MILLVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Wellness Committee Meeting Minutes November 5, 2026

Dr. Rasmus called the Millville Area School District Wellness Committee Meeting to order at 1:09 pm.

Committee Members Present: Alex Cavallini and Corey Whitmoyer

Administration/Staff/Others Present: Dr. Joseph Rasmus, Superintendent; Whitney Holloway, Business Manager; Matt Mills, Jr./Sr. High School Principal; Brandon Gordner, Elementary Principal; Chelsea Rosenberger, Board Secretary; Fritz, Student Services; McKenzie Johnson, School Nurse; Rachel Verstraeten and Katie Sick, Physical Education teachers.

- Metz Culinary Management Representatives: Andrew Chandler, Amy Costanzo, Steve Belles, and Rhonda Wildt.

Introduction

Dr. Rasmus began by reviewing the purpose of the Wellness Committee and explained that the committee's responsibilities include reviewing the District's food service program, nutrition education, physical education, school nursing services, Wellness Policy implementation, and the required triennial assessment.

Metz Culinary Management – Food Service Program

- Mr. Steve Belles began with a brief overview presentation that would be shared with students. He emphasized the importance of including students in the Wellness Committee process.
  - Dr. Rasmus agreed that student participation is essential and suggested involving student council representatives from both schools to provide meaningful feedback regarding school meals, food preferences, and opportunities for program improvement.
- Mr. Belles discussed providing students with information regarding meal requirements, nutrition standards, and food service operations before seeking feedback.
  - Mr. Mills emphasized that student representatives should have sufficient time to gather information and opinions from their peers.
  - Mr. Andrew Chandler suggested utilizing a student survey to gather feedback from a broader group of students.
  - Dr. Rasmus expressed concern that an unrestricted survey might generate responses that would not provide useful information for program planning. He suggested that administrative guidance and structured questions could improve the quality of feedback.
  - Ms. Amy Costanzo supported face-to-face meetings with student representatives. She suggested identifying specific topics for discussion and allowing representatives approximately one month to gather information from classmates before returning with feedback.
  - Dr. Rasmus supported this approach and emphasized the importance of establishing a process in which students take responsibility for gathering meaningful information. He emphasized the need to include elementary and middle school students, recognizing that their experiences and nutritional needs differ from those of high school students.

- ➢ Mr. Belles explained that Metz could provide age-appropriate information regarding nutrition, calorie requirements, meal components, and menu planning.

❖ Next, Mr. Belles provided an overview of the nutritional requirements governing school breakfast and lunch programs. He explained that school meals must meet federal and state nutritional guidelines, including requirements for caloric ranges based on grade levels; required meal components; fruits and vegetables; whole grains; protein and meat alternatives; sodium and added-sugar limitations; and appropriate portion sizes. Mr. Belles discussed using educational posters and other materials to explain what constitutes a reimbursable school meal. He noted that many students and families do not understand the nutritional regulations that determine menu offerings and portion sizes.

- ➢ Dr. Rasmus requested additional explanation regarding restrictions on certain food purchases.
- ➢ Mr. Belles reviewed the federal Buy American requirements and explained that certain foods, including bananas and other fruits not commonly grown domestically, are subject to purchasing limitations. He explained that the program must monitor non-domestic food purchases and document applicable exceptions.
- ➢ Committee members discussed how these requirements affect food availability and menu selections.
- ➢ Dr. Rasmus noted that greater understanding of these regulations could help address concerns from families and staff regarding school meal portions and food choices.

❖ Mr. Belles reviewed the nutritional information available through SchoolCafé. He explained that the system provides information regarding menu items, nutritional content, and meal components.

- ➢ Dr. Rasmus questioned whether Ms. Johnson had access to the information, particularly for students with diabetes and other medical conditions requiring nutritional monitoring.
- ➢ Ms. Johnson confirmed that she has access to SchoolCafé and uses the information when assisting students.
- ➢ Dr. Rasmus expressed concern about situations in which staffing shortages or other unexpected circumstances require substitutions to the published menu.
- ➢ Ms. Johnson explained that students generally bring the packaging from prepackaged food items to her office, allowing her to review nutritional information and calculate carbohydrates as needed.
- ➢ The committee acknowledged that emergency menu changes must be managed carefully to ensure students with medical needs receive appropriate support.

