



Agenda

Policy Development and Review Committee

Wednesday, October 8, 2014

6:00 pm

Board Chambers

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
September 10, 2014
- 4. Future Policy Topics**
- 5. Policy Review:**
 - Briefing note on Health Promoting Schools in the Halifax Regional School Board
 - School Boundary Review discussion
- 6. Next Meeting**
November 12, 2014
- 7. Adjournment**

Health Promoting Schools in the Halifax Regional School Board

Purpose:

The purpose of this brief is to inform the governing board members of the philosophy, research and working definition of Health Promoting Schools. It will also outline the work being done with our partners and the health promoting school team to promote student achievement and overall well-being.

Background:

Many international organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, and the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) recognize that schools can make a substantial contribution to a student's health and well-being. Effective schools, to which young people feel connected, can have an impact on health and inequalities in health.

Research suggests that healthy learning environments support both student wellness and student achievement (Basche, 2011; Suhrcke, 2011). The Health Promoting Schools approach (HPS) helps the education system achieve its mandate of supporting classrooms, providing quality education, and fostering student engagement strategies that facilitate improved school attendance and classroom behavior.

HPS is a whole school approach that is holistic, strategic, and engages the school community in building healthy school environments which positively influence the educational outcomes for children and youth. Integrated school approaches such as HPS are more likely to produce better health and education outcomes than those which are mainly information-based and implemented only in the classroom (International Union for Health Promotion and Education, 2008).

(Based on excerpts from Department of Health and Wellness (DWH) Submission to the Minister's Panel on Education, 2014).

The Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DoEECD) position on Health Promoting Schools

"The mission of HPS in Nova Scotia is to create and support healthy school communities where student learning, health, well-being and overall achievement are improved."

HPS is a partnership between the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness (DHW), District Health Authorities and local school boards. Partnership between the education and health systems is essential to ensure the areas for alignment between the two departments is identified and worked on collaboratively.

The whole school approach is the same philosophy that underpins the EECD's Continuous School Improvement Framework. Continuous School Improvement focuses on student achievement and school performance. School performance attends to school culture, equity, student behavior, etc.; the features of the school that support student achievement. This is congruent with the goals of Health Promoting Schools in creating a supportive school environment. EECD adheres to the World Health Organization's concept of Health Promoting Schools, which is based on the following four pillars:

- Social, physical environment;
- Teaching and learning;
- Healthy School Policy; and
- Partnerships and services

The Health Promotion Collaboration Group is a working partnership that represents the Capital District Health Authority, the Halifax Regional School Board, and the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). The Health Promotion Collaboration Group meets monthly to determine strategies that support each agency's health-related goals, work and strategies in schools. The Collaboration Group is responsible for administering and being accountable for the annual Health Promoting Schools grant funding from EECD and DHW. It also coordinates the financial priorities for health promotion work by being responsive to the strengths and needs of schools. The Collaboration Group includes:

- Cathy Carreau: Consultant, English Program (P-12), HRSB - Co-chair
- Linda Young: Director, Public Health, Capital District Health Authority (CDHA) - Co-chair
- Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed: Chief Medical Officer, CDHA - Committee Members
- Marlene Broderick: Coordinator, Student Services, HRSB - Committee Members
- Jerry Thibeau: Facilitator, Curriculum Implementation, HRSB - Committee Members
- Shelley Radford : CDHA - Committee Members
- Stacy Toth – School Administration Supervisor, HRSB - Committee Members
- Jill White – School Nutritionist, HRSB - Committee Members
- School and Community Physical Activity Coordinator, HRM - Committee Members

Vision Statement: Schools and their communities strive to create school culture that nurtures an optimal environment for the physical, mental, social and emotional growth and well-being of children and youth, staff members, families and community members to improve educational outcomes.

Beliefs: A positive school environment is “the learning environment and relationships found within a school and school community” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2012). The Collaboration Group believes students are more motivated to do well and to realize their full potential in schools that have a positive school climate, where they feel safe, included and supported emotionally and physically. (Toronto: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2008) The Collaboration Group also believes that mental health promotion for children/youth and staff will positively affect the school climate; thereby, supporting the learning environment for better student achievement. Education is one of twelve determinants of health and is, therefore, a strong focus for the Collaboration Group.

