



The **OEA Choice Trust Wellness Grant Program** is designed to motivate and empower school employees to take charge improving their health and well-being in a supportive environment - resulting in positive, sustainable changes in lifestyle choices that will have a long lasting impact on wellness.

School employee wellness programs that address physical inactivity, poor eating habits, and tobacco use are a worthwhile investment. Research shows that wellness programs can benefit school employees, for example: reduce unhealthy behaviors, lower absenteeism, reduce escalating health care costs, fewer work related injuries and worker compensation claims, improved morale and retention of employees and improved productivity. Healthy employees also become positive role models for their students.

The mission of the OEA Choice Trust Wellness Grant Program is to improve the health and well-being of Oregon school employees through grant-making; focusing on empowering and enabling the participants to take responsibility for improvement of their health within a supportive environment.

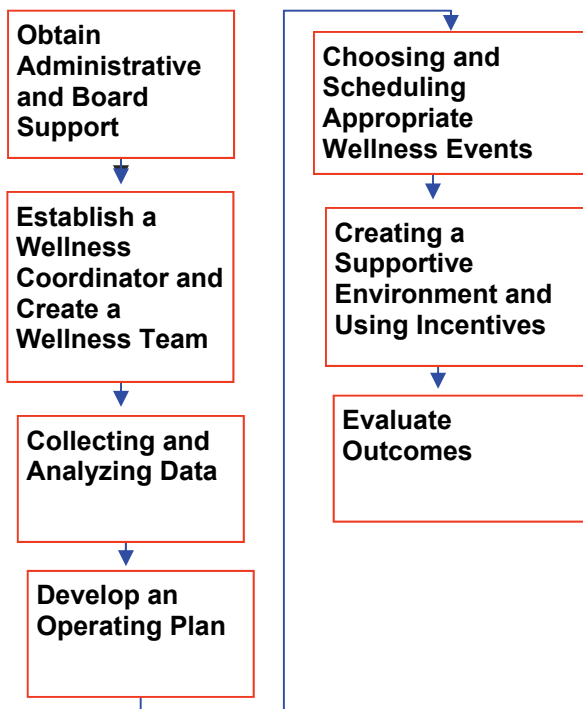
The following is a helpful guide that can be used in building an effective wellness program starting with a wellness grant through OEA Choice Trust.





An organized, well-thought out program has the greatest chance of making changes in school employee health habits.

The following chart shows the steps to creating a school employee wellness program:



Step 1

Obtain Administrative and Board Support

Win support for the wellness grant by building a case for why you need school employee wellness. Having administrative support is vital to the success of your grant and without their support succeeding in building a sustainable school employee wellness program is very challenging.

[Link to Present the Facts](#)

[- School Employee Wellness Facts](#)

Research Shows the following are benefits of a wellness program:

- ◆ Improved health and health behaviors
- ◆ Reduced absenteeism
- ◆ Fewer work related injuries and worker compensation claims
- ◆ Improved morale and retention of employees
- ◆ Improved productivity
- ◆ Lower health care costs

Step 2

Establish a Wellness Coordinator and Create a Wellness Team

Wellness Coordinator(s).

Selecting a wellness coordinator(s) is crucial because it will help to ensure effective communication, support, and success. The coordinator must be willing to step forward and be the lead person for the school employee wellness program. The coordinator will be a contact between the wellness team, administration, school employees, and OEA Choice Trust.

Wellness Team

The wellness team should be committed and motivated to build and plan a sustainable school employee wellness program. It's important that all aspects of the school setting are represented on your team because this will allow for different perspectives. The members of



the team should be enthusiastic and excited about promoting the wellness program and communicating the information to the school employees.

Click the links below for examples.

[Link to example: Central SD 13J Wellness Site Coordinator Application](#)

[Link to example: Wellness Committee Invitational Letter](#)

Step 3

Collecting and Analyzing Data

Collecting and analyzing data is needed to understand what the school employees want and hope to get out of their wellness program. The data collected will provide a baseline for monitoring, evaluating, and adapting the program over time.

The following are examples of ways to collect data:

- ❏ **Needs and Interest Survey**
What do employees need? What do they want to do? How ready are they?

[Link to Needs and Interest Survey](#)

- ❏ **Workplace Environment Assessment:**
This can lead your workgroup to recommend actions for changes to make the worksite more supportive of healthy behaviors.

