meeting with ideas for a policy format. Ms. Bonollo hopes the Committee will

endeavor to structure an updated policy, which outlines rules for schools and expands outreach to employees.

Areas of Wellness Policy review were divided between Committee members as follows:

Food - Karin Wetherwill and Ken Bowman; Health - Linda Mendonca; PE - Ray Pita; Adult Wellness - Miriam Plitt; Overall -Joanne Bonollo.

Karin Wetherill gave a brief update on the Brown University - CDC Obesity Grant.

Set Next Meeting Date - Will email and confirm a meeting date for April.

Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.