

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2020
11:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
VIA ZOOM

ATTENDANCE

Amy Creighan, Eric Kasperowicz, Sandra Kozera, Margaret Labritz, Allison Mathis, Amy Patsilevas, Heather Pelat, Deanna Philpott, Lindsay Radzvin, Catherine Regan, Jennifer Siegle, Michelle Spingola, Jackie Wichelmann

Minutes are taken by Margaret Labritz

WELCOME

Welcome to new members Sandra Kozera, Heather Pelat, Jennifer Siegle.

AGENDA

There is no agenda for this meeting due to the pandemic. Students are not in the buildings full-time and the Wellness Policy needs to be reviewed this year.

The PDE (PA Department of Education) requires that the Wellness Policy be reviewed every three years in order to see how well each school is doing and to assess how we are complying with the Policy. There are a number of steps involved in the process. This needs to be completed and approved by the Board no later than June 2021. The Board needs two readings of the Policy so we will plan to get the Policy to the Board in April 2021.

We will plan to meet again in March 2021 remotely.

There will be two wellness surveys sent out in January 2021. One will be for the community and one will be for District staff.

When the surveys are completed, there will be several parts of it to be reviewed. Various members of the Wellness Committee have agreed to review the responses in each area and then meet as a whole group to review everything and see what changes may be necessary.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELL BEING

It was mentioned that there is a general concern for the mental wellbeing of students during this current situation of the pandemic, i.e. not being in school, not interacting with other students, not having structure on school days, students are devastated. How can we help our students and address their needs right now? This issue of struggling students (mentally and academically) is also weighing on staff.

Some districts are connecting elementary students with high school student mentors. The high school student helps the younger student whether it be academically, talking with the student and/or sending positive letters/notes to the younger student. This could help a student who may be lonely, may not have parental support (parents could be working all day) and/or may not be attending zoom classes. Students need contact with other people. It should be noted that there are high school students who are also struggling.

North Hills will be starting a Stand Together Club. High School students are training now to be qualified student mental health ambassadors. Perhaps this club could help raise awareness about mental health and addiction.

North Hills also has a Hands for Service Club which fosters the value of community service. Perhaps we can start with this club.

Another idea is the fact that high school and middle school students are done with classes before elementary students. Is there a way to connect these older students with elementary students from approximately 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. during a school day? Maybe they could help someone with math, a music lesson, etc., then maybe parents would not have to get a tutor. This could be mutually beneficial. Since January, February and March are long months, could this be built into the calendar?

In another community, a teenager started a friendship community connecting people and it grew. Possibly we could choose a few students to try this and see if something could work. Students need something to do and to be connected together.

We need to build resilience with students during these difficult times.

Maybe we can designate a day to bring attention to the issue of students struggling mentally during these difficult times.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:50 a.m.