

**New Milford Board of Education
Wellness Advisory Committee Minutes
December 9, 2015
Lillis Administration Building, Board Room**

Present: Committee Chair: Mr. Joshua Smith
Committee Members: Dr. Diane D’Isodori, Mrs. Marianne Durkin, Mrs. Cindy Gallagher, Mrs Jennifer Hankla, Mrs. Ann Hartman, Mrs. Lynn Holmes, Mrs. Susan Murray, Mrs. Mary Orcutt, Mrs. Sandra Sullivan , Dr. Len Tomasello

Also in Attendance: Ms. Stacy Kabasakalian, NM Youth Agency

1.	<p>Call to Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Joshua Smith called the Wellness Advisory Committee meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. 	<p>Call to Order</p>
2.	<p>Public Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<p>Public Comment</p>
3.	<p>Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>A. Substance Abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Stacy Kabasakalian explained the Substance Abuse Council (SAC) to the committee, stating that its members are comprised of staff from Highwatch, NMPD, NM Hospital, Social Services, and NM Town Council. She stated that they would like to see members of the clergy as well as more pediatricians on the Council. Ms. Kabasakalian gave a summary of the activities that the SAC has sponsored recently. Stacy explained the CARES group to the committee. The CARES group is really just starting out in NM, but is doing very well thus far. She highly recommends this group for anyone who is dealing with a loved one’s abuse. Ms. Kabaskalian stated that as part of a grant through the NW Prevention Council, they do have \$7000 available to schools if they would like certain programs. She stated that they are bringing the DIRT program back to the schools. This money is allocated only for programs in the school and outreach programs. 	<p>Substance Abuse</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RECEIVED TOWN CLERK 2015 DEC 11 A 9 07 NEW MILFORD, CT</p> 

- Ms. Kabaskalian met with the new substance abuse counselor for the NM Schools, and did let her know what resources are available to her through the Youth Agency.
- Mrs. Hartman asked about the heroine epidemic and if there is data showing which program is more effective. Stacy stated that they are looking at that, but didn't have an answer at this time.
- Mrs. Hartman asked if there were options available for kids who are asking for treatment. Ms. Kabaskalian stated that they had just run a program on Nov. 9, 2015, "How to get help", which was a workshop for people living with the addict. Stacy mentioned "Greenwoods", which also includes mental health treatment, is a great place to start if they need help. The Youth Agency has a listing of resources available for anyone who would like one.
- Ms. Kabaskalian stated that part of the problem is advertising the programs and getting community involvement. Ann mentioned that there is a new Facebook page, New Milford Events, which is strictly for events, no political propaganda. She thought that perhaps Ms. Kabaskalian could put future events up on that page.
- After a discussion on resources that are available, Mr. Smith stated that the main goal would be to limit the amount of dots that have to be connected by pooling resources and wraparound services. This would allow us to identify markers before it becomes addiction.
- Mr. Smith stated that the Substance Abuse Counselor, Cornelia, started today. She will primarily be at the HS, however, she will be available to the school counselors and social workers in the other schools. For the younger schools, she may not be needed necessarily for the student,, but for issues within the student's family.
- Dr. D'Isidori asked what the policy was on student privacy amongst staff. Mr. Smith explained who has access to what information

	<p>and that guidance, teachers, nurses, social workers, and administrators are all in the loop. Helping the child comes first in time of crisis. He stated that in addition, staff members are also sensitive to the families. The main goal is to get children the help they need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Smith stated that it's a good thing that this committee is beginning to extend beyond this committee and "food", it is becoming a community issue. 	
<p>B.</p>	<p>School Breakfast Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Sandra Sullivan did a brief explanation of the breakfast program available to the schools. She stated that in previous years we had breakfast available K-6, but it is now available at the secondary level too. • Mrs. Sullivan handed out a spreadsheet showing the data for the amount of breakfast in all schools broken down by Free/Reduced/Paid lunch. • She would like to see participation increased. She states that she does do quite a bit of outreach via the website, district newsletter, advertising in the Welcome packet. She also does send letters home to all the SNAP participants letting them know they are eligible without having to fill out the forms. • Dr. D'Isidori stated that there was a questionnaire on her United Way Grant that she was working on. One of the questions was about eating breakfast at home or school, about 90% responded with "eat at home". • Mrs. Sullivan stated that she is doing above and beyond the required outreach and still not having great participation. • A long discussion was had whether there was enough time in the morning for the students to eat at school and way to perhaps get more students to eat at school. • Mrs. Sullivan handed out the current menus to the committee and explained the categories. 	<p>School Breakfast Program</p>

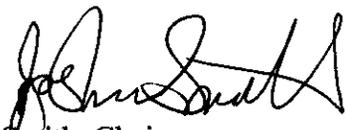
<p>C.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mrs. Hartman stated that she feels the data is from a very small window.• Mrs. Cindy Gallagher asked if attendance was taken into consideration with this data. Sandra stated that absences were but not tardies.• A discussion on how to get more students at SMS to be able to have time for breakfast was had. <p>Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Smith began by stating that as part of the budget for next year, there are pieces that fit around mental health and wellness.• Mr. Smith mentioned that for the most part Free/Reduced lunch participants are self reporting. He is concerned with the families who have not submitted the forms. Need to capture those families.• Mrs. Sullivan stated that she does get a list from Social Services of families who are identified as SNAP. They do not need to fill out an application. They are automatically identified in Admin Plus and they are notified as well. She can also match by address so if different families are living at the same address, they are all eligible. If one member of the household is eligible, the entire household is eligible.• Mr. Smith explained the criteria for Free/Reduced lunch to the committee members.• Mr. Smith spoke about rethinking the number of hours of health instruction for K-6. This might perhaps help them to identify those markers earlier, so we can start counseling, maybe making it less likely to abuse as they are older.• These ideas may manifest into budget items that he would like to see be supported.• Dr. Tomasello stated that he is concerned about the emotional/mental health of students here in New Milford.• Mr. Smith did reply that we are taking steps in	<p>Budget</p>
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	<p>the right direction by asking for some of those resources in the upcoming budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Kabasakalian stated that the Youth Agency 9-11a.m. homework club on Saturdays is a huge hit. This was initially recommended by one of the schools. It mixes middle schoolers with high schoolers and they are finding it very helpful and good support for all the students. Stacy stated again, that the Youth Agency offers a lot of free programs. If there is something that the Youth Agency is not already doing or have ideas to expand, please let the Youth Agency know. • Mrs. Hartman asked if Dr. Tomasello would be willing to express his feelings at a BOE Budget meeting since he was eloquent in what he stated. Mr. Smith replied and explained the way the budget process works and that Dr. Tomasello would include this in his narrative to the BOE. • Dr. Tomasello responded that he doesn't feel there are enough resources available to deal with what the students are dealing with today. • Dr. D'Isidori asked how we get the message to the Mayor and Town Council what our needs are. We should be working as a community to pool our resources. • Mrs. Hartman stated that this might be the perfect time to get this ball rolling with the new town Administration. Mr. Smith stated that it would be great to have all the community agencies working together. 	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Public Comment</p> <p>There was no public comment.</p>	<p>Public Comment</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Adjourn</p>

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Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joshua Smith', written in a cursive style.

Joshua Smith, Chairperson
Wellness Advisory Committee.