

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
106 Hancock Rd.
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
FOOD SERVICE/WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Thursday, April 22, 2021

5:30 PM

Physical Location: None

Virtual Location:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85275444453?pwd=SBOWmxISC8wclozY0xWVmf4cUFjZz09>

Meeting ID: 852 7544 4453

Password: hc63EF

Phone: +1 312 626 6799 US

Meeting ID: 852 7544 4453

Password: 810833

Minutes

Committee Members:

- Richard Dunning
- Robert Short, Jr.
- Keira Christian
- Liz Swan
- Pamela Murphy
- Kelly Parker
- Todd Bennett
- Savannah Lee

Committee Members Present: Richard Dunning, Robert Short, Jr., Keira Christian, Liz Swan, Lori Schmidt

1. Call Meeting to Order

Lori Schmidt called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

2. Select Committee Chair

Robert Short, Jr. nominated Richard Dunning as Food Service Committee Chairman. Liz Swan second. Dick Dunning accepted. Motion carried.

3. Accept Minutes of March 8, 2021

Robert Short, Jr. motioned to accept the minutes of March 8, 2021. Dick Dunning second. Liz Swan, Keira Christian, and Robert Short, Jr. abstained. Motion carried.

4. Program update

Lori Schmidt reported that March financial data has not yet been received.

Lori said that we contract out for food service. Every year, based on lunch rates, reimbursement rates, and experiences i.e. catering, sales etc. determines loss standings. Sales have been down. Each year we budget for an anticipated loss; this year \$116,921.00 was anticipated. We have \$135,000.00 available for this year to cover this. The loss is projected at an additional \$100,000.

Waivers have been extended to permit ConVal to serve free food through the 2021-2022 school year. We will have the ability to serve in a non-congregating manner. Food can be picked up. We can serve anyone 18 and younger in the summer. An outreach solution is planned. Guilfoil Public Relations will be looked to for promotion of completing free and reduced lunch (FRL) paperwork.

This summer, if we have ESY or Title programs going, we will have people on campus that will help our summer program maybe break even. We shouldn't lose money on this. The goal is to reduce, if not eliminate our loss. Historically, we have never made money on our food program. Liz Swan asked if the Federal Government is funding the free meals and because not as many are participating, we are not receiving funding. Lori Schmidt confirmed.

If we can open in a more normal manner it may help. We should be able to increase our participation rate.

Robert Short, Jr. said that when we say that free meals have been extended, he thought that they would cover all of the meals.

Lori Schmidt said that with the application process, you could qualify for FRL or pay. Each category has a specific reimbursement rate.

There are two options for running a summer program. We have run a program SSO program that has a slightly lower reimbursement rate. Next year, that is all the USD is allowing.

Robert Short, Jr. asked if we need to creep our price up. What would be the cost if we self-paid?

Lori Schmidt said that she has been anxiously waiting for a tool that identifies what our lunch rate should be. We have a cap of a .10 increase. We need to increase it by .15. She needs to complete the tool based on last year's data.

Then came the announcement of the extension of the waiver. We don't have a need to change prices because there is no charge for meals.

We can say that we don't want the USD support and fund our own program.

Is there a requirement to charge all children for lunch?

Fresh Picks has changed things. In addition, we have to recalculate revenue. A \$282,000 deficit is anticipated.

Lori Schmidt has asked for a new report from Café Services. She hopes that the summer program is more successful.

Our FRL numbers were static to last year but have increased over the year. We did not take the big hit for our FRL numbers. We did not know over the summer and start of the year that there would be free food through the year. We were able to encourage families to complete the assistance forms.

Lori's concern is that the extension of free meals through next year will be widely publicized causing families not to fill out the paperwork. If a student received the FRL status this year, it does carry through to September 30th.

Keira Christian said that there are benefits for filling out the FRL paperwork in the way of fee waivers for college testing. College application fees are waived as well. FRL numbers tie into Erate dollars and Title monies. We will have to encourage families to complete the paperwork.

Dick Dunning asked how well teachers are informed about this. High school teachers could inform students about this as well as middle school teachers. Dick further suggested that Kimberly Saunders share this with administrators to encourage completion of applications.

Liz Swan said that we could work with the marketing firm on small clips that include this information to encourage applications. Liz said that she has noticed that a lot of families do not opt into food service because of food sensitivities. Dairy free and lactose free as well as gluten free are important to families and it is not always recognized by our food program. Nutrition is important in this community. A heightened awareness is needed.

Lori Schmidt referenced a survey that she previously sent. We make accommodations for medically necessary allergies. Lori spoke about the nutritional value of certain foods that meet the requirements. Lori is planning to work with our food service director. We need to work on the perception that we are serving junk food.

Liz Swan said that she believes that things are getting lost with gluten free and dairy free options. People are human and mistakes are made. Variety is important as well. A gluten free meal cannot always be a salad for a middle school student. A gluten-free meal for everyone to allow a student with allergies to eat what everyone else is eating is not a bad thing.

Robert Short, Jr. said that the breakfasts provided frequently include sugary cereals or doughnuts. Part of it is that some of the foods today that appear to be unhealthy really have healthy components to trick your brain.

Liz Swan suggested using creative language when promoting meals; something "free" is associated with lower quality. The value needs to be shown to people.

Keira Christian said that there is a fair amount of stigma in receiving a free meal. It is a no shame situation the way it is run today. It is not publicized.

5. Other

None.

Robert Short motioned to adjourn at 6:24 p.m. Keira Christian second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok

Amended at the August 26, 2021 Food Service/Wellness Committee meeting.