



## East Greenwich School Committee

### Health and Wellness Subcommittee Meeting

Monday, November 18, 2024

10:30am

Hybrid meeting

In Person at: East Greenwich High School - 2nd Floor Conf. Room  
300 Avenger Drive, East Greenwich, RI

### Minutes/Summary

Committee discussed the health and wellness leaders breakfast which had higher attendance than any in previous years. Many representatives of the district were present with much enthusiasm for the topics. Particularly school lunch programs.

The group discussed the resources and presentations from the Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition breakfast. The resources, including slide decks and exhibitor guides, were available on their website. Karin also announced the rollout of a new web app designed to provide medically accurate information on sexual and reproductive health to young people. She explained that the app was designed to be mobile-friendly and accessible, with no registration or collection of user information.

#### Rhode Island Training - School Health Regulations

Karin discussed a potential training opportunity with the Rhode Island Department of Education to learn about school health regulations. The group considers inviting various teams and stakeholders to attend the presentation.

#### School Bathroom Infrastructure and Safety

Subcommittee discussed the need for more infrastructure in the school bathrooms to prevent vandalism and ensure student safety. They considered the installation of cameras and electronic hall pass systems to monitor student movement and identify potential issues. Anticipating the implementation of the Stanford Reach curriculum for 9th graders, which includes interventions for students caught vaping in school. Panel members discussed the school's policy on vaping and tobacco use among students. They acknowledge that many students are addicted and cannot go through the day without vaping. A model policy from the Rhode Island Department of Health moves away from punitive measures and towards a more restorative and supportive approach, providing resources to help students quit. Dr. Willis suggests that families receive referral to consult with PCP offices to evaluate the need for nicotine replacement products like patches or gum for students caught vaping, so they can get through the day without suffering withdrawal symptoms. The discussion highlights the



need for a compassionate approach that recognizes vaping as an addiction rather than just misbehavior.

### Vape Detector/Upgrades

Molly Sylvia discussed potential security upgrades and funding sources for vape detectors and security cameras in school bathrooms. She mentions that some previous upgrades were supported by the state education department, and suggests exploring reimbursement programs or grants. The group will consult with policy subcommittee to update school's tobacco-free policy. The Stanford study will provide limited funding at the end of the year which can be put toward vape detection.

### Health Education and Wellness Policies

The committee and district admin plan to roll out a self-assessment tool created by the Healthy Schools Coalition. Admin will begin administering a staff survey on adolescent sexual health education, with plans to have specific staff members like health educators and nurses complete it anonymously. Asst Sup Sarah will coordinate its distribution.

### Managing Student Phone Usage Challenges

The panel discussed the challenges of managing student phone usage in schools, particularly during lunchtime. Ms. Sylvia shared her experiences from a previous incident in another school where students were allowed to use their phones during an evacuation, which led to confusion and difficulties for the school administration. They agreed that the policy of keeping phones in backpacks during school hours is effective, but acknowledged the difficulties in enforcing it.

### **Meeting adjourned.**

*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.*