

NE Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative – School Wellness Policy Review/Site Visits
School: Clayton Ridge Schools - Clayton County
March 11, 2008

Attendees: Renae Kraus – school nurse, Joyce Cherney – Foods & Consumer Science teacher, Rick Einck – H.S. Principal, Food Service staff – , Students - ____ - Elementary Principal, Carol Glawe – Regional Team member

Handouts: ISU Ext. Publications – “What Schools Can Do”, “Non-food Alternatives”, “Tips for Preparing a School Wellness Policy”

Format of Discussion:

- Introductions –
- Overview of F&F Initiative – Ann & Cindy
- Spring/Summer '07 County Discussions – Schools identified as an asset and one of the focuses of our initiative – Ann
- Explanation of each school's policy review for 5 requirements: (Reference: IDE school wellness policy matrix & ISU-E Journal of Extension article – fall 2007)
 - Goals for Nutrition & Physical Activity
 - Nutrition Guidelines
 - Guidelines for Meal Reimbursement
 - Plan to Measure
 - Need to Involve Community
- Feedback for Clayton Ridge wellness committee –
 - Goals for Nutrition & Physical Activity – Written in statement format. Not measurable
 - Nutrition Guidelines & Guidelines for Reimbursement – Not defined
 - Plan to Measure – Not present
 - Involvement of Community – There were several key people (school staff) involved in the development of the school wellness policy. Renae Kraus coordinated most of the work with the Superintendent and previous HS principal. Time for school personnel to work on this in addition to their full-time work is an issue.

4 essential steps of AI: Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver

Step 1) Discover: Telling stories of success is the first step in the process of discovering the positive core and appreciating the best of what is. To accomplish this, you might ask members of the wellness committee some of the following questions:

- **"Describe one aspect of the wellness policy development process that made you feel successful or inspired."** It's admittedly very broad and general, but it helps you understand what they deem valuable and what they see as their assets/strengths.
 - Walking Wednesdays- Received a mini-grant to create a walking program for HS and Elementary that has been well received
 - Student group (FCS teacher/facilitator) coordinating a Healthy Snack program via the Vending machines. Candy has been replaced with cheese sticks, yogurt, veggies, bagels, more milk.
 - Student group passed out fruits for snacks around school. Plan to work on rest of food pyramid in this effort

- During ITEDs – Student group worked with principal to replace doughnut snack with juice, cheese sticks, muffins, graham crackers and milk. Received very positive feedback from students
- Tasting Tuesdays – mini-grant from Team Nutrition to offer fruits to students in Elementary.
- **"Tell me about a resource you or others contributed that made development of the school wellness policy possible."** This might concern contributions made within the group, but perhaps some from outside the committee. Identifies resources and assets already at their disposal.
 - Principal contacted vending machine company and arranged for machines to be switched so a refrigerated machine was available for healthy snacks (student group effort)
 - FCS Teacher – attended a state conference for Food & Consumer Science teachers several years ago where she learned about ways to promote healthier eating in the school FCS curriculum and associated student groups. She has promoted this in her classes and has partnered with the school nurse to apply for outside grants to support this effort. Their HS received 2 Team Nutrition grants and another small grant. FCS Teacher and school nurse have contributed extra time and effort in applying for these grants and coordinating with students. During summer '07 – teacher & school nurse went through every item in vending machine - removing the unhealthy items and replacing with healthier choices.
 - Principal, Business Manager, Superintendent & school board – have been open to all new ideas brought forth by the student group and staff.
- **"What kinds of positive things have you observed that are related to development of a school wellness policy?"** (Notice I didn't write "as a result of" since some people are uncomfortable giving wholesale credit to a particular effort esp. if they think other factors are at work). Encourage them to think broadly about this question. It doesn't necessarily have to be impact based esp. at this early stage but perhaps their observations will be related to improved processes like communication. In other words, maybe it hasn't yet changed the eating or exercise habits of students, but in the process of developing the policy, maybe some faculty and staff got to know each other better, maybe members of the committee started making personal changes, maybe it changed the teaching curriculum on some level, maybe it stimulated more discussion among the faculty, maybe a few parents got more involved in the school, etc.
 - Food Service – started providing salads for lunch. Students and staff seem happier with that choice and variety of salad option. Issues for food service are staffing to support additional labor, storage of salad items, logistics of serving – salad bar vs. individual container, etc.
 - Concession stand survey in February '08 – coordinated by Regional Team youth members – Brandon & Kim. Surveyed 97 people. Consensus – people are interested in healthier options and are willing to pay a little more. These students coordinated this survey with the principal and student senate. Next year they are hopeful to make healthier changes working through the student senate. They currently have a strong leader in their student senate and are working now to prepare for next year.

