

Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition
Full Membership Meeting
March 3, 2009
(notes/minutes – JQH, DAB)

RI Healthy Schools Coalition Five-Year Goals:

Goal 1: By October 2012, ALL school districts in RI will develop and implement high quality, performance based Physical Education curriculum incorporating the RI Physical Education Standards. That curriculum will be delivered in every RI school to all school children pre K-12 to develop the knowledge, skills, behaviors and confidence needed to be physically active for life.

Goal 2: By October 2012, ALL schools in RI will fully implement district- and state-adopted policies and laws ensuring that ALL foods and beverages available on school campuses and at school events contribute toward eating patterns that are consistent with dietary guidelines for Americans.

Goal 3: By October 2012, ALL staff in RI schools will have access to wellness programs incorporating nutrition and physical activity education and programming opportunities.

New Steering Committee approved for 2009:

Dorothy Brayley, Kids First

Rosemary Reilly-Chammat, RI DOH

Elissa Jelalian, Brown U, Miriam

Jane Vergnani, New Eng. Dairy & Food Cncl.

Deb Ranaldi, RIAHPERD, Narragansett

Angela Ankoma, RI DOH, IHW

Megan Tucker, Amer. Heart Assoc.

Becky Bessette, RIDE

Kathi Masi, RI F&CS, S. Kingstown HS

Thomas Hoagland, ARAMARK

Marianne Stepanian, Lifespan

Steve Cohen, RIAHPERD, Prov Schools

Cindy McDermott, YMCA

Christie Moulton, Farm Fresh RI

Solange Morrissette, Sodexo

Suzanne Brodney-Folse, Healthy & Wellness Institute

2008 Past Action Review & Discussion:

Build capacity in RI for Physical Education Professional Development for Phys Ed/Health instructors and administrators. RIAHPERD and RIDE may be key players in this. – This is definitely in the planning stages. RIAHPERD is setting up workshops. Newport’s Betcha Can! Project, funded by Carole M. White PEP Grant, provides a model whereby Physical Education teachers in Newport Schools are being trained in Sparks curriculum, afterschool program also uses Sparks and PE teachers are training other teachers in classroom Sparks activities – a comprehensive district wide approach. Ryan Zilly would be a contact to learn more about what’s happening there.

Help District Administrators recognize and believe in the value of “excellence” in PE programs. - have this as a possible theme for HSC Breakfast, also further emphasize in the Superintendent Workshops, issue of defining and showing “what is a quality program?”, making the link between physical activity and academic learning. Betty Britto or RIASCD spoke of the “Learning First Alliance” and how that may provide a forum to reach administrators. The “Learning First Alliance” is attracting educators looking for Best Practices. – so if a district has a “Best Practice” in PE, it could be demonstrated through this group. Steve Cohen of RIAHPERD and the PE lead Team in providence spoke of providence as a potential “Best practice”, as well Narragansett

hand Bristol-Warren have some great Best Practices. Betty connected with Steve Cohen of RIAHPERD so the organizations can work together on this. Others spoke of providing training for PE teachers to teach them how to present to their administrators their curriculum, assessment, etc. as it is the responsibility of the PE teachers to help their administrators become familiar with their course methods and outcomes.

Require the use of the RI Physical Education Frameworks that were endorsed by the RI Board of Regents in 2003 and that teach and promote daily personal fitness. Require use of appropriate curriculum, student and teacher assessment tools. Done. Accomplished through new 2008 PE Law, special thanks to Megan Tucker of AHA.

Help and encourage districts and schools to build Wellness goals into their district strategic plans and school improvement plans. Does RIDE track this? Becky Bessette said she would look into it. In the early years of District Wellness Policy and Wellness Strategic Plan development, Jan Mermin was trying to collect district strategic wellness plans and track the districts that were formally including wellness goals in those plans. Not sure if that practice continues at RIDE, so unsure as to districts' progress in that area.

Share the PE Video that was produced by the RI HSC with all RI district administrators. View it now by visiting this Thrive Link: http://www.thriveri.org/moreinfo/whats_new.html - JQH to add it to Kids First website. Still a highly relevant video!

