

WESTERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
23 Highland Avenue  
Westerly, RI 02891  
Health & Wellness Sub-Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, November 9, 2021  
4:30 PM

MINUTES

1. Call to Order  
D. Bowdy called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. Present in addition to D. Bowdy were A. Storey, K. West, G. Price, J. Perrin, T. Castagna, M. Herard, A. Doescher and K. Wetherill.  
Mary-Ellen Rossi, Director of Pupil Personnel and Mark Gordon, Homeless Liaison joined the meeting as well.
2. Approval of Minutes from 9-28-21  
A. Storey made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by A. Doescher. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Public Comment  
No one came forward.
4. Food Service Report  
M. Herard reported on the following items: Farm Fresh kits arrived at WMS, local produce was delivered and the success of breakfast and lunch at all schools.
5. Westerly Prevention and Wellness Partnership Report  
A. Iadevaia was not present at the meeting. See page three of the minutes for her report.
6. Old Business  
A. Storey spoke to S. Scott regarding Attack the Track and the possibility of just having the track event minus the extra activities.  
  
K. Wetherill noted that Recess Rocks will be adding a cohort for middle schools in addition to elementary schools.
7. New Business
  - a. Mental health support  
M. Rossi reported that she hired two new staff members under the Project Aware Grant who will work alongside our mental health personnel.  
T. Castagna noted that she is now seeing a correlation between mental health issues and COVID.  
J. Perrin also added that she is seeing lots of students with physical symptoms of anxiety. Discussion ensued.
  - b. Homelessness and lack of affordable housing

M. Gordon reported that as of now we have the lowest number of homeless families we've had in a long time. He reviewed the laws pertaining to homelessness and mentioned that half of our homeless population is because of lack of affordable housing. Discussion ensued.

8. Future Agenda Items

None

9. Other

A. Storey reported out on the Test to Stay program as well as the new testing site at Babcock Hall for asymptomatic and symptomatic students and staff. J. Perrin spoke highly of the site.

Next meeting January 18, 2022

10. Adjournment

J. Perrin made a motion to adjourn at 5:32 pm, seconded by A. Storey. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Diane Bowdy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Diane Chiaradio Bowdy, Chair  
Health & Wellness Subcommittee

## Westerly Prevention and Wellness Partnership Report

The Westerly Prevention and Wellness Partnership has been working to increase outreach to homeless populations and have begun identifying specific locations in town to provide resources to. Additionally, we held a Drug Take Back event and Westerly collected 149.5 pounds of unused/expired medications for disposal through the police station.

We are also looking to increase mental health resources and will be adding more wooden mental health signs with QR code resources in town.

South County Regional was awarded an Opioid Stewardship grant which means more opioid specific resources will be coming to Westerly. Also Westerly was identified as a high need area and will have a provider offering "Incredible Years" programming at daycares in town. This program is an early childhood prevention program.

Lastly we are going to be collaborating with the Chariho Youth Task Force to hold events in Bradford as the two communities share this area. We hope to offer our first joint event before the start of the new year. (More to come).