SUMMARY

In 2005, the Downingtown Area School District made a commitment to student, faculty, and staff health and wellness. This commitment included a district level wellness advisory committee, K-12 school health councils, central office wellness committee, and the federally mandated local wellness policy. DASD expanded this commitment to include a school board wellness goal which formally aligns student health and learning. A district level strategic plan and K-12 health improvement plans provide goals, direction, and measurable outcomes to help all students make healthy choices and reach their full learning potential.

The DASD 15 year commitment to health and wellness provides an unprecedented opportunity to create K-12 healthy school communities where students receive consistent health messages and participate in health-promoting activities to support healthy choices and academic success.

At the close of the 2019 -2020 academic school year, all 16 schools and the central administration office assembled wellness teams with documented outcomes, action plans, and strategies aligned with the district level wellness goals.

These schools initiated 3 district –determined wellness goals:
Goal #1

- To increase protective factors and decrease risk factors associated with the use and abuse of harmful substances and behaviors.
- Outcome: Increase prevention of substance use and abuse through education and awareness for parents, staff, and students.
- Outcome: Engage youth in advocacy initiatives to raise awareness and educate peers on effects of substance use and abuse.

Goal #2

- To promote safe and supportive schools for positive school culture, and healthy social and emotional development.
- Outcome: Increase mental health and suicide prevention education for parents, staff, and students.
- Outcome: Increase prevention education addressing (e.g. cyber, texting/sexting, verbal, physical bullying including gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual identity, orientation, for parents, staff and students.

Goal #3

- Sustain a healthy school environment for healthy eating and physical activity.
- Outcome: Meet criteria and compliance with the Downingtown Area School District wellness policy including nutrition education, physical education, physical activity, food services, nutrition standards, and other school-based activities.
DASD WELLNESS BY THE NUMBERS
17 District Wellness Committees

26 District - Level Wellness Advisory Committee Members

137 K-12 Wellness Committee Members

260 Wellness Strategies for Grades K-12

12,794 Student Impacted

1,730 Staff Impacted

10 Wellness Sub-Committee
INTRODUCTION

Health and learning are inextricably intertwined. Health problems and risk behaviors of: inadequate diet, physical inactivity, drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, intentional and unintentional injuries, and sexual behaviors which result in HIV/AIDS, STDs, and unintended pregnancy significantly compromise student health, learning, and overall academic achievement.

Research in the fields of education and health present a compelling case for the causal role that health plays in closing the education achievement gap. The nation’s schools are committed to helping all children succeed. Yet, every school day children and adolescents come to school with physical, mental, emotional, and social health issues which prevent them from fully participating in and benefiting from the efforts of school administrators and teachers to help every child learn and achieve. Health promoting behaviors improve health, increase the likelihood of academic success, and support and promote healthy families and communities. Coordinated school health is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as a strategy for improving students’ health and learning in our nation’s schools.

The healthy development of children and adolescents is influenced by many societal institutions. After the family, the school is the primary institution responsible for the development of young people in the United States.

The health of young people is strongly linked to their academic success and the academic success of youth is strongly linked with their health. Thus, helping students stay healthy is a fundamental part of the mission of schools. After all, schools cannot achieve their primary mission of education if students and staff are not healthy.

- Health-related factors, such as hunger, chronic illness, or physical and emotional abuse, can lead to poor school performance.

- Health-risk behaviors such as substance use, violence, and physical inactivity are consistently linked to academic failure and often affect students’ school attendance, grades, test scores, and ability to pay attention in class.
The good news is that school health programs and policies may be one of the most efficient means to prevent or reduce risk behaviors and prevent serious health problems among students. Effective school health policies and programs may also help close the educational achievement gap.

The Downingtown Area School District recognizes and supports the link between student health / wellness, and learning. The DASD local wellness policy and school wellness goals establish the foundation for creating K-12 health school communities. The DASD District Wellness Advisory Committee, the Healthy School Zone campaign, and K-12 School Health Councils advocate for and raise awareness of connection between student health and academic success.

**Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (ASCD and CDC, 2014)**

The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model “provides an important framework to address the collaborative relationship between learning and health.” The whole child approach ensures that each student is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged and sets the standard for comprehensive, sustainable school improvement and provides for long-term student success. The new model calls for greater alignment, integrations, and collaboration between education and health to improve each child’s physical, social, and emotional development.

The new model includes the (5) tenets of the Whole Child including: Health, Safe, Engaged, Supported and Challenged. The new expanded model includes the home and school community: Health Education, Physical Education and Physical Activity, Nutrition Environment and Services, Health Services, Counseling and Psychological and Social Services, Social and Emotional Climate, Physical Environment, Employee Wellness and Family and Community Engagement.
The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model focuses attention on the child, emphasizing a school-wide approach and acknowledging learning, health, and the school as being a part and reflection of the local community. The overarching message of the new model is “Coordinating Policy, Process, and Practice” and “Improving Learning and Improving Health”. Schools have contact with 95% of U.S. children ages 5-17, and schools represent the primary institution responsible for childhood development, after the family.

It is essential that schools have an effective and comprehensive school health model in place during these critical years of social, psychological, physical and intellectual development.

