SECTION I

FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS
Nominal Group Decision Making Process (NGDMP)

The nominal group decision making process is a structured method for group brainstorming that encourages participation from each person participating in a small group. The NGDMP was used in Martha’s Vineyard as part of the consultation process to obtain broad input on school wellness from a wide range of stakeholders.

Nominal Group Decision Making Process (NGDMP)

1) Introduction and Explanation- Moderator describes the NGDMP and presents the questions that each of the groups will be responding to:
   a) What are your recommendations to improve school wellness?
   b) What are your recommendations to improve school mental health/substance use supports and services?
   c) What are your recommendations to improve community collaboration?

2) Silent Idea Generation – Participants work independently to write ideas in brief phrases

3) Sharing Ideas – Participants share each idea with group and the moderator records each idea on a board for all group members to see, listing each idea separately

4) Group Discussion – Recorded ideas are clarified as needed to explain the idea

5) Voting and Ranking – Participants vote privately to prioritize three top ideas for each question

Once lists are developed the moderator or assistant tallies the votes – Votes are tallied with each first choice receiving 3 points, second choice 2 points, and third choice 1 point. The top 3-5 scoring ideas are identified and listed in order from top priority to lowest priority.

The NGDMP was conducted with the following groups:
Parents/Caregivers (3 groups)
School Committee
Substance Use Disorder Coalition
Middle School Students
High School Students
Mental Health/Substance Use Staff
Law Enforcement
Political Group
Community Services (2 groups)
Parent/Caregiver Group (n=9)

What are your recommendations to improve school wellness?

**Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</table>
| 1. K-12 universal, updated/modern wellness programs with set timelines (good choices, sex education, drug education, time management) | a. Health start in 9th instead of 10th grade  
b. Parent education to fit with student curriculum so everyone on same page nights and ongoing communication)  
c. Professional development; parents blamed and feels confrontational rather than collaborative (*) |
| 2. Take away stigma; psychologist working in schools | |
| 3. More required active (movement) breaks throughout the day | a. Unstructured, outdoor  
b. Brain breaks in the classroom | |
| 4. Tower Foundation - problem-solving emphasis rather than focus on punishment | |

**Additional Recommendations**

- Improve food of island lunchrooms; look at current lunches
- Collect old meds from home and disposal at school one-day
- Understand misbehaviors leading to discipline
- SEL attention and less punitive approaches; better professional development to shift culture by staff
- Parent communication with school regarding discipline
- Clarity of laws regarding how to navigate 504/IEP/manifestation
  - Staff training
  - Support for families
- Integrate community supports into school
- Kids receive “confidential get out of jail free kid”
- Increased time for Parent-Teacher conferences (> 10 min)
- Teachers have clear ideas of wellness plans at each grade level
- Clarify roles of school counselors regarding counseling
- Wrap-around services to include social worker
What are your recommendations to improve school mental health/substance use supports/services?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

1. How to ask for help (particularly for substance abuse)
   - Literacy of substance abuse, Mental health
   - Reality/explicit education around medical impacts (scientific basis)
   - Parents included
   - Universal Curriculum to Kindergarten to get to good interpersonal skills

2. Shift in culture to shift from bad kid-good kid; teach all learners with less judgment
   - Focus more broadly so not only focusing on AP/exceptional kids as “normal”
   - Alter “labeling” and encourage kids across groups to interact
   - Across staff, students, parents (not just within groups)

3. Services in house vs outsourcing as no buy in or monitoring (lacks trust)

Additional Recommendations

- Education for stigma
- Change from discipline to support for disability
- Encourage interpersonal engagement
  - Starting early as social curriculum for friendships
- Discipline unrelated to curricular activity (lose hockey banquet, practices, etc.)
- Universal with attention to “middle” who not recognized as not standing out
- Practical application of SEL
- Apologies and accountability
- Stop focusing on test scores, class rank

What are your recommendations to improve community collaboration?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

