

**DATE:** January 17, 2012

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Trustees Michael Janz and Catherine Ripley

**SUBJECT:** Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities - Summary of Feedback, Community Meeting, October 28, 2011

**RESOURCE STAFF:** Tash Taylor, Director, Executive and Board Relations

**REFERENCE:** <http://www.appleschools.ca/resources.php>  
[www.shape.ab.ca](http://www.shape.ab.ca)  
<http://www.epsb.ca/policy/gbe.bp.shtml> (EPSB Health and Wellness policy)

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**ISSUE:**

The feedback from participants shared at our community meeting which focused on health and wellness, will be used to inform our Board colleagues and prompt their thinking with regard to health and wellness in our schools (Attachment I).

**BACKGROUND:**

In alignment with District Priority 4 and EPSB Health and Wellness policy GBE.BP, Trustees Janz and Ripley hosted a joint Ward F and Ward H gathering to discuss *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools, and Healthy Communities*. Parents and community members were in attendance at the Riverbend Community Hall on October 28, 2011.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

While the district priorities have been established, metrics in this area have not. Existing health and wellness initiatives have received direction from regulations.

**KEY POINTS**

- More collaboration and partnerships are required to help improve the health of all citizens, starting with our students and transmitting positive behaviors and habits to all citizens.
- Establishing metrics in these areas are challenging, but crucial to charting progress.
- The three main themes of *Nutrition, Emotional Health, and Active Living* in policy GBE.BP are robust and should continue to serve as direction for the regulations and ongoing activity in the District.
- We should endeavour to include student input as we further develop the metrics and activities to promote health and wellness so as to capture the passion and imagination that many students hold in this area.

**ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES**

ATTACHMENT I Short Summary of Feedback from *Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities* - Community Meeting (October 28, 2011)

CR/MJ:ee

## **Short Summary of Feedback from Ward F & Ward H “Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities” Community Conversation October 28<sup>th</sup> 2011**

### **Introduction:**

In alignment with District Priority 4 and the EPSB Health Policy (<http://www.epsb.ca/policy/qbe.bp.shtml>), Trustees Janz and Ripley hosted a joint Ward F & Ward H gathering to discuss “Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools, and Healthy Communities.” In attendance were parents and community members. The event was held October 28<sup>th</sup> at Riverbend Community Hall.

The feedback from community participants shared in this document will be used to inform our board colleagues and prompt their thinking with regard to health and wellness in our schools.

### **Special Guests**

Erin Wright of APPLE Schools project (<http://www.appleschools.ca/resources.php>)

Bev Esslinger of SHAPE (Safe Healthy Active People Everywhere) [www.shape.ab.ca](http://www.shape.ab.ca)

*Thanks again to Ed Butler, Christina Collins, Carmelle Cooper, Matt Jeneroux, Frances Lin, Kim Kelly, Laurie McIntosh, Deb Olmstead, Jennifer Pillay, Madeline Rainey, Marianne Rankin, Jan Wallace, Michael Walters, and our presenters for attending!*

### **The Gathering**

Participants were asked two questions:

- 1) What actions are you taking in your school or in your community to promote health and wellness?
- 2) Where would you like to see EPSB focus more attention with regard to health and wellness?

We then brainstormed potential metrics for measuring progress in the three areas of **Active Living**, **Emotional Health**, and **Nutrition**.

### **FEEDBACK ON TWO QUESTIONS**

#### **1) What actions are you taking in your school or in your community to promote health and wellness.**

- Staff in the ReachOut Program at Argyll Home Education work with students one-on-one and display patience and acceptance of their students regardless of their challenges and symptoms.
- Promoting City of Edmonton program to teach grade 1-3 snowshoeing and grade 4-6 x-country skiing. Have to vote on proposals acceptance at Jan 12th annual general meeting of our school council. Likely will pass with a cost of \$1000 to school council.
- From pre-school to grade 6, Council has attempted to disseminate some age relevant nutrition materials to parents, teachers, and students.
- I have lobbied for an extended lunch eating period at our elementary school, which was implemented this year.

