

Journey to the WELL



Volume III, Issue III

December 15, 2016

Upcoming Wellness Events

- **Happy Holidays!**—
We'll see you next year!

Inside this issue:

Sleep Technology	2
Financial Wellness Workshop Review	2
MESD Wellness Survey Results	3
Crock Pot Recipe: Chicken Tacos!	3
January Plank Challenge	3
Walker Tracker Tips	4

It Works for Me! Ovid Boyd, Technology Services

By Ovid Boyd

Oregon is a beautiful place to bike during the summer, but biking in the winter months is not as harrowing as many folks might imagine. For me, biking is my main way of staying healthy, so I've been a year round bike rider since I was a kid (even when I lived in the snows of Sweden and extreme cold of Northern China). If you can safely drive in it, you can safely ride in it. The key is to dress right. Most of us already have rainproof jackets, but you need rainproof pants and shoes too. *Don't go biking in the rain with just a jacket!* I also have waterproof gloves, a hat, and socks, but you can get by without such extravagances. Lights and a handkerchief to dry your seat aren't a bad idea either. You also want to be prepared for weather changes. I keep a set of rain gear at home, and leave another set at work. Most winter days I use my nicer set both morning and afternoon, but in case the morning starts sunny, but by the afternoon it turns rainy, I still can get home comfortably.

For those wondering where to get rainy biking stuff, I purchased my gear from ShowersPass, a local Portland company, and am quite happy with it: <https://www.showerspass.com/>



Ovid Boyd

Free Music—and more!

In the spirit of saving money (see the Financial Wellness article on the next page), it's great to know about a new option via the public library: hoopla digital. hoopla is a groundbreaking digital media service offered by your local public library that allows you to borrow movies, music, audiobooks, ebooks, comics and TV shows to enjoy on your computer, tablet, or phone – and even your TV! With no waiting, titles can be streamed immediately, or downloaded to phones or tablets for offline enjoyment later. They have hundreds of thousands of titles to choose from, with more being added daily.

If you have a Multnomah County Library card, go to www.hoopladigital.com or go to the app store on your phone and download the hoopla digital app. (Many other library systems are also part of hoopla). It takes almost no time to sign up, just enter your library card number. You can borrow up to eight items in a month. For example, you can borrow an album for 8 days and then it disappears. (You don't have to remember to return anything – no late fees.)

This is a great way to have fresh music to enhance exercise – or even just washing dishes.

Sleep tech: apps that monitor and improve your sleep

We all know that sleep is important to nearly every aspect of our health and wellbeing. (If you need to be convinced, look at this from the National Institutes of Health <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/sdd/why>)

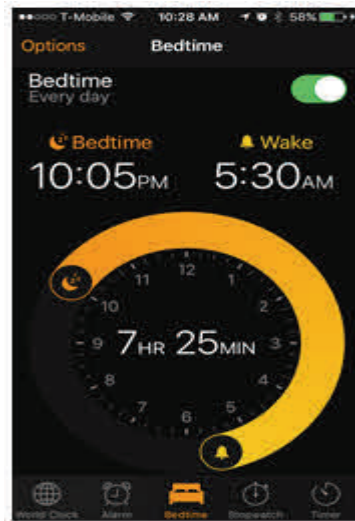
We also know that screens/monitors of all types can have a negative impact on sleep. What about turning that around by using a smart phone to improve your sleep? Two members of the Wellness Committee use apps to improve sleep.

Margo Lalach in School Health Services uses the tool that is built into the updated iPhone system. If you go to the “clock”, click on Bedtime. Going through the prompts will help you set up your bedtime and the time you want to wake up. You can choose how far ahead of bedtime you want to be prompted to start getting ready. You can choose your wake up time, which shows how much sleep time you will get. Finally, you choose the sound that will wake you.

This tool is simultaneously scientific and intuitive. It makes you aware of how many hours of sleep you get. Margo said, “It makes me more intentional about my sleep pattern.”

She has been going to sleep and waking

up more consistently. You can choose from several wake up sounds. Each one is designed to wake a sleeper gently. The



sound starts softly and gets louder. It's not jarring.

Margo is a public health professional who pays attention to research and health. She said she is motivated by the way consistent sleep makes her feel, and the science validates it..

Bradley Leininger, at Donald E. Long, has been using an app called Sleep Cycle.

This app is available for free at iTunes and Google Play. <https://www.sleepcycle.com/how-it-works/> Sleep Cycle uses your phone's built-in microphone and accelerometer to track REM sleep cycles. Features like intelligent snooze allow you to set a time to wake up, like “between 6:00-6:30”, and it will wake you when you are at your lightest sleep during that window of time. When you wake up, you self rate your sleep quality. The phone can also check your heart rate when you wake up, if you hold your hand over the light. (Can you believe our modern technology?!!)