The Downingtown Area School District wellness initiative has adopted and is in alignment with the “Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child collaborative approach to learning and health. The structure of the district level advisory committee and each of the K-12 school health councils applies the model to setting wellness goals, outcomes and action plans to support student health and learning. (www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth and www.ascd.org).
Reporting K-12 Wellness Committee Success

Elementary (K-6) Summary of School Health Council Success DASD K-6 School Health Councils fully implemented the following strategies to promote student health and learning. These strategies included:
Goal #1

To increase protective and decrease risk factors associated with the use and abuse of harmful substances and behaviors.

- Grades 3-6 Health Education curriculum
- Cougars Club
- Watch D.O.G.S.
- Wellness Wednesday
- HPE Staff PD (Footprints for Life) Grades 2-3
- Student Led Wellness Club

Goal #2

To promote safe and supportive schools for positive school culture, and healthy social and emotional development.

- Grades 3-6 Health Education Curriculum
- Little Avidum
- Random Acts of Kindness Week
- Wellness Wednesday
- Cougars Club
- School-wide PBIS
- Class Meetings
- Habits of Mind lessons (overlap with health education)
- Community Outreach Programs
- Buddy Bench
- School Assemblies (bullying prevention, BMX, respect)
- Home Visitation Program
- Intruder and Safety Drills
School Counselor Pro-Social Lessons
Watch D.O.G.S
Lunch with School Counselor
HPE PD (Footprints for Life) Grades 2-3
Kindness Club
Morning Meeting
Student Led Wellness Club
Mix it Up at Lunch Day
Family Heritage Day
Respect Rocks
Super-Secret Spirit Days
Beaver Buddies
Internet Safety Program
Child Safety Program
Family – Based Mindfulness Training
Gratefulness Paper chain of Thanks
Door Decorating Winter Contest
Crime Victims Center
Sunshine Committee

Goal #3
Sustain a healthy school environment for healthy eating and physical activity.

K-6 Physical Education curriculum
Walking and Running Clubs
(Walking and Running clubs (STRIDE and Girls on the Run and building running groups )
Walking and Running events
(Jump Rope for Heart, Turkey Trot)
Intramurals
School Gardens and Tower Garden, monthly salad tastings
Classroom Celebrations with activities (no food)
Staff Blood Pressure Checks
Staff Boot Camp
Secondary (Grades 7-12) Summary of School Health Council Success

DASD 7-12 Schools wellness teams fully implemented the following strategies to promote student health and learning. These strategies included:
Goal #1

To increase protective and decrease risk factors associated with the use and abuse of harmful substances and behaviors.

Grades 7-10 Health Education Curriculum

Student Assistance Services

Prevention Specialists

HPE Professional Development: Say it Straight Grades 7-8

HYPE – Healthy Youth Positive Energy (CTC) sponsored clubs

Wellness Day

DEHS Wellness Course Page (folders for staff with lessons for all topics including wellness activities, brain breaks, mental health resources for staff)

Caron Treatment Centers

No-Vape Campaign / No Alcohol Campaign

Red Ribbon Week (ribbons, stickers, certificates, pledges, HYPE and staff)

Goal #2

To promote safe and supportive schools for positive school culture, and healthy social and emotional development.

Grades 7-10 Health Education Curriculum

Grade 9 Suicide Prevention Lessons

QPR training students and staff

Kindness Week including (Canned food drives, baskets, Paws for Kindness gram, Day Without Hate, T-shirts, video, post it notes with kind word messages)

Breast Cancer Awareness Pink and Denim Day
Minding Your Mind

HYPE (Healthy Youth Positive Energy) CTC sponsored club

Aevidum

Student Assistance Services

Prevention Specialists

HPE Professional Development:
Say it Straight Grades 7-8

Faculty – Staff Basketball Game

Minding Your Mind

Advisory Lessons

Yoga Club

Kindness Week

Hallway Decorating

Dr. Fish Leadership Groups

Wellness Day

Motivational Guest Speaker David Magrogan

Miles for Mental Health/Wellness

Cultural Equity/Aevidum/Staff Interviews

Staff Breakfast

Zen Den

Kindness Week Challenge (student council, HYPE, Cultural Equity, NHS, French Honors Society, Door decorating committee, Kindness Notes for staff)

DEHS Wellness Course Page (folders for staff with lessons for all topics including wellness activities, brain breaks, mental health resources for staff)

Monthly holiday show your colors, Ugly sweater day, Halloween dressup

COVID 19 masks for staff created

Spring wellness week included virtual activities (staff pet yearbook, physical videos, gratitude center, videos, Art (painted rocks), staff recipes

Meditation / Stress Management / Dealing with Emotions lessons

Open REACH activities

Pass It Forward

Secret Pal for staff

Caught Being Kind

Hearts for Hart

Secret Leprechauns for staff

Power Down Week

Music Fridays
Goal #3
Sustain a healthy school environment for healthy eating and physical activity.

Physical Education curriculum  
DASD Wellness Policy  
Faculty Staff Basketball Game  
Yoga Club  
Wellness Day  
After School Fitness  
Powder Puff  
Virtual Exercise Challenge  
Smoothie Station  
Staff and Student Walk at Lunch Days  
Miles for Mental Health  
Winter Wellness Day (puppy yoga, arts and crafts, volleyball, basketball, weight room, HYPE and Wellness Committee joint activities) fruit, water, snack bars  
Open REACH activities  
DEHS Wellness Course Page (folders for staff with lessons for all topics including wellness activities, brain breaks, mental health resources for staff)  
Get Caught Eating Healthy

Downingtown Area School District State of Wellness (2019 – 2020)

DASD Wellness in 2019 -2020 was a year of conversation, reflection, research, and most importantly responding to the health and wellness needs of students, families, and staff. Wellness strategies implemented were informed by community input through town hall conversations, data, student needs and interests, mental, emotional, physical and social concerns and challenges and factors contributing to a healthy school community.