- I am a parent coach of elementary school running club, which has high participation rate. Provide basic "sports nutrition" information to kids (includes sugar shocker kit.)
- Look for opportunities with specialized instructors - dance, gymnastics
- Lunch hour activities - longer lunch hour.
- Promoting healthy food choices in school
- Our school has a policy where all uneaten food goes home so parents can see what the kids aren't eating for lunch.

## **2) Where would you like to see EPSB focus more attention with regard to health and wellness?**

- Would like the district to become more informed on the topic of brain disorder - commonly referred to as "mental illness" Specifically brain disorder of organic/physiological origin. I would like to see differentiation between behaviour and symptoms and see appropriate responses (rather than simple "reactions").
- Pleased to see that some of the discussion was about what parents can do.
- MEND program for prevention of obesity in children's & adolescents (part of AHS (5yr.) "Health Action Plan"
- Parenting initiatives that reinforce health & wellness.
- Focus on the benefits of sleep for children and adolescents
- Encouraging active daily living initiatives to start @ home ie parents responsibility is to provide a healthy environment for their children.
- PS: Changing behavior is complex and challenging! Involving people in areas where change is desired,, especially students, and getting their feedback is key.
- Remember not to take too much of the responsibility away from the parents. EPSB doesn't have to take the place of the parents.
- Healthy eating and make sure choices are promoted.
- increasing physical activity after school in Elementary. Eg. Partnership with exercise specialist, perhaps Phys Ed at U of A and EPS.
- Healthy nutrition, getting rid of junk food in schools (perhaps this has already fully occurred?)
- Encourage kids to eat great lunches in order to encourage learning in the afternoon and ensure kids don't crash.
- Encourage walking to school - decrease availability of bus service/yellow bus.
- Encourage schools to host intramurals for most of the school year as opposed to a few months.
- Create an EPSB Healthy cookbook.
- More health and physical education instruction may not equate with improved health and wellness
- Most of the nutrition and healthy information taught is very repetitive year after year. It would be better to spend less time on this so kids aren't so bored.

## **FEEDBACK ON POSSIBLE METRICS AND MEASURES:**

We had a brief discussion regarding metrics and measurements that could assist us in knowing we were meeting our fourth district priority in the three core areas of Active living, Emotional Health, and Nutrition. Some suggested metrics and measures were:

### **Active Living:**

- Achieve fewer children arriving on school buses and in cars (i.e. more kids arriving on foot or by bike or other “active transportation” method)
- Track the opportunities we provide for kids after school to do active things as opposed to "Sit and Do" activities (ie. after school clubs that are focused on exercise, outdoor games, etc. rather than art, piano)
- Track running clubs and active programs-- especially the non-competitive ones.
- Require every school to have a safe travel plan (and/or healthy transportation activities)
- Make note of /capture the activities of parent councils to support active health activities (i.e. provision of pedometers, etc.)
- Create a baseline of where students and/or classrooms are at and then set targets for individuals and classrooms but make it fun like step counters etc.
- Promote fun targets like walking around the world to integrate with geography curriculum.
  - Opportunities: Work with other community partners and health professionals.
  - Barriers: If “active living” after school clubs were to be developed at schools, are there requirements for a staff member to be involved? (i.e. for insurance purposes, liability).

### **Emotional Health**

- Track behavior issues like detention.
- Track reductions in bullying and conflicts.
- Evaluate if our satisfaction surveys indicate emotional health.
- Promoting a variety of extracurricular activities to help kids find sports and activities that work for them and so they can engage with sports in a positive way (rather than a demeaning way).

### **Nutrition**

- Help students make good nutritional choices through increasing availability of “choose more often” foods and restrict access to junk foods.
- Encourage fun contests where kids promote consuming more fruit and vegetables with their own families.
- Tie nutrition into the curriculum like the Westglen Milk project or the Sugarbusters initiatives.
- Help students track their meals and share this with their parents. Sometimes parents pack healthy lunches but don’t know if the kids are eating them.