

F2S Connections Team Meeting

Monday, April 16, 2007, 11:30-1:30, Renton, WSU-KCE (Duwamish Room)

Attendance: 14

1: Groups introductions:

Tricia Sexton, community member, Tim Crosby, 21-Acres, Amy Berg, parent in Bellevue SD, member of nutrition council; PTA North-end alliance, Elise Hart, parent, Laurelhurst ES Nutrition Council, Tiana Colovos, parent, Orca ES, Nutrition Committee; RD Terry....., Vista/Ameri-corps, Orca ES; Tom French, chef; parent South Whidbey; Ann Lanning, parent, Bellevue SD ; Ann McMonigle, Chinook Book; Sylvia Kantor, WSU-KCE Small Farms and Food Systems; Goldie Caughlan, PCC
Gretchen Colonius, parent; Fred Berman, WSDA Small Farms and Direct Marketing Program; Heidi Broekemeier, F2S intern

2: Committee Reports:

Outreach Committee: (Elise Hart)

- Elise is working on soliciting information/input for F2S Toolkit; UW intern working with Tree Swing; (Tree Swing is an organization working with nutrition in schools; implementing new PE program in schools: www.treeswing.org); an individual who has worked with Tree Swing and has children at a private school is planning to pay for the intern; the intern will earn two credits, and the project will be due at the end of the quarter (around the beginning of June);
- Sue McGann is working on collecting information for the Speakers' Bureau; have discussed organizing some type of training for speakers
- Also talked about a potential training on how to use the F2S Toolkit once it is finished
- Alison Leber: Developing the Chef List for the Toolkit; project has total buy-in from the Chef's Collaborative
- Tim Crosby: continuing to update the Factoid Blog – looking for sourced articles to post; www.Foodsystemsfactoids.blogspot.com
- PTA Convention, May 4-6, Double Tree Hotel in SeaTac: Ann Lanning is presenting workshop on how to encourage parent involvement in healthy school involvement; parent panel is part of the presentation for giving good examples; goal is to serve as resource for active PTA parents; Ann's presentation is 9-10:30 on Friday, May 4; talked about the possibility of having a F2S table at the Convention, but will be a cost involved; there's a definite interest, but don't know if we have funds;
- Talked about soliciting interest in writing an article about how far Seattle SD has come;

Policy Committee Report: (Tricia Sexton)

- First meeting; looked at a range of policy options that Heidi has worked on for UW Degree Project work;
- Discussed goal of having policy options, ideas and language for next legislative session that starts in January 2008; need to have ducks in order by this summer;
- Looking down the line at how options would affect others
- Tricia will be talking to the CFSC to see how they have gone about legislation development

3: Toolkit Feedback (Elise Hart):

- Thinking about a title; want to include ‘wellness’ as it includes nutrition and physical activity;
- Envisions Toolkit to be very accessible and usable by parents; Has had parents say to her that: “I have a concern about food in schools, but why care about the farmers?” Many parents don’t see the big picture – health, wellness, personal and environmental health
- Interested in having a ‘F2S tab’ in toolkit, and not a F2S Toolkit; The F2S tab would include the goals of F2S connections, and why it is important to connect with farmers; Toolkit would also have information on how to start a nutrition/wellness program at your school, and include clear steps;
- UW intern’s deadline is early June; Could Outreach Committee make up F2S tab and give it to her? Tim Crosby & Tricia Sexton will take on the task of creating a skeleton form of the F2S tab;
- Where to post or make the Toolkit accessible? Envisioning on the Laurelhurst website and WSU website; don’t want to worry about having to update it all the time; have it a pdf on the web and have people print it out themselves; we no funds yet for making copies;
- Is looking for more information on other Toolkits out there; She’ll be done by June, could have it wrapped up by fall school year;
- Concern that this may ‘reinvent the wheel;’ make sure that the information the intern is using are key pieces; suggestion to have a conversation within PTSA; if it is truly a tool for parents, there may be some funding; to maintain something like that it will be very expensive, but PTA should be very interested in it;
- Hope to have a skeleton/draft of the Toolkit to show and share at the PTA Convention;

4: Report on Farm-to-Cafeteria Conference, Baltimore, MD report (Sylvia Kantor, Tricia Sexton)

