

Governor's Council on Physical Fitness
Wednesday, November 14, 2007; 9:30 am - 4:00 pm
Keiser University, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Meeting Minutes

Council Members Present

Ms. Shannon Miller, Co-Chair
Dr. Javier Garcia-Bengochea
Mr. Carlos Castresana
Mr. Charles Castevens
Dr. Karen J. Dowd
Mr. Thomas D. Epsky
Mr. William "Bill" Montford
Mr. Robert M. Keiser
Dr. Don Rapp
Dr. Dot Richardson
Dr. Ana Viamonte-Ros
Ms. Mary Rumberger
Ms. Julie Ryczek
Dr. Judy L. Schaecter
Ms. Amy Young

Council Members Absent

Mr. Dave Andreychuk
Ms. Michelle Brantley
Mr. Derrick Brooks, Chairman
Ms. Jennifer Capriati
Ms. Nancy Hogshead-Makar
Mr. Kezarrick "Kez" McCorvey
Mr. Shaquille O'Neal
Ms. Sheila Sheridan

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. by Shannon Miller, Council Co-chair. Ms. Miller thanked Keiser University for hosting the meeting for two days. It was announced that November 8, 2007, Kelly Slater, Professional Surfer, was appointed to the Council as an Honorary Member. Mr. Slater was unable to attend today's meeting.

Roll Call and Housekeeping

Roll was taken by Jennie Hefelfinger, Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness. Ms. Hefelfinger addressed a few housekeeping items, such as placing cell phones on silent and asked the speakers to stick to assigned timeframes. Ms. Hefelfinger also informed all attendees that the meeting, as required by Florida law (Government in the Sunshine), was being videotaped and that minutes and transcripts would be available for public viewing on the Healthy Floridians website. Ms. Hefelfinger reminded all that today and tomorrow there would be a public comment session. All were asked to sign a public comment card provided at the registration table by 2:30 p.m.

Statement of Governor's Mandates

Ms. Miller took a moment to restate the intent of the council and the Governor's goals in creating a Council on Physical Fitness.

Speaker: Lisa Creswell, Chair National & State Effort: Action for Healthy Kids
Reference PowerPoint Presentation

Ms. Creswell stated that Action for Healthy Kids is a national grassroots organization that focuses specifically on physical activity and nutrition in the schools. There are 300 team members in Florida. Nearly \$30,000 in grants has been raised for the state of Florida. The organization wants to be a resource for collaboration and implementation of policies to encourage schools to participate in free, existing programs. Ms. Creswell emphasized that the “whole child” is important. Ms. Creswell said the Executive Order states there is a correlation between physical education and academic achievement.

Speaker: Matthew Singer-Co-Chair of Legislative Advisory Teen Council

Mr. Singer stated that the mission of the Teen Council is to be advocates for issues important to teens. The role of each member is to remain physically fit and to maintain academics while promoting physical fitness in the community. Mr. Singer informed the committee of the Teen Council’s recommendation to start a mentoring program in which student athletes mentor younger students who are struggling with weight. The Teen Council’s second recommendation is to develop a website that provides information on how to stay fit. The final recommendation is to implement a reward system for mentors in which the mentors are personally congratulated by the Governor and the Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness.

Council Member Questions:

Julie Ryczek

Q: How is the mentoring system structured?

A: High school students mentor younger students from both middle school and elementary school levels.

Julie Ryczek

Q: Will the mentoring program be adopted in each school district throughout the state of Florida?

A: Yes, there is currently no requirement dictating structure. Any high school coach can implement the program. Mentors will receive community service credit towards graduation.

Robert Keiser

A: The mentoring program can also be done in the community, not only through the school system using a high school coach.

William Montford

Q: What areas does the advisory council mentoring program cover?

A: The advisory council is part of the Broward Days program in Broward County.

Q: Will other counties be included?

A: We would like to have statewide expansion of a statewide council.

Q: Do you work with local state legislators?

A: Yes, locally and in Tallahassee.

Q: How do you choose what issues your council will undertake?

A: The agenda is multi-dimensional and deals with the whole student. All council members have good GPAs and are student-athletes.

Thomas Epsky

Q: What are the recommendations for recognition?

A: When there are positive changes in lifestyle habits, a public figure such as Shaquille O'Neal from the Governor's Council could deliver a plaque in front of peers.

