

## MINUTES OF MEETING

Wayland Wellness Committee

Meeting of: February 15, 2023

Present: Jason Verhoosky, Michele Schuckel, BJ Cataldo, Cheryl Judd, Scott Parseghian, Heather Yates

Assessment of the Wellness Policy:

The Committee began this discussion at its first meeting of the year. They reviewed who needs to be a committee member, and sought out candidates. They set up the meetings for the school year.

Scott Parseghian provided a quick recap of the Wellness Committee. He explained that when Richard Whitehead, Director of Students Services left, no more meetings were held and then Covid hit.

BJ Cataldo said since she is in an interim position, she thinks for the sake of stability that the K-12 Wellness Director remain in charge of the Committee. Scott Parseghian concurred.

At the second meeting, the Assessment continued with the committee reviewing the current policy and discussing the need for an increase in Wellness Education in the district.

Review of Minutes of 2/14/23: Motion by Heather Yates, second by BJ Cataldo to approve. The minutes were approved 3 in favor; 3 abstentions.

Health and PE Update: Scott Parseghian announced that tonight a puberty meeting is being kicked off with all 5th grade parents. He said an email was sent out to the parents on Monday with the presentation. Last year 2-3 parents were against it because of some of the material included in the presentation.

Budget: Scott Parseghian said PE didn't make it into the budget this year. It was tabled until next year. Scott put in a grant for the Wayland Public Foundation. It will be for a .2 5th grade teacher.

A Middle School teacher went out in October. She hasn't returned. There have been no applicants for the position. The position is difficult to fill because the teacher is hoping to return, but it is uncertain when. They have been doing the best they can. Two part time positions are open that cannot be filled.

The High School seems to be doing fine except for the uptick of mental health concerns. Work is going to be done with the students since suicidal thoughts and

actions have increased. The lack of people to assist the students is alarming. Parents are on 18-month waitlists.

BJ Cataldo asked, is there a way to be able to bridge the Counseling Department and the Health and Wellness Department? Classroom teachers aren't able to teach because they are on the phones all night with parents. This isn't in their purview, but there's a lack of resources.

BJ Cataldo recommended that when you return to school in September that the Superintendent and Curriculum person start the conversation to get the budget project going. Michele Schuckel asked if the conversation should be started now? Should a separate mental health group be getting together to talk now rather than just this committee that only meets quarterly?

There may be more clarity where Central Office is heading by the Committee's next meeting.

BJ Cataldo suggested getting on the agenda of the new School Committee to discuss SEL.

Jason Verhoosky provided a brief description of what he has been doing. He said data has been shared internally and with the community on the Metrowest Adolescent Survey. He said the meetings have not been heavily attended. Mental health indicators is the largest area of concern. Anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts/attempts have increased. Some data about the impact associated with Covid exists. This data was collected in Fall 2021. There has been some feedback from students that the survey was not as confidential as it should have been.

Some of the other areas of concern: substance abuse, including vaping. Vape products are being used regularly.

People are struggling with people who want to stop but cannot. Educational programs will continue in the Spring

Gearing up to redo the survey in the Fall 2023

Data will be available in the Spring of 2024

There are questions that are added by the district. These include questions on healthy relationships and dating violence. Forced sexual interactions and physical altercations in the home have been reported.

A Youth Social Night for Middle School students took place. Ninety students attended last week's event. It was well received by both students and adults.

Empower Program is held 7th grade through High School during the summer. Teambuilding, problem-solving skills are learned. Approximately, 20 students attend, free of charge.

Coming up on the season where there is a spike in healthy relationship issues. The Wellness Department will be trying to stay on top of this.

School Lunch Program: An update was provided on school lunch. Free meals for all has resulted in an increase in participation. Breakfast participation is increasing at all of the schools.

Sports Betting: Most kids have out of state accounts for betting. Problem gambling is 1% in adults. Michele Schuckel has a lot of information on this topic. She will try to get some of the information into school newsletters.

If there's a way to participate and provide information, she will help. It's about choices.

Scott Parseghian said it could be added to senior curriculum. He said it's something he can explore.

Michele Schuckel provided additional information for the Committee: All 8th graders will get CPR certified. The district is getting new AEDs. She said we need to be more prepared for a cardiac arrest.

Jason Verhoosky left the meeting at 8:50 a.m.  
BJ Cataldo left at 9:05 a.m.

It will be determined where AEDs are needed around Town.

Alcohol sales are up. Parents are drinking with their kids in high school.

Fake prescription drugs are on the rise.

All nurses have Narcam.

Cocaine use in freshmen and sophomores is on the rise.

Michele Schuckel said she applied for a grant for substance abuse

The next meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2023 at 8:00 a.m.

Motion to adjourn by Heather Yates, seconded by Michele Schuckel. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Cheryl Judd