DASD administration, school board, and staff are committed to responding to health and wellness priorities and in 2019 -2020 built an infrastructure of (10) wellness
subcommittees representing priorities for student health and learning. These (10) subcommittees included:

- Student Education
- Parent Engagement
- Vaping Prevention
- Data and Decision Making
- School Start Time
- Staffing
- Professional Development for Staff
- Staff Health and Wellness
- Technology
- Wellness Policy for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

Each subcommittee was chaired by DASD staff and representation included: parents, community members, administrators, staff (teachers, school counselors, prevention specialists, HR, Food Services, school board). Sub- committees were charged with the mission to explore, identify, and prioritize action steps for meeting student health needs and promoting a school community for health and learning.

**Highlights of each committees work includes:**
Wellness Subcommittee: Student Education

Recommendations: Explore SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) programs and resources

Wellness Subcommittee: Professional Development

Recommendations:
Speaker for Teacher Summit (Trauma, ACEs)
Wellness programs/ events for staff and Downingtown community
Explore “Speak Up” program for Grades 6-12
Explore "Mind Up" program for Grades K-5
Discontinue sub-committee

Wellness Subcommittee: Staffing

Recommendations:

- Increase itinerant social skills instruction, special education teacher(s) (5) for Grades K-5
- Increase school psychologist positions (3)
- Increase gifted support teacher positions (2)
- Increase school nurses positions (1)/building
- Increase secondary school counselor positions (2)
- Increase behavioral analyst positions (5) K-12
- Hire district level wellness champion OR create small groups of DASD
- Stakeholders/professional staff to roll out district level wellness and mental health
Wellness Subcommittee: School Start Time

Recommendations:

Audit our health curriculum K-12 to evaluate our education of students on the importance of sleep.

Program for parents

Program for staff

- Review bus system and costs (unable to complete this year due to Infinite Campus, delays and staff turnover in the transportation department)
- In an effort to free up time and reduce stress for our students – study time spent on extra-curricular activities and homework
- * Consider additional questions added to the “Youth Truth” survey (included on committee report)
- * The committee recommends the Wellness Task Force and/ or the District further investigate the feasibility of implementing a later school start time in DASD. This evaluation should include a set of committees with all stakeholders as well as a timeline of actions, events, and dates/times.

Wellness Subcommittee: Student Data

Recommendations:

The committee completed its work around climate surveys for all stakeholders and had begun to address student data collection at the building levels. We were able to gather
input from all levels and had intended to develop a consistent template for use across the District moving forward. (This work was suspended due to school closure).

We don’t believe the subcommittee needs to continue this work next year. Work needs to be completed, but likely can be spearheaded by our prevention specialists and school counseling teams rather than a separate wellness committee.

**Wellness Subcommittee: Vaping**

**Recommendations:**

- Resources for students (curriculum, programs); HYPE clubs; SAP; “Say It Straight”.
- Resources for DASD Parents (Caron’s PREP program; DASD Parent Speaker Series; SAS teams provide resources via DASD website; Presentation, display at back – to – school night, course selection nights, parent events / meetings, partner with CTC.
- Resources for Staff (Caron presentations for PD and Learning Summit).
- Policy Violators ( Caron “Connect”; SAS Referrals; COAD Referrals, Initial screening and follow-up protocols, nicotine vapes and paraphernalia / second offense).

**Wellness Subcommittee: Wellness Policy (Healthy Eating and Physical Activity)**

**Recommendations:**

- Clarify policy (Grades K-8 and 9-12) including FAQ
- Communicate policy to building administrators
- Create system of approval and enforcement of wellness policy (classroom food, celebrations, and fundraisers)
- Compliance with PDE expectations for wellness policy
- Student involvement /feedback
- Tasting events (expand offerings fresh food)

**Wellness Subcommittee: Parent Education**
**Recommendations:**

1. Reduce the number of presentations
2. Survey parents for topics of discussion
3. Provide budget for advertising
4. Continue outreach to community for attendance

**Wellness Subcommittee: Technology**

**Recommendations:**

- A well-developed philosophy of utilizing technology to aid learning in our schools (the stay at home order at emergency remote-learning will definitely impact this philosophy)

- Addressing needs/gaps in appropriate scaffolded learning of technology for our students, including social media use.

**Wellness Subcommittee: Staff Wellness**

**Recommendations:**

- The District need a Staff Wellness Committee comprised of Administration and Staff. There is so much energy and input in the buildings that it helps tremendously to have the perspective, experience, and knowledge of staff members at different levels.

- In many cases the ideas from the staff support subcommittee were more for the professional development committee.

- Members from the community did not participate very much. The direction and focus of the group was driven by the staff that was directly impacted by the
The group started by having discussions on what wellness meant, but it really took off when we started to implement.

This group is ready to run with many different thoughts and ideas.

Sub-committee meeting agendas and minutes are available at:

https://www.dasd.org/Page/4865

Next steps include development of a 2020-2021 Wellness Road to include goals, wellness structure and process for implementation of health and wellness strategies.

