The Brantley County Wellness Committee met on October 18, 2016. Laura Lynn, School Nutrition Director thanked everyone for using the WellSat evaluation tool to determine strengths and weaknesses in our policy and our schools. From the evaluation, it was determined that there are concerns with the amount of nutrition education being offered in our system. Those in attendance were not sure what or how much is taught in science and health classrooms across the grades. We will further this discussion with Dr. Jacobs to identify what standards are being taught in the various grades that would be considered nutrition education. Atkinson Elementary Representatives Jenny Willis and Candace Yawn told the group about how much their PE Teacher Paul Able uses some of his class time to really emphasize good nutrition, good eating habits as well as the importance of physical activity. He is also a champion in the lunchroom daily as he encourages his students to eat a balanced lunch. It was suggested to have Coach Able to meet with the other elementary and middle school PE teachers to discuss how he integrates nutrition, healthy eating and physically activity into his daily plans. It was also mentioned that we could put age related fliers in the classrooms as well as posters in the hallways and classrooms. They would also like to see if we could locate video clips that could be shown during morning and/or weekly announcements.

Another concern noted from the evaluation is the lack of modeling healthy eating behaviors and physically activity behaviors from the school staff. This was an eye opener in that it is not something that all staff thinks about. So the committee decided that it would be very beneficial and a good starting point if there could be a weekly/biweekly or monthly email blast with reminders and helpful hints for encouraging staff and students to eat better and to exercise more at home. School nutrition employees shared the little video snipits that teachers can use in their classroom for a quick wellness activity.

Finally, the committee discussed about using food as a reward and using physical activity as a reward or punishment. Many in the group shared that there is a lot of food used as a reward but it was agreed that if a teacher or group was using food as a reward it should be done after the lunch period. Most all said that children love going outside and that extra recess is used as a reward. However, when a student is not finished with his/her work, they are sometimes required to stay in and finished their missed assignments. Although this happen, most reported it is only occasionally and never the same child all the time.

The school nurses in the group said that they would like to have more nutrition and physical activity brochures so that when parents are in the office or in their office they would have access to wellness information.

After closing comments and no questions, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be scheduled for early spring.