



Framingham PUBLIC SCHOOLS School Committee

Health and Wellness Subcommittee

Remote via Zoom

September 28, 2022 4:00 p.m.

Open Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Valerie Ottaviani (Chair), David Gordon, Adam Freudberg, William LaBarge

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Director of Health and Wellness Courtney Balacco, District Nurse Leader Aurelia Medina, Director of Food Services Dario Nardi, Executive Assistant to the School Committee Joanna Hastry

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m., noted all in attendance, and said that the meeting was being held remotely, was being broadcast live on Facebook, and was also being recorded. She noted all in attendance and how to participate for public comment.

Public Comment

There were no participants for public comment.

Review of Policy IHAMB: Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco as Referred by the School Committee

The Chair said that Policy IHAMB was referred to the subcommittee to review by the full committee and the draft policy with suggestions from administration was included in the packets. Mr. Freudberg asked if vaping should be called out specifically in the title or if it's covered under drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Director of Health and Wellness Courtney Balacco said that sometimes there are different substances in vaping devices, but nicotine falls under drugs so she is not sure it's necessary to change the title.

Motion: To approve Policy IHAMB as drafted and send back to the Policy Subcommittee.

Moved: Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Mr. Freudberg **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (4-0-0)
(Yes: Ottaviani, Gordon, Freudberg, LaBarge)

Review of MetroWest Adolescent Survey Results

Ms. Balacco shared a presentation with the 2021 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) key findings. The presentation included key characteristics of the MWAHS, 2021 Framingham Public Schools Student Participation, when students respond truthfully, and key findings from the survey on: trends in cigarette smoking and vaping, the use and perception of risk for electronic vapor products, trends in alcohol use, trends in marijuana use in high school, misuse of prescription drugs, bullying and victimization, cyberbullying, trends in stress in middle school and high school, specific populations, COVID-19 and mental health, trends in online behavior by middle school and high school and by sex, associations of social media use and other risk behaviors, hours of sleep, and school connectedness and engagement.

Ms. Ottaviani asked if these results go out to parents and if any next steps are needed. Ms. Balacco said that she will be working on a plan on communicating this out to the full School Committee, staff, and a wider audience. She said nothing further is needed from the School Committee and on the District's end they will be looking at the data and what this means for their programming, such as education about anti-vaping, health curriculum in younger grades, reinforcing initiatives on connection and community building with staff and students, and increasing access to mental health services. Mr. Freudberg said that students and constituents have spoken to him regarding issues with accessibility using the bathrooms and asked if there is a policy, regulation, or something in the handbook so there is a common understanding and consistency. Ms. Balacco said that she agrees that bathroom use is a health related issue, there can be student specific plans if there is a need, and they have been looking at more equitable access for the middle schools and the high school for LGBTQA+ students and making sure bathrooms are safe spaces, such as dealing with vaping, etc. She said that she will discuss the concerns that were brought up and follow up with the committee. Mr. Gordon said that the data seems to show that issues of depression can exceed available staff and asked if there are opportunities to partner with agencies that can help students. Ms. Balacco said that they just began the process of partnering with Advocates who is opening a behavioral health urgent care facility. She said that a grant will provide a behavioral health urgent care clinician on staff for the District who will be a conduit for accessing the urgent care facility, as well as providing crisis response and temporary supports while students wait for long term care. Mr. Freudberg asked what specific actions can happen based on the data, such as the data showing that many youth who are reporting mental health issues are not receiving mental health services, and if there is anything that the School Committee can do to support progress, such as within the budget. Ms. Balacco said that she can think on what action steps can be taken and report back. She spoke about how having these conversations are the key critical starting point as stigma is often the reason students and others don't access mental health care and the more we can normalize these conversations the better off the community is going to be able to get that care. She noted that other barriers include the availability of providers and insurance.

Discussion and Vote on Possible Revisions to Goals and District Wide Wellness Committee Update

Ms. Ottaviani said that she has been working with Ms. Balacco and DESE to get back in compliance with being able to participate in the John Stalker Institute by reinstating a District Wellness Committee. She said that the District Wellness Committee will need to create goals and have four meetings before May to then reapply for help from the John Stalker Institute. She said that they participated in a virtual training with DESE and there are federal regulations they have to follow and certain items that need to be incorporated into the goals, such as USDA standards. She said that she was hoping for a discussion to see if the subcommittee goals should remain as is or if they should be aligned with what the District's Wellness Committee goals will be. Mr. Freudberg said that the District Wellness Committee may be more day to day management that the School Committee doesn't have much of a role in and if there are recommendations for what the School Committee could do the goals could be reviewed and could see if it is in our purview. Decision was made to leave the goals as is and the District's Wellness Committee will create goals that are in line with the federal government regulations. Ms. Ottaviani said that she will update the committee as the Wellness Committee meets.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of April 12, 2021 and February 28, 2022.

Moved: Mr. Freudberg **Seconded:** Mr. LaBarge **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (4-0-0)
(Yes: Ottaviani, Gordon, Freudberg, LaBarge)

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Mr. Gordon **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (4-0-0)
(Yes: Ottaviani, Gordon, Freudberg, LaBarge)
Meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

Policy IHAMB with Proposed Edits

2022 Health and Wellness Goals

2021 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey Slides

Draft April 12, 2021 Minutes

Draft February 28, 2022 Minutes

These minutes were approved by the Health and Wellness Subcommittee in Open Session on January 11, 2023.

These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on January 17, 2023