Communities That Care of Greater Downingtown

CTC Mission Statement:

To empower youth to make positive choices to reach their full potential.

CTC Vision Statement:

A community where all youth are making positive choices and achieving their goals.

The Downingtown Area School District works in close partnership with the Communities That Care of Greater Downingtown. CTC plays a vital role in promoting and supporting healthy school communities to increase protective factor and decrease risk factors link to substance use and abuse and mental and emotional health issues.

Since 2001, Communities That Care of Greater Downingtown has worked to bring
together community partners committed to empowering Downingtown youth in making positive choices, enhancing protective factors and reduce behaviors which negatively impact health, learning and social outcomes

In 2018, CTC reorganized with a Collective Impact framework recognizing that a single organization cannot change a major social issue. CTC of Greater Downingtown embraces an inclusive approach with a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and a backbone organization. We are focused on increasing collaboration, increasing equity, and collectively supporting the capacity to build systems for healthy communities. Our partners provide resources, programs, and workshops to promote positive health choices and reduce risk behaviors in these core areas:

- Engaging youth in peer prevention initiatives
- Promoting alternative healthy social activities and events for youth
- Equipping parents and strengthening families
- Providing prevention education and public awareness

During the 2019 – 2020 school year, DASD and CTC partnered together to provide programs, resources, and initiatives to support the DASD wellness goals focusing on mental and emotional health and substance use and abuse prevention. Highlights of the prevention initiatives include:

- CTC facilitated and supported professional development in (3) evidence-based programs including: Footprints for Life; Say It Straight and Signs of Suicide (SOS). Professional development for each program was hosted by the Downingtown Area School District (DASD). Through providing these program trainings CTC was able to build capacity for prevention education to be implemented in grades K-12 in the greater Downingtown community.

**Signs of Suicide (SOS) Numbers:**
- 2 DASD Staff were trained as Master Trainers in SOS in July 2019

- 10 DASD Staff were trained to facilitate SOS with their students

- 125 DASD teachers were educated about the SOS program and mental health prevention and intervention strategies

- 750 students at Marsh Creek 6th Grade Center participated in the SOS program (*SOS was planned to be implemented with 1,100 students at this building prior to COVID-19)

- SOS will be implemented in the coming school year at the Marsh Creek 6th Grade Center

Footprints for Life™ Numbers

- 12 DASD Faculty and/or Elementary Teachers were trained to facilitate Footprints for Life

- 10 HPE teachers—(1) HYPE teachers from each K-5 building, (1) HPE Curriculum Leader and (1) Prevention Specialist Coordinator

Say It Straight Numbers

- 8 Teachers and/or Staff from DASD were trained in SIS

- 6 HPE teachers--3 HPE teachers from each middle school, (1) HPE Curriculum Leaders and (1) Prevention Specialist Coordinator

- Prevention programs will be implemented during the 2020-2021 school year integrated into the K-8 health curriculum.
HYPE: Healthy Youth Positive Energy

- (6) HYPE clubs in Grades 6-12
- 7,107 DASD students reached through HYPE club prevention initiatives
- 78 HYPE club student members
- 16 fully-implemented school-wide prevention strategies
- 21 Students participated in the Caron Treatment Centers “Role Models for Change” peer – to-peer mentoring program
  - Representation of CTC on the DASD district level Wellness Committee and wellness sub-committee (Student Wellness)
  - CTC partner (Caron Treatment Centers) provided professional development, and assisted DASD wellness committees with resources available to staff, students, policies, and parents including presentation at the DASD joint HSA meeting.
  - (25) community prevention partners aligned resources and programs to assist DASD staff, youth, and families in mental health and substance use prevention.

Human Resources: Promoting Wellness for DASD Staff

Living Well @ DASD
Background

Living Well @ DASD was created over 10 years ago. Our initial goal at the time was to help our employees “shape” their own future with a healthier lifestyle in order to help them in turn “shape” the future of their students. As we grew into this initiative, it became apparent that we could influence other factors with our wellness program. We saw that we could have a positive impact on the budget by containing the ever increasing health care costs and reducing absenteeism along with the costs related to absenteeism. In addition, the positive response from staff can have an effect on increasing morale and productivity.

Through the years, we have looked at varying measurements to help shape our evolving wellness programs such as:

- The cost of health care.
- The cost of sick days.
- Participation in wellness related activities.
- Feedback provided by employees.
- Utilization and trends found in DASD’s health claims.

Taking all of these factors into consideration, Living Well @ DASD has continued to
maintain the following mission and supporting goals over the years. However, the program has used varying activities in order to achieve these goals.

**Mission**

To create a progressive and sustainable wellness program that works to enhance the mental, social, emotional, and physical health of staff.

**Goal #1:** To increase awareness of lifestyle choices, to encourage overall health and wellness, and to promote the resources available to employees to meet their wellness goals by creating an effective communication plan that reaches all employees through multiple vehicles.

**Goal #2:** Provide staff with resources that allow them to address their wellness needs and improve their health.

**Goal #3:** Contain costs and increase fiscal responsibility.

**Goal #4:** Develop a culture that promotes and enhances student growth by combining efforts of student and staff wellness to have a District Wide Coordinated program.
Program

During 2019-2020, the District created a number of Subcommittees tasked with researching one of ten identified topics that would help support wellness at DASD. The committees would work to create action plans and strategies aligned with the district-level wellness goals.

