

FFI Regional Youth-School Workshop

April 8, 2010

Notes: Discussion Questions

Assessing School Readiness for FFI Youth and Pilot Commitment

What criteria might we consider for schools in YEAR 2 of the FFI work?

1. Administration and teacher support
2. More involvement school and community (presentations to school boards, community members including- city councils, Master Gardeners, student bodies, teachers, farmers)
3. Budget
4. Schools share with other schools (presentation to schools)
5. School board knowledge and policy change
6. More team involvement
7. Consolidate all of the sub-groups in the county and get everyone on the same page, under the same goal. There needs to be communication between the county groups (wellness committee, SRTS team, active living team, F2S team, etc.)
8. Identity YOUTH and ADULTS who are willing to put in time: CHAMPIONS
9. Training with the staff- staff must see the need for healthy foods and physical activity.
10. Examine school wellness policies and adherence
11. Staff/administration as role models
12. Make more time to meet with adults and youth/adults
13. Food Service readiness. More staff are needed to prepare fresh produce.
14. Schools need to take action, not just talk and share about it.

What do we need to know in order to recruit or select a school that is “ready”?

(Background: A school needs to be ready in order to become a pilot school and we are seeing that without readiness, the success of SRTS or F2S programs may be inhibited. What do we need to know to get read for Year Two work? How do recruiters select into going to YEAR 2)

1. Administrators. They have to be open to change.
2. Need to think about what the benefits of becoming a pilot is...
3. Core group of diverse and passionate helpers that are willing to see this program through and get the program started. The core group needs an action plan. This committee should involve both school and community members that will make this program sustainable for ten, twenty, thirty years.
4. While creating an action plan...need time to plan, commitment of staff time, assess finances/grant dollars, how to write grants, storage facilities for local foods, the willingness to change kitchens, new equipment, regulations for local foods use/prep, and garden planning. Is the school board willing to commit at the onset?
5. If a school is ready, then they have already started! So a pilot program comes in adopting an already existing program in its infancy.
6. If you are recruiting a school, then the school probably NEEDS the help because they are a vulnerable community based on data.
7. Is it about money? Would grant money make a school ready? The money will help, but it's really about the people. Look for commitments even without the money. Dedicated people are the foundation for a program. Money is needed in order to spark conversation

about thinking outside the box of how we get our food and the physical activity of our children. The money can bring people together to discuss what to do with it. But the ESSENTIAL question is: HOW DO WE MAKE THE IDEAS SUSTAINABLE AND MOVE FORWARD WITHOUT THE MONEY?

8. Is your community a right fit?
9. Need good press/communication
10. Educate teachers about healthy food. Do the Cross-Age teaching lesson for the teachers.
11. Make connections with the CORE Curriculum because FFI work ties into it perfectly.

What have we learned that is really important about making progress toward the Strategies, Tactics, Policies in the FFI Community Action Plan?

(Background: Gut level, what is essential in making progress? What are some of the lessons learned?)

1. Student involvement: their ideas can make a change!
2. Alignment with other committees: Groups united under a common umbrella in order to use time effectively. In small towns and schools, it is common to see the same group of students or adults volunteering and these people could go to ONE meeting and get all of the information from the JOINT meeting and then do break out meetings for each committee. A COUNCIL of sorts, with liaisons and unity.
3. Commitment from group doesn't always depend on money. It's about relationships
4. Be courageous in efforts to make change, not everyone will buy-in, but follow the energy
5. Perseverance: We need to stay PERSISTENT in our programs and disciplines.
6. We need to be proactive and thinking FORWARD.
7. Review wellness policies...follow through on its mandates, be willing to amend/update
8. Be creative in setting long/short term goals ie. use statistics
9. Create incentives for riding/walking to school: shaving head, students walking from California to New York and back.
10. Building relationships is essential as well as perseverance in the face of adversity. (Every school environment is facing adversity in terms of families, economic adversity, schedules, etc. This will NOT be a change over night but instead will produce change like water dripping over rocks.)
11. Statistics can be used as a foundation to discuss the benefits of change and why this initiative is important to our children.
12. Be patient: schools are in such chaos these days that we need to keep doing the best we can.

What makes or enables a school to be the most successful in making progress toward the Strategies?

1. Student involvement. The commitment and attitude of the YOUTH is what will create success. Students are willing to change.
2. Persistence/good attitude
3. Administrations and teachers LISTEN to their students and SUPPORT them in their active and healthy living pursuits. It's helpful if the core group of passionate people

think outside the box and move forward without economic expectations from the administration.