Include PE in RI Middle and High School Reform; address PE in RIDE Secondary School Regulations. The language of the 2008 PE Law has been incorporated into RIDE Regulations!

Implement/Encourage fitness testing/tracking for all students – would need to be implemented as part of meeting the 2008 PE Law.

Include PE in high school students' portfolios/graduation requirements - all agree this is great, but student selects their topics. Some have included/selected PE – but not required to do so.

Blitz PTA's and PTO's with Wellness information, including healthy fundraising options - JQH to write an article to release in fall about alternative fundraising programs successful in RI schools, Carole Toselli mentioned Dr Greg Fox, AAP in Bristol and his work talking about alternative fundraising from a health perspective

Support Recess; don't let Recess Fade Away – this is about rallying parents. Parents understand that kids cannot focus. Not much coordinated action on this yet.

Educate, educate, educate all school staff about Wellness; build a personal wellness culture in every school - YMCA, BCBS efforts through Muni-Blue, Dept of Health, Shape Up RI, Kids First Superintendents Wellness and Teacher Wellness programs – we agreed we need as many opportunities out there as possible

Build leadership skills amongst administrators for leading Wellness -Superintendent Workshops

Work with health insurers to bring Wellness Resources and programs to school districts -BCBS of RI, Muni-Blue

Develop and share a school district Staff Wellness Toolkit – not been done

Work with Unions for Staff Wellness programs/initiatives – NEA has been doing some stuff to promote Wellness in union members’ environments. Seems that NEA is getting behind Wellness.

Track and share District Cost Reductions that result from investments in Staff Wellness – great idea – not done.

Continue to work with District Wellness Committees to share State Law Compliant/Approved Product List, Self Assessment Checklists and Tools, and other information as would be helpful for district policy implementation at the building level. Kids first working under NGA Grant and soon with Dept. of Health, Initiative for a Healthy Weight, has taken leadership role on this work and continues to work with all active Wellness Committees, as well continues to help re-activate those that are faltering a bit.

Develop signage – POST the LAW in every school building – where, how – great idea, not done.

Address “the politics of changing norms” at the 2008 Breakfast for School Leaders – was not done – possibly a topic for the 2009 Breakfast.

Develop a needs assessment and improvement planning tool (sample action plan, too) around school and district wellness. – YMCA has an brand new assessment tool that they will share with Kids First to use with Wellness Committees. Checklist was developed and has been used during the past two years. Action for Healthy Kids may also have a baseline assessment tool. All agree this is important – so helping District Wellness committees continue to assess and improve shall remain in focus as Kids First and others work with District Wellness Committees.

Continue building RI Farm to School programs and School Gardening Programs until every school in RI gets connected to fresh, tasty fruits and veggies! – Kids First reported that 35 of 36 districts purchased something from a local farm during the 2008 harvest and continues to step up its efforts in 2009 and 2010. Kids First serves as the coordinating agency for RI Farm to school project and works with many partners, including DEM, Southside Community Land Trust, RICAPE (*Garden in Every School Campaign 2010*), RI Farm Bureau, and so many others. Sodexo, ARAMARK, and Chartwells continue to voice commitment to RI Farm to School. District personnel need to continue to DEMAND local!

Improve the nutrition criteria for School Meals; increasing fruits, veggies and whole grains; reducing sugars, fats and sodium. - RINR 2009 was mandated in February 2009. See below for more discussion.

Continue to promote Food Safety and the Food Safe Schools Program in all RI Schools - URI Initiative for Food Safety Curriculum in Special Needs Classrooms, Kids First working with URI in Residential Childcare Institutions to implement HACCP in food safety and food prep. Food Safe Schools Program, although

unfunded at this point, lives on in many RI schools. All food and nutrition education programs should incorporate food safety practices naturally.

