

ER9 WELLNESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES – MEETING FEBRUARY 24, 2010

Present: M. Basak-Smith; L. Bishop; D. Breyer; L. Bunce; V. Cram; R. Haber; N. Kaldawy; M. Mas; A. Metcalf; T. O'Donnell (Chartwells); M. Smith.

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m.

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS PROGRAM

Gina Pin, assistant principal of Joel Barlow High School, joined the meeting to give a small presentation on the Developmental Assets Program developed by Search Institute. The institute identified 40 developmental assets for adolescents (ages 12-18) that are building blocks for healthy development. The program includes a survey that was developed by students for students that determines how many of the 40 assets a student has. The assets are both in school and outside of school and include such things as support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. The goal is to build resiliency (successful navigation and negotiation for well-being under stress; knowing what to do when you don't know what to do; ability to overcome adversity). As you build assets, you build resiliency.

The Towns of Easton and Redding would like to administer the survey to high school and possibly middle school students. The Easton-Redding Community Coalition is involved and has already approached the superintendent of schools. The proposal is to administer the survey in the fall of 2010. Before the survey is given it might be posted on the district Web site for parents to see it. Survey responses are anonymous. Results of the survey would be shared at town meetings. Marie Mas offered the assistance of the ER9 Wellness Advisory Committee.

There is a student-run Developmental Assets group that meets at Barlow on Monday evenings after school twice a month. It is an active group. They also go to the middle schools in the spring to do presentations.

The committee asked if there was a similar program for younger children – possibly something called Attributes which might be worth investigating.

CHARTWELLS UPDATE

Tom O'Donnell from Chartwells joined the meeting. He offered a quick review of the nutrition grant money available to the tri-district as part of the food services contract. Marie Mas mentioned that at a recent Administrative Council meeting the administrators agreed the first \$2,000 should go to SSES to help with their community garden and/or to involve the Easton Historical Society to work with the school in teaching the students about the history of farming in Easton. Marie asked Rachel Haber, teacher at SSES, to spearhead the use of the grant money by the school.

Ann Metcalf shared that a survey on the school lunch program is being developed and will be sent out to parents/students via Listserv. To encourage the purchase of school lunches, "Lucky Tray Day" will be offered again once or twice a week. Students who have the lucky number on their tray will win a small prize (i.e., bookmark) or treat. Ann will be posting a newsletter on the district Web site which will include a comparison of purchasing school lunch vs. lunches packed at home. In March, parents of students in RES and SSES will be invited to join their children for

lunch at the school cafeterias. Beginning in March she will offer a "Carving Station" with freshly cooked roast beef twice a month at lunch. March is National Nutrition Month. She and Lisa Bishop, Chartwells dietician, will be having informational stations at lunches with the topic "Herbs and Spices." Students will guess what the spices are; prizes will be given for correct answers.

Ann is sending a letter to the elementary school principals in Easton and Redding to see if the teachers would be interested in having their students plant seeds in cleaned, empty milk cartons.

REVIEW OF LUNCH MENUS

The three dieticians on the committee did not have a chance to meet to review the school lunch menus together, but have reviewed them independently. Lisa Bunce says she feels Chartwells is doing "a fabulous job." Marie said that she would like the dieticians to meet a few times a year to review the menus. The student committee member, at Tom O'Donnell's request, shared that students love the salad bar. She said some things such as the pizza and hummus/chips are expensive. The chicken patties are not well liked. Overall, she said, school lunches have changed for the better.

Molly Basak-Smith asked if Chartwells could provide food at the Family University. Tom O'Donnell agreed but it would have to be worked out with those who run the event. Nikki Kaldawy said she would talk to Mary Ann Pieratti. Another suggestion was made that Chartwells run one of the breakout sessions, possibly on nutrition.

ER9 WELLNESS WEB PAGE

Members were asked to share ideas to develop content for a proposed Wellness Web page which will be part of the district Web site. All suggestions should be sent to Vicki Cram, Central Office administrative assistant and Webmaster.

CORNELL PROJECT

Molly Basak-Smith discussed the proposal to do a baseline study of fourth graders in Redding and Easton. The study would look at lunch purchases for the month of May and a report card would be sent home to parents about what their children are eating. Idea is to see if the report card would influence food choices; gear students to make healthy choices. Tom O'Donnell shared that side dishes are not tracked by the POS system. If it were added, it would be additional steps for the cashier to enter – less time for students to eat. Molly will meet with Tom to discuss further.

MISCELLANEOUS

Tom O'Donnell shared with the committee that state law requires him to meet with students twice a year. Marissa Smith said she will organize a small group of students to meet with Tom. Tom urged that the group include a mix of students, those who buy lunch and those who don't. Nikki Kaldawy will help.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Submitted by Vicki Cram