- Highlights: How is F2S working for food service? Ventura Unified SD idea that wouldn’t it be great if there was a way to take the USDA buying guide and convert it into what works with local farms; make it a translation of the buying guide; what are some good things that a food service director could include as a ‘tool’?
- Gale Feenstra (CA) carrying out a national F2 Cafeteria data collection project to identify and create a different distribution map; serving as an intermediary is an emerging non-profit model that serves as link between farms and institutions;
- Growerscollaborative.org; showed a pyramid of who they are serving; the base is corporate food service establishments; hospitals (30%) and schools (20%); USDA value-added funding source of \$210,000 funds in Ventura start up funds and now currently self-funded; two year pilot in each place; two or three hubs; one is really doing well;
- Hospitals is the big one; have an agreement with Sysco; have to meet every month; to keep it going smoothly; lots of time; hospitals working only with big distributors; CAFF has to get their food to the distributor;
- Presentation on trust-building; NY state has a F2S program that’s really moving; their F2S Team meetings include meetings with DOE departments; and every meeting they do a site visit of some kind - distributor, farm, school
- Presentation on how to frame your message

- Keynote speaker, Alberta Sonito – what Italy has done in their school food program; Sylvia has requested a copy of the video; Scotland ideas; contradictions of concern with environmental concerns and large and small farms/products;
- Farm to School Impacts report from over 30 programs now available;
- 400 people attended conference;
- Feel free to contact Tricia or Sylvia directly if you have further questions;

5: Chef-in-the-Classroom program presentation: Ann Lanning & Tom French

- Initially working with food service at the ES level; important to touch all students but ES students are very responsive; cafeteria programs; school garden programs is how Ann's efforts have started; students really respond to guest speakers; have parents telling them their kids are now eating salads;
- Last year in 6 class rooms; 120 students at Spirit Ridge and Bellevue and Lake WA ES; this year scheduled for a Bellevue, Garden Project; one session in five classrooms for harvest salad program; Carl Sandburg at Lake WA SD; Laurelhurst in May, two classrooms scheduled;
- Relationship development has been the key over the past three years; Ann is our 'relationship' manager; it's taken a lot of time to get people on board; principals were very easy; teachers take a bit more time; six active teachers at Spirit Ridge ES who have taken ownership of the garden program; serves as sort of the umbrella; parents take quite a while to warm up to these new ideas;
- Touch on food issues, also touch a lot of others; family, community; our families and communities are so fractured; so this sense of belonging has been what drives this
- Early in the game we saw that there were two sides to this: 1) Creative/fun/tours/fieldtrips; and 2) Bigger/technical side; have approached it in a three-tiered approach: 1-Administrators and technical; 2-Classroom issues; 3-Community issues
- Formed a company to do this work; for-profit; resistant to creating another non-profit; really saw this as our primary life work; offer services in three categories: 1) Administrative: working with SD to communicate policy to teachers, employees, training sessions; 2) Classroom level; abandoned all language around nutrition; and now talk about food education; there's enough language out there about nutrition education; now talk about seasonality; food mapping projects with kids; fieldtrips, edible school gardens; classroom demos; tactile kind of learning; if the parents were as responsive as the kids, this would be easier; wish it was that easy working with adults; 3) Community organizations: 62 organizations we are working with; have a champion within that organization that wants to support that; have some creative fundraising; and parent education programs;
- Emphasis on the food connection piece; really need this entity; Optimum Resources; given an initial grant and renewed from a private philanthropist; identify barriers; 8 pilot programs; conducted over 300 interviews in communities and schools;
- Then partnered with Abbie Lytle with Abbie's NW; to be the premier provider to organizations with a commitment to stay local; stay away from Sysco model; chosen to focus on working small and local; learned that getting food there the way we want it and meet their price point is major obstacle; have learned that technical support and staff training is very important; understanding seasonality issues; have had some successes in Bellevue at middle school level; WA-grown mashed potatoes every day at one middle school;