1. Extra time for schools across towns to meet; required collaboration across

2. Superintendent use of cabinet meetings to plan, use in-service days, PLC for training staff

3. Directing money from discipline to supports

Additional Recommendations

- Stronger Leadership in Supt Office
- Standard approach across schools
- IEP’s being K-12 universal (not school/town specific)
  - Teacher training
  - Consistency
- Grow Teacher morale within each school
- Community outreach to address SRO’s and make consistent across schools
  - Away from Juvenile Justice and SRO understanding how to help school success
- K-8 substance abuse responses
- Lunch as part of curriculum where include elderly
Parent/Caregiver Group (n=11)

What are your recommendations for actions to improve school wellness?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Consistency from school to school so equal</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Health and wellness curriculum (standard across Island)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Holistic/Wholeness approach for staff/students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Measures to demonstrate progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adequate time to eat and exercise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Recommendations

- Full-time health teacher
- Shift in culture and training/curriculum evaluation
- Stick with programming
- More opportunities to move and be up throughout day
- Food nutrition with all grades
- More in house counselors, supports and accountability
- Feedback loop that includes students as co-creators
- Ongoing training for teachers to recognize mental health and trauma concerns
- More structure with community collaboration to allow feedback/evaluation
- Better sexual education and begin with younger students (more internal, and less 1-shot afar)
- Peer support programming
- Curriculum honors health/wellness (walk the walk); sleep deprivation/nutrition/exercise
- Healthy meals
- Mental health needed for specialized training (e.g., foster/adoptive care)
  - Lack of expertise with diverse student problems
- Comprehensive supports with consistent approach proactively
- Avoid labeling of kids (“good/bad”) and instead profiles; look at kids differently; affirm different learning styles and integrated identity to feel respect within the Island community
- Clear goals/outcomes/evaluation (Agreed-on measures of success by all)
- Foster/More emphasis on creating sense of community/school climate
- Cultural sensitivity for health/wellness
- Family involvement
- Leadership to cultivate PTO in high school (beyond sports boosters)
- Superintendent should take strong stance and monitor for all-Island initiatives (not pass
- Early childhood inclusion in planning and work with school (little resources and not part of school
What are your recommendations for actions to improve school mental health?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Full-time empowered, coordinating (with school and community and curriculum oversight) health educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teaching students tools and strategies to cope with emotions</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Education early about substances and adult healthy living</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Don’t underestimate kids’ ability/interest to learn about mental health, engage, co-create</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Effective consequences and addressed with consistent, island-wide approach</td>
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Additional Recommendations

- Supporting staff with Professional Development
- Time outdoors
- Clear access to supports
- Intra-staff communication to support struggling children
- Education with SEL, problem solving, led by peers
- Comprehensive all-age experiential learning with modeling and practice
- Cultural shift toward trust and nurturing
- Clear planning across school year with parent communication, rules
- Public education campaign to raise awareness, compassion, and help-seeking; collaboration between schools and community partners
- Inform, educate, and connect families
- Accountability for community partners to improve service delivery
- Better training for high school peer training/mentoring program
- Wellness committee with schools and community providers
- Collaboration with Charter school as charter school has wellness program
- From reactive to preventative approach (and focus is on the behavioral kids and not anxious kids)
- Increased opportunities for community service to promote connections and well-being
- Better implementation about existing and new programs (Responsive Classroom “trained” but not but not implemented with integrity)
- Restorative practices
What are your recommendations to improve collaboration?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Regional efforts</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Introduction of core curriculum with all schools that can be supplemented by individual schools (led by Superintendent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Review and refine missions on social service organizations to reduce redundancy and improve services</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Shared understanding led by community of health definitions and priorities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Additional Recommendations

- Working groups on curricula with community groups, experts, parents
- Support and training to improve collaboration practices
- Shared/integrated staffing across schools
- Open and inclusive processes around health programming
- Learn from best practices
- Collaboration in food sourcing
- Stronger Superintendent leadership
What are your recommendations for actions to improve wellness services?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

1. Have specific programs for mental health and to prevent stigma
2. Clinical Supports for adolescents with homelessness and embed in schools
3. Uphold policies by inserting accountable professionals

Additional Recommendations

- Wellness coordinator in each school and who would meet collectively weekly
- Make information accurate (MJ not the same as Opiates)
- Lack of specialized resources for transgender or such
- Special services to address Brazilians or unique groups.