One of the subcommittees was Staff Support. This committee brought together staff members from across the District. During the year, the Staff Support SubCommittee came together to be the staff wellness committee that implements and organizes staff wellness activities and communications. The subcommittee spent part of the year gathering information on what the District already had to offer staff on both the District level and at individual schools. Using that information, the committee started to move forward with new initiatives.
Wellness on Schoology

The Staff Support Wellness Subcommittee is proud to share a new Schoology Course. We wanted to make wellness more accessible. There are sections for staff including personal wellness, resources from our health benefits, Health Advocate, and even staff discounts. There are also sections for wellness activities to be used in the schools for both students and staff at the elementary and secondary levels. While we always had a website, this allows for a better organization of information in one place with the opportunity to ‘chat’ or ‘post’ messages. We will continue to build and develop this robust tool. To access this course, please go to https://schoology.dasd.org/home. The Access Code to Join a Course is 98BH-F9KJ-4PQQK.

21 Day Wellness Challenge Initiative

This was not your traditional challenge. It was about getting staff to think about wellness from a different perspective. When you think of wellness, do you only think of diet and exercise?
While those are two vital components of wellness, in order to achieve true wellness, you must take into account the whole person. Research shows that there are multiple dimensions of wellness that can include physical, emotional, social, intellectual, financial, occupational, environmental and spiritual wellness.

It has been said that it takes 21 days to develop a new habit. In 21 days, employees were challenged to explore all dimensions of wellness in hopes that they make choices towards adopting a healthier lifestyle.

The committee provided a 21 day calendar of activities for staff to do each day. During the challenge, there were also more in-depth ideas were shared with staff if they wanted to take the challenge a step farther.
The following are a listing of the activities that we used during the 2019-2020 school year...

✔ Distribute emails regularly to all staff with wellness resources available to employees and current wellness initiatives.

✔ Promote Health Advocate newsletters, webinars, and other resources regularly.

✔ Provide Wellness Tips and News in Bi-weekly HReminders and Rapport Card newsletters.

✔ Update Living Well @ DASD website on a regular basis with new content on current wellness initiative as well as links to community resources, insurance provider information, and other wellness resources.
✔ Have rep from each building as a liaison to further promote wellness initiatives in buildings.

✔ Wellness Advisory Council meetings with School Health Councils to share information and ideas.

✔ Complete School Health Index Needs Assessment and School Improvement plans.

✔ Promoted National Employee Benefit Day and this year’s topic – Resilience.

✔ Staff Volleyball League

✔ Maintain, Don’t Gain Holiday Challenge

✔ 21 Day Wellness Challenge

✔ Flu Shots

✔ Promote SwiftMD

✔ Health Advocate – Employee Assistance and Advocacy Program

✔ On-Site Yoga Classes

✔ Staff Wellness Discounts from Local Businesses

✔ Promote wellness opportunities available through our insurance products; i.e. gym reimbursements, 6 free nutritionist visits, etc.

✔ Healthy Lifestyle Matching Program.

✔ Promote Wellness initiatives/webinars offered through our EAP program.

✔ Access to gym equipment after school hours.

✔ Healthy snack machines.

✔ Each building also had individual staff wellness activities for staff, such as fitness classes, nutrition classes, healthy foods, etc.
Health Advocate

In 2013-2014, the District introduced Health Advocate. Health Advocate is the nation’s leading independent healthcare advocacy and assistance company that provides several personalized services.

For employees, Health Advocate is a free, confidential program that offers EAP+Work/Life benefits to help employees address difficulties in their life by providing short term assistance with personal, family, and work issues that are having an impact on their life and ability to focus on work. There are 8 free sessions for counseling per issue, one free session for legal, and one for financial work per issue. In addition, it simplifies the navigation of the health care system by helping employees find the right doctors, resolving billing and insurance claim issues, explaining benefit coverages, helping parents or in-laws with the complexities of Medicare, and much more!

Some of the topics that Health Advocate focused on this year were alcohol awareness, mental health awareness, vacation safety, organizing workspace for better health, spring allergies, exercise momentum, safe usage of prescription drugs, suicide prevention, and much, much more. They also provide resources for issues that impact many such as the devastation caused by wildfires, school and other mass shootings, etc.

Health Advocate has a mobile friendly design and app, which allows for easy access to help on the go, placing all of your Health Advocate EAP+Work/Life benefits right at your fingertips.
SwiftMD

A benefit that was added in December 2016, but vigorously promoted was SwiftMD, a telemedicine company. The wellness effect of this benefit is to give employees as well as their dependents easier and quicker access to healthcare to treat minor illnesses. In looking at the number of employees and dependents taking advantage of this resource, we find that our numbers continue to grow. The expected result is more productivity from a healthy employee and less sick time used.

IBC - RESOURCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Employees who elect medical benefits through DASD now have a new tele-behavioral health resource from IBC. The program is called On To Better Health and it offers an on-line option as well as the option to talk to a behavioral health provider by phone or video chat. The confidential online program can help you improve your emotional well-being, manage
everyday stress, and feel better with self-assessments, articles, videos, and personalized and guided therapy — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Outcomes

Over the years, the wellness program has played a part in influencing costs, such as attendance costs and medical claims. Costs for the 2019-2020 school year are not yet finalized. In looking at complete costs for last year versus expected costs for 2019-2020, we are projecting that the costs will decrease. However, this year will be an abnormality due to COVID-19 and the quarantining measures put in place. With the multiple closures of doctor’s office, suspension of elective surgeries, and the hesitation to go out in public places, our employees did not utilize health benefits as much as would have been expected. This may also have an impact on next year’s claims as more folks ‘catch-up’ on missed appointments and claims rise.

