

PREMIER'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

NOMINATION FOR NORTHWEST SCHOOL DIVISION EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAM

NWSD LIVE WELL

#NWSDLIVEWELL

TYPE OF PROGRAM

The Northwest School Division Live Well program was launched in 2019 in response to a rising trend of educator burnout and anxiety. Senior administration, with the support of the board trustees, brought together a team, including teachers, administrators and school support staff, to address how the division could support staff on a system-wide level. The team recognized that while there are many factors and systemic concerns that can lead to burnout, there was an opportunity to support the personal wellness of staff and build a sense of community around well-being.

The Live Well team recognized that wellness can mean different things to different people, so they developed monthly themes around physical, spiritual and mental health. With something for everyone, monthly challenges were set up for staff to complete individually or as part of a staff team, building

**EDUCATING CHILDREN IS
A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.
WHILE ENSURING THE WELL-
BEING OF EVERY STUDENT,
WE MUST LOOK AFTER
OURSELVES AND EACH
OTHER. LIVE WELL
PROMOTES THE
IMPORTANCE OF THE NWSD
PERSPECTIVE OF STAFF WELL-
BEING, BY PROVIDING AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE
TO WORK TOGETHER, TRY
SOMETHING NEW, AND
CREATE A PLAN.
THE MISSION OF LIVE
WELL IS TO HELP ALL STAFF
ON THEIR PERSONAL
JOURNEY TO A HEALTHY
FUTURE.
~ DUANE HAUK,
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The classroom has changed significantly over the past few years and the needs of students have dramatically increased. Our teaching and school support staff have more and more demands placed on their time, which has created a multitude of stressors. Our trustees and senior leadership recognize the importance of looking after our staff, so they can look after our students. The board was in full support of Live Well and set aside funds to ensure the Live Well team could operate the program and continue to enhance the monthly challenges with prizes that coincide with the challenges being completed. The board has also participated in monthly challenges, to ensure we are "practicing what we preach." We truly believe that when we look after our staff, we are also improving our students' learning outcomes.

~Faith Graham – Former
Board Chair

camaraderie at the school level, in our administration team, and amongst the board.

Each staff member was provided with a Live Well Journal to chart their progress, collect their thoughts and highlight their successes. The journal served as a concrete tool to share information about the challenges and help staff to plan their personal journeys. The outline of the year for the Live Well campaign was colorfully articulated and information about each monthly theme was presented. Having a vibrant journal that employees could have in their hands and easily take with them underscored the idea that wellness is something that you can personally interact with on a daily basis. Our Live Well team knew they were on the right track with this concept when they could spot the dog-eared journals on staff desks in buildings all across our division.

GOAL OF PROGRAM

LIVE WELL was started to promote healthy lifestyles across the entire division to ensure the physical health and mental health was targeted in all staff, administration and board to provide a healthy learning atmosphere for all of the students. "Healthy Body – Healthy Mind" became a real mantra each month as challenges amongst schools were implemented and promoted with team and individual activities

were done to increase health in many aspects.

Exercise, meditation, walking, relaxation and increasing water consumption were targeted each month in the challenges to start creating healthy habits in fun ways.

INNOVATIVE NATURE OF PROGRAM

The Live Well calendar and journal was created to match the school year full of challenges for schools and individuals to complete as a competitive model for the opportunity to win exciting prizes that were purchased to suit the challenges implemented.

The calendar is below on last page.

A link to the journal can be found at:
<http://www.nwsd.ca/LiveWell/Documents/Live%20Well%20Journal%202020.pdf>

The journal could be filled out manually and submitted to the committee or a link to the challenges was set up on our staff/board portal link on our webpage to be filled out electronically.

Fun challenges included:
 My Wellness Goals
 Get Moving : Step Challenge and Virtual Run
 Harness your Hobby
 Nutrition
 Stress Management
 Active Living

Expand your Knowledge

Sleep

Mindfulness

Outdoor Fun

Thanks & Gratitude

An NWSD cookbook has also been added to our portal from the sharing of recipes in the month of Nutrition and will be added to each year with new recipes.

TEACHER SUPPORT

Support from the staff is well received. Last year 26% of staff completed Wellness Goals for the year.

Over 1000 unique entries in the individual challenges over the school year, which doesn't include any of the staff challenges or activities that were happening. The STEP challenge winner last fall took 246,703 steps in 7 days!

There was a comment from a staff member from last year that resonated with what the division was trying to achieve.

