



# Social Emotional Wellness Coalition of the Tri-Lakes Area

Sponsored by NET, a program of Tri-Lakes UMC

## Meeting Minutes - Monday April 22

### In Attendance:

High School Students: Sela Miske, Emilie Brooks, Abbie Gray  
D-38 Board of Education: Theresa Phillips  
D-38 Admin: Lori Benton  
Lewis Palmer HS: Bridget O'Conner, Erika Nash, Robyn Hudson, Bill Benton, Dawn Klein  
Palmer Ridge HS: Kim Sandoval, Debbie Sell  
Lewis Palmer MS: Jennicca Mabe  
Monument Academy: Cary Howarth  
Kilmer Elementary: Char Armstrong  
Bear Creek Elementary: Jessica Miller  
Palmer Lake Elementary: Lori-Ann McConnell  
Parents: Kelly Bane  
Community Member: Tyler Hufford  
Tri-Lakes YMCA: Lucas Calhoun, Holly Brandon  
Kiwanis: Rich Strom, Mike Luginbuhl, RF Smith  
Ryan Pappas Memorial Foundation: Brenda Brondum, Susan Pappas  
Value Up: Mike Donahue  
Young Life: Taylor Holmes  
NAMI: Kirk Woundy  
Tri-Lakes UMC: Jason Baxter, Sheli Gray, Sam Hastings, Nancy Fritzsche

### Elevator Speeches (recurring themes expressed):

- There are many great programs out there, so many safety nets. We need to coordinate with each other to make sure the safety nets overlap so no one can fall through the cracks.
- This is a complicated problem and collaboration is a must.
- We need more community outreach and parent education - kids shouldn't be concerned about getting in trouble with parents for completing a suicide assessment form at school.
- It's important for students to be able to share their stories. They need to be seen, known, heard and loved.
- What's really scary is the kids we aren't aware of, who are having problems.
- Lewis Palmer School District is understaffed when it comes to dealing with mental health issues.

- Appreciation that the people in this room have been successful in thwarting many suicides already.
- Kids don't feel or act valuable.
- Kids aren't aware of the support they have. They need to hear the same supportive message throughout the community.
- Youth Mental Health First Aid is being offered to the community for free in an attempt to educate people who don't have kids in the system.
- It's important to start social-emotional programs as early in the education process as possible.
- The YMCA is providing safe spaces for kids to meet through RAD and Young Life. RAD provides safe and sober activities for youth, drug and alcohol education, and most importantly a place for teens to connect.

### **Presentation - Debbie Sells: Social Worker for LPHS/PRHS:**

- Debbie is the only employee whose job is solely dedicated to mental health at LP - and her position is only .8.
- D-38 is 80% white and 10% Latino/Hispanic
- D-38 is an affluent community comprised of many retired military members.
- At risk kids in D-38:
  - Kids in foster care - 34
  - Kids on free and reduced lunch - 673
  - Homeless kids - 12
- There have been 724 flags related to mental health between the two high schools and the middle school so far this year.
- Suicide ideation is very fluid - a student can be fine in the morning and by afternoon be having suicidal thoughts.
- Suicide Risk Assessments:
  - 104 have been completed this year.
  - Need two people to do an assessment and it takes an entire day.
  - Screeners are shorter assessments that determine whether a full assessment should be completed on a student.
- Colorado is currently #9 in deaths by suicide - always in the top 10.
- El Paso County had 13 deaths by suicide last year.
- Many of our students have unhealthy coping mechanisms - in part because they have been given so much and don't know how to handle disappointment and failure.
- There has been an increase in anxiety, depression and panic attacks among our students in recent years.
- Getting kids to and from appointments is an issue.
- There aren't enough counselors in the area to meet the need.
- There is limited time and resources for mental health education in the schools.
- Kids are over scheduled and it's not a priority to seek mental health services.
- Families often take their children to a Primary Care Physician who prescribes medication but no counseling.
- We need better communication with agencies that provide in- patient care.

## **Bridget O'Connor: LPHS Asst. Principal**

- We need to be proactive for all kids not just those at risk.
- Need to develop a system that is streamlined and efficient.
- Allowing students to give back to the community is important.
- Our events need to be coordinated, with everyone rowing in the same direction.
- We need to continue to have open conversations with students and parents.

## **Introduction of the SEW Mission Statement Draft**

### **Action Items For Next Meeting:**

- Review the Mission Statement and offer input.
- Consider ideas for smaller work groups.
- Complete a SWOT Analysis: what are our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats when it comes to Youth Social Emotional Wellness in the Tri-Lakes Area.

### **Announcements & Upcoming Events:**

- Every Voice Matters: Monday April 29 6:00-7:30pm at LPHS
- An evening of open dialogue where students will share their personal stories. The hope is that all who attend will gain understanding and perspectives about being a teen in today's world.
- Perfectly Imperfect: Saturday May 18 8:00am-3:00pm \$35
- A workshop for parents to feel supported and learn new strategies in dealing with teenagers. For more information: [perfectlyimperfectworkshop@gmail.com](mailto:perfectlyimperfectworkshop@gmail.com)
- Infuse: A Night to Appreciate You: Saturday April 27 5:45-7:30PM at Wesley Owens Designed by teens for teens. Program: "Managing Yourself: Dealing with Life and Relationships." Free pizza, and drinks for purchase.
- Please invite other agencies and programs in the area that are interested in the SEW Coalition.

**SEW Website:** [tlumc.org/sew](http://tlumc.org/sew)

**Next Meeting:** Monday May 13th 6:30-8:00 PM  
LPHS Distance Learning Lab