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October 5, 2015

Superintendent
Mary Skipper

Superintendent Skipper,

Response to Order Id# 12626

By Alderman Rossetti

“That this Board’s President discuss with the School Committee the role of Cambridge’s adjustment counselors, relative to preventing and/or dealing with addiction.

At the request of Superintendent Mary Skipper, I contacted the Cambridge Public Schools and spoke at length with Adjustment Counselor, Cathy Rocco, the lead in drug and alcohol response for the Cambridge Public Schools. Ms. Rocco stated it is the role and practice of CPS adjustment counselors to intervene, assess and refer any student identified with a substance abuse issue to a community based program for treatment and intervention. This “best practice” is dutifully adhered to in the Somerville Public Schools by all members of our student support counseling teams.

All SPS school adjustment counselors, SACs, have a DESE license, and carry the title “adjustment counselor/school social worker” a number of our counselors are LCSW and some are LICSW. LICSW has the right to 3rd party bill and supervise interns; while LCSW cannot 3rd party bill yet can supervise student interns. SACs, are members of the Special Education Department and service students with Individualized Educational Plans, IEPs who have a counseling component written into their individualized plan. An SAC’s primary role is to process and respond to referrals and requests for services, however assessment and appropriate referral is a staple of the role.

All District “school counselors and adjustment counselors” play an integrated role in addressing the needs of students with drug and alcohol issues and support the collective and collaborative efforts in providing a safe and healthy environment for the whole child. Both School Adjustment Counselors and School Counselors are integral members of the school based “Student Support Teams” who assess, intervene and refer on a case by case basis. Our District has many mental health partners (Riverside, Cambridge Health Alliance, Home for Little Wanderers and our own SPS independent drug and alcohol consultant) and a myriad of support programs for our students both identified and at-risk of alcohol and substance abuse.



The following is a breakdown of our SPS Counseling staff:

Somerville High School

- Adjustment Counselors (SPED): 3 LCSW
- Director of Guidance: 1
- Adjustment Counselors (Regular Ed.): 1 LICSW
- School Counselors: 4 House Counselors, 1 CVTE Counselor, 1 ELL Counselor

Full Circle/Next Wave School

- NW: 1 Adjustment Counselor/School Social Worker
- FC: 1 LICSW
- FC: 1 Clinical Coordinator, LICSW
- SHS & FC/NW: 1 Drug and Alcohol Counselor, (19 hours per week)

Somerville Public Schools, K-8

- Adjustment Counselors/School Social Workers, (SPED): 7
- School Counselors (Regular Ed.): 8

SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS,

Response to Drugs & Alcohol, Prevention & Intervention:

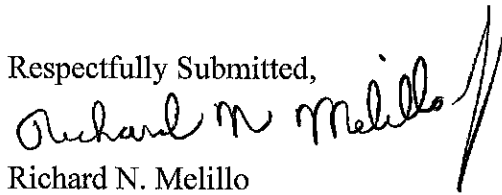
- Second Step Social Competency Curriculum K-8: focus on prevention, identification & intervention of drugs and alcohol
- SHS Drug and Alcohol Curriculum: Drugs & Alcohol, 3 week unit in grade 9 & integrated drug and alcohol curriculum in grade 11.
- SPS Drug Counselor/ Consultant: 19 hours per week, offering both individual & group sessions, collaborating with all adjustment & school counselors.
- SPS Drug Counselor, Test administered: Michigan Alcohol Assessment & DSM IV, assessment & behavior supports; referrals from K-12 school counselors and adjustment counselors
- SPS Drug Counselor: offers 5 drug and alcohol group session per week at FC
- SPS Drug Counselor: works closely with Somerville Overcoming Addiction developing and promoting vigils
- CHA, Teen Connection: active health room referral & treatment via school counselors and adjustment counselors
- Office of Prevention: work closely with Director offering prevention and intervention for SPS upon request, including drug & alcohol initiatives, SPF Programming & Leadership opportunities
- Riverside Mental Health: referral, treatment & intervention via school counselors and adjustment counselors
- Home for the Little Wanderers: referral, treatment & intervention, via school counselors and adjustment counselors
- SHS Training Assemblies (9-12): Improbable Players, local group of recovering addicts perform skits, offering humor and referral opportunities

- SHS Training Assemblies (9-12): Chris Herren, nationally renowned addiction specialist and speaker
- SHS Training Assemblies (9-12): Matt Garen, nationally renowned addiction poet
- TRN, Trauma Response Network: trained counselors addressing drug related crisis, referrals, follow-up, education and intervention, supported by all school counselors and adjustment counselors
- STEPS Program: NEW, SPD partnership with SPS, relationship program addressing all social issues, bridge building.
- SHS Athletic Department: MSSADA, Mass Secondary Schools Athletic Directors training "Life of an Athlete" on-line curriculum offered to team captains, approximately 120 student athletes
- SHS Athletic Department: MIAA Wellness Workshop for all athletic leaders
- SHS Athletic Department: "Leadership Trainings" offered by Athletic Director, "What Do You Know" MIAA Drug & Alcohol Policy training
- SHS Athletic Department: Student Parent & Athletes Nights, contributions by Somerville Office of Prevention, drug and alcohol prevention

NEW INITIATIVES

- Imbedded School Counseling with Riverside MH & Home for Little Wanderers, implemented 9/2015
- Drug & Alcohol Intern Program with UMass Boston, 2 licensed interns at SHS, counseling, group and individual, assessments. Start date January 2016
- Board of Health offered 10-12 hours per week of staffing: including individual and group counseling sessions. Consultation to all school and adjustment counselors
- SHS & BOH partnership; design, develop & implement ALA-Teen Program

Respectfully Submitted,



Richard N. Melillo

Director of Student Services