❖ Mr. Belles reviewed culinary promotions previously offered or planned, including: Back-to-School Carnival; Street Eats; Holiday Meals; Try It Tuesday; Oats Your Way; Big Game Meal; and Opening Day Grill.

- ➢ Mr. Gordner questioned whether these activities would also be offered at the elementary school.

- ➢ Mr. Belles confirmed that activities would be provided at both buildings, although programming would be adjusted according to grade level and student interest.

❖ Dr. Rasmus asked Ms. Sick whether elementary students receive instruction on reading nutrition labels.

- ➢ Ms. Sick explained that nutrition education is incorporated into physical education activities when possible, but instructional time is limited. She prioritizes keeping students physically active while introducing basic health and nutrition concepts. She indicated that additional nutrition education provided by Metz would be beneficial.

❖ Mr. Cavallini questioned whether the District could make more information regarding school meal requirements and nutrition available through the District website.

- ➢ Mr. Belles indicated that Metz could provide educational information but cautioned that presenting too much information at once may reduce the likelihood that families will read it.
- ➢ Dr. Rasmus supported expanding the information available on the District website. He explained that parents frequently question meal portions and food selections without understanding the regulations governing school meals. He suggested developing a regular nutrition education feature that could include information regarding meal requirements, healthy eating, and food service operations.
- ➢ Mr. Mills questioned whether parents are sufficiently aware of the nutritional information already available through SchoolCafé.
- ➢ The committee discussed the possibility of providing monthly nutritional information and highlighting existing resources.

Food Service Program Growth and Participation

❖ Mr. Belles discussed the District's participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) and its effect on school meal participation. He explained that Metz continues to monitor breakfast and lunch participation and evaluate opportunities for program growth.

- ➢ Mrs. Holloway explained that the District recently experienced a significant decrease in the number of directly certified students.
- ➢ Ms. Costanzo explained that direct certification identifies students who qualify through certain assistance programs without requiring a separate school meal application. She indicated that changes affecting direct certification are occurring statewide.
- ➢ Mrs. Holloway expressed concern regarding the potential impact on future CEP eligibility.
- ➢ The committee discussed factors affecting participation.

❖ Mr. Chandler questioned the length of time the District's CEP eligibility calculation remains established.

- ➢ Mrs. Holloway discussed the multiyear eligibility period and explained that determining the most advantageous time to reapply can be challenging.

- ➢ Dr. Rasmus questioned whether other districts have experienced difficulty maintaining CEP participation.
- ➢ Mr. Chandler indicated that, among approximately 80 Pennsylvania schools with which he was familiar, only one had opted out of the program. He explained that the district had not fully understood the process and was experiencing negative financial implications.
- ➢ Dr. Rasmus emphasized the importance of monitoring the District's eligibility information and maintaining the benefits of CEP for students and families.

❖ Mr. Belles discussed the transition of high school breakfast service to the hallway near the student entrance.

- ➢ Dr. Rasmus questioned whether the new process was operating effectively.
- ➢ Mr. Mills reported that the program is working well and that no significant issues have been identified.
- ➢ The committee discussed the benefits of allowing students to obtain breakfast as they enter the building.

❖ Dr. Rasmus requested an update regarding elementary breakfast service.

- ➢ Mr. Gordner explained that additional breakfast options were introduced in October. However, staffing shortages required the building to reduce the number of available options.
- ➢ Dr. Rasmus emphasized that the goal is to restore additional breakfast options, including hot breakfast offerings, once food service staffing stabilizes.
- ➢ Mrs. Wildt confirmed that this remains the goal.
- ➢ The committee acknowledged the importance of maintaining clear communication regarding menu availability.

MASD Policy 246: School Wellness Review

❖ Dr. Rasmus initiated a discussion regarding the District's health and physical education curriculum.

- ➢ Ms. Rachel Verstraeten explained that tenth-grade health instruction is shared with Ms. Sick. She reviewed topics addressed in health classes as well as the Sports Nutrition elective, which includes instruction regarding nutritional labels, nutrients, and healthy food choices. She expressed concern that many students enter these courses with limited knowledge of basic nutrition.
- ➢ Mr. Gordner emphasized the need for more comprehensive health education at the elementary level.

❖ Dr. Rasmus questioned whether the District's current programming adequately addresses all applicable health and physical education standards.

