

Gale-Etrick-Trempealeau (GET) School District

GET Schools used the mini-grant funding to promote healthy lifestyles and positive role-modeling in the district staff through a staff in-service and wellness fair.

Prior to the start of the mini-grant project, a staff and senior student survey was conducted to assess interest in wellness and healthy lifestyle information. For staff, the survey indicated that personal food preferences and convenience were biggest barriers to healthy eating. Removing soda machines from school was supported 100%, and 78% supported nutrition guidelines for all foods at school. Nutrition education was thought to be sufficient by 77%, but yet 56% thought the schools' nutrition message did not reinforce healthy eating behaviors or was not consistent. Just over half of the staff surveyed (56%) felt that the students were not active in an organized way at recess, and 44% think more community fitness programs for children are needed.

The senior student survey indicated that 64% of the students felt they are not committed to eating healthy, with personal food preferences and convenience identified as biggest obstacles to eating healthy. Unlike the school staff, 90% of the senior students do not want soda machines removed from school. However, 61% of the students agreed to support nutrition guidelines. The students wanted more nutrition education -- 71% felt more nutrition education was needed in school and 60% felt district message inconsistent and does not support healthy eating. The senior students also felt that students were not active in an organized way at recess (60%) and 47% wanted more community programs for kids fitness.

Using the survey results, the district encouraged staff to be role models for wellness. All district staff received copies of the district wellness policy. Nutrition information was provided through the district newsletter, and WEA Trust health education staff provided fitness and stress management information and resources at the wellness fair. Messages were sent to students and staff to encourage eating school breakfast and more fruits and vegetables.

The district posted the wellness policy on their district website, and sent the policy home with students. In-service training was provided to all teachers on nutrition and wellness, and it was noted on that future trainings should include the bus drivers, as a candy reward system was used on the busses.

From the survey results and teacher feedback, the district built in resources for continued in-services into the budget. The district rewrote the health curriculum to include more nutrition and fitness, and has plans to further revamp the PE curriculum next year. The wellness committee felt it was very important to have parents involved and take ownership in the wellness policy, which became apparent to them after the WisLine Webinar sessions. The wellness committee has added more parents to the wellness policy team. Another noted success was the school board's support of the district wellness policy to only stock water and juice in the vending machines (despite pressure from a beverage company representative).