



MINUTES

Providence School Board Health & Wellness Committee Meeting Physical Health & Nutrition Subcommittee

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.

February 10, 2021

CONVENE MEETING

1. Co-Chair Grossi called the meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.

In attendance:

Linda Grossi, PPSD HPE and co-chair

Rachel Newman-Greene, Healthy Communities Office and co-chair

Solight Sou, PPSD Wellness Coordinator

Julie Malloy, PPSD Nurse

Kelly DeAngelis, Sodexo Director of Sustainability and Student Engagement

Aaron Lenart, Sodexo Operations Manager of Secondary Schools

Paula Paolino, URI SNAP-Ed

Karin Wetherill, RIHSC

Kerrilynn Viccione, PPSD educator

APPROVE AGENDA

2. Approve Agenda
A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented
MSV- Paolino, Viccione (8-0) MOTION APPROVED

APPROVE MINUTES

3. Approval of minutes – 12/9/2020, 10/28/2020, 11/12/2019
A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented
MSV- DeAngelis, Viccione (8-0) MOTION APPROVED

Subcommittee Member Karin Wetherill sequentially join the meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

4. Welcome and introductions
Co-Chair Grossi welcomed everyone to the meeting and all members introduced themselves.
5. Physical Health Updates
Wetherill announced that PPSD has 11 elementary schools who are Recess Rocks schools and that now more than ever, this program can offer support to many educators on staying active and healthy during the pandemic. Recognizing the need to re-offer these services in ways that

are socially distant or in classroom and do not require use of equipment, PPSD was able to partner with Playworks RI and offer a Professional Development on January 25 and also have participants register for a free Keep Playing subscription funded by Blue Cross Blue Shield. Over 30 educators were in attendance and as a requested next step, Coordinator Sou will follow up with Central Office for a final attendance list to continue to offer support to the elementary schools who participated. She will also continue conversations with Partnerships to continue encouraging participants to sign up for Keep Playing.

Wetherill also shared out a Black History Month Yoga Lesson she received from another school district and co-chair Grossi offered to forward the slides to Supervisor Donna O'Connor to share out with other HPE educators.

6. Nutrition Updates

Newman-Greene explained that with the current challenges, the subcommittee's work to prioritize student nutrition remains of utmost importance and that the H&W metrics will allow us to stay on track with progress and the support of DeAngelis and Sodexo.

Co-chair Grossi added that she recently met with DeAngelis to discuss concerns in secondary schools, which DeAngelis would provide more information on after her presentation.

7. Nutrition Metrics/Report

DeAngelis presented on the following:

- 1) Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics
- 2) Challenges and Opportunities
- 3) December - Holiday Break Distribution
- 4) Looking Forward

Obstacles related to Covid-19 remain a challenge, resulting in issues with staffing and difficulty with high participation rates due to student attendance, quarantined classes, tardiness and virtual learning.

The month of January has shown lower participation rates because of a lack of holiday break distributions, which has resulted in higher participation numbers this SY.

Sodexo continues to provide different service models for meals in the schools through café style and classroom delivery. Café distribution allows for hot meals delivery while classroom delivery contains cold meals. In the 24 elementary schools, there are 6 café service pilots and 18 classrooms. In the 7 middle schools, there are 6 café services and 1 classroom service. In the 10 high schools, there are only café services.

DeAngelis is in regular communication with PPSD's Strategic Communications team to further improve awareness and increase participation rates at the Grab and Go meal sites. For the upcoming February break, Sodexo is collaborating with RIDE for planning.

Sodexo recently hired several new staff members which includes 4 new chiefs, 1 new manager, and 1 new Quality Assurance member. These additional supports will allow the chefs to customize menus to their specific schools.

The holiday break meal distribution in December was record-breaking. Approximately 9,300 students received 405,492 meals and snacks. Of this, 185,688 take-home meals were provided to elementary school students and an additional 219,804 grab and go meals were provided at the 8 school sites. Over 323,194 pounds of food were distributed to provide breakfasts, lunches, dinners and snacks over a 13 day period. Locally grown and produced foods from Gotham Greens, Quonset View Farms, Calise Bakery, Roch's Fresh Foods, Belltown Farms, and Jeff's Granola were also included in the holiday meal kits.