Bradley has used Sleep Cycle for a couple of months. At the beginning, he often had a 46% sleep quality rating. Sleep Cycle asks questions so you can start to track the relationship between what you're doing and how you're sleeping. As a result, Bradley now avoids eating food or drinking coffee late at night. His very best sleep was rated 97%. He said, “You know it's working when you see regular peaks and valleys on the chart.”

If you have tips on sleep, please let us know. You can email mesdwellness@mesd.k12.or.us and we will include information on the Wellness page in January.

Financial Wellness Workshop Review

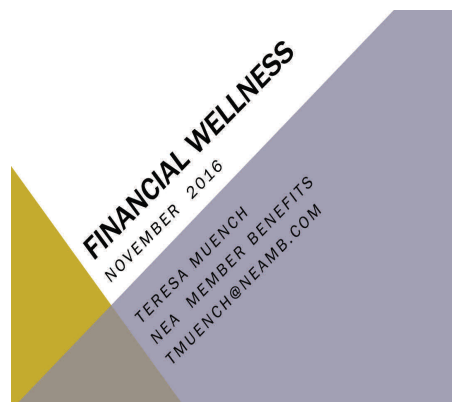
Teresa Muench with the National Educational Association (NEA) office in Seattle, gave two financial wellness workshops for MESD employees on November 30. The link to her Power-Point presentation is here: <http://www.mesd.k12.or.us/cms/lib8/OR01915807/Centricity/Domain/87/Multnomah%20Financial%20Wellnes.pdf>

Teresa gave a fast-paced presentation on how to create a spending plan, how to save more, how to borrow wisely, and more. One of her tips is to check your credit score annually. Everyone is entitled to a free report every 12 months from the 3 different credit bureaus.

Go to www.annualcreditreport.com Just so you know in advance, she said that they will ask you a lot of questions to verify that it's really you. Since many of us are

wary about answering these types of questions, it's good to know in advance that it's “legit”. Teresa suggested checking all the information in the report, including who else has looked at your scores.

NEA's member benefits website has a finance section here <https://www.neamb.com/finance.htm> It has information about educator tax deductions, student loan forgiveness, and more.



Healthy Outcomes and Healthy Outlooks: MESD’s Wellness Survey Summary

MESD is committed to creating a “culture of wellness.” The MESD Wellness Committee, now in its second year, is helping to achieve that goal with programs and resources for healthy change. In 2016, seventeen employees participated in some or all of the Wellness Committee monthly meetings where we reported out our progress and acted upon new opportunities. *(The Wellness Committee meets on the first Thursday of each month 3:15-4:15 in the Ainsworth Building, including participation by phone.)*

In October, 132 employees com-

pleted our second annual Employee Wellness Survey.

- 77% said they read the monthly newsletter. *(We say “hurrah!”)*
- 53% say that the Employee Wellness Program had an impact on their wellbeing.
- 68% want to be more physically active next year, and also 53% want to increase strength. 53% were satisfied/very satisfied with the Employee Wellness Program, but over 32% said they have not participated. *(We hope to reduce the number of “did not participate” in 2017, because 78% said that the employee well-*

ness activities can be successful/very successful in improving health and reducing health risks.)

All indicators show we are collectively trekking in the right direction. Happy Healthy Holidays, we will continue our journey together in 2017.

For more information about the Employee Wellness Committee, contact Suzanne Briggs at sbriggs@mesd.k12.or.us.

Crockpot Recipe: Chicken Tacos!

Some foods are seasonal: watermelon in the summer, chili in the fall and winter. But tacos, they’re good all year round in my book. I love crockpot chicken tacos because they are super easy and delicious. Below is one of my favorite recipes and it takes no time to put together. Good for a snow day! Enjoy!

If you’d like to share a recipe in an upcoming wellness newsletter, email Leanne at lmixa@mesd.k12.or.us

Crockpot Chicken Tacos

For the chicken:

- 1 cup chicken stock or water
- 5 cloves garlic, smashed

- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 2 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 2 pounds)

For serving:

- 12 to 16 corn tortillas, warmed
- Guacamole (if you don’t find good avocados this time of year, Trader Joes has a great avocado mash in the deli section that works great)
- Salsa
- Limes
- Fresh cilantro leaves

Place the stock or water, garlic, cumin, chili powder, paprika, salt, and bay leaves in the bowl of a 4-quart or larger slow cooker and stir to combine. Add the chicken breasts.

Cover the slow cooker with the lid. Cook until the chicken is tender and registers an internal temperature of 165° F, on low for 4 to 5 hours or on high for 2 to 3 hours.

While the chicken is still warm, transfer it to a cutting board or large plate and use 2 forks to shred the meat.