The total amount spent on substitute costs is projected to decrease dramatically. Again, due to COVID-19, we are unable to correlate the wellness program with a decrease in the need for substitutes.

As in previous years, student achievement continues to increase. While many factors impact student achievement, the wellness programs have shown that they are an
Next Steps

Our wellness committee has evolved into a group comprised of more members from different areas of our District. We have begun planning for next school year. Next year, we have an unprecedented opportunity to plan a Staff Wellness and Cultural Equity Professional Development Day. We see this as an opportunity to provide exposure to wellness to all staff. Another opportunity will be planning parts of another Staff Development Day by planning some sessions of the Learning Summit. There is also a hope that we can promote a kindness initiative next year. Plans are underway for the 2020-2021 school year. Our overall goals will remain the same, but in order to maintain a robust program, our methods to achieve those goals may change. Committing time, money, and resources continue to be essential to achieving our goals.
In 2020, we welcomed an all-new Aramark management team to DASD:

**Will Van Patter**, General Manager

**Paul Kubik**, Chef Manager

**Melina Klipp**, Food Service Manager

The 19-20 school year ended abruptly, but we had a fantastic year and are excited to share our progress from the time we had in session before the closure. We were also given the opportunity to serve the community during the stay-at-home order, and we jumped at the chance to make the most of the situation and to continue to provide for our student’s nutritional needs.

This year, our focus areas were: To Provide a Wide Variety of Nutritious Foods, to Teach Students to Make Healthy Choices, to Create Appealing and Healthy Eating Environments, and to Build Healthy Resources for The Community.
Provide a Wide Variety of Nutritious Foods

**Choose My Plate:** Offerings for the 2019-2020 school year included foods and that were nutrient rich, high quality, safe, wholesome and healthful (including snacks), environmentally responsible and local when available.

![My Plate Diagram](https://_choosemyplate.gov)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s On My Plate?</th>
<th>What’s Not On My Plate?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fresh produce, fruits and vegetables</td>
<td>Excessive sugar and salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salads with reduced fat dressings</td>
<td>Added trans fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low and nonfat dairy option</td>
<td>Fatty fried foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean beef, chicken and/or fish</td>
<td>Candy and soda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole grains</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lower fat cheeses
Lower sodium items
Juice or light syrup packed fruit
100% juice and water

Some History of Wellness at DASD: The prevalence of obesity among our nation’s children has been increasing in recent years, putting our children at higher risk for heart and other associated diseases as they move into adulthood. Many of these diseases are preventable if we work together now to help children learn to eat balanced, healthy meals. To help ensure a healthier generation of children, in 2010, Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which authorizes funding and sets policy and standards for the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) core child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. As a result, new menu planning requirements and updated nutrition standards for school meals were required to be met as part of the federal child nutrition programs.

In the early days of the formation of the DASD Coordinated School Health Council, Aramark and DASD began to implement upgrades to nutrition standards. In the spring of 2012, prior to the official start of the new regulations, Aramark released a new standard menu, which was implemented here at DASD. This menu featured an expanded variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, more legumes and only low-fat and skim milk. Student feedback and production records were used to help finalize menu cycles to coincide with the rollout of the new regulations.

For the 2014-2015 school year, additional regulations were required for breakfast meals. In 2017-2018, Aramark and DASD continued to roll out menus for breakfast and lunch which met and exceeded the new USDA requirements. Some highlights are:

- Weekly energy levels (calories) are set for breakfast and lunch meals and are separated to reflect the needs of children in each of three grade groups: K through 5, 6 through 8, and 9 through 12.

- Meats and Grains have a weekly portion range with a daily minimum requirement.
● All of the bread and grain products served meet a new ‘whole grain-rich’ definition, designed to ensure that these products are a good source of fiber.

● Students must take at least ½ cup of a fruit or vegetable with each lunch and breakfast meal.

● Daily minimums are to be met for all components and weekly minimums are to be met for vegetable sub-groups for lunches: dark green, red/orange, beans/pea (legumes), starchy, and “other” vegetables.

● There is a limit on saturated fat only (not total fat).

● Sodium Targets were put in place.

● Only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milks are offered; flavored milks are only available as fat-free or skim.

● **PDE Administrative Review:** To ensure program integrity of administering the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program, state agencies began Administrative Reviews in the 2019-2020 school year. The reviews focus on the certification and benefit issuance process and the accuracy of meal counting and claiming, whether meals claimed for reimbursement meet meal pattern and nutritional quality requirements, the maintenance of the nonprofit school food service account, and USDA Foods. General program compliance is reviewed regarding Civil Rights, School On-site Monitoring, Local School Wellness Policy, Competitive Food Services, School Meal Environment, Food Safety, Reporting and Recordkeeping, and Outreach. Our review was conducted in December and we were found to be fully compliant, meeting all nutrient standards, having staff properly trained and available for questions, and being well-organized and receptive for the review!
Teach Students to Make Healthy Choices

- Elementary FUEL and Ace Programs: This year, we implemented an all-new Elementary FUEL Program. Our elementary students saw and sampled fresh and healthy options such as Chicken Tacos with Pineapple Salsa (pictured), Bruschetta Pizza, and Rainbow Flatbread. Our students also saw our Elementary mascot, Ace, travel the world. Students received fun prizes that encouraged them to eat healthily and participate in our program!