Step 2) Dream: Envisioning what might be; sharing ideas for a preferred future. What does a successful school wellness policy look like and what can it do for the

school/children/community, etc. Dreaming should be encouraged without attention to resources. In other words, it's a question that should be prefaced by: "If ANYTHING were possible, what if..."

- **"Based on what we've learned about what's working well, what would it look like if we did even better? What would a successful/effective school wellness policy do for the school, students, parents, teachers, administrators, and/or members of the community? In other words, what kinds of positive changes would a successful policy bring?"**
- Incorporate a balanced approach to wellness via programs like character education
- Students aren't the statistic of shorter life expectancy than their parents!
- Healthier lunches – replace dessert with fruit
- Better PE program – consistently “more physical” – Need a new work out – weight room space. Students do not have a space to go to work out that is conducive or pleasant.
- Kids and their families will turn off their computers, TVs when they are home. We can do more in this school to offer information re substitute options for children in addition to information to parents re the impact of screen time
- Health units will have more on nutrition. We are seeing more children with asthma and type II diabetes – we have to focus more on their health.
- After school programming for staff and students to promote physical activity

Step 3) Design: Finding innovative ways to create the shared future outlined in the dream step; creating breakthrough propositions. What the school can do to commit resources, align standards, etc. to achieve the vision outlined in 2 (through the process of developing "provocative propositions")

- Ask the committee members: **"What can you do to secure the support and resources you need to create a school wellness policy that creates the kinds of positive changes you've just identified?"** Be creative!
- Hospital is working with the H. School to provide fasting glucose testing.
- Health Fair – FCS student group, teacher and nurse coordinating a 2nd health fair @ the H.S. in April. Several partners including local hospital and ISU-E involved.
- Provide an inservice to educate staff
 - Principal added – could provide inservices throughout the school year to promote healthier eating and physical activity
- Provide more ongoing education for students
- Involve the Middle School more (m.s. campus is 20 mi. away)
- Utilize a newsletter – supplied by ISU-E – “Growing up Healthy” (area parochial schools use – parents like it)
- Continue to foster a relationship between the High School students and the Elementary...Example given: H.S. students provided the following programs:
 - K-1 – “Thank goodness for cows”
 - 2nd grade – FFS presented information on food
 - 3-4th – information presented on how milk is collected, processed
- **You could go another step and ask them to develop some concrete, provocative propositions that show their commitment to specific strategies.** For example, “Our

school will incorporate health and wellness activities into the curriculum of every class -- even accounting!" or something like that.

- A vision shared – “We could walk anywhere – farmer’s fields, trails, etc. without worrying re trespassing...like they do in Europe. Everything would be connected by a walk/bike way.”

Step 4) Deliver: Sustaining change, implementing the innovation, setting the "school compass," and monitoring progress and evaluating results. What needs to happen, how, who will do it, by when? How will you know you are successful? What are some signs or indicators that show you are successful? Who will keep track of them and how?

- **"How will you know you've been successful in creating positive change? What tools and resources can you use to measure change?"** Again: Encourage them to be creative and don't overlook the students, teachers, and classes as possible resources!

- Kids won't be in front of the TV as much.
- Improved school climate and culture conducive to healthier choices, better decisions and understanding of impact across the health spectrum.
- People won't be so tired – they will feel healthier and have more energy.

Summary comments:

We offered Cindy Baumgartner (ISU Extension Family Nutrition & Health Specialist) as a contact for an inservice this spring. All of the people present were engaged for 90 minutes. It is interesting to note that their school wellness policy is like a philosophy statement, however their overall focus and movement towards school wellness is impressive. The FCS teacher and school nurse are champions of wellness and youth as future leaders. They have created structures for the students to succeed and use their knowledge re the health impact of healthy eating and physical activity. Administration is very supportive of the staff champions and the student leadership in the wellness area.