

HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMITTEE NOTES 10/21/10

Lincoln Public School Department
October 21, 2010
Lincoln High School – Exhibition Room #1
135 Old River Road
Lincoln, RI 02865
8:00 AM

Present: Georgia Fortunato, Mary Anne Mignacca, Andrew Viveiros, Mary Anne Roll, Melinda Smith, Karen Zangari, Linda Newbury, Jan Boucher, Carole Toselli, Paula Howard, Rhonda Sexton, Rita Kinniburgh, Brenda Sylvester, Jan Rago, Jim Frost, Michael Bedrossian, Kevin McNamara, Patricia Ann Kilsey, Carol Michaud

Call to Order

WELCOME

Mary Anne Roll

Updates

Mary Anne Roll reported that she spoke with administrators prior to the opening of school in September to review the Health and Wellness Policy and how to present it to parents. Policy handouts were developed and distributed to parents, and principals were asked to address three specific points at Open Houses regarding the policy:

1. If a food cannot be served in the cafeteria, it cannot come into the school during the day.
2. There are significant food allergy issues in the district mandating this policy, along with concerns about obesity.
3. The issue of food safety, i.e., how it has been prepared and handled, etc., is of utmost importance, and schools cannot guarantee the safety of foods brought in.

Mary Anne noted that Halloween will be the first big test of the policy. She also pointed out how important the school secretaries, as they are usually the person parents interact with when bringing in food.

The policy applies to classrooms; possible exceptions to the policy could be made for school-wide celebrations. These must be documented at the schools.

Discussion ensued; it was suggested that parent/teacher conferences would be another great way to get the info out to parents. There will also be an Open House on Nov. 14th for incoming 9th graders (who are 8th graders right now), and that would be another time to distribute the policy. Possible challenges to the policy: bands and sports teams' fundraisers, as the policy does focus on what is happening during the school day. It was noted that parent education is needed regarding fundraisers and food served after school is dismissed.

Jim Frost

1. This is the 3rd day of "Project Respect" where 75-100 kids are pulled out of school to learn communication skills to deal with bullying.
2. The day before: there was a safety event at the High School regarding the new texting and driving law. It is illegal to text and drive. Officer Dave Waycott had the kids driving vehicles similar to golf carts around the parking lot. He compared their driving without texting to driving while texting, "Driving while texting is illegal." The kids received all kinds of tickets while texting and driving.
3. There is a new curriculum on Disease and Disorder Prevention.
4. Continuing relationship with "Day One" – dating violence and bullying

Mary Anne noted that the health needs in every school goes beyond nutrition; need to focus on all 8 components of health.

DISTRICT WALK UPDATE

Scheduled for 10/22/10. Opening ceremonies with dignitaries at 9:10 AM at Northern Elementary School; Barbara Morse Silva will be there from NBC 10. PE teacher Deb Reddy will be performing yoga with students during the opening ceremonies. This is the third year that all the elementary schools are participating and the 5th year for Northern.

4th and 5th graders from Northern, Central, Lonsdale and Saylesville will walk in the morning, and 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders will walk in the afternoon. There are 20 High School students and hundreds of parent volunteers. Kindergarten students will have a similar program at their own schools.

The theme this year is “Yoga is for everyone.” There will be 24 different yoga positions at stops along the way. Parents have also donated water and healthy snacks.

EXPANDING AND PROMOTING TABLE HOSTING

Need to identify a parent who can be the “point person” at each school to coordinate this program. The person needs to work with Andrew Viveiros and Aramark, the school principal and staff to determine best times to hold table hosting events, and work out the logistics with recess, recruiting parents to volunteer, and getting needed information to the parents before the event. Karen Zangari has coordinated the effort at Lincoln Central and is glad to assist other parents at other schools. She has put together a “packet” with cafeteria guidelines, nutrition facts about the foods being eaten that day, and the survey sheet from Andrew. Georgia Fortunato said she will ask Lincoln Central Principal, William Skitt, to talk to other administrators about how the program has worked. The other question is whether a similar program can be coordinated at the middle and high schools with parents?

Kids First have been busy in the Lincoln School District this week at Lonsdale and Northern Elementary schools. Farmer Hope Ryan had a farm display in the cafeterias, Andrew Viveiros served RI apples to all the students at lunch, and Chef Sandra Sepe was encouraging students to eat a “colorful” tray, while passing out “locally grown” stickers. The special guest at these events was the “dancing apple” costume worn by the Aramark lady at Lonsdale, and a PE teacher at Northern (Deb Reddy). A contest was held to “name the apple.” Later today, Chef Sandy and Farmer Hope are coming to Lincoln Central to do 2 presentations on healthy snacks vs. treats, with a healthy snack for the kids to try made of homemade applesauce in a waffle cone with vanilla yogurt and a topping of oatmeal and maple syrup. Karen Zangari, coordinating the event, checked with the nurse for food allergies and other food issues such as diabetes, etc.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ACTIVITY BREAKS

The goal is to make sure children are not sitting still any longer than 2 hours at any time. Is there a way to increase physical activity during instruction through natural breaks in the day? The Bristol/Warren district has a parent who designed in-classroom “exercises” for teachers to use at their discretion. The Lincoln district PE teachers will be meeting on this issue. It was noted that in addition to the physical activity, a “power down” segment is needed to help the kids quiet down for instruction.

HEALTHY FUNDRAISING

Kevin McNamara noted that there have big changes in fundraising recently; not as much candy is being sold as in the past. Mary Anne Roll noted that we should know what kind of fundraising is going on at the schools at this time. All fundraising must be approved by the principals, and then by Georgia Fortunato. Current fundraising that the committee is aware of includes candles, blankets, magazine drives, t-shirts. Lincoln Central is having a Donation Drive, where parents simply write a check out to the school. One of the benefits is that 100% of the money goes to the school.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Concern was raised about funding being reduced by the state, and what the current participation in the program is. Andrew Viveiros said that Lincoln has no state funding for breakfast; federal funds are used. Apparently, the number of children eligible and participating has increased recently.

HEALTHIER U.S. SCHOOL CHALLENGE

There is a sub-group that will work on this challenge. There will be a meeting at CCRI on November 17th from 9-11 AM.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, December 9th, 2010 at 8 AM.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zangari