**School Health Advisory Council**

Meeting Minutes – May 4, 2015

* **Welcome and Introductions**

Jen Vogelzang Ann Redmon, Ana Manuelian (SADD), Julie Fenn, Kristie Demirov, Marsha Lazar, Richard Dougherty (Dick), Jill Gasperini, Mary Ellen Dunn, Ian Dailey , Eammon Sheehan, Martha Kurland, Sharon Kendall, Sion Harris, Carol Shum (notes)

* **Announcements**
* Wednesday was National School Nurse’s Day
* Tuesday, May 12, there will be two presentations of interest at the School Committee meeting: Guidance Department Curriculum Review report and follow up to the Ad Hoc Committee’s Report on Youth at Risk
* **Updates**

Lexington Youth and Family Services (LYFS) - Marsha Lazar reported that she is leaving LYFS after 3 years. She started as the Director and evolved her position into a Prevention Specialist role as part of shifting the agency toward more of a prevention mission; they will still offer intervention. Her position will be combined with the clinical position as a .4 FTE and they are advertising for that position now.

Under her leadership LYFS initiated and kicked the off the Asian Mental Health Initiative which is now being referred to as Asian Family Support.

LYFS is also planning to bring in in Youth Educators as part of a program, “Sources of Strength”. This program harnesses the power of social networks and views youth as primary influences of other youth. Marsha reviewed some of the activities that LYFS has been a part of this past year including: Lexington Parent Academy, the upcoming (5/7) Perks of a Wallflower movie and discussion in collaboration with the Library Teen Board, a parent-teen dialogue under the Asian Health Initiative, a parent Book Club discussing The Art of Parenting, an upcoming Community Conversation on Mental Health (5/8) for counselors and clinicians. The Community Conversation on Mental Health is based on a model developed in other countries to increase the connections with mental health services across a community’s systems to improve community health.

* **Report: Wellness Policy Review Committee**

The Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) audited the LPS Wellness Policy and noted some citations. Mary Ellen Dunn then convened a subcommittee of SHAC (that included a student rep from SADD) to discuss the citations and our response. The subcommittee’s update on DESE action items include: 1) we need a communication strategy for anything that falls under the wellness policy, 2) we need to identify the strengths and weaknesses in our policy (for instance we need more time to do in-depth student education including increasing our efforts with elementary students; currently nutrition education is focused on 7th grade). The distance of the water fountains from the cafeteria did not meet the guidelines, but no changes are anticipated.

We decided to review the Wellness Policy at the first meeting of SHAC in the fall. The implementation guidelines should be reviewed/updated periodically. If we think that anything in the policy needs to be changed, we will need to report that to the School Committee. We will talk about how to follow through on a communication strategy at the fall meeting.

Jill pointed out that there are regulations for School Health Advisory Councils that require reports to the School Committee. Jennifer offered to pull together information from this year’s meeting and to prepare a summary of our efforts for this year. She will send the summary to the Superintendent with a request that he provide the report to the School Committee

* **Report: Lexington Parent Academy**

Note: summary reports were handed out at the meetings; they are attached to the minutes.

The Planning Committee felt that the academy was very successful for a “first time” event. The group is already getting ready to plan for a second academy in 2016. The next planning committee meeting will be June 1, 2015 at 10:00 AM in Room 626 at the High School.

Someone (not from the Planning Committee) contacted LexMedia and they videotaped the three auditorium presentations (Cyber Safety, Motivating the Unmotivated, and They’re not crazy; they’re teenagers.) One session, Understanding and Addressing Anxiety, was closed to more participants once the room was full. In the evaluations some people mentioned that they wished that some sessions had been offered twice.

For the next academy someone suggested that we add a Survey Monkey link for people to evaluate each workshop online. It was also suggested that we build time into the end of each workshop for providing feedback. Someone else suggested using a QVC code that can be used on people’s phones. We discussed whether childcare may have been an issue for elementary and pre-school parents (would more have come?). We’re asking the PTA’s to conduct a survey of their membership to get more input on this.

* **Plans/Goals for next year**
* We definitely want to continue the conversation about under age drinking. Julie sponsored a forum (rescheduled from an earlier snow day) where only 5 parents showed up. The timing might not have been the best; students were involved in sports and projects. People agreed that the discussion comes back to what is happening in people’s homes. There appears to be a lot of passive acceptance. We hope that positive peer pressure can be used to influence other parents and the community.

It was suggested that there be one social host law presentation for anyone buying a prom ticket as well as one for each sport season. Parents would need to sign off that they attended. Julie explained that police officers are also getting educated about the social host law. (Not part of their training.) Another possible time for educating parents would be during the orientation for incoming 8th graders. We also discussed the possibilities of conducting a Social Media Campaign with the help of graduate students who might be able to assist in developing a social media campaign to get other parents and students on board.

* YRBS results

We discussed possibly using the new Community Center for presenting the YRBS results next year. Our goal for the next survey administration is have it on line. Maureen Kavanaugh, the Director of Planning and Assessment at the Central Office, is very supportive of an online survey.

Hopefully the new Director of Technology would be able to help us figure out how to do this.

Someone mentioned that they felt that the presentation by the Northeastern researchers is somewhat canned. We may want to work with NU to provide a broader presentation and be ready to respond to more in-depth questions. Some of the areas that people would like to have more information include: stress coping, sleep, bullying (biggest factor in suicide risk). People are also interested in looking at alcohol use within different demographic groups in town.

* Wellness Policy

Develop and publicize a communication strategy for informing parents and staff about the policy.

* Lexington Parent Academy 2.0

Meeting dates for next year:

October 5, 2015

December 14, 2015

March 7, 2016

May 9, 2016