



MINUTES

Providence School Board Health & Wellness Committee Meeting

Pursuant to Executive Order 20-25 issued by the Governor of Rhode Island, the Providence School Board held this meeting remotely. A recording is available on the Providence School Board YouTube channel at bit.ly/pvdschoolboard

April 27, 2021

CONVENE MEETING

1. Call Meeting to Order - Committee Chair Diagneris Garcia called the meeting to order at 5:08p.m.

In Attendance:

Diagnery Garcia, H&W Chair
Solight Sou, PPSD Wellness Coordinator
Linda Grossi, PPSD HPE and co-chair
Dana Benton Johnson, PPSD Specialized Instruction Manager
Julie Malloy, PPSD School nurse
Mark Jeffrey, Sodexo District Manager
Kerrilynn Viccione, PPSD
Lisa Hoopis, Sojourner House and co-chair
Rachel Newman-Greene, Healthy Communities Office and co-chair
Kelly DeAngelis, Sodexo Director of Sustainability and Student Engagement
Karin Wetherill, RIHSC
Paula Paolino, URI SNAP-Ed

APPROVE AGENDA

2. Approve Agenda as presented
A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented
MSV – DeAngelis, Newman-Greene (13-0) MOTION APPROVED

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of Minutes - 12/26/20, 6/24/20, 01/22/20
A motion was made to approve the minutes 12/26/20 and 06/24/20 with an amendment to move the 01/22/20 minutes to another meeting
MSV - DeAngelis, Grossi (13-0) MOTION APPROVED

COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL UPDATES

4. Welcome and introduction
Chair Garcia welcomed everyone to the meeting.
5. Comments from the Community/Guests

Newman-Greene announced that City of Providence's Healthy Communities Office has hired a new director, Laurie Maoise Sears, who will join future meetings.

PRESENTATIONS

6. Sodexo Metrics Report

DeAngelis provided a Powerpoint presentation with updates from December 2020 - February 2021 on the following:

- Food Service Mission
- Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics
 - Challenges and Opportunities
- School Vacation Distributions
- Next Quarter Preview
- Questions

Sodexo's mission statement was shared ("Prepare all students for learning by ensuring access to quality nutritious meals with a focus on environmental sustainability and financial stewardship") along with its four goal areas:

1. Link student nutrition to academic achievement
2. Increase student participation in food program
3. Engage parent and community in food program
4. Increase food program revenue to fund the strategic plan

Additionally, Sodexo has identified a priority question to support monitoring and success: Is what I am doing now contribution to student achievement?

DeAngelis touched on progress with qualitative and quantitative metrics while addressing ongoing challenges for the food service program. These challenges that impacted the metrics include:

- Covid-related obstacles - quarantines, classroom closures, school closures
- Lost serving days - snow days, January's phased-in student return
- Staffing challenges
- Student participation challenges
- Income surveys proved to be a hurdle that required support from the Child Nutrition Program in order to achieve a broader collection

Within these challenges, Sodexo was able to identify opportunities that required great flexibility and a deeper prioritization of safety. Several new staff members were also hired, along with improved and expanded coordination with Central Office's Strategic Communications department, Operations, and Family and Community Engagement Office to further support Wellness.

Deepened collaboration with RIDE resulted in improved vacation meal distributions at Grab and Go sites, along with opportunities to work with teachers and community partners in and out of schools. There was also development of student surveys to offer student-centered school meal options and new social media presence through Twitter and Facebook were also created.

Through prioritization and ongoing support from Sodexo to collect annual income surveys, PPDS was able to grow from 65% participation to 84%. Additionally, 14 raffles for Air Pods in February helped secure district funding amounting to tens of millions of dollars through these surveys.

School vacation distributions included 2 holiday breaks in December and February. These distributions take-home packages and home deliveries at all 8 Grab and Go sites. Participation in December resulted in 9,534 students participating and 412,360 meals served. In February, the numbers grew to 12,807 students participating and 245,180 meals served. Offerings from local partners included Steere Orchard, Gotham Greens, ICM, Shri, Calise Bakery, Jeff's Granola, and The Pizza Gourmet.

In addition to offering take-home meals during holidays, Sodexo also provides them during PD days when students are distance learning.

Events from March to further engage students included the first middle school feedback session and Student Advisory Team convening, a virtual cooking class with local chef Brian Dinan from Los Andes, and the introduction of a district-wide Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) at Grab and Go sites. Pre-pandemic, FFVP was only offered to elementary schools.

In April, there were bike raffles during vacation distribution, an elementary Vote & Be Heard survey pilot with support from URI SNAP-Ed, promotional events with Gotham Greens and Big Nazo, and ongoing community partnerships with URI SNAP Ed, URI Master Gardeners, and Farm Fresh RI. Volunteers were also in attendance to support meal distribution to families and students.

Sodexo is expanding their team and are currently seeking chef managers, cooks, and dedicated food service workers. Jeffrey also stated that a 2-minute video is also in production to further communicate to families and the community ongoing efforts to improve school meals.

