



**Health and Wellness Subcommittee
Remote
April 30, 2020 @ 5:30 p.m.**

Open Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Jessica Barnhill (Chair), Karen Dempsey, Adam Freudberg, William LaBarge

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Tremblay, Superintendent

Judith Styer, Director of Health and Wellness

Joanna Hastry, Executive Assistant to School Committee

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. She noted all in attendance and said that the meeting was being held remotely, was being broadcast live on Facebook and was also being recorded.

Public Comment

No public comment

Review Subcommittee Scope

The Chair read over the summary of the subcommittee that was developed in the Rules and Administration Report.

FPS Health and Wellness Report

Director of Health and Wellness Judith Styer talked about applying for grants, the programs at the different schools, and adding nurses. She said that they started laying the groundwork on social emotional work previous to the pandemic. She said that the past year was the first implementation of the social emotional learning programming at elementary schools, and the second big initiative in January was for a code of conduct development and support. She said that this is intended to help with fairness in responses to students, and upon completion of writing of code they will begin implementation in the district. She said that there were funds given by Senate President Karen Spilka which are directed at supporting mental health of our students. She said that it is a hard situation now with staff and everyone dealing with the trauma of the pandemic that is going on right now. Ms. Barnhill asked how the closure is impacting the day to day operations and students/families/teachers. Ms. Styer said that all support staff are in communication with many of the students, and everyone who has a caseload has set up a schedule for communication. She said that the Director of the Bridge

Program has said that many of the kids who have had serious issues with anxiety in the school year have seen symptoms decrease. She added that some students have pretty rough home lives and it is troubling for staff who no longer have eyes on them. She said that re-entry into schools for staff and students is going to be very difficult after being out of school for so long, and there will be a need to be cognizant of the needs of staff to build systems and structures for the first weeks of school, and the trauma we are all experiencing. She said that we are waiting for guidance from DESE and the state, and kids are going to have to relearn how to be back in school, with each other and with teachers. Ms. Barnhill asked if there is a way to collect data from parents, teachers and students to help identify these areas that may need attention, such as anxiety, stress, depression, substance abuse, and what students may be experiencing. Ms. Styer said it is probably safe to say all of the above are happening. She said that staff and teachers are directed to be in constant communication, and if they hear something they should be bringing it back to team if students or families need extra support, etc. She said that in regards to a survey, she is concerned about people feeling overwhelmed already and surveys getting lost within all the communication.

Family Resources

Ms. Styer said that a family resource guide is live and updated every day on the website, and one is being created for resources for homeless families.

Members discussed all the work that has been accomplished, and how it is great that Framingham has a community has been able to offer resources with good relationships with the district. Mr. Freudberg suggested that, from a mental health perspective, there be some sort of closure for students with their former classrooms. Dr. Tremblay said thinking of this in multiple phases: right now until the end of the school year, then the summer block, and then next school year. He said that they are keeping them all in focus with a lot of details within them, such as commencement, and social emotional effects on that. He added that there are also fiscal matters that will affect how to close out the school year, and many things are not figured out yet.

Request for Information

Ms Barnhill said that requests for information for this subcommittee could be such items as the MetroWest Health Survey, but also immediate needs now. Ms. Styer said that they are focused on the near future which is the next two months, and the immediate needs and challenges are so great right now. She said that they are scheduled to resurvey the kids in the fall, and the data is important and sure will see some striking indicators, but it is hard to do long term planning as we don't even know what learning will look like in two weeks. Dr. Tremblay said they can hear from teachers as they are engaged with students, and can track engagement with teachers to be able to see what students are engaging and which are not. Mr. Freudberg suggested the need to plan for a surge of mental health and wellness needs in a community that was already surging prior to this, as well as the funding that is no longer as high as anticipated. He added that we should look into low cost or no cost things to help support staff and counselors.

Discussion about a future meeting being set in the next month or so when more guidance is given by the state. Discussion about how other health problems such as EEE could reoccur with Covid still happening, and thinking about how to balance that.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn. **Moved:** Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Ms. Dempsey

Roll Call Vote: 4-0-0 (Yes: Ms. Dempsey, Mr. Freudberg, Ms. Barnhill, Mr. LaBarge)

Meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

Rules Report Description

These minutes were approved by the Health and Wellness Subcommittee in Open Session on June 15, 2020.

These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on June 30, 2020.