

Floral Park-Bellerose School District
District Wellness Annual Report
2022-2023

Date: August 2023

To: Floral Park-Bellerose Board of Education

From: Linda Macias - District Wellness Coordinator

Cc: Lisa Ruiz, Superintendent
Dr. Tara Davidson, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Susan Fazio, Principal
John DeKams, Principal

Re: 2022-23 District Wellness Report

Pursuant to the District Wellness Policy, the Floral Park-Bellerose School District is required to meet at least two times per year. This requirement was satisfied by meeting on the following dates: October 27, 2022, January 26, 2023, March 30, 2023, and May 25, 2023.

The 2022-23 District Wellness Committee was comprised of the following members:

District Administrators:

Lisa Ruiz, Superintendent
Dr. Tara Davidson, Asst. Supt. For Curriculum & Instruction
John DeKams, Principal FPBS
Susan Fazio, Principal JLCS
Sharon Meyer, Director Special Education

School Board:

Rose Peltonen
Laura Trentacoste

Social Worker:

Jane Helfman

School Lunch Manager:

Karen Crenshaw

Parents:

Anu Jara
Theresa King
Lisa Ramraj
Amanda Talty
Cheryl Spigonardo

Teacher:

Erin Notaro
Taylor Patwell
Frank Thomas

Resident:

Maureen Blatz

Nurse: Amy Gernon

Linda Macias, District Wellness Coordinator, has compiled the following reports from the key members of the District Wellness Committee. This report along with the District Wellness Policy can also be located on the School District website, www.fpbsd.org.

Commented [JD1]: Lauren is our School Counselor, split between both FPBS and JLC

John DeKams
Principal FPBS

Susan Fazio
Principal JLCS

The Floral Park-Bellerose School District meets the District Wellness Policy goals through an on-going review of the goals with the community members, parents, staff and faculty. The physical education department's lessons include physical fitness, healthy eating and all-around good health habits - living a healthy lifestyle. The staff and faculty received training during the 2021-2022 school year from Safe4You which included allergy awareness and resources to promote a healthy lifestyle for students. On-line training using Safe Schools is provided to all administrators, teachers and teacher assistants/aides which include many on-line courses related to wellness, COVID, and Erin's Law.

A summary of the local school events included:

- **Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle:** A district-wide monthly wellness newsletter, *Lion's Quest* social emotional learning lessons, *Alert Program* – "How's your engine running", social-emotional surveys and check-ins, Project Wisdom morning messages, Kindness Week, Mindful Minutes; Assembly programs including *Allergy Awareness and Cultivating Kindness*; *Boosterthon*, Brain Breaks, ongoing lessons provided by the classroom teachers about living a healthy lifestyle, *Be Kind People Project* "Move of the Month" (our character education program which incorporates movement in the classroom), *Project Wisdom* character and social emotion lessons, skits and daily messages, Growth mindset lessons and monthly themes. Morning announcements encouraged mindfulness and wellness practices such as ways to breath (candle breath, flower breath), yoga, mindful movements, celebrating wins, and thankful thoughts. Our Discovery Labs used their hydroponic gardens to grow lettuce which was brought to our cafeterias to be enjoyed by our students promoting healthy eating.
- **Promoting Physical Activity:** Field Day events, Olympic Day events, Yoga (Junior, Indoor and Grade 4-6 Outdoor Olympics) Yoga (Arts in Education program), Recess and extra recess periods every day and across the week, movement breaks, Go Noodle time.
- **Promoting a Safe and Inclusive Environment:** *Book Club*, *Books of the Month*, *Shared Decision-Making Committee*, *School wide multi-cultural cookbook*. Lessons are provided to all kindergarten through sixth grade class (topics include books on character education, perseverance, healthy eating, anti-bullying, having a growth mindset, STEAM/Challenge Activities). Each class also received a set of books donated by the Hance Family Foundation surrounding diversity, equity and inclusion. These books were chosen by the classroom teachers and are incorporated into their lessons throughout the year. Our bulletin boards reflect student work around these topics.
- **Promoting Community Involvement and Partnerships:** Outdoor education trips where they learn about the environment, nature and how to care for it, Clark Gardens and the DNA lab support the students and their understanding of the environment, and the role they play in it, EAK "Grow With Me" day at Centennial Gardens (virtual) and Allergy Awareness Month in May. The Pocket Prairie planted by Dropseed Landscaping which includes native plants from the Hempstead Plains continues to be used to educate students on plants, history and use. This year we began our first annual Career Day where families and community members were invited into our schools to share their expertise with our students.

As a school district, our Social Emotional Committee/Mental Health Committee continues to create our monthly newsletters that include resources and ideas for parents to support our students' mental health and well-being. FPBSD students and families participated in the "Don't Press Send" presentations to help promote healthy and appropriate use of social media and other technologies.

The Shared Decision-Making Committee focused on Community Involvement which resulted in our first annual Career Day. In addition to Career Day and establishing community relationships, FPBS Shared Decision-Making Committee also focused on creating common positive behavior interventions and support expectations and language.

Karen Crenshaw
Food Service Director

During the 2022-23 school year, the federal COVID funding stopped funding free breakfast and lunch meals for all students. This was the first year back to having all students pay for meals unless they were qualified for free/reduced meals. It was a grab-n-go breakfast that students ate in the classrooms at the start of the school day. We had a drop in participation in the breakfast and lunch program, due to the meals not being free for all. We continued to feed all the Pre-K students as well.

We still faced some food shortages, but it was minimal throughout the year. But we did face increased food prices throughout the year. And in some cases, products prices increased more than once this school year.

The committee came up with questions for a Food Service Survey, to ask families what they liked, the frequency of buying meals and things they wanted added to the menu. We went over the results at the first meeting of the 2022-23 school year. There was a big emphasis on healthy meals and keeping items their children love like chicken nuggets and pizza. We also discussed having more hot food options for the Vegetarian student. As a result, this year we added more items to the lunch menu including Vegetarian burgers and Veggie Nuggets to the weekly menus. Making parents and students aware of all the hot options that can be vegetarian friendly, including pizza, brunch for lunch, pasta, mozzarella sticks, cheese quesadillas and mac n cheese.

Our other focus was having food that was locally sourced. We currently have been getting pasta, meatballs, yogurt, string cheese, grape juice, and fruit/vegetables that are all locally produced in New York. Next year we will be adding to this list, with our milk, hot dogs, hamburgers, and more produce.

The Discovery Lab teachers and cafeteria teamed up to have home grown samples in the cafeteria for students to try. The 2nd graders grew butter lettuce in class and when it was ready to be harvested, they brought it down to the cafeteria. We washed, cut it, and had sample cups for all the 2nd graders to try at lunch time. We made sure that there were no students with lettuce allergies.

We had developed a student lead food preference committee at both schools. We talked about how the food service program is operated. And how we need to abide by the rules and regulations from the USDA. So, they can't just eat anything they want, we must follow a healthy diet. They gave me suggestions of food items they would like to add to the menu which we have implemented. Including lemonade, crispier fries, mashed potatoes, and grilled chicken. They also came up with 3 different menu items they would like to see in the cafeteria. The entire district voted on school budget day what was their favorite choice. The choices were Breakfast burrito, BLT sandwich or Bacon, Egg and Cheese on a Bagel. Bacon Egg and Cheese was the winner and we had it in the beginning of June. We will add it to the menu for next year since it was a big hit!