

5-21-20 Grantee Virtual Meeting Key Take-aways

General Information:

- Adjust action plan timelines if possible
- If you need to change anything in your action plan or budget, please check in with OEA Choice Trust before you make the changes
 - SEW Grants please check-in with Asta (asta@oeachoice.com) and if it is budget related include Inge (inge@oeachoice.com)
 - Mini-Grant changes please check in with Arien (arien@oeachoice.com)

Staff challenges due to COVID-19:

- Feeling disconnected from staff needs at this time; isolation, loneliness
- There is a lot that needs to be done right now to focus on students and shifting to online learning; very time consuming for staff
- Very overwhelmed by all of the resources shared by partners and organizations
- Students in very fragile situations; staff are trying to connect and support students virtually and help them stay engaged and in school
- Some restrictions on communicating with ALL staff has been a barrier to overcome
- Stress for staff has been elevated
- Employees are feeling uncertain and unsure how to help because their jobs have not resumed, or they have not been assigned new duties leaving them feeling aimless

Ideas and strategies to continue supporting school employee wellness:

Village School (Eugene 4J Charter)

- Communicate compassion with staff and practice forgiveness. Keep communicating that we are all doing the best we can
- Fitness challenges are still happening remotely. 65% of staff participated in the April challenge and the “Mindful May” challenge encourages staff to meditate and use Headspace (app that is free to educators)
- Communication mode is email and virtual staff meetings

Silver Falls School District

- Created SEW themed days of the week and resources via an email to all staff:
 - “Monday Madness” or “Mindful Monday” (for the mind) emails include something humorous like a silly video or something mindful like a quote
 - “Wellness Wednesday” (for the body) emails share resources related to physical health like workout videos, guided meditations, or moments in nature.
 - “Friday Refuel” (for healthy eating) emails promote healthy food choices and often include a recipe

- Tips: Ask staff for things to share resources/recipes, work with someone who is able to send out emails to all staff and keep the barriers to accessing the information (short emails with no more than one click to get to the content)

St. Paul School District

- Drove Smart Snack approved snacks to each staff person's home
- Adjusting the timeline for planned professional development

Vernonia School District

- Hosting a Pilates classes virtually; the teacher (an employee of the district) shared her classes with three other districts
- Hosting a virtual book club
 - Selected books in line with potential professional development books for next school year
 - Meeting virtually has helped people stay focused and to get a head start on professional development
- Eat lunch virtually
 - There is a standing time for people to connect, blow-off steam and stay connected

Scappoose School District

- Created a wellness bingo with a wide range of engaging activities to appeal to a diversity of staff

La Grande School District

- "Drive Thru Delights"
 - Partnered with a variety of local businesses to provide a special menu (\$5.00) to all staff twice in April
 - Brought staff out of their homes and provide some mental relief from their screens.
 - Supported local businesses that are struggling to remain afloat during the shutdown
- "Battle of Wits"
 - Building connection and culture through school and staff-based trivia at the buildings during home-based instructional period
- Walking Challenges
 - Organizing virtual walking challenges or wellness changes by building during distance learning
- Sharing healthy recipes and information with staff

Klamath Community College

- Updating the wellness webpage
- Sharing staff host 20 minute live hobby videos on the KCC YouTube page
- Fitness classes using Zoom
 - Experiencing higher participation rates with virtual yoga rather than in-person
- Publishing a weekly wellness newsletters
- Organizing weekly challenges to give staff new ways to engage

Southern Oregon ESD

- Walker Tracker

- Monthly newsletter with inspirational messages
- Might send books on meditation or journals

Dallas School District

- Focusing on care and connection to staff and families during COVID-19
- Maintained 90% connection with staff during district closure through a variety of communication methods such as, Zoom staff meetings, direct phone calls, etc.
- Encouraging staff to continue finding ways to connect to their purpose during this time. If they can't be in the classroom, driving a bus or in the cafeteria; how can they still find a niche that works for them and provides meaning, while staying safe and healthy?
- Messaging from the district that self-care is the most important thing right now and plan to have staff wellness be the focus of a professional development day

Centennial School District

- Started a resource list organized by wellness category and have been shifting resources as needs change
- Reminding everyone we are all doing the best we can in very unknown and uncertain situations which is stressful. Be patient, be flexible and take each day as it comes

Willamette ESD

- Sent virtual care packages to all staff letting them know the wellness program is active, staff are cared about and staff are supported
 - Care packages included: Amazon gift card, coloring pages, links to the employee assistance program (EAP) and a link to the Headspace page
- Sending newsletters every other week with resources
- Hosted "Refresh and Recharge" Walker Tracker challenge with 60 employees participating
 - Sent digital gift cards as incentive
- Administered survey to get feedback on staff needs specifically during this time; survey responses really helped the wellness committee understand how best to support staff
- Providing lunchtime yoga sessions via Zoom and recorded so that staff can participate on their schedule and with family if they want
- Asked staff to send success stories and testimonials of how they are coping and staying healthy while at home. Stories were shared in newsletter to help staff feel connected
- Still trying to push forward even though things are looking a little different than planned

Grantee Recommended Apps:

- Down Dog – free to educators
- Headspace – free to educators