



MINUTES

Health and Wellness Social Emotional Health Subcommittee Meeting

Pursuant to Executive Order 20-25 issued by the Governor of Rhode Island, the Providence School Board held this meeting remotely. A recording of the meeting is available upon request.

December 9, 2020

CONVENE MEETING

1. Meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m.

In attendance:

Dana Benton-Johnson (Co-Chair)
Sarah Dinklage (Co-Chair)
Amy Messenger, Project AWARE
Beatrice Ake, Sojourner House
Ellen Cynar, Director of Healthy Communities Office
Karen Wetherill, RI Healthy Schools Coalition
Naiommy Baret, Parent Support Network of RI
Penny Ferrara, NAMI RI
Solight Sou, PPSD Wellness Coordinator

APPROVE AGENDA

2. Approve Agenda
A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented
MSV- Benton - Johnson, Messenger (9-0) MOTION APPROVED

APPROVE MINUTES

3. Approve Minutes - September 30, 2020
A motion was made to approve the minutes as presented
MSV- Benton - Johnson, Messenger (9-0) MOTION APPROVED

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

4. Welcome and introductions
Co-Chairs Dana Benton-Johnson and Sarah Dinklage welcomed the attendees who each introduced themselves.

5. Subcommittee Mission Statement

Benton-Johnson reviewed the mission and goals of the SEH subcommittee and stated that “the Social Emotional Health Subcommittee is dedicated to supporting the development and sustainment of social and emotional health and wellbeing of Providence Public School students and families. The subcommittee believes that improved social and emotional health helps students achieve their academic and human potential. The subcommittee values and is committed to partnering with students, families, PPSD staff, and community members, as well as local and state agencies. The subcommittee believes that collaboration can lead to increased awareness and access to opportunities and services that foster and support social and emotional health and wellbeing. The subcommittee upholds research findings that indicate social emotional development can be fostered across settings, including home, school and community. The subcommittee also recognizes the value of increasing opportunities for students to further develop the five core competencies of social emotional learning as identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL). The Rhode Island Department of Education and Providence Public Schools endorse the five CASEL core competencies: Self Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills and Decision-Making Skills. The subcommittee believes that social emotional health and wellbeing are extremely instrumental to lifelong success. “

6. Subcommittee Goals

- Recruit
- Reconvene
- Rebrand
- Reach

PRESENTATIONS

7. Assessing and Supporting SEL, SEH and Wellbeing

Benton-Johnson and Messenger presented “Assessing & Supporting Social Emotional Learning & Social Emotional Health & Wellbeing.” This presentation explained tools being utilized by Providence Public Schools to measure social emotional learning and social, emotional and behavioral functioning of students. In addition, the presentation included a brief description of Project AWARE and resources purchased through the grant to support student social emotional learning and social, emotional and behavioral health/ wellness. The slide deck for the presentation can be found at [here](#).

A question was raised about what the district is doing to increase parent engagement. Benton-Johnson described the district’s special hotline for parents as well as the District’s Parent Guide which provides information and resources for supporting children’s social and emotional needs and tips for parents including how to stay connected to their child’s school.

Baret shared that the Parent Support Network of RI has been holding Holiday Family Circle, weekly fun virtual events aimed at families of children with behavioral health challenges. She directed people to the organization's website for more information: www.psnri.org.

Dinklage shared that the Governor's Office is funding RI Student Assistance Services (RISAS) to place Student Assistance Counselors into six new Providence schools. The new schools are Mt. Pleasant HS, Hope HS, Gilbert Stuart MS, Nathan Bishop MS, Nathanael Greene MS, Esek Hopkins MS. RISAS has been operating at Central, Alvarez and Classical HS and Roger Williams MS.

Student Assistance Counselors provide substance use prevention/early intervention services and are available to see students impacted by substance abuse at home as well as for mental health challenges that place them at greater risk for substance use. Student Assistance Counselors work collaboratively with the building's student support team.

ADJOURN

8. Adjourn Meeting

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:55 p.m.