

Minutes of the School Food Subcommittee meeting  
February 6, 2007

Present

Subcommittee members: Paula Jones, Meryl Bennan, Katie Kaplow, Rick Keeler, Colleen Kavanagh, Ed Wilkins, Loretta Lee, Libby Albert, Ericka Lovrin, Meyla Ruwin, Dana Woldow (chair), Anne Quaintance, Karen Gehrman, Jacob Schreiber  
Guests: Timothy Ho, Aimee Liwanag, Kristy Voluntad, Phillip Pak, Carlos Julio Gonzalez

The meeting was called to order at 4:05pm by subcommittee chair Dana Woldow. The minutes from the previous meeting were read and a motion made to approve as read.  
MSP

Students from Balboa High School presented the preliminary results of a project they are doing about improving food at their school. They reported that common complaints from students are that the meal is not large enough to fill up a high school student; that they would like better quality food, including organic fruit, although they understand this would cost more money which SNS does not have; and that they would like more choices of entrees each day, rather than one choice, take it or leave it.

Ed Wilkins (SNS director) said he was prepared to begin a new pilot at Balboa which would address most of the students' concerns. The new pilot would add an "offer bar" (like a salad bar, but only fruit, vegetables, and bread – no cheese or meat) to the daily lunch, which would complement (not replace) the hot entrée. The offer bar would contain several kinds of mixed greens, plus broccoli and cauliflower florets, carrot sticks, cucumber slices, etc., and a variety of fresh fruit every day. In addition, Preferred Meal Systems (the district's meal provider) offers a level of service in which several hot entrees can be provided every day. Ed would like to make this available at Balboa but first must have the electrical service to the Coyote Café upgraded to accommodate the large freezer unit which this option will require. Preferred pays for all new equipment required by the offer bar and the larger choice of entrees. Ed is aiming to begin the pilot in early March, contingent on the electrical upgrade being completed. The Balboa students agreed to help promote the new lunch options at their school, as the success of the program will hinge on increased participation by students; if successful, it will be expanded to other sites. The students also agreed to survey their peers several weeks after the new options are introduced, to get feedback and recommendations for other entrees they would like to see, and to report back to this subcommittee at the April meeting.

Ed explained some of the financial constraints under which SNS must operate. Dana suggested that we might perhaps ask the BOE to allocate some Prop H money next year to improve school food. Libby and Dana are also working to help get the federal and state reimbursements increased, as they are far too low given the higher cost of living and of labor in SF.

Karen Gehrman, a parent at Presidio Child Development Center, shared her concerns about the large amount of sugary, low nutrition snacks and treats being provided to the children by parents, often as part of a birthday or holiday celebration. Her concerns echo those heard from parents at many elementary schools. It was proposed that a new working group be established for PreK food issues; Karen agreed to chair the working group and to solicit members from her own and all other CDC sites. The group will discuss additions to the Wellness Policy which could reduce the amount of unhealthy snacks being brought in by parents. It was agreed that the original policy of not setting any restrictions at all on food which is given away free is not working at the PreK/elementary level, because there is so much of it going on. Karen will report back in April with her group's recommendations for Wellness Policy changes. Meyla Ruwin (director, School Health Programs) will arrange for Wellness Policy staff training for CDP staff, as she is already doing for K-12 staff.

Dana reported on the Grab n Go at Balboa, which began service in the lobby last week. About 3 times as many students are now eating school breakfast as compared to before Grab n Go two years ago (about 230 students now vs 80 students then.)

Legislation which would make catering trucks keep back 1500 feet from middle and high schools has been introduced at the Board of Supervisors.

Rick Keeler, a medical student at UCSF, has been working with Colleen Kavanagh on the grant application for the Point of Sale system, and told the subcommittee that he has now begun a new project surveying the vending machines in middle and high schools. Rick will visit each school, take inventory of the machine contents, and leave information about the Wellness Policy. He will follow up with a report to each Principal, detailing which products are not in compliance with the policy, and provide them with a form letter they can give to their vendor explaining the policy and the need to stock only products on the district approved list, not on some SB19 or SB12 compliant list, because our standards are stricter than state legislation. Rick will report back to the subcommittee at the end of his study.

Dana reminded everyone that for the next several months, it is important to make sure that the BOE is reminded to please make good nutrition a priority when interviewing candidates for the new Superintendent position.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm

Next meeting: **April 17th**