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Presentation to Board of Directors, Sequoia Healthcare District

February 3, 2010

Redwood City 2020 (RWC 2020) is an ongoing collaborative involving ten public and nonprofit organizations that work together to ensure that children, youth and families living in the attendance area of the Redwood City School District are safe, healthy and successful. These partners collaborate on complex issues that require coordinated efforts and ongoing investments to be effectively addressed

Current RWC 2020 Core Partners are:

- Redwood City Elementary School District
- City of Redwood City
- County of San Mateo – Human Services Agency and Health System
- Sequoia Union High School District
- John W. Gardner Center For Youth and Their Communities, Stanford University
- **Sequoia Healthcare District**
- Kaiser Permanente
- Cañada College
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Shinnyo-en Foundation

The City of Redwood City is the fiscal sponsor for RWC 2020. The Redwood City School District provides office space for RWC 2020 at the District Office, 750 Bradford Street, Redwood City CA, 94063.

RWC 2020 Community Wellness Goals

In December 2009, RWC 2020 adopted four overarching Community Wellness Goals that employ health promotion strategies to create and maintain a healthy community for all. RWC 2020 partners agree that health and wellness are the necessary foundation for all of our initiative areas. In adopting these goals, RWC 2020 identified first year objectives under each goal area, doable steps to develop momentum for needed long term efforts.

Goal Area	2010 Objectives
1. Increase easy everyday physical activity	Increase the number of students walking/biking to school through such strategies as: assessing safe routes to schools, educating the community about the need for increased daily activity, and piloting a *walking school bus program* that brings students from a drop off location 2-3 blocks from school to and from the campus at the beginning and end of the school day.
2. Make healthy food the easy, affordable and viable option	Complete a Retail Food Environments Analysis in this community to locate areas with insufficient access to healthy food and then work to improve availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in these areas.

3. Build social cohesion and maximize public spaces	Promote community building and outdoor activity by promoting school and community garden development, using the City's Community Matching Grant Fund as one source of seed money.
4. Promote healthy practices in 2020 partner organizations so they serve as models for the community	Develop a "healthy meeting guide" for use by RWC 2020 partners to promote healthy refreshments and incorporate physical activity into organizational meeting structures. Additional options: guides for classroom parties, sporting events, fundraisers

Role of Sequoia Healthcare District
RWC 2020 is suggesting that Sequoia Healthcare District take the role of "Lead Partner" as we begin to implement Wellness Goal #1: increasing easy everyday physical activity.

For each of RWC 2020's initiatives, one of the core partner agrees to take on the role of "lead partner", the ongoing home of the effort. RWC 2020 remains active with each initiative, assisting with program design and development, tracking progress on implementation, providing policy support and collaborating on resource development.

The following is a table of current RWC 2020 Initiatives and the lead partner organization for each:

RWC 2020 Initiative Area	Lead Partner
Community Schools	Redwood City School District
Sequoia Teen Resource and Wellness Centers	Sequoia Union High School District
Community Youth Development	John W. Gardner Center for Youth and their Communities

The Need We Are Addressing
Thirty years ago, over 66% of children walked to school (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Today, only 13% walk or bike to school. In the same period, we have witnessed an alarming increase in childhood obesity and decrease in physical fitness, a situation that sets the stage for development of chronic diseases such as diabetes and asthma. Redwood City School District and Sequoia Union High School District reflect these national trends.

Redwood City School District has a total enrollment of nearly 9000 students and about 2/3 of those students are from Latino/Hispanic backgrounds. Nearly 50% of the District's students are English Language Learners. In 2008, district-wide, only 27% of 5th graders and 26% of 7th graders met all of the physical fitness standards in the State administered physical fitness tests. Latino students scored at lower levels as a group, 19.6% (5th grade) and 18.8% (7th grade) meeting all standards. (Source: www.kidsdata.org) Clearly there is a problem that needs to be addressed if our young people are going to be as healthy and successful as we want them to be.

RWC 2020 serves a diverse community located in one of the wealthiest counties in the country. Local demographic data from the 2000 U.S. Census, the American Community Survey, as well as the 2007 San Mateo County Adolescent Report help to paint the picture

of this population of approximately 85,000 people who live in Redwood City and unincorporated North Fair Oaks. About 9% of these community members are children under the age of 5 years. About 60% of the 8800 students attending Redwood City School District are eligible for free or reduced cost lunches. About 50% of these students are English Language Learners, with the largest number coming from Spanish speaking families many of whom have immigrated from Mexico and Central America.

Getting Started

In order to initiate the Walking School Bus Program, we are asking the Sequoia Healthcare District to provide initial funding to contract with an expert consultant who would:

1. Work with the principal and community school coordinator at Fair Oaks School to implement a School Walking School Bus Pilot Program before the end of the current school year (2009-10); and,
2. Work with the City of Redwood City, San Mateo County, Redwood City School District and any other key stakeholders to develop a phased-in approach to implementing the Walking School Bus or similar walk to school programs at other schools in Redwood City School District in the upcoming years. This would involve consultation with the 17 school sites in the Redwood City School District, City and County planners and public works representatives. In the future, we hope to work with schools in the Sequoia Union High School District to promote walking/biking to school as attractive options for students and staff.

The consultant will build on a body of work completed by a group of Urban Studies students from Stanford. This current resource, a binder of information addressing best practices in active school travel, provides case studies, a review of literature and a very practical appendix. One of the assignments of the consultant will be to identify possible funding streams for the walk/bike to school programs that are planned as this program expands, including Federal Safe Routes to School sources. We expect to incorporate volunteer support from parents and community members into the overall design of this program so it will be as cost effective (and sustainable) as possible, once established.

Fair Oaks School has already taken a number of steps to assess safe routes to school and work with the County to mitigate existing safety hazards to ensure safe walking routes to school. This school site is ready, during this school year, to serve as a pilot for the walking school bus program.

We believe that the Walking School Bus Program will bring multiple benefits to the Redwood City/North Fair Oaks communities and that it will be a local, replicable model for use by other school districts in the Sequoia Healthcare District service area.

Sustainability

As any new program is being designed and piloted, questions about its sustainability must to be raised. Other communities around the country and in California have been successful in starting and continuing walk to school programs. As we pursue development of this model, sustainability will be a priority.