The Health Promotion Collaboration Group may also draw on other partnerships when projects or other circumstances warrant. These partners may be, but not limited to:

- IWK
- SchoolsPlus
- Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture
- Stepping Up – Active Halifax Communities
- Heart and Stroke
- Doctors Nova Scotia
- Halifax Recreation
- Nourish Nova Scotia

The Health Promoting Schools Collaboration Group has allocated funding for the following priorities:

- Mental Health Promotion
- Health Curriculum (P-9) support
- Breakfast Program Support
- Health promotion grants to schools
- Physical Education 10-12

The Health Promoting Schools Team employed by the Halifax Regional School Board includes:

- Jerry Thibeau: Facilitator, Curriculum Implementation
- Jill White: School Nutritionist
- Cathy Carreau: Consultant, English Program (P-12)/Active Healthy Living Leader
- School and Community Physical Activity Coordinator (TBA)*

The following chart provides examples of the team’s work in schools.

Health Promoting School Support

The Health Promoting Schools Team visits schools, upon invitation, to help assess health promotion needs and to act as a support in creating school plans. These plans are in alignment with the priorities of the Health Promoting Schools Collaboration Team.

- **Go To Teacher Training:** These are junior and senior high teachers students "go-to" when they need support. They learn to identify mental health problems and how to facilitate referrals to mental health resources. Approximately 300 teachers trained to date.
- **Youth Health Centers (Public Health) :** 15 high schools (full time); Bedford and Forsyth Education Centres - Bedford Campus (part time); 8 junior high schools (part time)
- **Youth Engagement Spaces - Junior High Schools:** Student led spaces that are the hub of inclusive, fun and health promoting activities
- **Mental Health Promotion Website:** *Pathways to Mental Health*
- **Collaboration with Safe Schools:** to promote positive school climates (mental health) and anti-bullying initiatives. The Caring School Communities program is implemented in 42 elementary schools.

Examples of Health Promotion School Funding

- Work with select schools who wish to promote mental health awareness and wellness
- Promote home-school relationships
- Promote Playground Activities Leadership (PALS) - The purpose of the P.A.L.S. program is to enhance student leadership on the playground and to get students more active. There is also a conflict resolution/anti-bullying component. Over 50 presentations occurred in 20 elementary schools.
- Fund arts projects to build sense of community in schools: AJ Smeltzer, J L Ilsley High family of schools, Ellenvale Junior High, and others.
- Support the concept of Natural Playgrounds that promote imaginative play to help students develop problem solving skills, relational competencies and resilience.

Student engagement through self-regulation: Run for Life and Luke MacDonald worked with experts like Dr. John Ratey and Dr. Stuart Shanker and the Halifax Regional School Board to launch the "Sparks Fly" initiative in the Fall of 2013. Sparks Fly is an initiative that introduces physical activity as a spark to calming and learning in the classroom during the teaching session. The goal is to incorporate physical activity with academic success in elementary classrooms through miniature stationary Spark Brain Bikes. The program has recently expanded to include Spartan Self-Regulation bikes at Halifax West. There are presently 28 bikes in schools around HRSB. Another 54 bikes have just been ordered and will be further deployed to 28 of our elementary schools and 7 of our jr/sr high schools. [👉 X-5 Kids Indoor Bike.pdf](#)

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| <p>Gender Equity Support Grades 4-12</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical activity to engage female students: yoga, all female run clubs, etc. • Girls Soar Clubs: support the development of self-image and sense of identity through physical activity • Non-traditional Physical Education equipment: supports programming for female students in Physical Education class • Voices Program: supports female students in learning how to assert themselves in a positive, healthy manner. |
| <p>Physical Education Curriculum Support</p> <p>Provincial funding through the Active Healthy Living Leader grant provides a 0.5 FTE to organize and ensure implementation of these initiatives.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Education P-12 professional learning sessions • Physical Education teacher lead team who provide curriculum support for their colleagues • I-Pad pilot project to facilitate assessment of students during Physical Education class • Direct support to teachers at their schools by a Physical Education mentor teacher – approximately 12 teacher mentors • Networking sessions for teachers of the various disciplines of Physical Education: yoga, dance, physical education leadership, fitness leadership • Yoga 11 – We continue to support teachers of Yoga 11 which has been added to the complement of public school program course through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. • Physical Education equipment purchases for schools - \$250,000 - \$300,000 in the last few years – refresh, consumables and equipment to enhance curriculum |
| <p>After School Physical Activity Grants</p> | <p>After school grants to support schools in providing programming for traditional and non-traditional physical activity: sports, running, yoga, and low impact activity. This funding was intended to focus on Junior High students who were not involved in current school extra-curricular offerings. In 2013-2014, 26 of our 34 schools with a Junior High component accessed funding to support this initiative. Activities such as swimming, judo, yoga, Zumba, skateboarding, cheerleading, Archery, table tennis etc. were offered. Funding also supported healthy snacks for these programs. Community Partnerships support schools in the implementation of this initiative – Doctors Nova Scotia, HRM Recreation, Sport Nova Scotia etc.</p> |