- ➢ Ms. Verstraeten expressed concern that the District is not able to address all standards as comprehensively as desired.
- ➢ Dr. Rasmus asked what changes would be necessary to improve the program.
- ➢ Ms. Verstraeten discussed changes to the District's health and physical education program over the years. She explained that students previously received substantially more physical education instruction and had access to additional health-related courses. She noted that the District has experienced reductions in instructional time, staffing, and elective offerings. Ms. Verstraeten

emphasized that students are increasingly sedentary, making it important to preserve time for physical activity.
- ➢ Dr. Rasmus acknowledged that the District is meeting the minimum requirements established under Chapter 4 regulations. However, he emphasized that meeting minimum requirements does not necessarily mean the District is providing the most comprehensive program possible.
- ➢ Ms. Verstraeten noted that students' exposure to additional health and nutrition instruction varies depending on the electives they select.

- ❖ Mr. Gordner discussed previous conversations regarding the possibility of returning to a full-time elementary physical education teacher.
  - ➢ Mr. Mills noted that an additional physical education position could also create scheduling flexibility at the secondary level and allow for expanded health instruction.
  - ➢ Mr. Cavallini expressed concern regarding the likelihood of Board support for an additional position, noting that other departments also have staffing and instructional needs.
  - ➢ Dr. Rasmus acknowledged that any staffing changes would require further consideration of educational priorities and budgetary implications.
- ❖ Dr. Rasmus reviewed updated policy language regarding student height and weight measurements, emphasizing that such measurements must be handled in a manner that protects student privacy and confidentiality.
- ❖ Dr. Rasmus reviewed the new Wellness Policy language addressing social media literacy. He discussed the importance of educating students about the mental, psychological, and physical effects of social media and mobile device use.
- ❖ Then, Dr. Rasmus reviewed policy requirements governing food-related fundraising activities. He explained that fundraising activities involving foods that do not meet applicable nutritional standards are subject to restrictions.
  - ➢ The committee discussed the limitation of five exempt fundraisers per building during the school year.
  - ➢ Mr. Mills indicated that the District needs to review its current fundraising practices to ensure compliance.
- ❖ Dr. Rasmus reviewed policy language addressing classroom parties and celebrations.
  - ➢ Discussion included limitations on the frequency of celebrations, communication with families, healthier food choices, and food safety.

School Nursing Initiatives and Priorities

- ❖ Mrs. Fritz reviewed recent efforts to improve the District's school nursing services. She explained that Ms. Johnson has been reviewing student health plans to ensure required information is current and complete.
  - ➢ Dr. Rasmus recognized the significant work completed by Ms. Johnson since joining the District.
- ❖ Mrs. Fritz reported that the District has obtained additional emergency medical supplies, including rescue medications and related equipment.
  - ➢ Ms. Johnson explained that she identified outdated oral airway equipment in the Jr./Sr. High School and that it was replaced.

- Ms. Fritz discussed improvements to medication storage procedures. She explained that the District has been reviewing requirements for medications that must be secured using double-lock procedures.
- Ms. Fritz explained that Ms. Johnson has been working to establish a consistent presence in both buildings.
    - Dr. Rasmus thanked Ms. Johnson for her flexibility and commitment to meeting student needs.
- Dr. Rasmus discussed the District's responsibility to address the medical needs of students participating in extracurricular activities. He explained that the District has been reviewing guidance regarding students who require emergency rescue medications outside the regular school day. Dr. Rasmus explained that additional conversations with parents may be necessary to establish clear expectations regarding medical support.

Triennial Wellness Policy Assessment

- Mrs. Holloway facilitated the committee's review of the required triennial Wellness Policy assessment. She explained that the assessment evaluates the District's implementation of Policy 246 and identifies areas in which additional work may be necessary.
    - Committee members reviewed the assessment indicators and discussed whether each requirement was fully in place; partially in place; or not in place. The committee considered existing District practices, instructional programming, food service operations, student wellness activities, and policy implementation.
- The committee reviewed the representation of stakeholders involved in wellness planning. Members acknowledged that the committee includes Board members, administrators, instructional staff, nursing personnel, and food service representatives. Student participation was identified as an area requiring improvement.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned the meeting at 2:54 pm.

Chelsea Rosenberger
Board Recording Secretary