

Wellness Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 12, 2023

2:30 pm

NRHEG Media Center, New Richland or remote

Members: Carrie Petsinger, Beth Schoenrock, Onika Peterson, Sara Meihak, Brooke Krohn, Dave Bunn, Craig Kopetzki, Dan Sorum, Karen Flatness, Samantha Joecks, Mary Urch, Payton Bunn, Kiyah Mikesell, Kiera Lenort, Wendy Schultz, Ashley Killday, Elizabeth Viktora, Melissa Karl, Aaron Phillips, and Mike Meihak

Members Present: Sara Meihak, Mike Meihak, Mary Urch, Carrie Petsinger, Dave Bunn, Craig Kopetzki, Mary Urch, Ashley Killday, Samantha Joecks, guest Gabrielle Alvarado (Health Educator and grant coordinator for Steele County Public Health)

Meeting Purpose: Discuss the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy (533: Wellness).

1. Review meeting minutes from 1/25/2023. These were reviewed and approved by members present. These will be posted online.
2. Current wellness concerns
 - a. Updated policy on [Web](#) and final approval was 2/21/2023. It is already active online.
 - b. Drinking fountain (Ellendale) - No updates. Drinking fountain is still not functional. The plan is to replace the drinking fountain with a used fountain/water bottle filler. Mr. Kopetzki will follow up with maintenance to see if we are waiting on parts or if we are waiting for the installation by a company.
 - c. MN student survey results
 - i. In order to find additional focus areas, we (Liz (school counselor), Brooke (school social worker), Public Health staff) will meet with students and get their perspective and assess staff to see where they feel their mental health needs exist. This will occur over the rest of the school year and into the fall of 2023. Public health will work on focus groups such as athletes, FCCLA, FCA, GSA, Student council, honor society, etc. to discuss the current stressors and towards the end, there is a small amount of education provided by public health.
 - ii. Focus areas
 1. Staff survey
 - a. Staff survey - review survey results. Survey was reviewed and shared with staff.
 - b. On March 27th Liz, Brooke, and Carrie met with interested teaching staff to discuss concerns - including classroom management techniques, what/when to send to social worker, counselor, nurse, etc. Liz, Brooke, and Carrie are

working on a document/resources to equip staff with in order for them to feel more comfortable.

2. Goals/Actions to meet goals

a. Staff & mental health issues

- i. On Jan 11th at staff late start, Greg Scheitel, Mental Health Consultant
- ii. Resources including Coping Skills Alphabet and Youth services directory were sent to all secondary licensed staff. The Coping Skills Alphabet was also sent to elementary licensed staff.
- iii. Liz & Brooke attended a training on Trauma informed schools and resiliency training. Carrie will also attend this training on April 20, 2023.
- iv. Key partners will work on surveying/gathering data on student perspectives of the mental health issues they are dealing with. This will occur over the rest of the school year and into the fall of 2023. Public health will work on focus groups such as athletes, FCCLA, FCA, GSA, Student council, honor society, etc. to discuss the current stressors and towards the end, there is a small amount of education provided by public health.

b. Parents & student technology

- i. Steele County Public Health will attend sporting events and an evening conference (April 24th) Public health will set up their big cell phone display and connect with students and parents - they ask 2 main questions - can you name that app? (to open up the conversation) and how do cell phones affect your friends?

- d. Tobacco Policy Review - The policy is compliant with requirements but there were a couple questions that arose - 1) is vaping education being provided for grades 6-8 as we have in the policy? Is there any other education provided to students? 2) How is the policy being shared with students and staff? This is done through the staff and student handbooks. Public health offered mini-sessions on the tobacco policy to staff, students, and public in the fall.

3. Roundtable/concern/questions - Gabrielle offered a few options for education for students including My Life, My Quit which is free and runs through the state of MN. It is available through an app. and consists of about a 1 month program with support. This has been used in other districts as an alternative to suspension when caught vaping in school. Waseca County is offering/working on multiple different things including a 4 full day training on how to handle resiliency and trauma. They also offered assisting in setting up a presenter on social emotional training. This training is offered to both staff and students. May 11th is going to be a "green out" which is where all community

members are encouraged to wear green to support and recognize that May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Also on May 11th Waseca will be hosting a seminar on MH & Suicide prevention for the community. This would include surrounding areas such as New Richland, Janesville, etc. There are also training resources from NAMI (national alliance for mental illness). United Way in Waseca is also doing a lot of work on mental health. Gabrielle also offered information on a program which is a student led group called YOLO (Youth Oriented Leadership Organization). This is a student-led peer to peer support regarding vaping and mental health. These student leaders at other schools have presented to 6th graders to help prevent vaping, improve health choices, and the student leaders talk about more concrete issues and outcomes of vaping. The student leaders receive a stipend of \$20/hr.

4. Next meeting date (must meet 4 times annually)
 - a. Fall 2023 - once the school year starts, Carrie will reach out to members to discuss the date of the fall meeting
5. Meeting Adjourned