

**New Milford Public Schools
Wellness Committee Meeting-Envision New Milford
December 12, 2022**

PRESENT:

Committee Co-Chairs: Laura Olson, Director of Special Services and Pupil Personnel and Anne Bilko, SNIS Principal

Committee Members: Alex Amaru, SMS, NES, HPS Health Teacher; Ray Manka, NMHS Principal; Megan Dwyer, NMHS Vice Principal; Lauren Bergner, Prek Dept. Chair; Debbie Clark, K-5 SPED Dept. Supervisor; Michael Boucher, SMS Vice Principal; Gwen Gallagher, NES Principal; Eric Williams, HPS Principal; Mary Orcutt, School Nurse; Keith Lipinsky, NMHS Athletic Director; Linda Morse, SPED Secretary-Scribe.

CALL TO ORDER:

3:30pm

Welcome: Anne Bilko and Laura Olson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Laura started off the meeting by having each school share “Good News” with what they have been doing regarding wellness within the schools:

HPS: Eric Williams shared that last year they provided Yoga and Zumba for staff after work. They have a positive word of the day where students learn about. He was hoping to get more ideas from other schools during this meeting to see what others are doing within their schools.

NES: Gwen Gallagher shared they had Spring Yoga with MaryAnn Ness; Paint and Snack after school, a Positive Self-Talk Program with students and posting positive messages on the bulletin boards and bathroom mirrors.

SNIS: Anne Bilko shared that they provide “Before School Intermural Sports/Recess” where students sign up to do 45 minutes of physical activity before school-parent drop off program. Anne quoted “Active kids in the morning make better students during the day.” There is a Yoga club, Positive word of the day/character trait; Youth Agency comes to have lunch groups once a month for each lunch wave for students who need to talk (with parent permission).

SMS: After school sports, student council and various clubs and activities.

NMHS: They provide activity periods where students are able to talk amongst their peers; Training students to be role models on an awards system (WAVE Award Program). There is a School Culture Climate group, a Safe Environment/Safe School group and the Wingman Group where upperclassmen mentor underclassmen. NMHS Athletic Council was recognized by CIAC and received the Michael’s Cup Sportsmanship Award.

LHTC: Provide Yoga and Mindfulness classes

Items of Information:

NMPS is in the process of revising their Wellness Policies on:

- Nutrition Education
- Standards for USDA child nutrition and school meals
- Free drinking water
- PE and Activity
- Wellness and promotion

New Initiatives:

The Governor is proclaiming May 26th of each year as CHILD MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS DAY!! NMPS is looking to do a “Get Outside and Play Day” for May 26th to raise awareness about children’s mental health and the positive effect on being outdoors. Some ideas include:

- Lawn Games (eggs on a spoon, three legged race, etc.)
- Basketball
- Capture the Flag
- Old time baseball
- Kickball
- Study Halls to relax if needed
- Movies in Auditorium

The Wellness committee would like one or two people in each building to organize this day. Green is the mental health awareness color, have students make green ribbons to wear for the day.

New Legislation – starting July 1, 2022. Recess, in the elementary levels, can no longer be used as a part of discipline. Public Act No. 22-81 Section 9. Recess must include 20 minutes of uninterrupted active time for students. This includes provisions that are unreasonably restrictive or punitive. We must allow time devoted to physical exercise even if the student does not complete their work or are behind academically.

Future Agenda Items:

TBD

Future Meeting Dates:

TBD

Meeting Adjourned: Laura Olson 4:20pm

Respectfully submitted:

- Laura Olson, Co-Chairperson
- Anne Bilko, Co-Chairperson