

San Gabriel Unified School District Wellness Council Meeting (SGUSD-WC)

Minutes

10/23/18

3:15-4:30 PM

District Education Center

In Attendance:

Mariamanda Sarabia (Food Services Operations Manager), **Kristin Fyfe** (Food Services Consultant), **Kathleen Leon** (Lead District Nurse), **Isabel Millan** (Food Services Director), **Adela Angiuli** (Executive Director, San Gabriel Education Foundation), **Alison DeVriendt** (President, San Gabriel Education Foundation), **Priti Bhatt** (Vice President, San Gabriel Education Foundation), **Chrissy Aulicino** (Manager, Schools & Programs, Special Olympics Southern California), **Hillary Tran** (School Nurse), **Shannon James** (Director of Assessment and Professional Development, Ed Services), **Kent Monteleone** (Health Teacher, Gabrielino), **Vimala Bagri** (Teacher, Coolidge), **Linda Austin** (Reading Intervention Teacher, McKinley), **Emmett Suess** (Art Teacher, Gabrielino), **Marci Raney** (Professor, Occidental College), **Socorro Beti Martinez** (Teacher, Roosevelt), **Ann Anderson** (Assistant Principal, Roosevelt), **Venecia Lizarzaburu** (Director of Special Projects, Ed Services), **Florence Lin** (Community Relations Manager, Asian Youth Center), **Sandra Dunville** (Principal, Washington), **Lon Sellers** (Director, Student Support Services and Principal, Del Mar)

Dr. Raney's Presentation on the Long Term Effects of Playground Beautification and Greening

Background

Nationwide:

- 20% of schoolchildren meet recommended physical activity minutes
- <50% of elementary school kids that live within a ¼ mile of school walk or bike to school
- The school day is the greatest part of day that kids spend being sedentary without breaks
- Children under 8 spend 2.5 to 3.5 hours a day engaged with media, with less time for children in higher income families and more time for children in lower income families

LA County

- 23% of students watch more than 3 hours of tv/day
- 23.7% meet physical activity guidelines
- 11% sedentary
- 25% of LA county students obese
- Obesity negatively correlated with neurocognitive functioning
- Obese children more likely to become obese adults

Prior research

Head Impact Criterion (HIC) – measure of the likelihood of head injury arising from an impact. In the case of playgrounds, it measures the likelihood of head injury if a child falls onto different playground surfaces.

- 31% of rubber surfaces pass HIC standards
- 100% wood chip playground surfaces pass HIC standard

Surface temperature cooling effect – students are less likely to physically active in hot areas of the playground

- Shade from trees reduce temperature the most (27.8 C) > shade from sun sails > infrared reflective paint (12C)

Pollutant removal rate – many schools are close to freeways, which increase the risk of asthma, which can reduce a child's capacity to be physically active

- Complex surfaces (plants of different heights) remove the most pollutants > tree plantations > grass lawns

The more variation in height of trees, plants, etc. the more nitrogen oxides removed from the air

In a study of mental health in high school ([Li & Sullivan, 2015](#)), students took high stress test. They took a break in either a room with a window that looked out onto another building, or a room with a window that looked out onto green space. The green space view increased attention and promoted stress recovery over the building view.

Moderate to vigorous physical activity is linked with improved playground design with green space. Teachers and parents self-report higher perceptions of safety in green space. Natural play spaces are associated with greater creativity and more diverse play options, greater playground cohesiveness, lower bullying incidences, and higher activity levels.

Occidental Study in LAUSD of 1st-6th Grade Students – Long-Term Results

No previous study has measured the longer-term effects of a recently renovated playground. Changes included removal of asphalt and increase of mulch, plants, trees, and reflective paint. The baseline assessment was conducted in spring 2016, the post assessment was conducted in fall 2016, the 4-month follow up was in spring 2017, and the 16-month follow up occurred in spring 2018. Results are expected to be published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine

Data collected through:

- Direct observation
 - Physical activity mode and intensity
 - Pro-social and anti-social peer interactions
- Accelerometer wear

At baseline, more than 50% of students were sedentary. Twenty-nine to forty-seven students who were previously sedentary were active after the playground renovation.

Zone preference

Before the renovation, less than 25% of students were in the asphalt spaces that took up most of the yard, mainly using it to cross to get to other locations. Students liked handball walls and 4-square/dodgeball.

After renovation, the grass field was the most popular, followed by mulch/trees/boulders, then outdoor classrooms.

Types of play vary by gender with girls playing less kickball and boys playing less on monkey bars.

Running and tag increased by a lot with the renovation, as did gymnastics/climbing/jumping/dance.

When most of the students are engaged in games like kickball or handball, many kids are standing in line waiting their turn (sedentary).

Running and tag games had highest percentage of time spent doing vigorous physical activity.

There were significant increases in minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity for individual students.

Greenspace exposure is important to introduce at elementary school level, because it creates a larger change in physical activity at that age than introduction at middle schools, when habits have already been established.