Further comments and questions were delayed in order to provide the Healthy Relationships Subcommittee update.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

7. Healthy Relationships Subcommittee

Chair Garcia announced that due to co-chair's Hoopis limited time, the committee will next hear an update from the Healthy Relationships subcommittee. Co-chair Hoopis announced that with ongoing support from Supervisor Donna O'Connor and her team of school nurses and health and physical education educators, the subcommittee was able to access the health curriculum to review its contents specifically for sexual and reproductive health at a further date. An initial meeting with Supervisor O'Connor resulted in a sharing of subcommittee goals and sharing out the RIHSC Adolescent and Sexual Reproductive Health Assessment with her team. This self-assessment is derived from the CDC's School Health Index assessment.

Sou added that the subcommittee will also include student voice into the subcommittee's work.

Wetherill also mentioned that an advisory group has been formed and will be working with RIDE

and RIHSC to update the health curriculum frameworks and that this will be helpful to the group.

Newman-Greene inquired if the curriculum is accessible online. Hoopis replied that a request from Central Office was made to the IT Department and it is in process. The curriculum is approximately seven years old and was created with support from a consultant and a health leadership team.

At the conclusion of the Healthy Relationships update, Chair Garcia returned to more questions and comments regarding the Sodexo metrics report. She asked what plans were underway for summer. DeAngelis said that multi-day meals will be offered at several school sites in conjunction to single day meals offered by the City's Park and Recreation Department. These locations have not yet been determined. In addition to this, there will also be paid summer youth opportunities available through Sodexo where a small group of students will help plan, manage, and maintain Hope High School's new school garden. Over the summer months, continued prioritization and planning of the upcoming school year will focus on breakfast in the classroom and customer service.

Chair Garcia said ongoing efforts to streamline health and wellness communications and updates are underway with the support of Wellness Coordinator Sou. This might include a more accessible social media platform for the co-chairs to better communicate with one another, and to also highlight all the work.

Wetherill offered support with the promotion of the multi-day meal sites and expressed concern about the amount of food and the heavy boxes being distributed during breaks. She wondered if it was a barrier to some families and hindering participation.

Benton Johson wondered if partnerships could be established to support transportation and also collaboration with local community centers as Gilbert Stuart has been doing. Newman-Greene mentioned that emergency food distributions also operate in a similar manner and arrange for distributions to their clients. DeAngelis said the Sodexo team will look into these options.

Chair Garcia requested that transportation assistance be coordinated as needed and that the City of Providence can also support this by having 311 provide any information for meals.

Jeffrey mentioned that Kristy Klausen from City Parks delivered COVID meals with 11 vans to serve the community's needs. Since last March, over 256,000 meals have been delivered.

8. Physical Health & Nutrition Subcommittee Update

Co-chair Grossi updated the committee on recent progress. With a heavy focus on nutrition, the recent subcommittee meeting featured a presentation from community gardener Doug Victor who explored potential gardening opportunities with schools. In January, a PD opportunity for Recess Rocks was offered to all elementary schools through RIHSC along with a digital Keep Playing subscription to support educators with remote learning and integrating SEL into active play. On May 17, another PD opportunity titled "Designing a Safe Return to Play" will be offered to support schools with safe recess and play for next school year.

Wetherill also shared out a program that with the American Diabetes Association that encouraged students to partake in virtual play sessions from home. As an incentive, every child who registers receives a box containing a jump rope, hacky sack and t-shirt. Any school or

district that registered with 75 student participants will receive a \$1500 stipend.

Paolino added that on May 17th will also be a virtual PD through URI SNAP Ed for health and physical education teachers. They will offer a new virtual Team Up to Change curriculum, new electronic Jeopardy and I-Spy games. Secondary educators have requested resources for meal planning and budgeting with bilingual materials. All educators will receive a book on sports nutrition titled Feeding the Young Athlete. Grossi shared that the educators love the PDs from URI SNAP Ed and the resources they offer.

Chair Garcia requested some screenshots from the PD.

9. Social Emotional Subcommittee Update

Co-chair Benton-Johnson shared that the subcommittee met on March 11th and were joined by Young Voices and the Empowerment Factory. The subcommittee's mission is to rebrand, build connections and showcase the availability of local resources. Young Voices led the discussion about the work they are doing in the schools and community and Gail Ahyers from the Empowerment Factory presented on the programs she has offered throughout RI. Co-chair Dinklage added that she was deeply impressed by the 3 young women who presented for Young Voices and highlighted their initiatives such as the Leadership Academy, Girl Power and a community improvement project course that is peer led.

Chair Garcia mentioned serving on the board of Steambox and their innovative efforts to maintain connections with students through podcasts. These podcasts feature interviews with students and individuals and she recommended that this be something this particular subcommittee could look into to further engage and archive the work they are doing. She shared out the podcasts for examples.

DeAngelis mentioned that she would love the opportunity to further collaborate with SEH to discuss the role of nutrition and Farm to School. Benton Johnson inquired if there would be an opportunity for Sodexo to provide meals to families affected by tragedies such as house fires and deaths. She requested strengthened communication to collaborate and support these families.

Benton Johnson also added that an SEL Toolkit is underway through the district as well as an increases in RISAS presence in the high schools. Ongoing collaborations with DCYF and HEZ continue to be built as well as pursuit of RIDE funds to offer trainings to support school staff. May will be mental health awareness month and the district is receptive to any supports offered.

PLANNING

10. Future Meeting Dates

The committee will next meet on June 16, 2021 at 5:00 PM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

11. Announcements

There were no announcements.

ADJOURN

12. Adjourn Meeting

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 PM

MSV – Grossi, DeAngelis (13-0) MOTION APPROVED