

Health and Wellness Advisory Committee Meeting
BMS Presentation Room
4/3/2019, 8:30 AM

In attendance were School Committee members Megan Douglas and Patrick McCrann, Superintendent Michael Messori, Paula Dillon, Erica Bulk, Patricia Tolento, Joann Royley, Anil Shukla, Michael Elliott, Amy Nunn, Denise Flores, Melissa Goode, student Jordan Sullivan, Denise Alves (BAY team), Barbara Cohen, Kimberly Orr, Nancy Roberts (Chartwells), and Karin Wetherill (RIHSC).

The meeting was called to order at 8:32 AM.

Minutes from the 3/6/19 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Meeting norms were reviewed, including

1. Focusing on opportunities, not obstacles
2. Engage in positive communication, including Respectful listening and allowing for shared air time.
3. Respect other's opinions.
4. Respect time, by focusing on productivity, staying on task and topic, providing timely agenda, minutes, and information.
5. Adhere to membership consensus building as the decision-making process.
6. Act as a representative liaison.

Dr. Shukla presented the findings and the recommendations of the Nutrition Working Group regarding a la carte foods at BHS and BMS. The goals of the group were to 1. promote whole foods/healthy alternatives, 2. reduce sugar content, 3. minimize commercial influence, 4. simplify the number of overall choices, and 5. incorporate student preferences with developmentally appropriate choice. The recommendations were to

1. Use lunch room setup and food presentation to make whole food and nutritional choices first line.
2. Decrease middle school and high school sugar threshold for a la carte items to 25% by weight (from 35% which is the current criteria); this new threshold represents the desire for Barrington to do better than the national guidelines while balancing available choices
3. Eliminate all "look alike" items: example, eliminate Doritos, Pop Tarts, Rice Krispie Treats,
4. Move the "frozen novelties" from the middle school to the high school (with the opening of the new middle school, and aligns with goal #5.
5. Limit servings of 100% juice to 10 ounces or less.
6. Work with student leaders in middle and high school to communicate and promote revised nutrition standards, new snack menu, and help organize taste-tests with feedback and future revision.
7. Parent education and communication regarding new list/guidelines
8. Consider delaying the snack offerings in MS to a month after school start to allow time for healthy patterns to develop and to dampen the "snack craze" in the beginning of the year
9. See attached current and new proposed snack list

Discussion ensued regarding the balance of choice with aligning what is offered to nutritional data, understanding the broad effects of poor nutrition (beyond weight, including energy, ability to learn, etc.), as well as discussions about how to assist with transitions/change in a community.

Ms. Alves made a motion to accept the the recommendations of the nutrition work group to start in the school year 19-20 with a revisit of the guidelines at 6 months and at the end of the year for possible revision, and to pass the recommendation to the School Committee for their consideration. The motion was passed with all present voting in favor, with no nays or abstentions.

Mr. McCrann presented the findings of the Lunchroom Work Group:

The Lunchroom Scorecard Group Report [March 2019]

Members: Erica Bulk, Melissa Goode, Patrick McCrann, Amy Nunn, Kimberly Orr, Jordan Sullivan, Patricia Tolento, Karin Wetherill

Mission: To review lunchroom environments in all schools and make recommendations for improvements.

Overview: We opted NOT to use the Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard which identifies areas to increase students' selection of healthier foods and decrease food waste. This was mainly because our K-3 schools were unable to be scored on the same criteria as the other schools. We also wanted to review the environment for each school in person rather than simply checking off boxes, then use that experience to create macro-level recommendations for the system vs individual schools. Here are the observations and challenges, as well as recommendations for action.

Observation 1: Many low nutritional content items are served at the "impulse section"-- ie end of the line at the check out.

Recommendation 1: Consider removing the junk food items and low nutritional content items from the "impulse section" at the high school and middle school. ie juices, chips, ice cream and other food with very limited nutritional content need not be offered at all.

Recommendation 2: Consider phasing out some (not all) snacks at the middle and high school. Goal is to find a balance where we can teach students about making good choices.

Recommendation 3: Make parents aware they can block snack purchases on their middle or high school child's account.

Observation 2: Several of the kitchens have dated equipment (ovens that don't actually cook, but warm), or no equipment at all. This undermines the capacity to cook and therefore the food quality.

Recommendation: Conduct a kitchen equipment audit and also review budget estimates to enhance kitchen equipment in order to properly cook food. Consider partnering with PTOs to fill gaps in funding to improve equipment.

Observation 3: Children have insufficient time for lunch. When we queried kids in the lunchroom, children in all six schools remarked that they do not have enough time for lunch. This was particularly challenging in the Elementary schools. Elementary aged kids didn't have enough time to actually eat, whereas middle and high school students wanted more time to be socialize and chat; these are activities we also believe are important.

Recommendation 1: Extend lunch time by 5 to 10 minutes, particularly in schools with A) large numbers of children eating hot lunch; and B) schools with large numbers of children eating concurrently.

Recommendation 2: Share best practices between K3 schools. For example, Nayatt might consider lining up hot lunch kids coming in from recess first before entering the building. Nayatt should consider color coding cards to move the line along to reduce serving time.

Observation 4: The youngest children in the Elementary schools have the least amount of time to eat among all children in the 6 cafeterias we visited. For example, at Nayatt, some children only had 7 minutes to eat after passing through the lunchline; the overwhelming majority of children had not finished their lunches when the lunch hour ended.

Recommendation 1: All children need not need to be in the cafeteria before the serving line commences. The line can commence as soon as children present for lunch.

Recommendation 2: Consider ways to enhance the lunch line flow, perhaps from visiting other schools.

Observation 5: Fruit and vegetable (F/V) service is currently "Opt-in." Therefore many children do not add F/V to their plates

Recommendation 1: Serve every child fruit and vegetables unless they "opt out."

Recommendation 2: Research best public health and marketing practices to promote uptake of fruit and vegetables for all children. This may include colorful displays, serving F/V first, offering F/V at numerous points throughout the serving line, reducing so many canned F/V offerings, and exploring other evidence-based marketing practices to promote healthy eating.

Observation 6: An estimated 80%-90% of children were drinking chocolate milk at every school. Schools varied in the placement of chocolate milk vs regular milk even within each setting. The way that milk is offered may impact its uptake.

Discussion ensued relative to each of the observations. Dr. Douglas noted that the issues regarding nutrition were addressed by the Nutrition Working Group, that concerns about equipment should be forwarded to the Facility Advisory Committee, that time and the management of processes will be directed to the School Improvement Teams or addressed in the upcoming strategic planning process. Additional questions regarding offer versus serve models (and the associated state requirements) as well as best practice models for the uptake of fruit and vegetables were addressed. Kimberly Orr will check with the state regarding options regarding the offer versus serve models, as well as options for notifying parents of opt out options for certain choices. Additional discussion about the third meal option which is currently vegan, but has very low ordering at each school, ensued; attempts to discuss options with parents will be arranged.

Dr. Douglas confirmed with Mr. Messoro that the position for a health and wellness/research expert on the Ad Hoc Advisory Athletics Field Committee had already been filled.

Dr. Douglas introduced the role of the committee in re-evaluation of the Health and Wellness Policy (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Oo3fMvzGryNZsqlbtPMgFtCwK_qOHeAQRj4zx1awerg/edit) for the district, which we will do at the next meeting on May 2, 2019, as well as the review of school and district smart goals specific to Health and Wellness, which we will review and discuss at the following meeting on June 5, 2019.

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 AM.