Greenspaces increase creative play, and help develop social skills and motor skills.

Greenspace locations have more small group activities (2-4 students) and hardscapes have more larger group activities (10+ students). There is a negative correlation between large group activities and physical activity due to waiting turns.

Girls are less active on hardscape than boys are, but just as active as boys on greenspace.

Playground renovation led to increase in pro-social interactions. More encouragement and collaboration amongst students correlated positively with small groups (2-4 students) and negatively with large groups (10+ students).

Antisocial interaction among individuals dropped significantly (nearly 50%) in experimental group, with no change in control.

Playground renovation increases opportunities for students to interact with nature, especially if they don't have that opportunity at home.

There were sex- and age-dependent improvements in population and individual physical activity levels, particularly in the form of moderate and vigorous physical activity. There were also improvement in pro-social interactions and creativity, and a decrease in antisocial behavior.

Next Steps

Determine how much additional greenspace can be incorporated to further narrow the activity gap between sexes without decreasing preferred activity options on hardscape.

Determine impact of playground greening on:

- School attendance and injury prevalence (kids learn to fall more safely, lower pollution and temperature, creates a space where kids want to be)
- Classroom behavior and academic performance
- Motor skill development and physical fitness levels
- Long-term adoption of physical activity behaviors

Acknowledgements

- LAUSD parents and staff
- Los Angeles Beautification Team
- Claire Latané, Landscape Designer
- Bevin Ashenmiller, Environmental Economist Researcher
- Undergrad team

The Wellness Council viewed photos of LAUSD site with playground renovation.

Dr. Raney discussed how she would like to lobby CDE to change rules for how many hopscotch, how many foursquare courts, etc. there need to be. She noted that May is living schoolyards month. The Wellness Council discussed that teachers would need resources for incorporated outdoor spaces into their curriculum, but that Children & Nature Network is working on curriculum.

Chrissy Aulicino's Presentation on Special Olympics Young Athletes Program

Kathy shared how Downey was recognized by ESPN for their programs through Special Olympics that benefit all students by promoting inclusivity and sports.

Special Olympics is a worldwide organization for individuals with intellectual disability (ID) and autism.

One program is Young Athletes for 2 to 7 years old to teach them foundational skills for sports. It promotes inclusivity for kids with ID and without ID to learn foundational skills in 8 weeks or longer.

Young Athletes also provides resources and lessons for teachers of lower elementary grades to use in PE and has information to give to parents to help with kids at home.

Special Olympics will fund it all with no cost to the schools.

The program can transition to Unified Juniors through 4th grade, 5th grade, middle school, and high school. It can help special education students transition to organized sports.

Warren High and Downey High unified teams play other. Special education and general education students play together as teammates. Unified teams travel with varsity and JV. CIF has a unified track now and unified cheer. Special Education programs also support youth leadership.

The Young Athletes program includes balls, balance beams, scarves, t-shirts, ribbons, etc. in a classroom kit.

Gabrielino Mental Health Awareness Day

Kent Monteleone and Emmett Suess presented on Mental Health Awareness Day.

The need was evident with lots of emergency calls at the beginning of the year. A group was started with ASB students, parent, school psychologist, etc.

Students led the Mental Health Awareness Day through the GHS school wellness committee.

Four mental health days were designated throughout the year so that kids know they are supported.

Each 2nd period teacher got bands to distribute to the students.

Social connectedness through strips of paper - students randomly assigned to pair off and write things that they shared in common. The strips given to ASB and they stapled them together to show the social connectness through the school

The next event will focus on stress and anxiety.

Students are so distressed that they are crying and can't speak so they give teachers a note to be referred to mental health professional. Teachers would like district support for mental health, so kids know we're doing something for them. They would like to remind students of mental health strategies (breathing, stretching, etc.) and practice them like a fire drill or coughing into elbow throughout the years to ingrain those strategies in their repertoire.

Some kids are very disconnected like "zombies" by the time they get to high school. Stress and anxiety are growing to epidemic proportions.

Students are under too much pressure, but possibly going to a flex schedule would help.

Adela said through the fee-based clinic Get Ahead she can see the stress in the kids.

The next mental health event at Gabrielino will be facilitated by the Department of Mental Health, and Kaiser will be involved in a future one

TeenZone is open in afternoons at Jefferson. During the day, it is open as reward for special education students.

November 15 they will screen the film Angst in the Gabrielino library.

Who can organize a mental health plan from elementary to high school?

EAC is bringing wellness into the LCAP and including mental health in upcoming PD day Nov 2. Recognizing stress in students, strategies that adults can use and model for students.

A survey would be important – ask students what is your biggest problem?

Teaches would like a vision for K-12 mental health.

Hillary offered to train high school students on stress relief breathing and meditation.

Teachers mentioned there is stress at lower elementary and even kinder level

Occidental can reach out to see if a clinical psychologist would be willing to come to visit.

Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services also has resources to help.

The next meeting will be held December 11, 2018.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:30 PM