



SCHOOL EMPLOYEE WELLNESS
A Guide for Protecting the Assets
of Our Nation's Schools

USEFUL TOOLS FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMS



This chapter contains helpful tools for use in planning, implementing, and evaluating a school employee wellness program, including the following:

- A sample letter of invitation to join the school employee wellness committee
- An employee wellness interest survey
- An employee health-promotion interest survey
- A school employee wellness program checklist
- A sample mission statement for a school employee wellness program
- Examples of national health observances

SAMPLE LETTER OF INVITATION

Dear Colleague,

Teachers and staff are schools' most valuable assets. Because the (name of district) values its teachers and staff and recognizes that they need to be healthy to do their job well, we are organizing a school employee wellness committee. We invite you to join us at an organizational meeting on (date and time) at (place). The role of the committee will be to represent school employees to ensure that school employee wellness activities address the interests and needs of the district's employees. As a member of the committee, you will be asked to meet regularly to plan, develop, and review activities; advocate for wellness activities; and share the concerns of the people you represent.

I will be in touch with you to discuss any questions you might have.

I hope you will join us in this important undertaking.

(Signed)

Authorized Signature

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS INTEREST SURVEY

Please complete the survey below to help us plan health and wellness activities for you. You don't have to put your name on the form unless you would like us to contact you. If you have any questions, please contact (name and contact information). Thank you for your assistance.

— Your school employee wellness team

Please indicate your current level of interest.

Possible Health and Wellness Activities	Would attend	Might attend	No interest
Alcohol/drug abuse			
Living with arthritis			
Managing asthma			
Back care			
Cancer prevention			
Living with cancer			
Managing diabetes			
Balancing work and family			
Financial management			
First aid/CPR			
Fitness testing			
Developing a personal fitness plan			
Aerobics			
Managing blood pressure			
Improving balance, flexibility, muscle endurance			
Line dancing			
Team sports			
Walking			
Preventing heart disease and stroke			
Immunization and infectious diseases			
Men's health issues			
Mental health – depression, dealing with grief and loss			
Field trips to markets to explore healthy foods			
Cooking class and meal planning			
Occupational health and safety			

Possible Health and Wellness Activities	Would attend	Might attend	No interest
Planning for retirement			
Prenatal care			
Strength training			
Managing Stress			
Supporting aging family members			
Tobacco/smoking cessation			
Using the health care system wisely/self-care			
Violence prevention in the workplace			
Weight control			
Women’s health issues			
Tai chi			
Yoga			
Other (describe)			
Other (describe)			

Questions or comments:

Name (optional)

If you would like to assist with organizing or offering health promotion activities, please provide contact information.

E-mail:

Phone:

Adapted from WEA Trust’s, http://trustswl.com/documents/misc/employee_int_survey.doc. Retrieved on February 14, 2004.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH-PROMOTION INTEREST SURVEY

To help us plan health and wellness activities, please complete the following survey about your current health habits and your interest in health-promoting activities. You don't have to put your name on the form unless you would like us to contact you. If you have any questions, please contact (name and contact information). Thank you for your assistance.

— Your school employee wellness committee

Interest in Health-Promoting Activities

Which of the following best describes your interest in health-promotion activities? Please check only one.

- I do not feel the need for help with my lifestyle or health.
- I have been thinking about changing some of my health behaviors.
- I am planning on making behavior change in the next 30 days.
- I have made some behavior changes but I still have trouble following through.
- I have had a healthy lifestyle for years.

Personal Health Habits

	Already do	Would like to do	No Interest
I exercise vigorously at least 20 minutes three or more times each week.			
I exercise moderately for 30 minutes three or more times each week.			
I do not smoke cigarettes.			
I avoid eating too much fat.			
I avoid eating too much sugar.			
I eat plenty of foods containing fibers such as whole grains, cereals, fruits, and vegetables.			
I eat breakfast regularly.			
I rarely feel stressed.			
I have my blood pressure checked annually.			
I regularly wear a seat belt when I am in a motor vehicle.			
I consume no more than two drinks containing alcohol each day.			
I drink 6-8 glasses of water every day.			
I get 8 hours of sleep most nights.			
I consult a medical self-care resource when I do not feel well.			

Adapted from *Healthy Workforce 2010: An Essential Health Promotion Sourcebook for Employers, Large and Small. (Fall 2001). Partnership for Prevention. Washington, DC.*

HOW IS OUR SCHOOL EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAM DOING?

The checklist below is designed to help track school employee wellness activities, based on the four stages of systemic change. The items are not necessarily in sequential order, but all relate to the development and institutionalization of a school employee wellness program.

