



East Greenwich School Committee  
Health and Wellness Subcommittee Meeting

Monday, September 23, 2024  
10:30am  
Hybrid meeting  
East Greenwich High School and via Zoom

Minutes

Attendees: Emily Kendall, Andrea Coelho, Amanda Wallace, Molly Sylvia, Monique Herard, Karin Wetherill, Lisa Perry, Matthew Willis, Clare Cecil-Karb

Review of targets from last year

*Request for additional district social worker:*

The district increased social work presence through formation of a new position - a divided role within Cole Middle School. The new position is currently filled by one of the SWers who previously held a generalist social worker position in the district. There is a social worker currently on leave until November and so there are now two social workers covering all schools except Cole MS. As a result of shifting responsibilities combined with having a staff member out it is difficult to know whether the addition of this staff member will be impactful.

The Cole Social Worker is currently funded with Title funds that were previously used for an elementary school math specialist.

The High School recently had some challenges related to the return of the SOS survey - administered to all students. When a screening returns a certain score the EGHS staff will meet with the student for risk assessment. A score of 4 or 5 on this tool indicates the possibility of suicidal ideation or plan and necessitates a full risk assessment.

Completion of these assessments fell to the HS admin staff because there were limited Human Resources available.

The high school staff reported a related concern that the assigned SRO for the HS has been out on medical leave since last school year. The lack of an SRO means that the principal and ass't principal are completing arrival and dismissal alone. The group reflected concern that this staffing seems insufficient for safety.

The wellness committee suggested asking school administration and school committee to consider adding funding to hire a substitute SRO until the return of the primary SRO. It was noted that this role would previously have been filled by Colby Anderson.

The wellness committee also suggested that the EGSC and administration begin to create a plan to have one (full) social worker per building when the district transitions to having five buildings and to continue to increase the number of social workers incrementally until needs are met.



*Report from Ms. Sylvia- EGHS*

Participation in Stanford Med Res Lab pilot- Program is called “You & Me Vape Free” and is set to roll out to 9 and 10 grade. All students will have instruction. With parental permission, students will be incorporated into the study and will receive remuneration in the form of a \$10 gift card for participation. Suggestion to roll out program in middle school.

At the completion of the study year the district will receive \$1,000 stipend. Another stipend is available for the following year. Ms. Sylvia intends to request that the district use stipend money for a vapor detector to use in a school restroom.

The committee recommends that the district review the Tobacco/Nicotine campus policy to make sure that the policy is in line with the strategy of keeping kids in school after a rule is broken. This is a different approach than previous strategies which might recommend suspension for serial infractions.

*Report on new cell phone policy EGHS, community read “The Anxious Generation”*

High school staff reports that the policy has been well received by many. Students report that there are mixed feelings among the youth at school and that being prevented from using phones during lunch feels excessive. The group suggested designating a space in the office for students to use phones to call or text parents. Group members expressed concern that students may not know that they should use office phones to contact parents. There are also reports that parents are frustrated by not being able to communicate with students. Community read meeting this Wednesday.

*Food/exercise wellness update (Dr. Willis) -* Dr. Willis is working with Ashley Cronin from Barrington RI to work on providing curriculum that includes best practices for talking about food/exercise and evidence based interventions to lessen the chance that school curricula will promote restrictive eating/disordered behavior. The committee suggested inviting Bob Downey to speak to the group and answer any questions. Update from Karin W. Regarding adolescent sexual health survey- this is pending building leadership. Dr. Ricca will give report at the next meeting that he is able to attend.

*Discussion/planning for school year meetings including future topics and meeting dates*  
- Wellness committee will continue to try to meet more often for shorter meeting times.

*The Health and Wellness Subcommittee of the EG School Committee serves in an advisory capacity only. Meetings are open to the public. Subcommittee members are drawn from the School Committee, the District and the community. The Health and Wellness Subcommittee is in accordance with RIGL 16-21-18. Its role is to promote, support and recommend best practice policies, programs and initiatives to enhance the overall health and well-being of students and staff while meeting federal and state guidelines. Oversight includes child nutrition, physical activity programs and mental health issues.*