Speaker: Elly Zanin and Dr. Valerie George-Commit 2BFit (Broward County Schools)
See PowerPoint Presentation

“Small Changes can make a Big Difference” The key is prevention at multiple levels.

Prevention has to begin in the schools, go into the homes, and involve communities and the workplace. Ms. Zanin stated that “It takes a village to have a healthy child.” The basis of the program's mission is to create habits that will create a longer, healthier life. The council was asked to look at the student planners that were provided to them. Ms. Zanin emphasized that the program does not add to the teacher workload, but provides new methods to plan nutrition and physical activities for the school day along with academics. Using the planners, goal setting is done each day along with the physical education and classroom teachers. Incentives are given to the children who sign the pledge form such as necklaces and charms and Bank Atlantic Bucks.

During the third year of evaluation of the program, over 70% of third graders reported eating more fruits and vegetables, increasing physical activities, and having positive attitudes towards being healthy.

Council Member Questions:

Judy Schaecter

Q: Who was targeted for the statistical data and what was the response rate?

A: There was a 50% response rate from the school targeted.

Q: Not all of the students in the school made the commitment?

A: No, there is an opt-out option, however not many students chose this option.

Q: What are the program's budget and resources?

A: The Beasley Marketing group raises all of the funding for the program in combination with grants from corporate sponsors. Aetna has come onboard as a new sponsor. There are 138 schools in Broward County and 114 are participating.

Q: In dollars and cents, what does that mean?

A: Out of \$210,000 total, it costs about \$12-15 per student to run the program.

Jule Ryczek

Q: Is there a more age-appropriate planner for younger grades? And will the program/planners be available for private schools?

A: A K-2 planner is needed and we are looking for additional funding for this expansion. We would also like to get involved in the private schools.

Don Rapp:

Q: Are the parents involved in signing anything?

A: Not yet, but it is being considered. A parent link is being created with similar incentives as the ones for the students.

Karen Dowd:

Q: Commit 2BFit is not a substitute for physical education programs offered by certified physical education. Teachers augment these programs.

A: Absolutely, physical education drives the program.

Speaker: Steve Bonino, Palm Beach County School Food Service Director
See attached PowerPoint Presentation

Mr. Bonino stated that Commit 2BFit is the least invasive and most effective program that he has seen. It is in eight of his schools. Mr. Bonino mentioned that a Wellness Promotion Task Force has been developed; a progress report in CD format was submitted to the council. In summary, "Awareness is the facilitator of positive change." It is a grave mistake to remove health education, physical education and the arts from the school day. Children do not have enough time to consume meals which leads to poor food choices and choices of convenience. Without proper nutrition, we cannot expect children to perform academically. Schools should have "appropriately scheduled meal times."

Council Member Questions

Judy Schaecter

Q: What do you believe is the minimum amount of time necessary for lunch provided and what is your comment regarding the 9:45 or the 2:15 lunch break?

A: It all varies depending on the age and size of the school. The formula should take into account 8-12 minutes standing in line and 20 minutes to consume the meal.

Julie Ryczek

Q: High school students do not have to have lunch based on an earlier day; 30 minutes for elementary is necessary due to schedules; can there be a focus on breakfast?

A: Breakfast has been a goal for over 3 years now. There are barriers such as such as late buses, drop-offs, lack of supervision, etc. Breakfast programs have been unsuccessful in the past.

Q: Every child can get a free breakfast?

A: Yes.

Q: What about the fresh fruit choice?

A: Two to three fresh fruit choices are available for both breakfast and lunch.

Ms. Miller turned the meeting over to Ms. Hefelfinger. Ms. Hefelfinger announced that all meeting attendees were invited to the subcommittee meetings as guests. Later today the committee would look at the recommendations from the other subcommittees for tomorrow's final recommendations. The meeting would reconvene after lunch at 1:30 PM.

Subcommittee Breakouts

Lunch

Speaker: Roy Rogers, CEO of Roy Rogers Consulting, Environmental Consultant in South Florida

Mr. Rogers made the observation that "Exercise intersects environmental education." He recommends that schools have 'Butterfly' symbols and butterfly gardens and encourage students to be mindful of global warming. With minimal resources, you can build a "Heart-Trail" that everyone can use for walking and to observe the environment. They can exercise while connecting with nature.