Discuss Major Activities Undertaken in 2008; Plan for 2009:

1. RINR 2009 - discussion of RINR recently presented and mandated by the Board of Regents at the Feb 2 meeting - Becky Bessette, RIDE - spoke about the potential barriers to a statewide rollout of RINR as experienced in the implementation of the ARAMARK State contract, the sodium issue proved to be the biggest stumbling block, a real challenge with USDA Commodities, industry is not there yet (e.g. frozen veggies vs. the canned and the sodium content in each) and if schools were cooking from scratch they might have an easier time meeting the required sodium levels, but the infrastructure doesn't exist in most RI schools for scratch cooking. After lengthy discussions on how to resolve sodium, the result is that RINR sodium requirements will be phased in (1000 mg for a school lunch). RIDE not giving up, just phasing it in as a strategy to give some more time to manufacturers to step up and develop new products. RIDE understands its role to provide assessment and technical assistance to districts to help them continue to improve and move towards achieving RINR. //Gail (Chartwells) voiced opinion that 1,000 mg will still be tough to adhere to, worried about product availability. She also asked if the state would be looking to impose punitive damages for non-compliance. Becky stated that she believes that is not the goal of the State. The State will assess and assist. The state is interested in true efforts to move towards RINR and eventually getting there. // Solange Morrissette (Sodexo) said there were real challenges with the sodium requirements, USDA products won't meet it, vendors aren't up to that yet, "we're one little progressive state, but we have to wait for the rest of the country to catch up with us", the whole grains, the fruit and veggies (even local with F2S) is working, the only challenge with these requirements is to get the kids to eat it //Tom Hoagland (ARAMARK) said that he's been trying to educate all the parents, all the staff, all the Admin on WHY RINR is important and why it is important that the school meal program is adhering to it. Becky mentioned that the State will be receiving a grant for \$320,000-350,000 for kitchen equipment – so stay tuned. Discussion about Team Nutrition grant which is out for LOI and the social marketing aspect of that grant work, once an agency is selected to do the work.
2. RI HSC Breakfast - [date set for Thursday Sept 17 at the Crowne Plaza](#), sign up sheet to help with planning sent around room and request for Planning Committee members will be sent out to the entire Coalition e-mail list.
3. Physical Education - law passed in 2008, professional development is being developed and new relationships were forged during this meeting to assist with that endeavor. Money for professional Development has been cut through Article 31, so this makes PD for any subject even more challenging. We need to develop creative and collaborative ways to be able to provide PD. RIHSC should continue to look for and promote Best Practices. Development of a "technical assistance" service is also under discussion and could be a solution. Much needs to be done. Members with capabilities to help this work along are asked to help/collaborate/participate in this endeavor to professionalize and standardize PE curriculum throughout the State. Improve the quality in every school.

4. Recess, Physical Activity, After School Programs, etc. - discussion of ways to make recess important, rally the parents, let them know importance of recess time and help them speak out in their own communities, keep the recess conversation current amongst the District Wellness Committees, support adding language regarding recess into Wellness policy and the important role of recess, e.g. cannot be withheld as a punishment, spread and encourage the use of the ABC Manual with activity breaks. Also important to highlight interdisciplinary approaches and team approaches to physical activity and education throughout the school day and after school.
5. School Nutrition: challenges exist with meeting RI Healthier Foods in Schools Law implementation in every corner of every building, but through continued education, reinforcement, and continued assistance provided to schools (Kids First, YMCA's, Kids Choose to be Healthy, Muni-Blue Wellness, Farm to School, and many, many others) we expect we will continue to improve in this area. It will take all of our collective energy for several more years. Now that school meals will be improving per RINR mandate, the movement towards healthier foods in schools continues strong.
6. Wellness Committees and Education in Districts - Mary Elena DeLuca described staff wellness workshops and how they usually work, about 90 minutes long, very interactive, focus on role modeling so that everyone in the school is on the same page with regard to physical fitness and healthy food habits,

Other - report from Ken Ayers on how RI farming industry has turned around, not only has the disappearance of green space stopped, but more farmers are entering the industry than we've seen in a few years, Farm to School's role in turn-around, Farmer's Markets role in turn-around, Kids First working on Farmer Trading cards as fun way to encourage students to appreciate farming as a viable industry and one that needs to be supported.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:05PM