

Minutes of Youth Advisory Committee Meeting
September 25, 2009

Members present: Jim Forti, Lynne Cavanaugh, Beth Butler, Erin Splaine,
Marlene Dodyk

Also present: Lynn Dowd, Dossie Kahn

1. Minutes of 06/12/09 were approved.
2. Next meeting dates set: 10/27/09 8:00 AM, 11/13/09 9:15 AM, 12/18/09 9:00 AM, 01/15/10 9:00 AM

Staff Updates:

- a. Introductions: Julia Surow was welcomed and introduced as the new WYFS Intern. She is in the second year of the Masters in Counseling Psychology program at Boston College. She has previous clinical experience in substance abuse counseling with a homeless and prison post release populations in Philadelphia PA before she began her graduate work at Boston College. She will work with us through the 2009/10 academic year.
- b. Referrals: Lynn – it has been an active start to the school year with new referrals from both the High School and Elementary levels. Marlene added that referrals have been steady for the new Stabilization Counselor position at WHS as well. That position offers both counseling and case management to students who return to school after hospitalization or have ongoing medical needs but are not already served by an IEP with specialized services.
- c. Parent Coffees: none are scheduled yet. Dossie is collaborating with Martha Jamison to provide outreach to athletic team families through team suppers, Jodi Pongratz also expressed interest in this to extend education outreach to theater and music involved families.
- d. Depression Awareness - Lynn and Dossie - a Depression Awareness project at WHS is underway. This year we are doing a collaborative project in which Julia Surow will work with 3 or 4 WHS students to discuss facts and myths and the concerns of WHS students in a video report that will be carried by WSPN. The design of the project will be developed in collaboration between Julia and the students and then made available at the school through WSPN. This week we discussed the idea with guidance staff and Principle Tutwiler who encouraged us to continue.
- e. Friends of WYFS: new members are interested and active. Karen Blumenfeld may need to reduce her involvement due to work demands. Community education projects this year will include topics on social development in the elementary years as well as social development and parent understanding of teen transitions, a book group is in development, both Marc Kline and Rob Evans are interested in presenting although dates and details are not yet fixed.

Board Updates:

- a. Marlene noted that referrals have been steady for the new Stabilization Counselor position at WHS. That position offers both counseling and case management to students who return to school after hospitalization or have ongoing medical needs but are not already served by an IEP with specialized services. Freshmen as well as returning upperclassmen are being served by the new program which is modeled on programs in Wellesley and Brookline. The new health curriculum is in place with 9th grade students using Alcohol EDU, and grades 10-12 participating in “Class Action” as case study approach to substance use and health education that enhances decision making skills through participation and analysis. The new WHS substance use policy is being implemented.
- b. Beth raised a question about what process helps welcome new upperclassmen into WHS. Orientation with added individual assistance from guidance staff is in place.
- c. Paperwork confirming Erin’s renewal as chair needs to be reviewed.
- d. Erin recommended a Facebook presence for WYFS to enhance community awareness and involvement in programming.

Community News:

Questions were raised following a BB gun shooting at FA Day Middle School in Newton regarding gun licensing and guidelines for families on gun safety.

Respectfully submitted,

Dossie F. Kahn