Speaker: Casey Hannan, MPH, Acting Chief, Program Development and Evaluation Branch Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Please see attached PowerPoint Presentation

Mr. Hannan stated that the problems of overweight and obesity in our country are vexing. The cause is multi-factorial and includes energy balance. Food and beverage intake and activity need to be looked at for the prevention of the epidemic among children, adolescents and adults. Profound and pervasive changes in lifestyles are required to fight the epidemic. These changes need to be similar to the cultural transformation that changed the social norms related to cigarette smoking and seatbelt use. Mr. Hannan also stated that he would like to see the council's charge under Governor Crist extended well beyond his tenure. Success must be sustained by many years of ongoing efforts. Mr. Hannan stated that the increase in weight foreshadows other health related issues. The CDC currently funds 28 states for nutrition and obesity prevention. The Coordinated School Health Program is funded by the CDC in the state of Florida. The CDC encourages the promotion of effective policies, encouraging a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity per day as well as nutrition standards for foods and beverages. Communities need improved access to fresh fruits and vegetables, zoning for sidewalks, bike paths, and parks. Adults in the workplace must be targeted as well.

Council Member Questions

Bill Montford

Q: We seem to focus a lot on schools; do we spend enough time or focus on the food and beverage industry and on advertising and promotion?

A: We focus on schools because it is where the kids are, yet we do need to work with other sectors. The CDC is working extensively with media and the food and beverage

industry especially with regards to saturated fat with low-fat/no fat options. These intervention strategies are led by the industry with very little government involvement.

Q: “Eating healthy is expensive” is not a true statement. What is “access to fruits and vegetables?”

A: In urban settings or inner city neighborhoods, with no nearby supermarkets people shop at local convenience stores/gas stations which do not stock fresh fruits and vegetables. The Farm-to-Market programs enable local farmers to sell fresh fruits and vegetables at worksites or even to supply schools.

Judy Schaecter

Q: Due to security concerns workplaces do not seem to want people in stairwells. Do you have any solutions to offer for these concerns?

A: Worksites do not want crime or falls. The CDC has not seen any data showing an increase of these occurrences due to increase of people using the stairs for exercise.

Dr. Dot Richardson

Q: How are states chosen for funding?

A: There are specific criteria that must be met. The state health departments must apply, propose a plan, and obtain a numeric score for funding eligibility.

Q: Are diet drinks safe and/or healthy?

A: Mr. Hannan will research the answer to this question.

Don Rapp

Q: How can Florida help the national government to fund prevention?

A: The leadership that Governor Crist is showing now is helping. Successes in the states need to be showcased.

Karen Dowd

Q: Are there funds available and investigative research available from CDC funds to help Florida?

A: Yes, Florida is currently benefiting and has been since 2001 from CDC research.

Dr. Dot Richardson

Q: CDC recommends 30 minutes of daily physical activity but some recommend 60 minutes?

A: The CDC believes that schools can contribute up to 50% of the daily recommended amount of physical activity.

Speaker: Jennifer Bland-Campbell, Aramark

Please see attached PowerPoint Presentation.

Ms. Bland-Campbell stated that Aramark serves food to over 15 million people daily in the healthcare, education, business, industry, sports and entertainment, and public safety and corrections environments. Aramark has recently formed a partnership with the American Dietetic Association. The organization assisted Florida Power and Light to

develop its employee fitness program. Ms. Bland-Campbell stated that in response to a decrease in exercise frequency in adults (who influence the habits of children) and a poor view of the USDA food chain, Aramark developed the “Health Awareness Program.”

Speaker: Robin Turner-Department of Environmental Protection- Office of Greenways and Trails

Please see PowerPoint Presentation

Ms. Turner stated that the agency’s goal is for all Floridians to be able to reach a greenway or trail which has public access by traveling 15 minutes from their homes or workplaces. The Cross-Florida Greenway project will connect the East coast of Florida with the Gulf coast. The agency also encourages bike riding for children.

Council Member Questions

Judy Schaecter

Q: What can be done to lift the barriers for inner-city families?

A: A primarily Spanish-speaking community in Miami was targeted for a “Plant-A-Tree” project. It was found that word-of-mouth/door-to-door initiatives worked best to encourage parents to bring their children to the park. Parents listened to someone personally known and respected.

Julie Ryczek

Q: With budget cuts and limited funding; is your agency feeling and “squeeze”?

