

## Eden Prairie Schools Wellness meeting

Date of meeting: 1-28-2021 (3pm on Zoom)

Attending: Jason Mutzenberger, Kristin Treptow, Roxann Roushar, Herman Moncada, Chuck Knuth, Amanda Nagy, Amy Antilla, Summer Beecher, Jenn Krajacic and Emily Colaizy

Agenda:

1. Jason gave a recap of where we left off back in 2019 and our agenda for this meeting.
2. Roxann presented a breakdown of how many meals the district served during this past year while dealing with Covid issues. After school was moved to off-site learning, they served 157,144 meals plus 30K summer meals last year. This year they have served 128K on-site and 172K off-site. The district is not serving nearly as many as they normally would be due to the Covid restrictions. Almost 1,000 families signed up to receive meals off site (delivery to bus stops, pick up at schools curbside and some to their actual location).
3. Roxann and Jason informed the committee how Covid has affected staffing and the food service financials.
  - a. Twenty-two food service staff were laid off and remaining staff's hours were reduced by one day's hours.
  - b. The food service fund is normally required to have three months of cash flow cushion plus funds needed for equipment of which approximately \$650K has been depleted and now food service is running in the red to the tune of \$275K.
  - c. The district has a fund balance for times such as these so food service will pull from this fund to keep operations. The district can run in the red for up to three years but with the Covid vaccine making its way around to our population there is anticipation that next school year will be much more normal.
4. Roxann discussed the food service department's new master tag line "Food Inspires" with catchy monthly themes like "Squeeze the Day with Citrus", "Learn to Love Legumes" and "Why Try Rye". This is a collaborative effort to get kids to try new foods and locally sourced ingredients. This theme is on all of EP schools' individual web pages, and there is a link to direct all sites to the main food service web page for more detailed information.
5. Amanda discussed the SHIP Grant for this school year. The grant provides funds from Hennepin County to promote Healthy Eating (about \$5K), Physical Activity (about \$5k) and a Vaping prevention awareness video (\$600). Much of the funds this year have gone to buy equipment.
6. Jason spoke about how the "Cares Fund" (Covid help/funds from the federal government) to the tune of about \$3.4M is all gone but there is a second round coming soon of \$2.8M which will greatly help the district remain financially solvent.
7. Chuck asked about CMS construction, and Jason informed the group that construction on our middle school is slightly ahead of schedule and is on budget! This will give the 6-8<sup>th</sup> grades an incredible

learning experience. Thankfully, the kitchen and cafeteria, which will have significant changes to them, are not being affected by the Covid budget restrictions.

8. Kristin discussed how Covid restrictions are affecting food service; we cannot do offer vs serve style of grab and go lunches – so all the lunches have all the components which costs more and some kids don't like all the options (oranges vs apples) so the concern is that there may be more food waste. The district is working to get more recipes (such as apple crisp) to families so they can use up any extra food from the meals they receive or take home. It was noted how amazing it has been to see such a collaborative effort from the school staff to get the meals out to families (bus drivers, social workers, teachers, community members and kitchen staff).
9. Jenn and Roxann talked about how all the meals this year are “free” and that they encourage all families that have kids attending EP Schools to take a meal as the government reimburses EP schools for each breakfast and lunch. There has been much marketing to get the word out, but the volume is down because many families feed their kids at home with online learning being in place. It was also noted that the left-over meals that were not picked up from that day's pre-order inventory are (as much as possible) repurposed. For example apples can be sent out for onsite meals the next day.
10. Kristin talked about how difficult it has been to keep up with the ever-changing routine to serve meals due to Covid restrictions. The meals need different packaging for Grab & Go, delivered, and on-site meals plus shelving and extra space for on-site eating. Staffing is not as efficient as in past years since the district is reacting weekly to regulation changes. Even the district's main food suppliers are constantly “shorting” the food on orders, so substitutions are almost daily. Special meals to students with specific needs (for example, gluten free) are still being distributed.
11. Roxann informed us of four grants the district applied for and received.
  - a. Hennepin County Grant – Helped EP Schools buy refrigerators to store milk and fresh fruit.
  - b. Agriculture Grant – Provided milk coolers for more space for distance learning meals.
  - c. Ship Grant – Provided flex-shelving to help stage distance learning meals for pick up.
  - d. Covid-19 Grant – Provided packaging and food safety.
12. Kristin informed us of four other grants food service has applied for this year (many are about \$5K)
  - a. USDA Grant – Farm to School “Try it Today” to acquire local ingredients and foods into lunches (such as green beans, honey, rye flour...)
  - b. USDA Grant (pending) First Bite - More farm to school sourcing of local products.
  - c. USDA Grant – For packing materials.
  - d. USDA Grant – For equipment to support new packaging needs.
13. Next meeting is to be determined but it will be this spring in 2021 (3pm, likely on Zoom again).