What are your recommendations for actions to improve school mental health?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

1. Training for teachers (e.g., Think Kids)
2. Staff trained and interacting with students throughout school day
3. Reduce barriers to access to care
4. Shift from discipline to proactive support

Additional Recommendations

- Hire staff necessary to support policies
- Timely implementation of SEL program
- Have SEL Curriculum
- Clarify roles of mental health staff

What are your recommendations for actions to improve school substance use services and supports?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

1. Create atmosphere of sharing without fear
2. Accurate, Substance Use Disorder information that is not fear-based (eliminate DARE)
   a. Brain info to address substance abuse (Doctor from NH); include parents
   b. Legal ramifications for kids and for parents (“social host law”)
3. Strategies to reduce stigma
School Committee Group (n=7)

What are your recommendations to improve school mental health wellness actions?

**Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)**

1. Universal k-8 wellness, SEL program with parents aware
   a. Training all staff, not just teaching staff
   b. More understanding of trauma effects on kids and required teacher training
2. DARE program currently one grade and wish to expand to all
   a. Medical impacts on body
3. Centralized coordination with health activities

**Additional Recommendations**

- Nurse/health professional in every school
  o Increase administrative support/reliance on nurse/health professionals to drive
- MH/Sex Education (about own body) in every school
- Use approach like in Iceland and Gunnison, CO focused on “full community” for wellness program
- Have specific supports for kids with special needs to get counseling toward wellness
- Hunger addressed and improve food program

What are your recommendations to improve school mental health and substance use actions?

**Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)**

1. Universal consistent curriculum
   a. Stress reduction for students (where to go/how to access)
2. Single school and community wellness person who is accountable, fundraising
3. Wellness courses for credit (yoga, mindfulness)
4. More involvement of parents (don’t realize things are an issue)
   a. Ongoing parent meetings rather than once/year
   b. Consistent across all the towns
5. More extracurricular activities for K-12 (and not only typical options)

**Additional Recommendations**

- School Adjustment Counselor at every school
  o Define roles of school counselors and mental health providers
- School support teams to develop policies and to offer support for individual students
- Embed services within the school
- Professional development for teachers so everyone aligned
- Coordination of services in/out of school
What are your recommendations to improve community collaboration?

**Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)**

1. Commit to plan partially funded by town and more by philanthropy
   a. Private partnership on the island; regional differences fragment efforts to push anything forward
   b. Leadership congeals into vision leading to community buy-in (on philosophy)
2. All-island coordinator for health/wellness (possibly within Superintendent’s office)
3. Differentiate wellness from clinical services
4. Regionalize health/wellness curriculum

**Additional Recommendations**

- Accountability/Enforce laws for parents who have house parties
  - Parents pick up children if violating
- Teen court
- Cabinet used to coordinate Professional Development and PLC’s
- Island-wide parent education that aligns with curriculum
What are your recommendations to improve school mental health and substance use supports and services?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

1. Curriculum at elementary and middle school  
   a. Evidence-based Universal

2. Parental communication and coordination with police  
   a. Yearly calendar  
   b. Paper form/multiple forms to share info  
   c. Speakers involved in community  
   d. Mandatory parental participation regarding MH/SA (beyond sports teams) and also for students  
   e. Campaign to engage parents  
   f. School leadership to engage parents  
   g. Transition points for middle school and high school

3. Embedding clinical services within school (not across street)

4. Uniform Policies at all schools and police familiar to all and enforced consistently

5. Peer Leaders to provide input and implement/articulate to peers  
   a. Peer Form to describe past experiences  
   b. Leadership Curriculum with diverse groups