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| <p>Community Use of Schools Grant</p> | <p>Work with community groups to support them with the cost of school rentals when they are providing activities that encourage physical activity. This grant highlights the fact that promoting healthy living extends to a larger community. In 2013-2014 we supported 12 community organizations that encourage physical activity and healthy living for a total of \$53,000 Examples: NS Wheelchair Basketball, Eastern Passage Scouts, Blizzard Volleyball, HRM Project, Eastern Passage Guide, Hubbard and Area Rec. Assoc.</p> |
| <p>Co-curricular healthy living support through community partners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctors Nova Scotia Running program • HRM Bike Week – HRM and Halifax Regional Police • Live and Unplugged – IWK and Active Halifax Communities • Girls Soar and Girls Physical Activity Week – Active Halifax and HRM • Special Olympics Nova Scotia • Active and Safe routes to schools – Ecology Action Center • Sports Nova Scotia • H2K – Maritime Heart Center • Get out Check it out – HRM and Active Halifax • Jump Rope for Heart, Hoops for Heart, Walk about Nova Scotia – Heart and Stroke. • Take the Roof off Winter – Recreation Nova Scotia |
| <p>Food Nutrition Policy Support</p> | <p>See board presentation from September 24, 2014 – Report #14-09-1487: Focus on Learning: Nutrition - (Link)</p> |
| <p>Healthy Living Curriculum Support</p> | <p>Grade P-9 Health curriculum emphasizes the importance of students’ active participation and engagement in all aspects of their learning, promotes comprehensive school health and provides a basis for assessing student achievement. The essence of the curriculum is the development of positive lifelong learning, attitudes, behaviours and living skills. It includes health education support services in the school and the community as well as a safe, health-promoting school environment. The two keys pillars of this curriculum are: The Body: Growth and Development and Values and Practices for Healthy Living</p> <p>HRSB partners with Public Health to provide Health P-9 Curriculum support through professional development and on-site visits with teachers. In addition, schools have received extensive resources to support the health outcomes. These resources include the following titles:</p> |

Sexual Health:

- Moodle grades 4-6
- Websites
- Kids in the Know P-9
- Healthy Body, Healthy Mind
- Numerous books for students
- Growing Up Ok (from Public Health)
- Sex? (from Public Health)
- It's Perfectly Normal
- Boy's Body Book
- Girl's Body Book
- All About the Body
- Puberty Kits (created by HRSB)
- It's So Amazing!: A Book about Eggs, Sperm, Birth, Babies, and Families

Mental Health:

- Senior High Mental Health Curriculum (a supplement to Healthy Living 9)
- Beyond the Basics
- Healthy Body, Healthy Mind
- Kids in the Know 7-9
- The Feelings Book
- Healthy Relationships: A Violence Prevention Curriculum
- Coping with Cliques
- Stress Reduction Workbook for Teens
- The Anger Management Workbook for Teens
- Girls Against Girls
- Don't Let Your Emotions Run Your Life
- We Want You to Know: Kids Talk About Bullying
- 7 Secrets of Highly Successful Kids
- He Shoots! He Scores!: A children's book dealing with child and youth mental health challenges and stigma

Nutrition

- Nutrition Kits (made by HRSB)
- Energy Drink Tool Kits (made by HRSB)
- Strive For Five Cook Book (made by HRSB)
- Healthy Eating for Preteens and Teens

Physical Activity

- My Health: Talking Openly About Healthy Living
- Strike a Pose: The Planet Girl Guide To Yoga
- My Amazing Body: Moving
- No Gym? No Problem!: Physical Activities for Tight Spaces \$
- Walking Games and Activities: 40 New Ways to Make Fitness Fun

Getting to Great Survey Data

Through all these initiatives, we certainly support schools in reviewing their Getting to Great survey results so they can access funding and respond to the identified needs. Our survey includes questions around indoor and outdoor extracurricular activities that are of interest to students, questions focusing on student eating habits in relation to feeling hungry and learning and questions as to their feeling of being encouraged to take part in extracurricular activities.

For example, our 2013-2014 survey results indicated that on average 66% of our students felt they were encouraged by teachers to participate in extracurricular activities.

We also have school by school data on what indoor and outdoor activity students would be interested in such as dance, yoga, Zumba, hiking, running, orienteering/geocaching etc.... It is important to note that many of our schools have responded to this data by incorporating these activities in the afterschool offerings.

In addition, we support schools in reviewing their Getting to Great survey results about their learning environment. Usually, schools approach the Health Promotion Team through the lens of improving school climate through mental health promotion. The Getting to Great results guide our discussions of what is necessary to build a culture of belonging and healthy relationships. Funding is then provided to assist the school in establishing their initiatives. The Health Promotion team keeps in touch to ensure the school receives ongoing support that is integral to their initiative.

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