[Link to school environment assessment](#)

- ❏ **Health Risk Assessment "HRA"**
An HRA is a health questionnaire

used to provide individuals with an evaluation of their health risks and quality of life. This assessment can provide a baseline of your groups health and needs.

- ❏ **Health Screenings:**
Perform periodic health screenings, for example: blood pressure check, lipid panel and blood glucose screening. Schedule the health screenings at the worksite; ask the vendor to provide you with an aggregate group report.

- ❏ **Polar BodyAge System:**
The BodyAge System is designed to quickly and simply give participants a baseline measurement of the overall functional ability level. The system provides individuals with their body age, compares it with their chronological age, and outlines steps they can take to decrease their body's age thereby increasing their overall health.

During the assessment, your strength, flexibility, body composition (fat|muscle ratio), and nutrition habits will be assessed. This can be combined with your blood pressure, lipid profile, and glucose numbers and the "age" of your body is calculated using all of the information. After the participants have completed the assessment they



receive a personal profile and tips to help decrease their body age. OEA Choice Trust collects all the data and provides the group with a summary aggregate report.

All data will remain confidential.

[Link to BodyAge FAQ](#)

Step 4

Develop an Operating Plan

The operating plan is the vehicle that articulates the strategic direction and is the document against which all progress is ultimately measured. Developing a plan forces you to consider your employee group(s) needs and strategic priorities.

The plan should include a mission statement, goals, objectives, an action plan and communication strategies.

Mission Statement

Developing a mission statement can help clarify your vision for your wellness program. The mission statement also sets the stage for establishing goals and objectives.

Goals

Goals are statements of what must be accomplished to achieve a vision. Goals can be both short term and long term, but must be realistic.

Objectives

Objectives are statements of how to accomplish each goal. Objectives should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time specific.

SMART Goal = measurable objectives.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| S pecific | one behavior outcome |
| M easurable | one result that can be observed or evaluated |
| A ttainable | but also challenging |
| R ealistic | do you have the resources to achieve? |
| T ime Specific | within 3 months - one year |

There is a saying, "what gets measured gets done." Goals which are measured can be powerful motivators for participants.

Action Plan

The action plan is a tool to help put your goal and objective into action and provide the necessary steps to accomplish your goal.

The following page contains an outline of an action plan.



| <u>Rationale</u> | <u>Activities</u> | <u>Outcomes</u> | <u>Method/Tools</u> | <u># of Employees Impacted</u> | <u>Time Line</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| SMART Goal: Measurable Objective | | | | | |
| Goal | Supporting Objectives | What will be different as a result of this project; knowledge, behavior, circumstances | To assess outcomes | By goal and/or project | |

The following is an example of an action plan from Central Point School District 6.

| <u>Rationale</u> (Goal) | <u>Activities</u> (Supporting Objectives) | <u>Outcomes</u> (What will be different as a result of this project; knowledge, behavior, circumstances) | <u>Method/Tools</u> (To assess outcomes) | <u># of Employees Impacted</u> (By goal and/or project) | <u>Time Line</u> |
|--|--|---|---|--|--------------------|
| SMART Goal (Measurable Objective): 20% of District 6 employees will sign up for an average of 2 screening processes (blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, body fat skin fold, flexibility, bone health, etc.) by September, comparing their results with medical standard and chart plans to make lifestyle adjustments where advisable. | | | | | |
| To assess and discover potential health risks | Screening for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blood pressure ● Cholesterol ● Glucose ● Skin Fold Risk Assessment | Participants will undergo screenings and receive a report on their measurements | Health screenings and assessments | 80 | By September, 2010 |

The goals, action plan, and measurable objectives are all to assist in accomplishing your overall mission. The operating plan is a working document and should adjust to the changing needs of the school employees, thus creating a school employee wellness program that has sustainability.



Communication Strategies

A very important part of the plan is communication. How will the plan be communicated and promoted? It is essential to keep everyone in the loop.

Examples:

- ▶ Develop a brand or logo
- ▶ T-shirts, hats, pencils, and stickers—make the brand visible on campus
- ▶ Kick off celebration to explain the wellness program and wellness mission statement

[Link to Central SD 13J kick-off example](#)

- ▶ Program launch letter or Memo

[Link to launch letter example](#)

[Link to Jefferson SD 14J launch letter example](#)

- ▶ Staff meetings and staff developments
- ▶ Flyers, morning announcements, posters in the employee lounge, and pay day stuffers

[Link to Jefferson SD 14J flyer example](#)

- ▶ Board meetings
- ▶ Newspaper ad
- ▶ Invite the local news to a wellness event

Step 5

Choosing and Scheduling Appropriate Wellness Events

Refer to the Needs and Interest Survey and other data collected to schedule your wellness events to ensure

employee interest. Your wellness committee should ask themselves these two questions before scheduling a wellness event:

- (1) What does the group need out of their health promotion efforts?
- (2) What do the employees want?