4. Minimum cost
5. Discipline/role modeling. No pop/soda at school- for everyone. 100 percent change not just partial commitments.
6. Standards need to change- at schools (distributors, policies, lunchroom), at the state level and at the federal level (commodity program)
7. Keep the VISION in the forefront of the conversation in the curriculum, policy, and school environment, the Iowa Core Curriculum.
 - This needs to be CONNECTED to the school environment through the Health literacy of the Iowa Core Curriculum.
 - Learn about Healthy Kids Act
 - Success story: South Winneshiek principal requires for every teacher to do a unit that involves the Food and Fitness Initiative.
 - Hold events that represent the vision ie. Homegrown School Lunch
 - Transforming the school environment
 - Teachers as ROLE models
8. Flexibility to staff
9. Take the bull by the horns and do it. Because everyone knows the benefits of this work but they won't make that initial step and do it.
10. Remember our focus: It's for the kid.
11. Dedicated food service staff. (Food service had to prepare all their meals before they came to the School Work Group Meeting)

Adult/Youth Barriers – led by FFI Youth – Youth-Adult Partnerships

Youth:

Challenges:

Old fashioned, stubborn, controlling, disliking change, ego, unaccepting, strict/angry, technology impaired, overreact, too smart

Benefits:

Talk to them about everything, wiser (more experience), have good ideas, new perspectives, have had experience with other things, helpful, know what's best for us, see the big picture (realistic), understand interest (because they've been there...), super brains, different perspectives on things, strong leaderships skills, experienced with communication

Adults:

Challenges:

Money is an issue, focus

Benefits:

Bring energy and excitement, adaptable, think outside the box

Questions:

How easy was it to come up with benefits? Easy to come up with, first thing that pops into my mind was benefits, similarities between youth and adults between challenges and benefits

Biggest challenges? Lack of time, trying to help every kid in every situation, trying to help everyone (figuring out a focus). Time wasn't an issue with kids... not the same number of responsibilities offered? Youth and adults are just as busy. Perhaps adults know how to prioritizing at certain levels better.

Helping at school: both sides understood challenges/benefits, adults never want to discourage ideas- channel ideas, building scaffolding (realizing that there's a process), youth are supposed to be seen but not heard- can never move forward, moving along a straight-line isn't necessarily where the energy, "back when I was a kid"- times have changed. "Yeah, but this is..." stop telling kids what to do, let the kids come to their own realizations/experiential learning-revision and reflect...

What benefits will help us overcome challenges? Are more willing to listen to kids' voice, the energy will overcome stagnations, experience adults have had (they can "calm" ideas), youth energy can overpower out of style.

How do we build capacity-commitment for local school wellness program?

What could we accomplish if our school wellness policy/committee were active and fully engaged in this work?

1. Ideas put in action with greater decision making power
2. More family healthy activities
3. Concession stands and meals with healthy options
4. Lower obesity rate
5. Culture change! NEW NORMS!
6. More energy
7. More positive healthy people involved as role models
8. Better attitude
9. Improvement in relationships and stronger community enjoyment
10. Lower number of at risk kids
11. Bigger and better facilities and more activities during the school day
12. Increase student achievement and attendance
13. Fit communities

What can we do to start building capacity on a local level? What are some next steps? WHO is going to do it?

1. Start building capacity
 - a. Start at the Top: share message with school board, school administrators, and city council members
 - b. Cross-age teaching
 - c. Foster Leadership
 - d. Wellness Day or Health Fairs help build capacity by informing people about the Wellness policy and building community
 - e. Accomplish a positive project to be marketed that can target families with young children
 - f. Learn from other schools wellness policies.
2. Next Steps
 - a. Need a plan of ACTION to establish clear goals
 - b. Consistency
 - c. REVIEW the Wellness Policy and make changes with students, parents, and teachers and CREATE that awareness

- d. Bring people to the table from the entire community by advertising upcoming events and meetings in local newspapers, school paper, and online resources
- e. Incorporate the Wellness Policy Into class projects
- f. Make the invitation personal, those we are already involved need to make an effort to personally invite others into the conversation.
- g. Accomplish one goal and market that success to gain support!
3. Who is going to do it?
 - a. Students, Parents, Committee members, Teachers, Administrators, Curriculum Director, Athletic Booster Club, City officials, Community members, Coaches, Food services, Nurses, Doctors, Exercise specialists (yoga instructors for example), local growers, school nurses, park and recreation
 - b. Change in consciousness of the community in a way to promote healthier eating and active living.
 - c. Find the key people and bring THEM to the table

Action Plans/Next Steps for Schools from Work Session

Central Elkader:

- We want to do a lunch menu survey.
- Try to improve the group's commitment by having a drawing for those who attend meetings.
- Organize a dance marathon for the end of school year.
- Complete FF exercise room.
- Educate kids about school lunches.