Due to inclement weather, two Tuesday distribution days were changed to Wednesday and DeAngelis is anticipating a Wednesday distribution date for February break as well. This upcoming meals distribution will include produce from Gotham Greens, Steere Orchard and a make-your-own pizza kits from the Pizza Gourmet.

Currently the district is working to gather income surveys from students. These surveys provide federal funds to the district and are due March 12th. DeAngelis will be lending support for this endeavor along with others at the district level.

DeAngelis recently met with co-chair Grossi, HPE Lynne Smith, and Nurse Malloy to address concerns around secondary school meals. To gather student input, surveys will be distributed to students after further consultation with other members to ensure accurate responses. Emojis and pictures of food items are being considered for an easy, student-friendly survey.

Scheduled for March is a virtual cooking class with local chef Brian Dinan from Los Andes and Farm Fresh RI. There will also be a Meet the Chef campaign scheduled at the schools.

To continue supporting educators with Farm to School, free seeds will be available from local organizations.

A request from co-chair Newman-Greene to display number of students served versus number of total meals served. By focusing on the number of students currently served, this will allow the subcommittee to better identify how many students are still in need of meals and how to better strategize for further improvements. DeAngelis agreed to make this change for the upcoming H&W meeting in March. She also clarified that Sodexo is able to also capture a 40% participation rate based on their sales figures compared to last school year.

Lenart added that the holiday meals distribution also allowed Sodexo to see that mostly elementary school students are utilizing these services at the Grab and Go sites and that more work is needed to appeal to the secondary school students. He also emphasized that those currently utilizing the sites are receiving more meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks) than students had in prior school years when in person learning only allowed for breakfast and lunch consumption. Therefore, while fewer students might be served during the pandemic, those we are able to serve are receiving more food than in previous school years.

Paolino inquired about the continuation of the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program. She recently attended a Woonsocket Wellness Committee meeting where the Sodexo representative was able to use the FFVP elementary program funds to provide fresh fruits and vegetables in their meal distributions and was wondering if it would be possible for PPSD to do the same. Lenart replied that Sodexo and PPSD were hoping to restart FFVP, but waivers must be signed and have their plan approved by RIDE. PPSD had to prioritize the income surveys this month instead for continued CEP eligibility, but there are plans to revisit FFVP at another time and leverage those funds and the best practices of other districts.

DeAngelis has also been putting up posters and holding raffles to win Air Pods at the secondary levels to increase meal participation through student surveys and also lend support to encourage income survey responses. Co-chair Grossi requested that these two endeavors be made action items for the subcommittee and that members provide support as needed.

Nurse Malloy and co-chair Grossi offered to lend ongoing support to encourage students at Gilbert Stuart and to follow up with other educators at other secondary schools for both action items and reconnect with DeAngelis. Viccione also offered her support at the elementary level.

Wetherill asked if there were plans to survey parents. DeAngelis explained that at the moment, the district is conducting other surveys and that she will revisit a parent survey at a later date. Wetherill is willing to share best practices in order to help increase food access for students and families, such as QR codes that will link to surveys or cooking tutorials.

Nurse Malloy also inquired about other ways to have volunteers help distribute meals along with the City of Providence's Park Departments has been currently doing. A follow up meeting with Parks has been requested.

DeAngelis will also follow up with the Family and Community Engagement Office and reconnect with Wetherill on next steps to increase meal participation.

PLANNING

8. New Business

Planning includes action steps to follow up for Recess Rocks and the student and income service distributes as well as overall meal participation.

DeAngelis also will share out a request for volunteers to help at distribution sites next week.

9. Announcements

The Physical Activity and Nutrition subcommittee will next meet on April 14, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

10. Adjourn Meeting

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m.
MSV- DeAngelis, Paolino (9-0) MOTION APPROVED