The following are examples of potential wellness events:

- Physical activity
- Nutrition/weight management
- Smoking cessation
- Responsible alcohol use
- Stress management
- Medical self-care
- Financial management
- Mental health/depression disease management
- Work/family balance

Consider starting with a wellness event that provides visibility to the grant and overall momentum, such as having a motivational speaker come to a staff development. Think about doing activities based around the school calendar or that revolve around national health observances. For example, February is American Heart Month; you could do a wellness event around heart health.

Be creative with your programs and wellness events because it will help maintain interest and sustainability, but always remember the wants and interests of the school employees.

For more information on national health observance dates go to:

www.healthfinder.gov/nho/default.aspx



Step 6

Creating a Supportive Environment and Using Incentives

Creating a supportive environment is a long-term project that requires real dedication to wellness values. Your wellness team must understand and acknowledge the current environment and be able to envision a healthier one and have patience to build that vision one step at a time.

Ask yourself how it feels to walk into your workplace. The influence of the worksite environment on health, wellness and safety of the staff is profound. It's difficult to do a nutrition intervention at the workplace and at the same time all the vending machines have unhealthy options.

Work to create a friendly, safe facility with proactive policies and full support from administration.

Using Incentives:

Everyone likes to win and providing incentives can provide motivation and appeal to your wellness grant. Incentives can build team spirit, accountability, recognition, and accomplishment.

Incentive Examples:

- ✚ Gift certificates
- ✚ T-shirts/Sweatshirts
- ✚ Gym bags

- ✚ DVD's
- ✚ Books
- ✚ Fitness tools

Step 7

Evaluating Outcomes

Evaluation can help identify needed changes, determine the effects of the interventions and help find ways to improve your wellness program.

Evaluation can show how the wellness program was successful and in return help build and boost participation levels. This will assist in assuring a sustainable school employee wellness program.

Evaluation Examples:

1. **Number of employees showing a reduction in medical risk conditions.**
Compare first BodyAge test results with second BodyAge test results.
2. **Reduced absenteeism**
3. **Cost savings for the district during the grant cycle.**
Lower number of substitutes needed due to improved teacher attendance.
4. **Employee satisfaction before and after grant cycle**
5. **Success Stories**

[Link to our website](#)

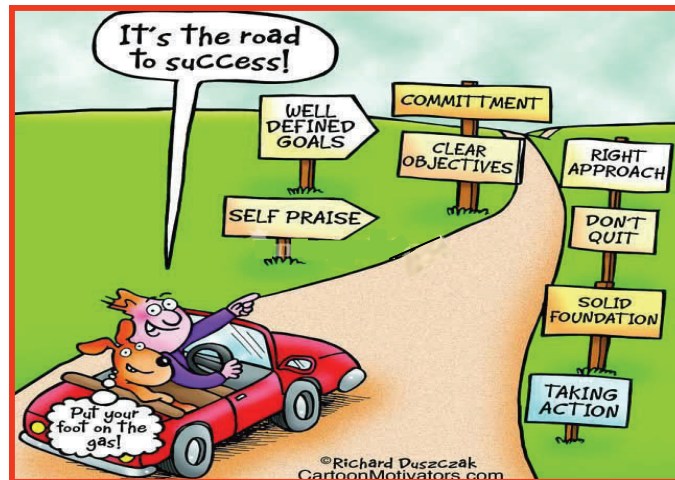
[Link to "How is your school employee wellness program doing"?](#)



In Conclusion...

Investments in wellness make possible healthier lifestyles for employees and contributes to the productive development of our communities.

This blueprint is an outline to assist you in preparing for your wellness grant as well as a resource for your future school employee wellness policies.



Sources:
2010 Wellness Council of America: WELCOS's Seven Benchmarks, School Employee Wellness: A Guide for Protecting the Assets of Our Nation's Schools, ODS: Workplace Wellness Guide—Ingredients for Success, Oregon Health Worksites Employer Toolkit-OREGON.gov