

Minutes of the School Food Subcommittee
November 8, 2004

Present: Ed Wilkins; Holley Wysong; Caroline Grannan; Miyoko Schinner; Janet Wojcicki; Norah Schwartz; Ericka Lovrin; Meyla Ruwin; Pat Saturnio; Laura Brainin-Rodriguez; Yvonne Don; Maryann Rainey; Dana Woldow (chair)

The meeting was called to order at 4:03. Minutes from the last meeting were approved as written.

Miyoko presented the information she has found on possible vegetarian entrees. Various options are available; Ed will review them all to make sure they meet Child Nutrition standards, and also to determine which might fall within our price limits. Although the committee would ultimately like to see vegetarian offerings in both the a la carte and the mainline, it is most likely that a la carte offerings will be tried first, as they are not subject to the same price restrictions as mainline. Once possible entrees have been identified by Ed, a taste test will be arranged to see if students are receptive. Lowell has already scheduled a tasting of other products for January; that could be an opportunity to test vegetarian options. Aptos Middle School would be a likely site to pilot the sale of student-selected entrees in the Beanery. If there are products which can be offered on the mainline through Preferred Meal Systems, they could be piloted through some of the elementary schools where School Health Programs is already working on heightened nutrition awareness.

Meyla and Pat provided an update on the POS pilot. Available funds from LEAF were less than anticipated due to some funds having been used to cover the salary of a LEAF member while she was out on disability. Some additional money was available from a special reimbursement for meals served at Lowell and Mission High Schools during the course of the LEAF grant, but the total funds available for a POS pilot are about \$30,000 rather than the approx. \$37-39,000 previously estimated. Although it had been hoped to have a pilot in place by this time, the process has been slowed due to the need to issue an RFP and allow any company that sells a POS system to bid. Current estimate is to have something in place for the second semester.

Ed presented the current status of the meal application returns. There have been many problems with the new software, which are gradually being addressed; a major problem which remains is with the IT department, whose lists of students enrolled in each school do not match the lists which Principals have of their actual enrollment. The data which SNS is using is from the IT lists, and Principals are having to call SNS and correct their enrollment lists to get an accurate count of their free lunch percentages. It is important that these percentages be accurate, as many grants and other funding sources depend on them, as well as their being a factor in API similar schools rankings. Ed cautioned that much of the data he was presenting would likely change as schools contacted SNS with updated enrollment information. Nonetheless, the percentage of returned applications appears to be up this year over last year; the increase is believed to be a result of the work the committee and SNS did to encourage all families to return the application, even if

they knew they didn't qualify. The 10 elementary schools targeted by the committee for special attention to try to raise their return rate all appear to have very high rates of return. Ed will provide an updated report at the next meeting. Meanwhile, another outreach effort will be made to the families of students who did not return an application. This time, the application will be mailed directly to the families, not sent home with students. Marina Levy was able to get an outside agency to cover the cost of this mailing.

Dana read an e-mail from Lorna Ho, thanking Ed and Philip Smith, among others, for their work in making sure that the SFUSD was in compliance with all health and safety regulations when the NBC program *Dateline* came around investigating. The investigators were not able to find any "dirt" to report on our district and so focused their attention on other districts. The committee applauded Ed and Philip for their hard work.

Ed distributed the results of the taste testing held at Visitation Valley Middle School in October, but a discussion of the results, and all other agenda items, were put off until next meeting due to the lateness of the hour. Student fundraising at Lowell will be put on the agenda as soon as the Lowell community produces a workable proposal. The meeting was adjourned at 5:05.