A: The acquisition program is funded through Florida Forever although the mission and partnerships may change.

Dr. Ana Viamonte-Ros

Q: Are there any Spanish Explorers Trails in the works?

A: Yes, the DeSoto Trail is currently being developed with help from the Department of Transportation.

Speaker: Dr. Jayne Greenberg-Executive District Director, Physical Education and Healthy Literacy, Miami-Dade County Public Schools

PowerPoint Presentation “Shaping the Future-A Blueprint for Change”

Dr. Greenberg began by stating that the district budget for the program is \$0 and over the past 5 years over \$8 million has been raised. The focus of the program is on technology (Wellness Centers), fitness education, water sports, and outdoor education. The program allows for full inclusion of children with disabilities. Dr. Greenberg informed the council that the program assists with curriculum development for physical education teachers and helped to develop curriculum guides. Accomplishments include curriculum changes, improved fitness scores, nutrition knowledge and diet changes, and the development of positive attitudes towards fitness. Dr. Greenberg recommends a three year phase-in of the program along with a ‘safety valve’ /waiver of options for other electives for the parents who choose other options for their children such as art, music, foreign language, home economics, etc.

Council Member Questions

Don Rapp

Q: Is there any research that links fitness in children to higher grades?

A: At this time the program does not have the capacity to create a data warehouse. We are looking for a data link to support this correlation.

Karen Dowd

Q: How often do you work with children with special needs?

A: This is done as scheduled. Parks are used for physical education during the school day which helps with space and time constraints.

Q: Is the program time not mandated by strict time limits?

A: School principals allow longer time for the program due to the fact that the program incorporates academics into the physical activity curriculum.

Public Comment

Speaker: Marla Banta-Member of the Hernando County Health Department Board of Directors

Ms. Banta stated that when she was in school, there were no soda or candy machines, only water fountains. All students were required to take physical education class or they would not graduate. Ms. Banta recommended that the vending machine items that are currently in the schools be switched for ones containing juice and healthy snacks. Ms. Banta also stated that she feels that parents need to become much more active as there are many programs available that most do not know about. Ms. Banta disclosed to the council that her personal physical health went downhill due to obesity as did her self-esteem. Ms. Banta stated that she believes if we do not take care of the children now, there is not going to be a future. All counties need to know what resources are available to assist them with this effort in order to combat the no time/no funding excuses for lack of physical activity programs in the schools.

Speaker: Laurie Thornbush from the Florida School Nutritional Association.

Ms. Thornbush mentioned that she wishes to partner with local produce growers to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to schools and to encourage the consumption of locally grown products. Ms. Thornbush stated that conservatively one serving of vegetables costs about fifteen cents. With a limit of \$25,000 statewide, there is not enough money in the school district budgets to purchase enough vegetables for every day. Ms. Thornbush proposed raising the spending limits to \$100,000 and asked the council to support her efforts.

Speaker: Joseph Luchower, Music Curriculum Specialist-School Board of Broward County

Mr. Luchower spoke in support of the need for a more physically active population rooted in physical education. He stated that he believes that physical education and physical activity are intertwined through movement with performing arts. Mr. Luchower stated that he feels that mandated coursework in physical activity alone without extending

the school day has an unintended negative impact on the arts and asked the council to consider working together cooperatively as not to limit the performing arts.

Speaker: Diane Bean, Fox Publishing

Ms. Bean asked the council to consider a nutritional and wellness curriculum in addition to the physical activity curriculum stating that children need to understand the connection for the program to be effective. This program would be “cross-curricular” enforcing nutrition and wellness concepts in conjunction with physical activity at the same time, not additional work, with reinforcement taking place at home as part of the curriculum.

Speaker: Anne Siegal

Ms. Siegal asked the council to e-mail her in order to help her to continue with her project.

Speaker: Rick Leitner, Master’s level Exercise Physiologist, Keiser University Instructor

Mr. Leitner stated that his students are studying for an Associate of Science degree in Sports Science and Fitness Technology. His students brainstormed ideas as to how they can help the council. The students decided to create a grassroots committee to inform/direct and to provide a support system for faculty on a statewide level so that students obtain health and fitness education by having guest speakers, etc. to assist with implementing the guidelines as mandated by the council.

The meeting ended at 3:35 p.m. for subcommittee deliberations and would be officially adjourned from there.