
Educational Services Commission of New Jersey – Wellness Committee Annual Report



Mission & Vision - to build a culture of health, wellbeing and the ability to learn by supporting the whole person: physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. The Wellness Committee works collaboratively with community resources, parents and school staff to educate, encourage healthy choices and implement wellness initiatives.

Goals:

- ❖ *Incorporating Wellness into the curriculum. To provide healthy meals and try new items to develop taste and textures. Educating students about healthy fruits and vegetables.*
- ❖ *Get students moving*
- ❖ *Staff and Community participation*

The Committee met four times for the FY18 school year.

The meal selection has been reviewed and healthier and leaner options have been selected. Students are given encouragement and recognition with a “I Tried It” sticker when they try something new. Schools have also done a ‘Jersey Tastes’ program where every month they try a new vegetable or fruit and learn about it.

Posters depicting the My Plate specifications for healthy eating is displayed on bulletin boards. At Thanksgiving time an additional poster was displayed showing My Plate holiday makeover suggestions for eating healthy during the holidays.

Students have been gardening and transplanting small plants outside or in the greenhouse. They are introduced to healthy recipes like making smoothies, cutting fruit and banana rolled in yogurt

then in granola and trail mix to make healthy snacks. Some schools are doing volunteer work and make healthy desserts like apple crisp and banana bread for a shelter.

Curriculums have been modified to pay more attention to the health and wellness aspect. Walking and stretching at regular intervals is a normal practice. In addition, we now have yoga, mindfulness and meditation, Zumba, swimming and pool activity on a regular basis. Student love exercising with exercise videos and dance video games like “Let’s Dance”. Schools have mini Olympics and Field day in addition to sports clubs. Students took hikes as part of the lesson plans to incorporate exercise. During the year, schools will strive to incorporate some kind of exercise for the morning meetings.

April was selected as the Health and Activities month after the spring break. The activities vary from cooking clubs, plants for pollinators to start a school garden, to online materials and classroom activities and yoga. Here are some of the planned activities:

- A folder was created on the shared teacher drive for Wellness Week resources and curriculum. A packet was developed and given to all teaching staff with information and copies of some activities/worksheets. All classes participate in the ALC Wellness Challenge. Teachers were given a list of 10 activities and a tracking poster and classes put a sticker by each of the activities that they completed. Classes that complete all 10 tasks received a certificate to post outside of their door. “Eating Right” was a part of daily lessons.
- The morning announcements for the Wellness week contained a “fun fact” about health and wellness. This will be done daily in the future.
- Articles, website links, were sent to parents for wellness at home.
- The ESCNJ entrance bulletin board has been decorated by ALC with the character education bulletin board has a “Spotlight On Health” as its theme.
- Exercise sessions and Zumba Dance Parties were planned to have fun.
- Science Fair with a focus on wellness, health and hygiene.
- Planting stations taught kids about planting and transplanting.

As a direct effect of the Wellness Committee meetings and discussions, we have been able to be more effective for the all-around wellness of our students. Healthier food options have been considered and more activities have been incorporated. We will continue to improve and our efforts will be to focus on the philosophy of farm-to-table.