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
INITIATION				
The following understand the benefits of school employee wellness and agree that a relationship exists between school employee wellness and the school’s/district’s mission:				
School board members	4	3	2	1
School superintendent	4	3	2	1
School principal(s)	4	3	2	1
School employees	4	3	2	1
The following understand what a school employee wellness program is:				
School board members	4	3	2	1
School superintendent	4	3	2	1
School principal(s)	4	3	2	1
School employees	4	3	2	1
Bargaining units/unions understand and support school employee wellness efforts.	4	3	2	1
ADOPTION				
The administration has approved the establishment of a school employee wellness committee.	4	3	2	1
The district has identified a school employee wellness leader.	4	3	2	1
A job description for the school employee wellness leader clearly establishes roles, responsibilities, and accountability.	4	3	2	1
The school employee wellness leader has time, space, and other necessary resources to carry out activities.	4	3	2	1
Membership and responsibilities of a school employee wellness committee are clearly defined.	4	3	2	1
A school employee wellness team has been recruited.	4	3	2	1
The committee has received training and understands its responsibilities.	4	3	2	1
The committee has attended a wellness conference, if one is offered in the state.	4	3	2	1
Building and bargaining unit liaisons/coordinators have been recruited.	4	3	2	1
Building and bargaining unit liaisons/coordinators have been trained.	4	3	2	1

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
The school employee wellness committee has inventoried school employee wellness activities in the district/school.	4	3	2	1
The school employee wellness committee has established a baseline for and tracks health-related costs.	4	3	2	1
Employees are screened for health risks, such as blood pressure and cholesterol.	4	3	2	1
Surveys are conducted to determine:				
Employee health self-assessments	4	3	2	1
Employee health interests	4	3	2	1
Employee readiness	4	3	2	1
Employee feedback	4	3	2	1
The school employee wellness team has a vision.	4	3	2	1
The school employee wellness committee has a plan with realistic goals, clearly defined objectives, designated roles and responsibilities, a timeline, and a budget.	4	3	2	1
IMPLEMENTATION				
The school employee wellness program includes:				
Ongoing activities to promote and reinforce awareness	4	3	2	1
Periodic health screenings	4	3	2	1
Provision for follow-up to screenings	4	3	2	1
Interest surveys	4	3	2	1
Health education	4	3	2	1
Staff development days	4	3	2	1
Stress management	4	3	2	1
Nutritional choices	4	3	2	1
Tobacco cessation programs	4	3	2	1
Opportunities for physical activity	4	3	2	1
An employee assistance program	4	3	2	1
A supportive environment	4	3	2	1
Incentives for participation	4	3	2	1
Resources to promote self-care	4	3	2	1
Provisions for worksite safety	4	3	2	1
Provisions for healthy air quality	4	3	2	1
Other (specify)	4	3	2	1
Other (specify)	4	3	2	1

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
Other (specify)	4	3	2	1
The school employee wellness program collaborates with community resources, such as the health department and hospitals.	4	3	2	1
The district/school has an emergency preparedness plan.	4	3	2	1
Employees have been trained on emergency procedures.	4	3	2	1
The school employee wellness program is prepared to address the needs of diverse cultures.	4	3	2	1
INSTITUTIONALIZATION				
School policies support and incorporate school employee wellness.	4	3	2	1
The district budget includes a line item that supports school employee wellness.	4	3	2	1
There is provision for transition from one school employee wellness coordinator to the next.	4	3	2	1
The program regularly solicits employee input.	4	3	2	1
Progress toward implementation is evaluated regularly.	4	3	2	1
The program is adapted, based on evaluation findings.	4	3	2	1
New employees are informed about the availability and benefits of school employee wellness activities.	4	3	2	1
The program has survived a change in leadership.	4	3	2	1
Goals are incorporated into the district’s improvement plan.	4	3	2	1

SAMPLE VISION STATEMENT

Health and well-being are essential parts of living and are vital to the work and the mission of the district. The program aims to promote positive change in six areas of health (emotional, financial, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual) and to establish environments that increase health awareness, promote positive lifestyles, decrease the risk of disease, and enhance the quality of life for district personnel and retirees.

— Washoe County School District, Reno, NV, Wellness Program

EXAMPLES OF NATIONAL HEALTH OBSERVANCES

See <http://www.healthfinder.gov/library/nbo/nbo.asp> for more.

September

National Cholesterol Education Month
National Food Safety Education Month

October

Healthy Lung Month
Health Literacy Month
National School Lunch Week
National Depression Screening Month
Breast Cancer Awareness Month

November

American Diabetes Month
Lung Cancer Awareness Month

December

National Hand Washing Awareness Week

January

Cervical Cancer Awareness Month
Healthy Weight Week

February

American Heart Month
Wise Health Consumer Month

March

National Nutrition Month
Workplace Eye Health and Safety Month

April

Alcohol Awareness Month
Cancer Control Month
Foot Health Awareness Month

May

National Employee Health and Fitness Day
Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month
Better Sleep Month
Clean Air Month
Healthy Vision Month
Mental Health Month
National High Blood Pressure Education Month
Skin Cancer Awareness Month