



Fairfield CARES Community Coalition

Minutes

November 18, 2020

View a recording of the meeting on our [YouTube channel](#)

Welcome: Cristin McCarthy Vahey welcomed all to the meeting at 8:32am

Attendance:

Co-chair Cristin McCarthy Vahey (Government/State Rep, Parent)

Members: Steve Baker (Parents), Beverly Balaz (Business), Wendy Bentivegna (Community Member), Bernadette Coppola (Parent), Philip Dwyer (Civic/Volunteer Org), Donna Fletcher (Health Care), Cathy Hazlett (Staff), Jennifer Jacobsen (Government/BOE, Parent), Reini Knorr (Parent), Lori Mediate (School), Emily Melnick (Evaluator), Tim Morris (School), Lance Newkirchen (Law Enforcement), Alison Seyal (Government/Social Services, Parent), Livy Shah (youth), Pam Walker (School), Margaret Watt (Substance Misuse Prevention Org), Nicole Wichowski (Substance Misuse Prevention Org), Noreen Wilpiseski (Youth Serving Org/Gov).

() indicates community sector.

Secretary for the meeting: Cathy Hazlett agreed to serve as Secretary for this meeting. If anyone would like to serve as Secretary, please inform any members of the Leadership team.

Approval of Minutes: Jennifer Jacobsen made the motion to approve the October 21st Coalition minutes and Phil Dwyer seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Co-Chair Update:

Cristin McCarthy Vahey provided a brief update on the desire to continue to grow the coalition, particularly wanting more parents of youth to attend.

Drug Free Communities Grant:

Cathy Hazlett informed the coalition members that the coalition needs representation from the media sector, the only missing sector of the twelve. The coalition needs to find a media representative prior to applying for the Drug Free Communities grant.

Officer Lance Newkirchen Presentation:

Lance Newkirchen informed the coalition of the Fairfield Police Department's Crisis Intervention Team and the many ways the department is engaged in youth drug use prevention.

Committees: Data, Program, and Resource: Each Coalition member participated in one of the three committees for about 20 or so minutes then there were reports back out to the larger group.

Data Committee

Emily Melnick reported out that the Data group discussed how to promote and recruit people for the various focus groups that will begin after Thanksgiving

Resources Committee

Phil Dwyer reported out that the committee discussed drafting a new mission and vision statements, building on the drafts provided by Tom Hennesey and the Statement of Purpose from the coalition's by-laws.

Program Committee

Reini Knorr reported that four vaping postcards will be sent to parents of middle and high school students during the month of February to educate on the dangers of vaping, and the committee is considering having the author of the Scaffold Effect: Raising Resilient, Self Reliant, and... present at the coalition's annual event in May. The committee also discussed a parent social norms campaign focused on the prevention of underage drinking.

Youth Committee

Cathy Hazlett informed members that the Fairfield CARES Youth Committee (FCYC) has been quite active and there are approximately 15 high school youth involved: drafted a teen vaping survey, will be developing a substance use prevention video for the 8th grade health classes, conducting a holiday outreach service for Operation Hope, and will be attending several trainings in the next few months.

Other Business: Jenn Jacobsen informed members that the BOE is planning to revise its Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug (ATOD) policy and infuse restorative justice practices into the policy (attached).

Donna Fletcher stated that Child Guidance Center has begun a youth SMART Recovery program and will be starting a Family & Friends SMART group very soon.

Nicole Wichowski mentioned that MADD has two programs, Power of Youth that is conducted in schools and at community centers and the Power of Parents that is done virtually to educate on alcohol, and drug use prevention.

Adjournment: Phil Dwyer moved to adjourn the meeting and Wendy Bentivegna seconded. Motion carried at 10:14AM.

Respectfully submitted

Catherine T. Hazlett
Acting Secretary

BOE Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drug (ATOD) Draft Policy Language Being Considered:

Drug and alcohol awareness, education and prevention programs for students shall be adopted and maintained, and shall teach that the use of controlled drugs (except for current prescribed medication(s)) and the unlawful use and possession of alcohol are wrong and harmful. The student programs shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of drug and alcohol use, and provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use controlled drugs or alcohol.

The programs will also explain the penalties that may be imposed on students for drug and alcohol abuse violations occurring on or off school grounds. Counseling and rehabilitation on programs, as described in the Administrative Regulations, shall be provided to students.

The District will review this program biennially to determine its effectiveness, to implement changes when needed, and to ensure that the sanctions set forth in the Administrative Regulations are consistently enforced.