

PAWTUCKET WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETING

School Administration Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room 286

Main Street Pawtucket, RI 02860

Tuesday, January 22,2013, 5:00 PM

Welcome

- **Introduction of Participants**

The Wellness Subcommittee Meeting was called to order at 5:10 p.m. by Joanne Bonollo, Committee Chair. Ms. Bonollo welcomed new members and asked for contact information. Attending the meeting were Joanne Bonollo, Gail Peet, Solange Morrissette, Linda Mendonca, Mary Parella, Martha Murphy, Kathy Suriani, Ronnie Cremonini, Kim Mercer, Sandra Cano, Laurie Dufault, Julie Motta, Susan Murphy and Debbie Cylke.

Public Participation - None.

New Business

- **Obesity and Poverty Presentation**

Angela Ankoma, from the Rhode Island Department of Health, was unable to be present at this meeting; however, she will attend a future meeting and show a PowerPoint on obesity.

- **Teen Pregnancy Awareness**

Ms. Bonollo stated the topic of Teen Pregnancy Awareness was suggested by School Committee Chairman, Alan Tenreiro. Mary Parella reported Pawtucket School District (PSD) had received a three- year grant in the amount of \$25,000 targeting students in junior high and following them into high school. The program is a teen outreach consisting of four curriculum levels along with a youth

development model that addresses relationships and getting to know their family and community. In addition, there is community service component to the activities. It is an afterschool program with program materials of 60-90 minute increments.

Students will be referred into the program by principals, school nurses and guidance counselors. A tentative date of Wednesday, January 30, 2013 has been designated to begin recruiting students at Goff Junior High School.

Ms. Parella informed the committee, Dr. Fine, Director of the Health Department, and Mrs. Stephanie Chaffee have a strong interest in the program and will meet with city mayors and community leaders.

In a few weeks, Ms. Parella will have more details how the program has been set up at the schools. Ms. Bonollo asked Ms. Parella to bring statistics on teen pregnancy in Rhode Island and Pawtucket to the next Wellness meeting.

The question was asked if there was a fee for the program, and Ms. Parella answered there is no charge. She informed members that for all after-school activities/programs, every site coordinator has the ability to waive fees or set up payment plans for students. No child would ever be told "no" or turned away.

On a side note, Ms. Parella informed the committee that Dr. Colleen Cavanaugh, OB-GYN, and a former professional dancer in New York, is giving back to the community through choreography and the arts. She is holding a small afterschool program for S411 and 6th graders at Baldwin ES, which is geared towards self expression and

addresses bullying among a variety of issues.

- **Wellness Collaborative**

Ms. Bonollo opened this item by informing the committee that every district is required by law to have a wellness policy, and Pawtucket School District's wellness policy does not meet state requirements. Through RIDE, a collaborative has been created to assist districts in formulating and writing their wellness policy. Eleven districts (including Pawtucket) have been accepted into the collaborative.

- **Wellness Policy**

Solange Morrisette explained, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2012 has "kicked in," and in doing so, the legislation authorizes funding, sets policy and changes guidelines. Through RIDE, Karin Wetherill, received a grant to review wellness policies, which need to be completed by September, 2013. Ms. Morrisette passed around a set of both old and new regulations for review.

Wellness Collaborative Forum dates are February 26 and April 9. The goal is to have the new policy to the School Committee for a first reading by June 30, 2013 and a final reading by September 1, 2013.

Joanne Bonollo, Linda Mendonca, Solange Morrisette, Sandra Cano, Julie Motta, Laurie Dufault, and Kathy Suriani volunteered to serve on the Wellness Policy Subcommittee. Solange Morrisette will email Karin Wetherill to find out if she will meet Pawtucket for an in-depth, one-on-one policy review and restructuring.

Ms. Bonollo, Ms. Mendonca, Ms. Morrisette and Ms. Cylke will attend the Wellness Collaborative meetings on February 26 and April 9.

Old Business

- **Backpack Program**

Ms. Bonollo distributed and reviewed a one-page report provided by Kim Mercer on poverty and the number of high need families among the students of Pawtucket School Department. A copy is on file in the Superintendent's office.

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The backpack program will be instituted to feed children on the weekends with an initial group of 100 students housed at Baldwin, Cunningham and Winters. Ms. Bonollo reviewed what had been discussed at the previous meeting on January 15,2013.

Topics of discussion included;

1. Donation solicitation.

2. Set up a tour and meet with the Food Bank

3. Due to the difficulty in procuring backpacks as well as the matter of backpacks being identifiable, it was determined it would be less expensive and a better idea to put food in plastic grocery bags, which could then be dropped into a student's existing backpack. Should a student not have a backpack, he/she will be provided with one.

4. It was determined the Pawtucket School Department will oversee the accounting for the backpack program rather than be placed under the 5013c umbrella of the "Back to School Celebration." Mary Parella has a 5013c and will check into this matter with the Business Manager.

5. Kathy Suriani will contact schools to assess need.

6. Martha Murphy will gather information from the schools regarding

PTO contacts.

7. A central location for food storage and a work area to pack bags needs to be secured. Joanne Bonollo will look into a caged area at Jenks, which previously housed food storage and facilitated a work area.

8. Student numbers were again discussed. Homeless students and/or students living in shelters will automatically be placed into the backpack program.

9. Targeted date to begin the program is the week of winter vacation (February 18-22).

• Set Next Meeting Dates

A "backpack specific" meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 29 at 5:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor small conference room at the Administration Building.

The next Wellness Subcommittee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 26, 2013 at 6 p.m. in the 2nd floor small conference room at the Administration Building.

• Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.