

District Health and Wellness Subcommittee Meeting
October 20, 2016
Central Administration Building

Present for the Committee: Colleen Lawless, Mary Ellen Reed, Bonnie Hartung, Karen Reichers, Tonia Donovan, Marie Enochty, Mary Lou Sette, Sarah Blackwell, Susan Murray, Ann Tefft, and Thomas Conrad, Superintendent

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Susan Murray, Director of Nutrition and Food Services

Citizens Speak

None

Priority Business

A. Sue Murray reported on a variety of things happening in our schools.

Nauset High School is making smoothies.

Stony Brook is making a healthy snack bag to purchase for snack times. If parents have questions regarding the Food Service Program, they can visit Donna Drown every morning after breakfast is served. Ms. Drown, in hoping to increase participation in the program, has created the Golden Spatula Award, the Silver Spoon Award, and the Bronze Whistle Award.

The Middle School will be serving breakfast in different areas in the school to see if they can get more student participation.

Wellfleet is serving organic milk at a cost of \$1.50. Regular milk costs \$.50.

Harvested vegetables are being used at Wellfleet and at Orleans Elementary School.

Apple Crunch Day is being celebrated in all schools.

B. Wellness Policy Discussion.

Superintendent Conrad gave an overview of the history of what has transpired with the Wellness Subcommittee over the past year. School nurses are responsible for checking food coming into the buildings. The nurses revised the Wellness Policy with language that will keep students safe.

The Superintendent indicated that the revised Wellness Policy was given to Principals to discuss with nurses. The Principals have given their full support to the revised policy changes. The new language has the full support of school nurses and building Administrators.

The Superintendent reported that within 12 months two students have been transported by ambulance to the hospital due to an issue involving food allergies. He stated that we have a responsibility to run safe and healthy environments for all students as best we can.

Nurse, Bonnie Hartung indicated that the Middle School is using this policy as practice right now. It is working great and has streamlined food issues. The staff did not have any negative feedback. She indicated that teachers are really looking at the curriculum and rethinking it.

Marie Enochty stated that “no food” policies have been in place for quite some time now at the Department of Early Childhood and Head Start. A no food policy also takes pressure off the families.

Nurse Mary Ellen Reed agreed that bringing food in for parties is an economic hardship for some families.

Nurse Karen Reichers stated that even for curriculum-based events parents brought in food with their recipes thinking that would be sufficient but she found that some of the ingredients would be harmful for children with life-threatening allergies. Tonya Donovan, Grade 1 teacher, thought store bought food would alleviate that problem. Karen Reichers indicated they are trying to move away from food celebrations in Eastham.

The Superintendent indicated that he has been in buildings with birthday celebrations and finger erasers, crowns, or students being recognized during lunch time are ways birthdays are celebrated. He indicated that many schools have not allowed food brought into schools for several years and that Nauset is not in the forefront of this initiative.

Discussion regarding healthy snacks, cross-contamination, food serv safe regulations, and homemade foods ensued. It was also mentioned that many students are allergic to various fruits.

Marie Enochty felt the policy would help students and parents think of things for celebrations other than food. Families can celebrate birthdays at home. She stated that school is a place for things that connect to the curriculum, using field trips as an example. Ms. Reichers stated that she has baggies in her office for when students loose a tooth with a toothbrush, pencil or some sort of prize and the kids are thrilled with it. There is no food involved.

Sarah Blackwell stated that the Wellness Committee tried to do this eight years ago and received an unbelievable amount of push back from teachers and parents.

Tanya Donovan stated that we are in a state of education where assessing goes on a lot. She suggested that the committee not forget that these are kids. Kids would be disappointed if they could not celebrate. They are still children. She felt the committee should work together to recognize kids, as there needs to be fun in school. She stated we have high expectations and rigorous standards. Mary Ellen Reed agreed that children should be celebrated. She suggested supporting teachers in ways that do not have food. She thought it would be better received if

teachers share with teachers ways to celebrate that have seen successful in the classroom. Tanya Donovan shared what she does in her classroom with the birthday compliments.

Colleen Lawless inquired about curriculum-based celebrations and it was indicated that all items must be store bought with a label.

Sue Murray indicated that at the school level, even when a parent brings in special food for a child with allergies, the food must be in a package, with a label and unopened.

A discussion was held regarding the process in which parents could bring in food for a curriculum-based celebration. The nurse has to have at least a 48 hour notice, the nurse checks food to be sure it is all store bought, packaged, labeled and appropriate.

The Superintendent suggested that he direct Administration to go to the next staff meeting with the policy. He explained the process of the policy going to the Policy Subcommittee and then the School Committees for 2 readings before adoption. In the meantime, he is holding parent forums in each town and this would be part of the forum. He would like to begin implementing the revised policy on January 1st.

It was suggested that lists for parents of healthy food options be placed on the website.

MOTION:

On a motion by Mary Ellen Reed, seconded by Colleen Lawless, it was voted 8 yeas and 1 abstention (Tonya Donovan) to approve the revised Wellness Policy.

Approval of Minutes:

On a motion by Sarah Blackwell, seconded by Marie Enochty, it was voted to approve the minutes of April 5, 2016.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Ann M. Tefft