- Chef-in-the-Classroom projects must be reemphasized out in the community; salad bar etiquette - how to move through the line quicker; food education on what is on the salad bar; taste items; chef in the classroom we provide a taste kit; four tasting areas; can train your taste buds; have had lots of successes; reinforcing in the classroom and seeing it also in the cafeteria;
- New focus is to take the reports and data collected and into a new action for the next years; also feel it is important to understand the programs that we design are needed to be sustainable; what infrastructure needs to be in place to support it; price point; distribution; looking at three core areas: Communication strategy; Technical side; Economy sustainability; partnerships, projects, value-added product development; decided that the cafeteria infrastructure has become more and more dismantled; eye opening; budgets are slim; training is minimal; most school cafeterias only have one person on duty; few more staff for day; found that if you pull out outside funding, the program collapses
- Lake Hills ES (Bellevue); pilot program for district Wrap-around Services Project (United Way, Park and Recreation, and the SD); make school as central place for the community; focus on low income schools; 42 first languages spoken in this ES; 600-700 people at evening events; supported by faith-based organization; signed agreement with the SD;
- Worked together for three years to understand the infrastructure; really want to be sustainable; what are the systemic issues to address? Partners to be on board? Funding? Successful in leveraging small amount of philanthropy to keep us moving;
- Next Steps: Very excited about it! Ann is on UW committee; Policy Legislation and Nutrition (UW study); 64 schools are providing data to be analyzed data; 08-09 is when data will be shared; Getting partnerships built; have a map; web of relationships; keep lining them up; idea is that we don't have to recreate these programs; lots of resources out there; field is very crowded; don't need to recreate things; transparency is key; how do we put ourselves out of work?
- Chef in the Classroom piece is moving along well; offer 11 items; will joint fund with us; or do bits and pieces; depends on where district wants to go; Think about Scalability; how to take it to a larger initiative? And figure out food issue? How to achieve the price point?
- Developments: Completed partnership agreement with Snohomish County; holding a spring, summer and fall summit at SD; present full range of options to each SD; get county to jump on board with that;
- How do we get enough food? Just signed agreement with Skagitians land project working on fresh farm program; successful meetings with farmers in Skagit County with a ready-made market; want to understand the needs; have warehouse space in Skagit; holding meetings with farmers and healthcare community over the past two weeks; developing a forecasting model; what is the growing capacity over the next two or three years; piloting breakfast burrito for SD; value-added product will be useful; tie into the chef in classroom
- Working on fundraising efforts in community; proceeds go back to support local projects; working with a project that tracks where money is given, track where it will be spent;
- Interesting ride over the past two years; lots of fun; have arrived at a real tipping point; have the right people at the table; National Patience Advocacy Council in Washington, DC presentation coming up; looking at value-added products for institutions; All started with the salad in the classroom; looking forward and making salad in the class is a real pleasure;

- Only charging for the cost of food now for Chef in the Classroom; eventually would like to co-fund with district so that the time piece is covered too; minimal investment on part of the PTA; not charging for other programs now; get funding from other places;
- Sustainable? Temporarily sustainable; create a community based economic engine; social enterprise model; ultimately this is where we see it's going; perks up the economic development people; brings value to real estate; health and vitality of future workforce; where we get the most leverage; there's lots of money in lots of venues we hadn't thought of; USDA and a food security contract looking into; hoping for bringing philanthropy partners to the table to be the last piece to push us over the top to a sustainable model;
- Other value-added products: pizza; salad bar; sauces; looking into meat, too; fresh seasonal, local; piloted 25 pound bag – locally grown stir-fry; address this unskilled labor issue; work with the system; don't see renaissance coming when we go back to the old cooking cafeterias; so working with creating value-added products.

6: Group updates:

- 1) New principal Gretchen Colonius's children's school in LWSD; treat for at the end of WASL testing will be a 100% fruit juice bar from Sysco, Natural Juice Bar brand
- 2) Peter Kirk ES got some press during National Nutrition Month due to the efforts of Stephanie Lecovin
- 3) Tim Crosby: Agriculture and Energy and climate change; analogies of how climate change affects food; economic resiliency of our food change; dept of ecology presentation for sustainability conference; Tim was invited to join the Governor's Climate Change taskforce;
- 4) Erin MacDougall: Attended a school garden conference in CA which brought together key players with goal of developing policy statement to bring to CA legislature; need to renew F2S legislation; use farmers markets as a mini-hub for distributions; salad bar is meal; all your components on the salad bar and not the hot line; looking at variety of ways to get their reimbursements; in CA lots of people working on this issue for a long time; say that we are moving way too slow; very inspiring; Alice Waters was the keynote; new program at New Orleans for their Edible Schoolyard;
- 5) Kellogg Food and Fitness Initiative Grant; started April 1st; press release out soon

7: Announcements:

Next F2S Connections Team meeting: Monday, May 7 – Fieldtrip to Jubilee and Full Circle Farm; look for announcement with directions, etc on F2S list serve
Orca ES plant sale is May 12; announcement out on F2S list serve