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# Educational Services Commission of New Jersey Wellness Committee 2021-22 Annual Report

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## *“One Day at a Time”*

*The Wellness Committee works collaboratively with community resources, parents and school staff during these exceptional times*



### Goals:

- ❖ Provide resources to staff and parents during the Coronavirus pandemic
- ❖ Improve Nutrition & Physical Activity while keeping students' safe

The Committee met four times during the FY22 school year. All meetings were virtual.

### Highlights of the 2021-22 School Year

The Educational Services Commission of New Jersey has been dedicated to reopening schools and bringing back students and staff safely. **‘One Day at a Time’** has been the mantra for this school year. The commitment of Commission’s staff has been invaluable towards keeping the kids healthy and active. Cafeterias are still closed and meals are being delivered in each class to minimize contact. Our vendor delivers the meals that are packed individually and are served accordingly.

Schools activities are almost back to normal but on the side of caution. All schools are planning the Spring Olympic activities. With COVID numbers lessening, classes are starting to walk again in the hallways and outside on warmer days. There is daily Yoga and Meditation and weekly Fitness Room visits. Lesson themes include healthy eating and exercising. Student lesson plans now include lessons that are helpful in preventing Covid 19. They include the use of PPE, good handwashing/hygiene habits, practice for wearing masks and extended wearing for longer periods of time along with social distancing through video modeling/worksheets/stories. Students are taught to recognize the signs of feeling “well” and “not well”.

**Academy Learning Center (ALC)** The staff started the Biggest Loser competition for those who wanted to participate. The event began February 2 until May 4 with prizes for our first and second biggest losers. In conjunction with the winter Olympics, all of the Adaptive Physical Education (APE) classes changed over to Olympic themed activities to get the students moving. Activities included “hockey”, “curling”, “skating”, and indoor track activities. Worksheets and resources were shared with classroom teachers and therapists to use for group lessons with students.

**Bright Beginnings Learning Center (BBLC)** is observing Mindful Mondays, 2Facts 1Fib fun days, Comedy Day, Friday Spirit Day for students and staff to wear school colors. The BBLC staff is preparing for a Volleyball game in June. The BBLC gardens are being prepared for the spring for students to “grow and try” veggies. Each class has participated via Zoom in the game show ‘Minute to Win It’, focusing on fine and gross motor skills to celebrate the awesome Occupational Therapists at BBLC. The Multiple Disability (MD) Month Committee at BBLC organized wheelchair races in the hallway to encourage physical mobility. This is a well-known traditional event at BBLC. The BBLC Replenish Food Drive collected over 1050 items.

**Center for Lifelong Learning (CLL)** On February 28<sup>th</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup> the students at CLL participated in the Kids Heart Challenge with a fun and challenging obstacle course set up by the APE teachers to keep everyone moving and to increase their heart rate. The Down Syndrome Awareness Walk in March and the Autism Awareness Walk in April was a full hour for each of our 4 communities to do as many laps as possible around the school and included a DJ for dancing. Virtual Dance Club is available for the whole school every Monday for two 30 minutes dance sessions.

**Future Foundation Academy (FFA)** had My Heart Rate activity, where students evaluate if their heart rate will be slow or fast during activities, such as run, skip, sit, lay and walk. Fruits and vegetables were incorporated to Activities of Daily Living Skills (ADL) and cooking activities. Students were given flyers about allergies and reactions.

**NuView Academy (NVA)** held the student badminton games and championship playoff tournament. There was also jump rope for health competition. NuView Staff participated in Spirit dress days for April. May is mental health awareness month so students track their moods during morning therapy groups each day. May is also the food allergy awareness month – flyers were given to all students and sent out to all students’ households.

**Piscataway Regional Day School (PRDS)** participated in the February Heart Health Obstacle Course. Students and staff participated in activities that kept them moving to increase the heart rate. There have been Weekly Social Emotional Learning Activities in every classroom. The students also participated in the Virtual Valentine’s Day Dance. PRDS is preparing for the mini Olympics in May. Additionally, students are preparing the gardens for spring with the staff and will be going out regularly to get exercise and some playground fun.



*'Taking One Day at a Time'*

