

ER9 WELLNESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – MEETING JANUARY 6, 2010

Present: M. Basak-Smith; L. Bishop; L. Bunce; V. Cram; C. Downey; R. Haber; N. Kaldawy; M. Mas; C. McLeod; T. McMorrان (part of session); A. Metcalf; A. Smith.

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m.

FOOD SERVICES

Marie Mas shared with the committee that the Boards of Education would appreciate an update from Chartwells on how things are going. Ann Metcalf would prefer meeting with each Board separately rather than attending a Tri-Board meeting. She will plan to attend Board meetings in April or May.

WELLNESS POLICY

Food guidelines were discussed at recent Easton Board of Education meetings following questions raised by several parents. As a result, a Listserv message was sent out to Samuel Staples Elementary School parents in December by Kim Fox Santora, Principal. Unhealthy foods may be discouraged but cannot be prohibited. The SSES food guidelines as outlined in the Listserv message are:

- Birthdays will continue to be recognized without food.
- Food will not be used as a reward in the classroom.
- Parent volunteers are not permitted to give students food.
- Students are not permitted to share food.
- With the exception of curricular areas where food is written into the curriculum, food will not be used in instruction.

Colleen McLeod added that Redding Elementary School students are frequently reminded not to share food due to other students' and staff allergies, and parents are encouraged to bring in healthy food.

40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS OF ADOLESCENTS

A recommendation was made Nicole Kaldawy that the committee move its focus in a new direction to consider the whole person, not just nutrition. She mentioned the Search Institute's "40 Developmental Assets of Adolescents" (www.search-institute.org). The program includes a survey that encourages the individual to look at their own development. Adolescents come up with 40 developmental assets they feel help an individual develop and become a more well-rounded person. The more positive personal attributes and positive environmental conditions an individual has lessens the likelihood the individual would become involved in risk-taking behavior. Gina Pin, assistant principal at JBHS, was involved with this program when she was at Ridgefield High School. Would like to introduce it at Barlow and involve students. Marie Mas said the survey would have to be approved by the Board of Education. Claudia Downey added that she would like to explore using the program at the middle schools as well.

SCHOOL LUNCH MENUS

Marie Mas recommended a subcommittee to review school lunch menus approximately every three months. Copies of lunch menus from September, 2009 to January, 2010 were shared with committee members Molly Basak Smith, Lisa Bunce, and Lisa Bishop. They will meet and review them with Ann Metcalf. Ann reported that a lot of cooking is now from scratch.

Unlimited fruits and cut up vegetables are offered. There has been a decrease in sales at the high school compared to the old lunch menus. Sales at John Read Middle School have increased. The deli bar is very popular. Sales at the elementary schools have decreased. Ann also reported that the POS system is working very well at the schools.

Discussion about whether the economy might be the reason for the decrease in sales followed. Are parents aware of the Free or Reduced Lunch Program? Suggestions were made to send out information via Listserv or consider re-surveying parents now that the new lunch program is in effect. Also educate parents about the importance of breakfast. School nurses report an increase in visits to their office because students are hungry; when questioned, students report that they have not had breakfast. Educating parents about the importance of breakfast was suggested. There was also discussion about snacks for students at the high school who stay after school for sports and other activities.

ER9 WELLNESS WEBPAGE

A new page on the er9.org Web site will focus on Wellness and will include an information section for school nurses to report information on illnesses/diseases. A subcommittee will be formed to develop the Webpage. Alice Smith volunteered to chair the subcommittee.

CHARTWELLS NUTRITION GRANT

ER9's contract with Chartwells includes an annual nutrition grant of \$2,000 over the five-year period of the contract to "support the Districts' wellness and nutrition initiatives". Marie Mas will discuss with ER9 administrators how the grant should be distributed: i.e., \$2,000 to one school each year or split the \$2,000 between all five schools each year of the contract. It was suggested that the grant be given first to SSES for their farm to school program which has already started. Chartwells provided examples of activities that other school districts have done with their grant monies.

SMARTERLUNCHROOMS.ORG/CORNELL FOOD AND BRAND LAB PROPOSAL

Molly Basak-Smith reported on smarterlunchrooms.org and Cornell Food and Brand Lab's aim to design sustainable research-based lunchrooms that subtly guide smarter food choices. They have made a proposal to Easton/Redding Schools. She has met with Marie Mas and Peggy Sullivan and will be meeting with Tom O'Donnell from Chartwells and Ann Metcalf concerning the proposal in the near future.

CHARTWELLS DIETICIAN

Lisa Bishop, a part-time dietician from Chartwells, was introduced. She works on Tuesdays and Thursdays; visits all the schools. During lunches, she has casual discussions with students/staff about healthy snacks, good nutrition. She thinks offering samples of foods being provided by Chartwells is a good idea which might lead students to choose different food items such as the homemade soups.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Submitted by Vicki Cram