Divide the meat between the tortillas. Top with guacamole, pico de gallo, and fresh cilantro. Serve immediately.

Recipe adapted from The Kitchn www.thekitchn.com.

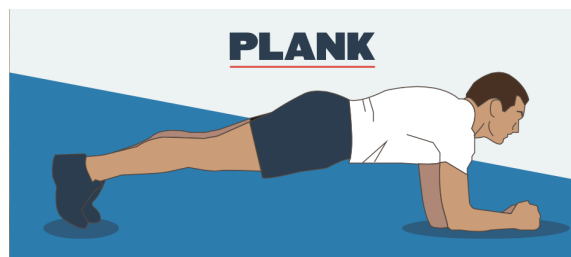
Get ready for it... MESD Plank Challenge in January

Just in time for New Year’s resolutions, we will have a 28-day Plank Challenge. You do it on your own, at home or during a break. You choose what form of Plank you want to do. (Straight arms, on forearms, on knees, straight legs) and start with 20 seconds, and reaching 240 seconds at the end. Yes, it can be done! The key to success is doing it daily and adding in a little more time each day. An all-MESD email will invite you to a Google Docs form online to track your plank each day.

Why are we doing this? Partly, because misery loves company. Mostly, because Plank is a great way to build core strength, which supports all kinds of movement and activity. Are there prizes? No, except for bragging rights and stronger muscles. You can wait until January 4, but if you want to get a head start,

check out this link for information about form and modifications <http://greatist.com/fitness/perfect-plank>

Participation is voluntary and for your own enjoyment and wellbeing.



**MULTNOMAH
EDUCATION
SERVICE DISTRICT**

11611 NE Ainsworth Circle
Portland, OR 97220

Phone: 503-255-1841

More info on the MESD Wellness web
pages: www.mesd.k12.or.us/wellness

MESD
Employee Wellness Initiative

Suzanne Briggs—
Co-Coordinator
sbriggs@mesd.k12.or.us

Elana Emlen—Co-Coordinator
eemlen@mesd.k12.or.us

Tips from MESD's top Walker Trackers

I'm a competitive person and after being in the challenge for a week or 2 I decided I wanted to see if I could win or at least get into the top 3. I love walking and when I'm in nature I can just keep going. Being active is very important to me.

—Peggy Sedlak (who had 40,326 steps in one day!)

I walked quite a bit, but also this fall I have spent many tens of hours doing heavy yard work. I used Walker Tracker's "convert an activity" feature to calculate the equivalent of the labor into steps. I am motivated by competition, and liked seeing my screen name high on the list.

—Clay Kelleher

I have a Fitbit, which makes it very easy to track my activity. I join a lot of step challenges through the Fitbit, and that keeps me motivated. I walk most days on my lunch hour, and on bad weather days, I like to use the treadmill in our exercise room (love it -- thanks for making that happen!!).

—Cheryl Craig

I've always enjoyed moving and being active, purchasing a Fitbit in August 2016, then linking it to Walker Tracker in September, has been an extra incentive to stay active. 12 hours out of every day, my goal is to get up and walk 250 steps (once/hour). I have reminders set up and I use every opportunity I get. Weather permitting, lunchtime walks add in another 1,500. Going to the gym and country dancing several times each week adds even more. My back & hips have felt better than they have for years, and that has been the best benefit for me. Having a buddy to support and motivate me has also had a positive effect. When I don't feel like getting up and walking, my linked-together friends and family are there to watch and nudge me to keep going. Let's all keep moving!

—Sabrina Bauer

Since I am retired and only work 4 hours a week it is easy for me to get in a lot of walking - on the golf course, of course! Even when I was working full-time I tried to get in 9 holes at the end of the workday when daylight allowed. Working or not, I am basically on my feet moving all day long until after dinner. I always stand and move at my computer too as sitting caused painful sciatica 6 years ago.

—Kim Green

I try to walk during both of my breaks and at lunchtime during the workday. In addition to adding steps at work I go to *Crunch* 5 days a week and have three dogs that I take turns walking daily. Portland neighborhoods make it very easy to walk my dogs since I have lovely sidewalks. (lol)

—Teresa Lay

Many of my "steps" were converted activities because exercise is so important for my mental and emotional well-being. I also mix it up so I don't get bored or injured doing the same thing- crossfit, barre3, yoga, running, swimming and biking. I initially started exercising regularly to rehabilitate my knee after a serious injury (and to prove my doctor wrong!), but once I realized how much happier I was when I got in regular exercise, it became easier to make time for it.

—Christine Smith

On my birthday, I set a goal to run 100 miles/month until my next birthday. Breaking that down into smaller chunks (25/week) makes me feel very accountable. Some months, I run just one mile at the end of the last day to squeeze in the 100th mile.

—Elana Emlen