

**WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 21, 2014**

Present:

Jo-Ann Keating, Ed.D., Director of Finance and Operations (Co-Chairperson)

Lois Pernice, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Mark Berkowitz, Athletic Director

Kim Kus, Assistant Principal, Hurlbutt Elementary School

Maria Kituri, Chef, Chartwell Food Services

Nina Daniel, Board of Education Rep.

Dan Doak, Assistant Principal, Weston High School

The meeting was called to order by Lois Pernice at 3:15 p.m.

The Committee discussed the following action items regarding Nutrition:

- Maria Kituri reported that there are more food options at the high school this year that seem to be very popular. Personal pizza is now an option which the students are super excited about. Pizza toppings are selected by the student and it takes two minutes to bake the pizza. They decided to go to the wider thinner crust which is faster to make, less carbs. Other lunch options new this year is the make your own salad bar and it is charged by weight. The burrito has two sizes this year, small or large and includes pork, beef or chicken or choose all three and rice, black beans, guacamole, lettuce, etc. and can be wrapped or by the bowl. A chicken sandwich station is back every day due to popular demand. Frozen yogurt is offered now with a variety of toppings. Sushi is offered two days week and a hot meal is offered every day along with deli style sandwiches. A soup station has been added as well.
- In September they introduced chicken and waffles and because it was successful, it will be on the menu in November as well as some new Asian dishes.

The Committee discussed the following action items regarding Social and Emotional Health:

- Mrs. Pernice is working on scheduling Family University Night. Last year the event was scheduled in April and this year she would like to back that date up because attendance last year was down possibly due to conflicting spring sports and other events. Climate Surveys will go out next week for students and parents with the main focus being on Bullying. We will look at the information to use for possible Family University topics. If we looking at a separate committee including parents to promote attendance, rather than going through the Youth Services Commission meeting.
- Dr. Marks gave a presentation for HES and WIS parents about lice, which is a topic that comes up a lot and parents who attended found this very helpful.

The Committee discussed the following action items regarding Physical Health:

- Mrs. Kus reported that "Run for Life" is on this week at HES and WIS is next week. This morning run with students and families has been well attended in the past.
- Dr. Keating reported that they are looking into rolling out an employee assistance program. This program would have a lot of components such as emotional support, medical advice, legal, financial advice, repairs for home, etc. for staff in need. Dr. Keating and Mrs. Kus will work on the Staff Wellness programs and hope to include Weight Watchers, Yoga and Zumba with this program that staff can attend after school.
- Mrs. Pernice reported on the topic of whether to allow birthday snacks prepared by parents in the classroom. Mrs. Pernice stated that the number of students who suffer with allergies or are diabetic has increased and it is difficult to regulate the snacks coming into classrooms. This is also a general wellness issue for students. Mrs. Pernice presented information that many area Districts no longer have food celebrations at all. Mrs. Pernice stated that we will finish out this year but will go to the PTO's at HES and WIS to discuss a plan for phasing out food celebrations. Some suggestions as an alternative to food celebration's that were discussed are: bringing in pencils, erasers, etc. and giving the birthday child a crown; parents read a book to the class; parents can donate a book to the library with the student's name inside; star of the week recognition.

The Committee discussed the following action items regarding Social Emotional presentation:

- Mr. Doak reported that on October 15th the High School assembly had a two part presentation performed by The Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, which is part of CREC. The first half of the assembly presentation was about The Laramie Project. Looking In Theatre is the group comprised of teenagers from the greater Hartford area, who present dramatic scenes dealing with important social, family, and personal issues such as drugs, alcohol, sexuality, AIDS, depression, suicide, and abuse and how these issues affect adolescents. The aim of the program is to highlight the topics so that audience members may talk about these issues openly and to clarify their own personal values so that they can make more informed decisions regarding their own lives. It was very successful and the high school would like to use this presentation again in the future.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.