"I am not very comfortable with where I am on my fitness journey and I'm definitely not comfortable running outside or in public yet, and I have been debating over the last few days whether or not I wanted to send this. But...I am so proud because this is the farthest I have been able to run yet and I can feel a difference so I have decided to celebrate that rather than focus on where I'm NOT because I know I will get there! This whole LIVE WELL challenge is great!"

The goal of the program is 100% participation, but that is not likely in any program implemented at any level. Increased participation is growing in numbers with staff across the entire division and that is key to continued health and wellness.

PARTNERSHIPS OF PROGRAM

Partnerships were created all across our division. Some examples of this are fitness facilities in many local communities. Spin studios, Fitness studios and gyms, yoga facilities and local businesses have been a vital part of the success of this program in the communities within the division.

Staff SPIN and workout sessions have been a great way to build staff rapport and camaraderie, creating healthy competition with other schools and encouraging each other along the way.

The Board appreciates the local businesses helping to ensure

Physical activity increases of the staff and administration and shows how important it is to build a healthy community and mentors for the students.

EVIDENCE OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

While this program does not affect grades and test scores directly, the LIVE WELL has improved the health and wellness of our staff and board. The reduced sick time leaves have

made a direct impact in the lives of the students as research shows the more the teacher is in the classroom, the better off it is for the student. If a teacher is well then they are able to model better coping strategies for students which then impacts **students' ability to show calmness** and to self-regulate.

It is like being on a plane and the oxygen masks fall in an emergency situation – a person needs to put their own mask on before they can help others put theirs on.

The NWSD has taken large steps to reduce transitions in our schools and communities, and this program relates directly to that focus. Teachers need to form healthy relationships with our students, and they must be present to do that. The LIVE WELL program has been one more facet of that focus. Keeping students and their families supported with classroom teachers and support staff is one more way to ensure all around student success and alleviates family insecurities around entering the school.

The Board truly believes that making wellness a top priority both at work and at home for all staff is the key to healthy relationships with students resulting in success in the classroom both with building confident learners, as well as being a good role models to them. We have added so many

things to the classroom to ensure students have what they need to learn such as nutrition and specialized resources, but we needed to take a step back and ensure our staff was in the right health and mental mindset to deliver curriculum and have the energy to focus on ensuring those educational needs are met for each and every student they meet in a day.

Live Well has expanded beyond the classroom into the homes of our staff and administration and has become the new normal. Take care of yourself before you can take care of others!!

Please visit the Live Well page on our website to see more video testimonials from staff about the Live Well program.

<http://www.nwsd.ca/LiveWell/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

"I think when we have healthy and well staff, that translates to students. The stronger our teachers and support staff are feeling, the better able they are to take care of our students. It's challenging work, we know that, and this is just a small way to help support them."

~ Davin
Hildebrand,
Superintendent of
HR



Live Well

SEPTEMBER	THEME: <i>Get Moving</i> ACTIVITY: <i>Step Challenge & Virtual Run</i>
OCTOBER	THEME: <i>Harness Your Hobby</i> ACTIVITY: <i>Take time for your hobby</i>
NOVEMBER	THEME: <i>Nutrition</i> ACTIVITY: <i>Share your favourite recipe</i>
DECEMBER	THEME: <i>Stress Management</i> ACTIVITY: <i>NWSD Wellness Fairs</i>
JANUARY	THEME: <i>Active Living</i> ACTIVITY: <i>Wellness BINGO</i>

YEAR PLAN

FEBRUARY	THEME: <i>Expand Your Knowledge</i> ACTIVITY: <i>Recommend a good book</i>
MARCH	THEME: <i>Sleep</i> ACTIVITY: <i>Sleep Diary</i>
APRIL	THEME: <i>Mindfulness</i> ACTIVITY: <i>Explore a Mindful Activity</i>
MAY	THEME: <i>Outdoor Fun</i> ACTIVITY: <i>Share a pic enjoying the outdoors Join the NWSD Golf Tournament</i>
JUNE	THEME: <i>Thanks & Gratitude</i> ACTIVITY: <i>3 things I'm grateful for</i>

STAFF WELLNESS is an area of focus for the Northwest School Division. The LIVE WELL campaign is about promoting and supporting physical, mental and spiritual wellness for all members of #teamNWSD. To Live Well can mean something different to each person, as we are all on different wellness journeys. A focus on your journey and showing your intentions, lets others know that you are making your personal wellness a priority. Let's support one another and help each other to LIVE WELL.

You are never too old to set a new goal or to dream a NEW DREAM.

~ C.S. LEWIS

Barb Seymour, Trustee

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