

Needham Youth & Family Services

Notes from February 13, 2019 Board Meeting

Meeting Commenced at 5:30 pm, Highland Room, Needham Town Hall

Board in Attendance: Julie Stevens, David Bookston, Kevin Keane, Karen Mullen, Annie Stein, and Shayan Raza

Director: Ms. Sara Shine

Motion to Approve January 9th minutes Made by David, Seconded by Shayan. **Unanimous approval of January 9th minutes.**

Update on Programs, Services and Awards

The group processed the anniversary of the loss of 2 Needham High School Students last year at this time. There was ongoing discussion about how NY&FS could be helpful in supporting the school and the students.

Sara updated the group on specific emergency client/family protocol specifically when there is a waitlist for services. This new procedure will allow youth, parents and families to access services immediately, be seen a handful of times, and have a thorough assessment with recommendations and resources for continued support.

Update on the Needham Unplugged Calendar, calendar was shared with the board

Staff member Carolyn Tracy joined the meeting to update the programs she has been heavily involved with. The Peer Tutor program is running smoothly, over 50 pairs are working together. Carolyn processed through some difficulties that some of the pairs are having including schedule changes or behavioral issues. Carolyn emphasized that the Tutors are High School students so the expectations need to be realistic and in line with what can be done in a hour or tutoring.

Carolyn and Sara then updated the group on some of the school workshops that are currently running in the school including Safe Surf, Sexual Harassment and Picture Perfect. All materials for all workshops have been updated this past year.

Make a Statement Day was then discussed in great detail. This year the project will be different in that a mural will be created with puzzle pieces. Sara shared some examples of

what the project will look like. Annie, Shayan and David all gave suggestions on how to involve the students and teacher the best and to ensure the students have enough time to complete the project. Additional time in homeroom, a contest attached to the project, and stations set up in the library were all recommendations for the project. It was also suggested that the students could either do the project alone or as a group. In addition, there were recommendations to get local community artists involved in future years.

The **Intergenerational** programs have started and will be running through February. The hope is that they will be more formally part of programming moving forward.

All staff members were part of a panel discussion of, "If They Had Known." The school response to the showing was discussed. There were a lot of positive thoughts about the showing although some students felt the information was repetitive as they already knew the dangers of mixing substances.

Parent Programming

NY&FS will be providing 2 parent workshops in March. One will focus on the use of social media and parenting techniques around this and the other will be run with SPAN and will be focused on vaping.

Forde Award

The Forde award ceremony was a success, about 75 people showed up to honor the recipients Peter Mesnik and Bill Earl.

Community Focus and Administrative Updates

New policies created for the Town were shared with the group. A majority of the time was spent reviewing the policy "Response to Sudden or Traumatic Death." Board members discussed how Youth & Family Services could be supportive to the community when tragedy occurs, especially when the death is not connected to a school. Some ideas included having a common space to be available for support (outside of the Town office), additional communication with emergency service departments, outreach to family and community members, and additional communication regarding the incident on social media.

The new high school grading system was discussed. Positives and negatives about the weighted grading system was processed and how students will have the freedom to take classes they are interested in without the classes being weighted differently in addition to feeling less stressed. Overall it is seen as a positive.

Motion to Adjourn 7 pm made by David, Seconded by Shayan. Unanimous decision to adjourn at 6:30