

## Notes for February 26, 2009 meeting

### Nutrition & Wellness Committee

#### Members in attendance:

CSH Director of Physical Education: Jim Amen  
Heart Links Project Coordinator (outgoing): Kara Andreski  
Heart Links Coordinator (incoming): Anu Bhatt  
Chairperson, Principal, Goosehill Primary School: Lydia Bellino  
Wellness committee representative: Helen Daly  
GPS parent representative: Liz Flynn  
GPS representative and Nutrition Committee Historian: Barbara Grieco  
Principal, West Side Elementary School: Lynn Herschlein  
CSH Board of Education representative: Robert Hughes  
FOCUS parent representative: Dorrie Paolano  
WSS parent representative: Stephanie Schandler  
CSH High School parent representative: Stephanie Schiff  
CSH School District Director of Food and Nutrition: Gerri Tiger  
Superintendent and District Office representative: Judy Wilansky  
Assistant Principal, CSH High School: Helen Browne  
Visitors to the committee meeting: Patricia Colon, parent and Connie Robins, parent

Members not in attendance: Elizabeth Bailenson, Amy Certilman

#### Information Sharing:

##### Comments from Kara Andreski, Heart Links coordinator

Kara distributed and discussed a final report from Heart Links surveys, which covered the period May 2008 through November/December 2008. Data for Pre and Post-Heart Links were included regarding vending machines and A la Cart items. Members of the committee asked questions and requested more information in the way of interpretation of the data. Kara will work on it and send a revised report with more information.

Kara stated that “we are really up there in compliance” and that, rated by Heart Links, out of all the extension schools, “Cold Spring Harbor is the only school district that showed improvement across the board.”

Kara noted the recognition breakfast conference being held in Holtsville on March 20<sup>th</sup> for schools participating in the Heart Links project.

This was Kara’s last meeting with us. Anu Bhatt is the new coordinator. Committee members thanked Kara and acknowledged the contribution of Heart Links to the work of the committee.

##### Update from Nutrition subcommittee

Kara Andreski from Heart Links presented a workshop on Wednesday, January 21, 2009 at Goosehill Primary School. Members who attended commented on the excellent content on the topic of smart shopping and inclusion of the “Bull’s Eye” food pyramid featured on the reverse side of our menus this month. Members also expressed appreciation to Gerri Tiger for her hard work in our school cafeteria programs. Gerri will distribute copies of the Heart Links information at our March meeting. Mrs. Schandler discussed the *Bonnie Plant Cabbage Program* for 3rd grade. Both Mrs. Herschlein and Mrs. Massimo have their schools involved in the project.

#### Technology Update:

Gerri Tiger will put the “What’s New in the CSH Lunchrooms?” on the website for CSH. Mrs. Bellino will have Notes from past meetings put up on the website.

#### New York State School Boards Association conference: *From Policy to Practice: Improving Student Wellness*

A template of the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) wellness policy was sent to all members. Mrs. Bellino explained that she attended a NYSSBA conference with Superintendent Judy Wilansky and board member, Robert Hughes on the topic of *Improving Student Wellness*. The “Coordinated Approach to School Health” graphic from the conference was distributed and we briefly discussed the different members in the model. Committee members suggested revisions to the graphic such as expanding the “Connecting schools, parents, and community” by using a coordinated approach with defined roles for each member and linked efforts. A possible goal would be to use the model for future membership on the district committee in 2009-2010. The planning of Wellness Days in our schools would be supported by having additional members of the district serve on the committee as suggested in the “Coordinated Approach” model.

Next year’s calendar, including frequency of meetings, times, structure, and possible topics were also mentioned.

#### Recognition of community members who attended the committee meeting:

Two school community members attended the meeting today and asked to speak. The committee members who were present agreed to have these visitors participate in our discussion today.

One visitor explained that she submitted a letter to the Superintendent and the Cold Spring Harbor Board of Education praising the committee for the changes in our food service program, but requesting that Part II of the Nutrition & Wellness Policy be reviewed and revised. Both parents stated that the cafeteria lunch program part of the policy was not the issue. One parent explained that during the week of February 9-13, her first grader was worried about bringing in his Valentine cards with candy attached and requested that his mother buy new cards or he would get in trouble. It was also stated that some children were sent home with Valentine cards that had candy attached and not permitted to distribute them. Superintendent, Dr. Wilansky and members of the committee expressed regret that this happened and stated that the intention was not to hurt the children. The parents further explained that the issue was not about enough prior notice before Valentine’s Day regarding the “no candy, etc.” part of the policy. Parents were aware of this part of the policy from the “birthday notices” that have been sent home. They asked for this particular part of the policy to be revised to permit parents to make their own choices for their children.

Surveys and many presentations were offered last year, but parents expressed their view that Part II of the policy guidelines was written without adequate parent input and communication. Other committee members stated that the intent was not to ban certain foods, but not have the food used for reinforcement.

Although teachers were not present, Mrs. Bellino read an excerpt from a letter written to the committee from a group of teachers. The teachers stated their appreciation for the committee’s work in promoting good health for the students, however they asked for clarification of “other cultures” in the policy guidelines. The teachers asked for changes to include “healthy choices

and healthy snacks; include all cultural celebrations with healthy food; and the principal will ensure that there will not be an excess of food for a celebration.”

As school principal and chairperson, Mrs. Bellino responded that Valentine’s Day, seen as a social and cultural school tradition in which children exchange cards and expressions of friendship, was a very difficult situation this year. The principals and all the teachers did their best to be sensitive to their students and families while implementing the policy as they understood it and as they thought it appropriate to their schools. Everyone agreed when Dr. Wilansky spoke about the adjustment period between the construction and implementation of any policy. It is through the thoughtful feedback from the entire community that policies are reviewed and revised.

Most members present agreed that they would be happy to review and revise the sections of the policy if the Board of Education directed us to do so. The committee will wait for direction from the Board of Education on next steps to address the concerns expressed.

**Agenda for our next meeting on Thursday, March 19, 2009:**

Committee members will read through the template of the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) Student Wellness policy. For our next meeting, each member will examine the topics/subtopics of policies (see below) and share their preferred sequence for the Cold Spring Harbor policy.

**Topics/Subtopics in NYSSBA Template Policy 5405 include:**

Physical Activity

- Physical Education
- Recess
- In the classroom
- Extracurricular Opportunities for Physical Activity

Nutrition Education

Implementation

Monitoring & Review

**Topics/Subtopics in Bay Shore’s Wellness Policy include:**

Physical Activity

- Physical Education
- Personal Health & Fitness
- A Safe & Healthy Environment
- Resource Management

Recess

After-School

**Topics/Subtopics in CSH’s so far include:**

Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

- Recess
- Physical Education

Health Education

- Personal Health and Fitness (includes a health curriculum)

Monitoring and Implementation

**Topics/Subtopics in Wantagh's Wellness Policy include:**

Physical Education/Activity

A list format that includes PE instruction, daily recess, and integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum