

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE**  
Wellness/School Health Advisory Committee Meeting  
Wednesday May 15, 2013  
Town Hall Room 103 8:30-9:30am

Chair: Peter Rowe

In Attendance: Peter Rowe, Mary Minott, Teddi Jacobs, Teresa Gallo-Toth , Alden Calwell, Dave Spinner, Kim Manasevit, Rebecca Sneider, Gloria Rudisch, Blanka Bogdanovich, Kate Donnelly, Melissa Battite, Bettina Neufeind, Helen Delichatsios, June Harris, Alisa Lincoln

1.) Introductions: Peter Rowe

2.) YRBS Report-Teddi

Teddi reported on the 2011 Gr.7 and 8 and BHS YRBS Brookline uses the CDC survey and adds local questions. Data suggests that anxiety, stress and depression are on the rise. This year the Break Free From Depression curriculum (from Boston Children's Hospital) was added in Gr. 9. Health teachers are will teach a mental health unit in Gr. 7 and 8, focusing on sequential lessons in stress reduction education (coping skills, resources). Health teachers are continuing to develop lessons that can be inserted into the curriculum next year to raise awareness and reduce levels of anxiety and depression. Teddi is using the YRBS data to optimize what is taught to students.

This year the YRBS results were shared on the B-PEN website, PSB website, and at a community forum at Devotion School. On April 2, B-PEN sponsored a parent night on the topic of depression to educate parents on prevention, early identification and treatment to support students at risk. There is concern about the lack of BRYT or transitional services available K-8.

3.) Guidance role in supporting and referring students/families for services –Kim and Rebecca

Rebecca Sneider states there are major mental health concerns for families whose children are struggling with mental health issues. Parents do not know what to do; they are looking at the schools to support their children. Students cannot be protected from the internet as it is readily available in their pocket (smartphones). They don't have the coping strategies for the personal scrutiny, bullying and peer review that they are constantly being subjected to. This intensity puts them at risk for cyber stress.

Kim Manasevit states it is important to understand that there are two levels of need.

Those who have a short term need that can be supported and remedied. Most challenging is the chronic and far reaching need for 5-6 students per year who cannot return to class because they need constant support. They live in the guidance office and we are not serving them well.

Parents do not know how to access help for their children, students often return from hospitalizations without reentry plans. When families fail to connect to mental health services the issues fall to guidance, who struggle with supporting the needs of these students and families. There are no K-8 social workers. Nurse is involved; there is some overlap with Special Ed. The liaison from the Brookline Center is always available by cell for consultation and does provide direct service as needed for individual students, but the need outweighs the resources.

Devotion has a program TLC for students with social-emotional needs but schools are encouraged to keep students at their local schools.

#### 4.) The Brookline Center Services-Dave Spinner

The Brookline Center was opened over 60 years ago. They take insurance and have sliding fees as low as \$1.00. They provide outreach, school visits, and intensive services. Intensive services include two therapists district wide providing in home treatment services. (IHT). Therapist work in the PSB, seeing 6-7 students per school up to 2 hrs. per week seeing over 100 students per year. Space and pull out time is challenging. Simmons interns are also placed in the schools.

Each school has the opportunity to offer lunch groups for 6 to 7 students to support building friendships.

Dave states that some families are not getting the support they need to feel safe.

At BHS there are more specialized programs that offer academic and emotional support for mental health and chronic medical issues. In BRYT , a clinician is available as well as a tutor.

This prevents students from being placed outside the district and greatly diminishes rehospitalizations. Students are put on IEPs for social emotional disabilities. Students at BRYT are with their cohort, it is really helpful for families as the student has an advocate supporting academics.

Guidance is the point of entry for Brookline Center referral in the schools. Guidance works with the liaison assigned to the school. BC trying to do more prevention, skill development for dealing with stress, it is open to everyone at no cost. Project Grow for pre-adolescent and adolescent girls, promotes positive self-image for girls. Also Brotherhood and Sisterhood to Success for Metco students to help them define themselves in the Brookline community.

The BC also offered support to school staff after the Newtown shootings.

Peter suggests that these concerns be shared with Karen Shmukler the acting Asst. Super of Student Support Services. Last year guidance explored possibilities of creating a BRYT for middle schoolers. Grant proposals were going to be written. Further conversations need to be explored.

5.) Plan and meeting calendar for next year-Mary Minott

Mary suggests that we create a more comprehensive K-12 approach to prevention in support wellness. She suggests that we merge the School Wellness Advisory Committee SWAC to include BCASA and BPEN to support our students.

Calendar would include a 2 hour kick off in September as a community forum to brainstorm solutions that would support students and families. She is suggesting a spring forum with a Depression focus in addition to our regularly scheduled SWAC agenda.

6.) Updates

Recreation Department –Melissa Battite

This summer a lunch program will be offered for student participating in the Rec camps.

There will be a nutrition class offered and a recipe book is being developed.

Rec Dept is collaborating with the Brookline Center re:

Concussion Training is being offered online.