Clayton-Ridge:

- Walking program that pairs students with senior citizens
- Start garden
- Afterschool gym activities
- Educate younger kids on wellness topics

Cresco:

- Meet with administrators.
- Healthy Kids Act survey currently being completed. Use this to help rewrite the Wellness Policy.
- In fall, have time during teacher in services to present FFI and Healthy Kids Act.
- Educate all the students about Wellness Policy. Ground zero meeting with administrators

Decorah:

- Health class is preparing for a day long health fair in May.
- 5K the first Saturday after school starts next fall.
- Wellness Committee: need to start one, don't really have one.
- Have a Healthy Kids Act presentation for faculty and food staff.

New Hampton:

- Publicize ideas start with school newspaper.
- Revamp the concession stand.
- Do a student lunch survey.
- Try to open the milk machine during sporting events.
- Host a Walk to school day, helping the little ones walk to school.
- Start raised garden bed to get students involved.

North Fayette:

- School Wellness policy: start from scratch with administrators, a representative from the hospital, food service, teachers, booster club members, school board, teachers, and high school students—meet once before school year is over. Meet quarterly, reviewing the policy is the first objective.

North Winn:

- Wellness Committee needs to meet more often and involve students.
- Healthier rewards, non-food rewards.
- Limit the ala-carte options or get rid of it. Replace it with healthy snacks for athletes like granola bars or fruit.
- Use money for concession stands for field trips, dances, etc.
- Incorporate the Healthy Kids Act into school.
- Science teacher is doing a Ratatouille Project, if goes well expand the garden.

Oelwein:

- We are a young squad.
- Start more activities: school gardens, Friendship Friday, Fuel up to Play 60, Lions Club-Walk About.

Postville:

- Look at the policy, “don’t know what it is.”
- Rewrite the policy and take to superintendent, school board, and booster club.

Riceville:

- School Wellness Policy: restart and reorganize.
- Salad bar has been going well, but want to do a survey to see what they should add etc.
- Start having intramurals sports in the spring, winter, and fall.

South Winn:

- Reorganize the School Wellness committee, modify policy, educate everyone about the Wellness Committee. Met on a regular basis, quarterly. Get parents, students and community members involved.

Starmont

- Triathlon
- School garden- determine
- Trying veggies/fruits at concession stands
- Trying to get pasta/salad bar at school lunch- do survey athletes will help prepare
- Try to get milk machine, cheese sticks/yogurt from local grocery

Turkey Valley:

- Start pre-K-12 Mileage walking club

Valley:

- Turn the big hill into a trail.
- Plan for “Go the Distance Day”
- Have fresh produce taste tests at the school. Use produce from Elgin farm markets.
- Tiger Run/Walk activity

West Central:

- Go to school board and get the word out.
- Talk to administration about making the pond area into a walking path/trail.
- Get TAG, the Tobacco Coalition, and community involved too!

Waukon:

- Get wellness policy up and running.
- Fix the Ala carte, which is mostly junk food.
- Try to educate students about healthy food with posters.
- Dodge ball tournaments, 5K, and school garden.

Wrap-up / Evaluation - Vanette Grover

If you were the “primary decision maker” and could decide most important part of your school’s FFI work what would you choose?

1. More activities- school day
2. Understand the why
3. Educate
4. Youth lead the way
5. Get people involved

What was missing from today?

1. Informal time to speak with other schools
2. Virtual walk
3. Need more students on FFI team
4. Opportunities to access local foods through purchase partners

Ah-Ha’s

1. Incentives for youth created by youth
2. Central’s FFI – youth presentation and activities
3. Reminder that this is a cycle that becomes a lifestyle change
4. YAP benefits and challenges
5. Brainstorming
6. Local Dirt

Obesity information:

<http://www.cdc.gov>

<http://www.foodfacts.info/blog>

Local Dirt:

<http://www.localdirt.org>