



Good Food Implementation Committee

April 17, 2019
2:30 – 4 p.m.

Attendees: Michelle Abernathy, Heather Alvis, Priyanka Anand, Anna Beebe, Amy Blom, Coralie Burr, Anna Ciao, Mike Cohen, Margaret Gude, Atalia Jones, Rainbow Koehl, Erica Lamson, Jennifer Moon, Elaine Nichols, Holly O'Neil, Jen Pinnow, Laura Plaut, Alexandra Sands, Cindy Scott, Josh Silverman, Tami Slack, Mardi Solomon, Katie Stanford, Sharece Steinkamp, Meagan Stephenson, Tanya Storm, Maressa Valliant, Elizabeth VanNiekerk, Faith Whalley, Jessica Sankey, Patrick Durgan, Karri Neuhauser

Jessica Sankey and Patrick Durgan welcomed the group. The group reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting. Minutes were accepted as written.

Garden-to-Cafeteria Toolkit Update: Laura Plaut, Patrick Durgan, Margaret Gude and Katie Stanford reported on grant from Whole Kids Foundation and Slow Food USA to support Garden to Cafeteria toolkit. We are working to make our own toolkit. On April 20, Andrew Nowak from Slow Food USA will walk through our garden to cafeteria process. Whatcom students will harvest leafy greens. Andrew will prepare a composed salad in our cafeteria as a training for our staff; the salad will be served on the school salad bar for lunch. The idea is to create a process for all schools to use to safely integrate food that we grow in our schools into our cafeteria. Patrick Durgan and Laura Plaut will be going to Cincinnati the week of April 23 to tell Bellingham's story at the conference.

May 10 is the Central Kitchen Groundbreaking ceremony. The Good Food Promise Implementation Committee is invited.

Patrick reported about the Chefs' Collective. They meet once a quarter to talk about connecting with community. They are hosting a market mob at the Farmers' Market on Saturday.

Review Feedback

Three big interests arose last month: waste (kitchen waste and waste from eating); food security; and food education. This spring, the group will focus on celebrations, fundraisers and food in classrooms. We will maintain a lens that includes increasing equity and reducing waste.

Small Group Conversations

This month we are focusing on how to have fabulous celebrations either with or without food in school. Teams broke out into groups by level – high, middle and elementary. Groups used two sets of prompts to guide their discussion. They took about 10 minutes to discuss each prompt and then gave feedback.

Report back from group discussion:

Discussion about Policy/Procedure

What defines a celebration?

What do we celebrate in schools?

Does wellness policy language ring true or are revisions recommended?

Elementary – Consider the heart of what matters: what drives celebrations? How do we want children to feel? How do we create celebrations that honor the child? Celebrations should be intentional, engaging activities, joyful, special (not every day), and highlight social connections. Celebrations should also be inclusive and increase equity. Food can exclude students (allergies, cultural food norms can lead to students who can't eat food that other students do eat).

Middle School-- Celebrations should be fun. We need to consider group activities where food is shared: completion of a milestone, birthdays, carnivals, other events. The wellness policy calls out birthdays but not other celebrations.

High School – Key celebrations include birthdays, holidays, sports activities, music activities, language classes, graduations and dances. The key target audience for communication is teachers more than parents. Wellness policy revisions should include honoring individual and group achievements.

Discussion about implementation

Where do you see a lack of alignment with the food promise?

What are some celebrations that would better align?

What are resources that would help with implementation?

Elementary – There is a lack of alignment and continuity across district and between classrooms. Groups recognized a need to identify the goal of the celebration and focus on honoring the child with a birthday book, compliment notes, photos. For attendance parties, consider non-food celebrations; for example, have an administrator visit classrooms. Give children a limited number of choices and let them pick. We recognize this is a culture shift and there is a need to support staff. Consider a policy to guide corporate sponsor gifts and promotions regarding food (like Menchie's or McDonald's promotions). One group held a discussion around equity and modeling healthy food behaviors. What can the district do to support schools that are resource poor with making healthy food choices? Consider a volunteer wellness ambassador position in each school.

Middle School – There is an assumption in our district that sugar equals celebration. There is a lack of resources for better choices. Are audiences ready for the change? Some celebration ideas: physical activity, healthy food options, a district "party truck." Too often sweets are offered as a grab and go instead of a celebration, we need to teach kids to slow down and enjoy food together.

High School – Needs include enforcement, information and buy-in. Families appreciate being included but usually don't drive high school celebrations. It would be good to have consistent messaging that is also easily available for families. Having district-wide monthly celebration of cultural foods through the cafeteria would be nice. Salad parties are a healthy way to include food in celebrations. The group suggested having a special day for every student once a year to recognize that student. We could have a volunteer committee at school to decorate a person's locker or an area to acknowledge every student,

possibly connect with #WeDineTogether. We could use Wellness Blog and webpage, email reminders, recipes for families.

Wrap up

Jessica thanked everyone for attending. She will send out minutes with a summary of the ideas we heard today. Next meeting is May 15, 2018.