- Secondary FUEL Program: Monthly FUEL Wellness Specials were developed by Aramark chefs and nutritionists to combat menu fatigue and generate excitement by introducing new recipes and new flavor profiles. The purpose of the FUEL promotions, which ran at the Middle and High schools, was to drive meal participation and make lunch more appealing for students while still maintaining nutritional guidelines and USDA regulations. For the 2019-2020 school year, Fuel themes focused on highlighting particular food categories found at our different branded stations. This approach helped to provide an exciting twist (both in taste and flavor profile) to student favorites each month. A few examples included Chicken & Tots with BBQ Crema and our Atomic Chicken Sandwich.

- Culinary Presence and Improvement of Non-Program Dining: During this school year, we brought Chef Paul Kubik to our team to oversee our secondary schools and catering program. Paul has used his culinary and management expertise to improve the food quality of our operation and train our hourly team in cooking techniques. For our High Schools, we hosted a Thanksgiving Carving Station (pictured), and they saw new menu items such as Grain Bowls (pictured), Bento Boxes, and
**Freshly-Made Cheesesteaks.** For our catering program and School Board dinners, Paul made **Seared Beef Tenderloin** (pictured), an all-new menu for our annual **Admin Holiday Party**, and even hosted a **Tasting Event** for our graduation ceremony catering events! We’re excited to continue to bring new, fresh, and healthy options to our programs in the many years to come.

- **Food Service Committee:** A Food Service Committee was developed to provide an avenue for students, faculty and administration to give direct feedback to Aramark’s management team about the Food Service program. Each year, student representatives from each High School are chosen for the committee to establish direct communication between Aramark and the student body and to address any concerns. The Food Service Committee only met at STEM this year, due to the untimely closure of school in March. Some of the topics addressed by the Committee included increased options, new menu items, the most effective ways to communicate to students, and hearing some of their favorite menu items!

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**Create Appealing & Healthy Eating Environments**

- **Elementary Fruit and Vegetable Displays:** We want to create an appealing and healthy eating environment for each one of our schools. Our new Food Service Manager **Melina Klipp** worked with our Elementary teams to switch from pre-portioning their fresh fruits and vegetables to instead using bulk displays (much like you would see in a grocery store or another retail environment). We witnessed students taking
more fruits and vegetables than before, and even trying some new choices they wouldn't have otherwise chosen. Some of our hourly team even took this as an opportunity to write encouraging messages on banana peels for our students!

- **Secondary Displays and New Communication:** Students who normally don’t choose to purchase food at school may not be aware of the changes we’re making if not for our communication and marketing efforts. This year, we created new labels at each station, new menu templates, and a new document that describes our program all in one place (pictured). We invested much of our time in our program at STEM, completely re-vamping their Java City coffee station with fresh, made-to-order smoothies, and a brand new salad bar (pictured)!

- At all of our High Schools, we added variety to the menu by breaking up our daily pasta bar twice per week to incorporate other made-to-order options. Our students’ most popular change was our **Asian Stir-Fry Station**, including General Tso’s Chicken with Broccoli, Lo Mein, and a Pork Egg roll (pictured). We also supplemented this station with **Breakfast, Cheesesteaks**, and **Italian** themes. Students loved the menu variety, and the appeal of the new food items!

- **New Breakfast Cart at Bradford Heights:** This winter, we implemented Bradford Heights Elementary’s first ever breakfast cart! Lead Food Service Worker Brittany Greiner (pictured) worked with Melina Klipp to implement a fun, fast, and healthy service model. Not only were student favorite options served in a new environment, but new, healthy items were included, such as freshly-made smoothies, Benefit bars, and portable cereal pouches. Students loved this change, and we went from serving 30 students each day, to serving up to 80 students per day!
Building Healthy Resources for the Community

- **Feeding Students During Coronavirus Closure:** When we learned that schools were closed due to the Coronavirus pandemic on 3/13/20, our amazing team rose to the challenge that was ahead of us. The students and families that relied on our food each day were still in need, and even more people came to depend on our program as time passed. In addition to our management team, we had 4 courageous volunteers who immediately helped to pack and serve food to our students during the closure: **Natalie Mendez** (EW), **Marsha Hamara** (EW), **Jaszman Johnson** (LE), and **Pat Smith** (DMS). At the outset, we started serving breakfast and lunch to 70 students per day. As it grew, we served more and more students, and eventually were providing breakfast and lunch for 750 students for all 7 days of the week! Even though the times were uncertain and challenging, we were so thankful to have the opportunity to come in each day to serve our students and meet a tangible need during an unprecedented season.

- **New Technology:** This year we implemented **Nutrislice**, a brand new online menu platform! This allowed us to make our menu available to families in another format, and the feedback of our users was overwhelmingly positive. This software gives families, nurses, and administrators access to nutritional information, ingredient lists, the ability to search by common allergens, and even the function to translate the menu into Spanish. We look forward to further implementing and making use of this amazing software in the years to come! Nutrislice also links to Aramark’s brand new blog and website **Feed Your Potential 365**.
This provides many resources for healthy eating, as well as tips on how to incorporate kids into the cooking process at home!