Additional Recommendations

- Prevention Awareness mandatory
- Adolescent Support Group for SA
- More use of Health clinicians/experts during classes or teaching  
  o Bring in experienced people
- Teacher/Staff Training Prof Devt on SA
- Identifying Providers to Route to (in and outside school)  
  o Clear/Consistent Referral Mechanism
- Address Perils of Vaping in 5th+ grades
- Community Coordinator to bridge across schools/grade levels
- Family therapy interventions (in the school)
- Obtain Info from Community Ongoing/mechanism community input
- Have designated health educators FT at each school
- Sharing resources across school districts (avoid duplication)
- Extracurricular activities beyond/including sports beginning early/alternatives to create school spirit  
  o Shared with YMCA, Ice arena, therapeutic riding center buy in and participation
- Communication with PD, schools, parents
- Community partner collaboration designing programming
- Safe place to talk with others
- Regional Middle School instead of 6 elementary schools
- Uniform Screening (SBIRT) done consistently
- PTO at high school as only sports/other interests parent participation now
- Screening and Treatment with “Fringe Diseases” and comorbidities
- Nutrition
- Extend School Day
- Culturally Sensitive Programming

What are your recommendations to improve community collaboration?

**Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)**

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Coalition of decision-making authority (parents, Law Enforcement, Businesses)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Coordinator position for collaboration across towns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unified school district</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Coordinated process of developing and presenting recommendations today</td>
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</table>

**Additional Recommendations**

- Shared financing strategies
  - Revisit financing formula (equitable between towns)
- Include businesses in collaborative efforts (liquor stores)
- Effective communication regarding resources (like what works for ferry)
- All-island parent council
- Evaluation: needs assessment and impact
- Universal grant mgt across towns
- All island drop-in center
- Press involvement in public education
- One elementary school
- Consistent disciplinary actions across schools
- Mandatory so that active participation
- Strategy to prioritize parental involvement and accountability
- All-island Student council
- Using best practices/Look at national or other (State) models that have worked
- Developmentally attuned efforts across island
- Use App and Multimodal efforts to increase parental communication
Middle School Student Group (n=28)

What are your recommendations to improve school wellness?

**Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)**

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<th>#</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase diversity of counselors (age, gender, specialty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Counselor caseload needs to better meet student needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teaching how to handle difficult situations</td>
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**Additional Recommendations**

- Help with disturbing/annoying behaviors in class
- Make all staff/adults available
- Teachers talk about touchy subjects
- Create safer environment
- More safety drills
- More teaching about mental health
- Counselors with expertise about depression, etc
- More afterschool activities*
- Chances to know counselors
- Counselors checking in more
- More opportunities for counselor conversations
- More access to IEPs
- More teaching about all types of drugs
- Peer mentorship programs

*Students were asked to list clubs/activities they would recommend. Results:*

Badminton, math, floor hockey, wrestling, boxing, clubs, arts (drawing, painting), tech/engineering, soccer, dodgeball, beach volleyball, language, gym sports, beyond gym sports, all-school activities, tumbling/gymnastics, air hockey, ping pong, surfing, journalism, astronomy, marine biology, more sports for girls, drama, book club, car/racing club, swim, workout, photography, cooking
What are your recommendations to improve school mental health and substance use services and supports?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>More collaboration between students and administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Teachers allow students to go to guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Check students for drugs daily</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>More counselors with more available time</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Support activities during flex time</td>
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Additional Recommendations

- More counselors with more available time
- More extracurriculars planned by students
- More voice for students at school
- Counselors know all students
- More respectful communication between students/teachers
- Safe space with available adults to talk/regroup
- Specific support for developing social skills and managing problems
- Opportunity to get to know more teachers at school
- Opportunities to get to know students across classes/grades via peer mentorship
- Leadership/admin more accessible
- More developmentally appropriate education about drugs, substance abuse prevention
- Whole-school activities
- More transparency about school issues
- Support activities during flex time
- More supportive atmosphere
- Address racism/intolerance including discipline
- Addiction support; recovery programs in schools
- Earlier addiction programs (abuse starts in middle school)
- Clear policies and consequences for substance abuse
- Phone access for emergencies
- More access to counseling for all kids
- Titles and qualifications of counselors clarified
- School spirit
High School Student Group (n=10)

What are your recommendations to improve school wellness?

