

Minutes
School Food Subcommittee meeting

Tuesday, Sept. 18, 2007

Present: Dana Woldow, meeting chair; Libby Albert, Soni Bhatia, Laura Brainin-Rodriguez, Mark Elkin, Karen Gehrman, Caroline Grannan, Karen Heisler, Paula Jones, Colleen Kavanagh, Loretta Lee, Aileen Murphy, Jacob Schreiber, Susie White

1. Dana Woldow called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Minutes of the previous meeting (May 22, 2007) were read and approved.

2. Ongoing projects

a. **Meal applications:** Applications are coming in faster than anticipated, and SFUSD Human Resources has not been able to provide temps to help, so the process is falling behind. SNS will lose money for any applications that can't be processed by the Oct. 9 deadline. Libby Albert explained the multiple reasons why it's important to collect applications for every student who qualifies. 20 volunteers have been trained to go to targeted schools just before and after school and talk to parents about this.

School Health Programs is working to get after-school programs to collect the applications too, which will bring in reimbursements for snacks.

There was discussion of collecting the applications at high schools, when the message must be sent via the students, not directly to the parents. Dana said Balboa had been successful by entering students in a raffle for donated prizes when they returned the application. She also suggested an incentive to teachers if they can get a targeted percentage in their homeroom to return the forms. Lowell is incorrectly telling families they must fill out one form per student as in the past. Actually, only one form is required per family.

The stigma for students of being identified as low-income was mentioned. Dana pointed out that a Point of Sale swipe card system will eliminate the stigma, because it will be impossible for an onlooker to tell the difference between free/reduced students and paying students.

b. **Salad bars:** Loretta Lee reported on the salad bar opening at Fairmount. Francisco Middle and Harvey Milk Elementary will open salad bars this month. There will be news coverage as soon as the salad bars are up and running smoothly.

It was asked if Mission High will get a salad bar. Renovations made on the Mission cafeteria over the summer, on which SNS was not consulted despite its requests to be included in planning, now make it impossible to install the planned salad bar. The cost of redoing the renovations to allow for a salad bar is unknown. The Facilities Department, which was in charge of the renovations, requested that SNS pay the cost

of redoing them from the city grant that's paying for salad bars, but that's not feasible.

- c. **Long-range planning:** Colleen Kavanagh reported that there will be a meeting on Sept. 27 to discuss "visioning," a mission statement and studying SFUSD's needs further.
- d. **Cooperation:** Dana mentioned some problem areas. Improved cooperation from principals, especially in distributing meal cards promptly, would reduce SNS financial losses. Announcements that all students eat free for the first couple of weeks of the school year caused significant losses. Those losses increase the SNS encroachment on the general fund. Dana passed out material giving information on how SFUSD staff can support SNS, which would benefit the entire district. It was mentioned that SFUSD is never able to get temporary workers to help with the annual short-term increased workload of processing the meal applications. That costs SFUSD lost reimbursements when the apps can't be processed by the deadline. Teachers have been requested to notify the cafeteria staffs in advance about field trips to minimize wasted meals, but that rarely happens. Cooperating with requests like this would significantly improve SNS' financial picture.
- e. **Funding needs:** Dana reported on plans to request Prop. H city funds to put salad bars in more schools and implement a Point of Sale swipe-card system.
- f. **Child Development Programs:** Presidio CDP parent Karen Gehrman has proposed that her CDP become a model preschool in implementing healthy food, and a parent group is getting together to work on that. Karen says the district is supposed to have filled a district-level position to manage CDP food but has not done it, leaving that to be added to Ed Wilkins' duties. Presidio has dramatically shifted its attitude and policies. Colleen reported that the Grattan CDP sells junk food as a fundraiser and hands out unhealthy snacks free to the children. Mark Elkin said some schools have overreacted to the Wellness Policy, forcibly confiscating food children have brought from home, which the policy does not call for.
- g. **Website redesign:** Karen has offered to redesign the www.sfusdfood.org website to make it more user-friendly.
- h. **Wellness policy enforcement:** It's not realistic to expect full, immediate compliance with the policy. Jeanne Pon is the district administrator in charge of enforcement. Paula Jones wondered if the policy needs to specifically ban overt identification of low-income students, even though that's the law of the land. The Point of Sale system is the only way to remedy the fact that some schools are still doing overt identification, Dana said. It was suggested that language be added to the Wellness Policy specifically prohibiting overt identification.

Loretta Lee said that some principals refuse to give out meal cards. When parents complained that an SNS employee was correctly checking off students going through

the lunch line, the principal supported the parents. Principals need to understand that SNS loses money if they don't give out cards and if the caf staff doesn't check off students eating lunch – and that the loss encroaches on the General Fund, cutting their own site budgets.

- i. School Health Programs update: Mark said that SHP is promoting the Wellness Policy at different levels, including making buttons reading “I support the Wellness Policy.” Teacher training is being held especially at low-income schools.

The Chef in the Classroom program was discussed. Soni Bhatia said it was successful last year but funds ran out to continue it.

The next meeting will be held Nov. 13 at Raoul Wallenberg High School. The meeting was adjourned at 5:25.