

**LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 11, 2023**

The District Health and Wellness Committee met four quarterly during the 2022-23 school year. The Committee is co-chaired by Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kevin McNamara, LMS Principal James Williamson and School Committee member Mary Anne Roll. The Committee membership includes, Principals, Staff, including School Nurses, Physical Education teachers and Support Staff, parents and students, and representatives from our Food Service provider (Chartwells). The Committee has also includes community partners including the RI Healthy Schools Coalition and the Blackstone Valley Prevention Coalition. As required by state law, this report is submitted to the School Committee and the Community.

Meetings of the Wellness Committee provide an opportunity to discuss those areas of current interest in our schools that relate to the key components of the Wellness Policy. These focus areas include Nutrition, Health and Physical Education and Staff Wellness. The School Committee adopted a Resolution in support of the Whole Child in 2017 which also informs the work of the Wellness Committee. In September 2022, the Wellness Committee used Work Groups as a means to focus the work of the Committee over the course the school year. During 2022-23, the Committee opted to continue to focus on two key areas that had been identified in 2021-22: SEL (Social Emotional Learning) and the development of a GREEN Team at LHS.

Recognizing that the Social/Emotional well-being of all students contributes their success in the classroom, the SEL Workgroup focus was to continue to assess the needs of students and to build capacity at the classroom level to support SEL without adding something “new” to the work of classroom teachers. There are strategies currently used at the classroom level that address the needs of all students, as well as the additional supports provided by various support specialists through referrals. In particular, instructional opportunities within the K-5 ELA curriculum have been identified as providing the opportunity to include SEL skills/competencies.

In September 2022, RI Healthy Schools Coalition held its Annual Breakfast for School Leaders. The keynote speaker, Kim Chi from Pure Edge, stressed the need for both students and staff to incorporate simple SEL strategies into their daily routine. A presentation by the RI Recycling Club’s program for food waste recycling in school cafeterias inspired the LHS students attending to add this to the agenda of the school’s Green Team. This will continue to be an topic of interest to this group during the 2023-24 school year.

Finally, all Principals completed a review of the District’s Wellness Policy to assess compliance with State/Federal requirements in three categories: Nutrition Standards, Health and Physical Education and Staff Wellness. Overall, the schools **Meet the Standard** in all areas assessed. Notably 30 minutes for Recess, as well as Lunch in the elementary schools has been the standard, exceeding the relatively new state Recess requirement at the Elementary Schools for a number of years. At LMS, Mr. Williamson noted the increased participation in the Breakfast program, the availability of healthier food options in the Cafeteria and the inclusion of Wellness in Professional Development opportunities. At Saylesville, Mr. Sarkarati highlighted efforts to promote nutrition through Health classes in the classrooms and cafeteria, the school’s success in eliminating food-based fundraisers and its consultation with **Recess Rocks** to maximize benefits of 30 minute recess.

Areas Needing Improvement and/or areas of focus that were noted included reducing food waste in the cafeteria, inclusion of physical activity outside PE, inclusion of Wellness in School Improvement Plans and the implementation of the new Health Education Framework.

The first meeting of the District Wellness Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, September 27th from 8-9 AM in the Media Center at Lincoln High School.