

BOE Social Emotional Health & Wellness Committee Special Meeting Minutes
Friday, February 24, 2023
BOE Conference Room
3 Primrose St., Newtown, CT 06470

In attendance: Janet Kuzma, Jenn Larkin, Chris Melillo, & Anne Dalton

CALL TO ORDER - Mrs. Kuzma called the meeting to order at 9:41am

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Brain Health Initiative -

Mr. Melillo was connected to Dr. Peabody, a program designer, to discuss a Brain Health Initiative. He was connected to her through the recommendation of First Selectman Rosenthal & Scarlett Lewis. Mr. Melillo stated that he will be getting more information but this was just a discussion to hear a little bit about the program. This initiative is backed by lots of brain health research. Ms. Larkin expressed concern about adding another program because when we add something we lose time for something else. Mr. Melillo will update us once he has more information

2. District Safe Climate Committees

Mrs. Dalton said she met with some of the districts Safe Climate and Culture committees to discuss the upcoming wellness week in May. Mrs. Kuzma asked if she could share a little bit about the safe climate committees. They are made up of various staff at each school and they generally operate to ensure there is a good morale at the schools. These committees tend to focus more on social emotional. She noted that at least one staff member at each school has had mindfulness training. She discussed the wellness week with the committees and brainstormed some ideas for activities. She noted the PTA's also plan to be involved and help. Ms. Larkin asked if there was a way to help have continuity between the different schools, especially at the elementary level.

3. District Social Emotional Health & Wellness Data

Mrs. Kuzma reported to the committee that Ms. Zukowski would like a full board presentation towards the end of the school year from Ms. Dalton on the overall Health & Wellness of the district. Mrs. Kuzma said we would like to see some data, not necessarily quantitative, on the progress of some of our programs and to determine if they are effective. In addition to program data the anonymous alert app data was asked to be a part of the presentation as well as past survey results that might be related. Mrs. Dalton shared that there is a prevention survey that the district has done previously for 7-12th graders, through the Prevention Council, but has not been done since 2019. Mrs. Kuzma asked if the committee could see this survey prior to going out to students to see what types of questions are being asked. Mrs. Dalton said she is unsure if it completed yet but will share results from 2019 survey with the committee. Mr. Melillo said the committee can review the data from the anonymous

alert app at next meeting. Mrs. Larkin also asked a question about bullying and the perception from kids. Some kids are perceiving “mean kid” behavior as bullying and the question was asked if we have talked to students about those perceptions. Mrs. Dalton said she will be working to put together a presentation and Mr. Melillo asked if Mrs. Kuzma can send him some data points we would like to see.

HEALTH & WELLNESS COORDINATOR UPDATE -

Mrs. Dalton gave a quick update from recent risk trends from the CDC. Mental health is a great concern - young females more particularly at risk. She said that when looking at improvements, there have been a decrease in risky sexual behavior and a decrease in substance abuse but there has been an increase in vaping.

SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE - None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

ADJOURNMENT -

Motion made by Mrs. Larkin, seconded by Mrs. Kuzma. Meeting adjourned at 10:21.