- **Read Across America Week:** This year, we participated in Read Across America Week in conjunction with National School Breakfast Week through a week-long promotion! Aramark donated $1 for every Elementary breakfast sold during the week of March 2nd – 5th. We saw many students and teachers participate, and we were able to donate $1070 toward food and nutrition-related books for our schools’ libraries!

- **Committees:** Our management team provided support and offered expertise in their participation with the following District committees and teams:

- **District Wellness Advisory Committee & Wellness Policy Subcommittee:** Will Van Patter headed the Wellness Policy Subcommittee as we looked to revise the process and execution of the Wellness Policy as it relates to the consumption of food by students during the school day (outside of the breakfast and lunch programs). We made great strides toward creating an effective system to keep our students healthy, safe, and included.
as schools look to celebrate different achievements and special days!

- **Cultural Equity Task Force:** Will was present at the CETF meetings, facilitating conversation and answering questions in conjunction with the Business Office concerning the practices and policies in the Food Service Department.

- **Food Service Committee:** Meeting with students and discussing hot topics in food service, potential new products, any concerns regarding their dining experience, and any projects we are currently working on.

- **District Safety Committee:** Organized and aided with policy updates and shared Aramark resources for distribution to staff regarding safety topics.

- **Support to Building Administration:** Met with Building Principals to update regarding and obtain feedback concerning District and individual building wellness needs.
Our Wellness Advisory Committee Members

Dr. Lou Chance
Sarah Brooks
Dr. Nick Argonish
Dr. Patty Bell
Jane Bertone
Dr. Bethann Cinelli
Pia DiSanto
Rebecca Britton
Kim Gardner
Dawna Hankins
Tim Hubbard
Alicia Krebs

Dr. Emily Lonardi
Eric McComsey
Tom Mulvey
Cynthia Newlin
Dr. Rob Reed
Jennifer Shealy
Sharon Standish
Carol Warren
Corey Sigle
William VanPatter
Caryn Ghrayeb
Lee Wisdom
Greta Neff

Our K-12 School Wellness Liaisons

Kaylyn Kirschner
Lisa Montemuro
Mark Young
Claudia Carosella
Jon Zelznick
Ashley Procopio
Brittani Keys
Brett Garrison
Michele Powell
Megan Kay and Nicole Stabiltio
Stephanie Britton

Beaver Creek Elementary School
Bradford Heights Elementary School
Brandywine Wallace Elementary School
East Ward Elementary School
Lionville Elementary School
Pickering Valley Elementary School
Shamona Creek Elementary School
Springton Manor Elementary School
Uwchlan Hills Elementary School
West Bradford Elementary School
Marsh Creek 6th Grade Center
Our School K-12 Wellness Committee Members

Ashley Procopio
Dr. Joe Fernandes
Steve Orendorff
Emily Vanim
Holly Lipow
Laura Martini
MaryKate McGowan
Theresa Carter
Jennifer Benner
Kara Butler
Karley Weidner
Claudia Coresella
Dr. Nick Argonish
Laura Sirico
Sara Dunn
Bridget Cohen
Katie Rastetter
Megan Ruhno
Jon Zelznick
Sheron Johnson
Lisa Montemuro
Shelda Perry
Lolly Piperis
Jillian Speers
Sharon Snyder
Nicole Stabilito

Natalie Whiteley
Kathleen Oakes
Shannon Webb
Loretta Kennedy
Amy Goulet
Julia Furlong
Sheena Sanford
Mark Young
Dr. Shawn Wright
Rhonda Treadway
Melanie Nolan
Jennifer Addy
Jaime Lynn Curley
Rebecca Hampson
Amy Kleaver
Keli Laverty
Amy Tompkins
Lauren Vogel
Michelle Powell
Kelly Hale
Bob Giering
Rosie Winkler
Dr. Dawn Lawless
Kaylyn Kirschner
Debbie Flint
Jill Miller
Megan Kay
Jackie Simmons
Sue Nann
Danielle Koch
Terri Blackburn
Lauen Booz
Jordan Mirarchi
Michael Peterson
Kathy DeNardo
Matt Newell
Brett Garrison
Janet Rohrbach
Lauren Merrill
Steve Pron
April Tyree
Brandon Prieto
Travis Orth
Mark Myers
Thomas Creighton
Bethany Deamer
Danielle Battiste
Lauren Roth
Kelli Young
Mike Zachardi
Kellie McGavinWiedlich
Kim Sapper
Michelle Ruzzi
Susan Heffernan
Rachel Immel
Rena Litz
Jynelle Sas
Jennifer Bender
Emily Jubeck
Dana Nardello
Brittani Keys
Elizabeth Hoffman
Jodi Cunniffe
Meghan Sirianni
Ashley Marsh
Dr. Melani Susi
Maria Dennin
Kara Rubinich
Dave DiVito
Deb Tinson
Ryan Mitchell
Shawn Wyatt
Greta Neff
Chrissie Goeske
Jon Ross
Darren Somsohn
Karen Webb
Stephanie Britton
Jennifer Bergman
Danielle Indeglio
Tara Sandora
Lorena Sevi
Maritza Matulka
Dr. Patricia Bell
Sue Yeager
Colleen Levinson
Theresa Mitchell
Kim Butler
Eric McComsey
Beth O’Rourke
Carol Warren