Top Recommendations (in order of ranked priority)

| 1. Clubs afterschool to help students |
| 2. More opportunities with Martha’s Vineyard community services |
| 3. More chances to talk individually |

Additional Recommendations

- Counselors help within school
- Teaching about dangers
- Don’t rush students into talking about mental health and substance use
- Check in with all students
- Keep doing good work at West Tisbury
- Help kids whose family/peers abuse substances
- Learn from people with real-life experience
- Other healthy activities
- Lead program at more ages
- More cameras and security
- More education at more ages
- Less judgment
- Increase consequences
- Adults educate themselves (hypocrisy)
- Safe zones
- Identified routes to get to speak with counselors
What are your recommendations to improve school wellness?

Recommendations (not listed in any rank order)

- Need a wellness curriculum
- Set bar higher for wellness in youth
- More interaction and programs with hospital and hospital staff
- Preventive medicine/public health approaches to understand healthy, unhealthy Behavior impacts
- Clarify roles of hospital, outpatient, off-island services
- Need more substance abuse beds on island
- Programs for training medical health professionals on island for high school students need to be better utilized
- Need to better integrate Brazilian community in schools
- Integrate health and mental health service providers into the curriculum
- Need more outreach to students who are not prominent achievers
- Need more inclusion of family planning and more comprehensive sexual education
- Too much competition for grants or service delivery (incentivize collaborations)
- Have annual health fairs and include all island health services and off-island as well
What are your recommendations to improve school wellness?

Recommendations (not listed in any rank order)

- At high school want SRO in place to have presence, develop relationships so have intel and collaborate
- Need to address apathy and tensions around substance, alcohol and tobacco use and need to understand regulations and policy around search and seizure and drug-free zones
- Have prevention/restorative practice responses to substance use than juvenile justice
- Need to take marijuana use more seriously and to view it as a concern
- Continue/reinstate SRO meetings with school staff to review status of students and continue youth round tables with stakeholders
- Would like to see more substance use education beyond sheriff’s office by mental health providers
- Have space at ferry to hold and transition youth with mental health concerns
- Need to build trust with Brazilian population and work past fear of deportation if come in
- Crisis Intervention Team (One Mind Program and then Mental Health First Aid program 8 hr program), seeking more tools to have
- More proactive disciplinary efforts to get drugs out of schools (bathrooms without doors, sign in with monitor, more student drug searches)
- More job opportunity and positive entertainment and social activities on the island
What are your recommendations to improve school wellness?

Recommendations (not listed in any rank order)

- Need a regional health coordinator and equity in services
- Would like more accountability of and transparency and sharing of information by Youth Task Force
- Develop a calendar for schools to clarify what services occur for students/parents
- Need to include comprehensive wellness in schools from oral health to substance abuse
- Include programs like We Stand Together for LGBT and consider professional development by Joy Robinson Lynch, Trisha Bennett (Know Your DNA)
- Need staff to help support extracurriculars
- Hire a County Health Coordinator (perhaps half county and half school and housed in Superintendent’s Office). Can function with volunteers.
- School Committee efforts to include mental health and substance use in budgets. Principals to address especially in elementary level since Superintendent has little power.
**Community Services Group (n=6)**

**What are your recommendations to improve school wellness?**

**Recommendations (not listed in any rank order)**

- Schools need to more reliably access Youth Task Force/IWIC
- Need to move past schools and principals worried about being negatively judged
- Need to be able to bill for a wide range of school services for public and private insurance
- If bring speakers in for presentations in schools need to better promote it
- Offering parent groups such as group using Guiding Good Choices
- Superintendent needs to mandate implementation of a universal health curriculum
- Need regional police department and a unified approach in schools that connects to health class
- Use of support groups and peer mentoring

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**Community Services Native American and NAACP Group (n=3)**

**What are your recommendations to improve school wellness?**

**Recommendations (not listed in any rank order)**

- Need to continue to address stigma in tribal community of mental illness
- Paper trail doesn’t reveal the complications with MH/SA since avoid identification
- Include tribal youth in providing input about programming
- Share and discuss proposed health curriculum with school and tribe
- Use flex periods, afterschool and in the evening to plan and implement programming
- Need to address mixed messages about whether alcoholism is “okay”
- Staff need to be trained about different cultures and should include speakers come to high school to speak about experiences of African American students
- Need to address students using prescription drugs recreationally. Students need to understand the impact on their bodies.