

A Snapshot of  
**Wellness**  
at Lawrence Public Schools



**2017**  
**2018**

# Meet the



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# Wellness Impact in Lawrence

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# District Team



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# Nutrition & Wellness

## By the numbers....

- Budget - \$5.3 million
  - 100 employees
  - 206,400 breakfasts
  - 1,026,000 lunches
  - 42,000 adult meals
  - 162,279 snacks
  - \$65,825 spent on local produce
  - 22% of produce budget spent locally
  - 42,750 meal equivalents via a la carte purchases
  - 58,250 lbs of local produced served
  - 12,650 lbs food donated to Just Food
- 2017 Summer Food Service Meals:
- 6,389 breakfast
  - 34,859 lunch

## Accomplishments

- More local produce served (36% increase)
- Opened Pinckney kitchen
- Beyond Diversity training held for staff
- Additional vegetarian options menued
- K-State University Pollution Prevention Institute waste study
- Supported two dietetic interns and a K-State undergrad
- Coordinated excess food donation to Just Food





**"As an employee and as a parent it is comforting to know the efforts that are being made in the Nutrition & Wellness Department to help our students find a successful balance with their nutrition. It is my opinion that breakfast and lunch in our schools should be a part of education, not necessarily a break from it and I feel like our district is working toward making that goal obtainable through the Farm 2 School program." – Nikki Naumann, Kitchen Manager, Cordley Elementary School**

## Challenges

- Staffing:
  - Average six vacancies
  - Average six absences daily
- Marketing
- Staying current with food market trends
- Budget:
  - Unpaid meal balances
- Healthy Hungry Free Kids Act Regulations

## Next Steps

- Wrapping up USDA planning grant
- Nutrislice:
  - Digital marketing platform
  - Meal description
  - Nutrition information
  - Phone app
- Employee training
- Bond construction

**"The kids have enjoyed the grape and cherry tomatoes and watermelon. Everything is so colorful and the Sunflower Elementary kids have acknowledged that several times throughout the growing seasons." – Deb Fye, Kitchen Manager, Sunflower Elementary/Southwest Middle School**



# FARM 2 SCHOOL



The Farm 2 School program encompasses a number of important wellness initiatives throughout the district. Over the course of the 2017-2018 school year, the program has helped to provide over 24 tons of local produce to the school cafeterias, supported 13 school gardens, and hosted more than 2,700 students during experiential learning experiences.

Lawrence USD 497 is currently home to nine elementary school raised bed gardens and four middle school production gardens. By the end of the 2018-2019 school-year, it is anticipated the district will add three more gardens, including spaces at Pinckney Elementary and the Lawrence College and Career Center. Plans are also in the works to create outdoor learning spaces at both high schools following the completion of bond related construction.

**"Farm 2 School allows kids to get dirty and learn outside of the classroom. It teaches our kids about failure and success and the joys of working hard." -Bill Allen, Grounds Manager, Lawrence Public Schools**

Thanks to numerous grants, donations, and district budget support, the Farm 2 School program has been able to staff 17 garden coordinator and assistant positions across the district. These employees help ensure garden upkeep, curriculum integration, and in many buildings, support after school garden clubs.

**"My favorite takeaway of volunteering at the garden was the chance to be a part of integrating a meaningful life skill among a future generation that I, as a child-aged student, was never given. While it is possible that a child who has learned to garden may choose not to grow one as an adult, how could one expect an adult who has never learned to garden to ever grow one?" - Tanner Broyles, KU Student and Volunteer with Langston Hughes Garden Club**

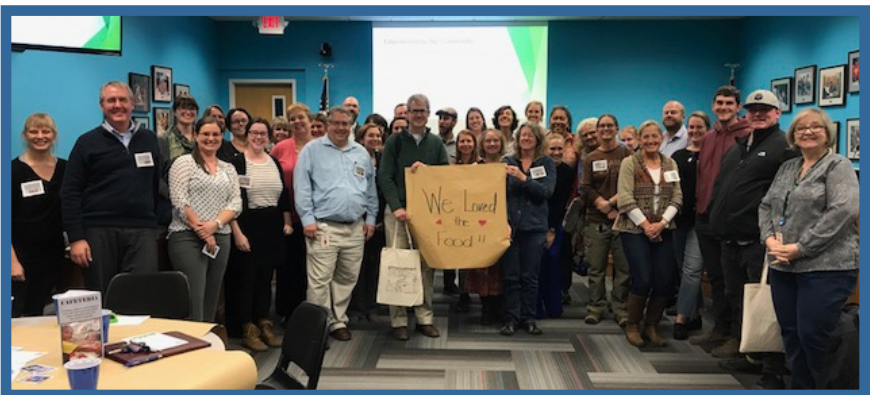


# USDA Grant

In June 2017, Lawrence USD 497 was awarded a \$44,976 Farm to School Planning Grant from the United States Department of Agriculture. The 18-month grant will result in an action plan that will be used to drive the Farm 2 School programming goals and initiatives for years to come.

The Farm 2 School team has hosted stakeholders from across Douglas County for four meetings throughout the 2017-2018 school year to develop the action plan, discuss overall goals, and brainstorm opportunities for program advancement. The stakeholder meetings are driven by four grant objectives:

1. Conduct an audit of current program efforts to identify strengths and weakness and create a sustainable, multi-phase strategy for continuation and growth;
2. Develop a sustainable marketing campaign and public relations plan;
3. Expand programming within food service areas and;
4. Develop an integrated scope and sequence related to Farm 2 School programming and nutrition education.





**"Lawrence Public Schools advances farm to school initiatives within their district through strategic partnerships and careful planning. Integrating farm to school into scope and sequence using information gathered from key stakeholders in the community allows for adaptive and innovative programming. LPS Farm 2 School is a powerhouse of sustainable practices in procurement, education, and school gardens and will continue to grow district and county support." – Rachael McGinnis Millsap, Director, Farm to School Academy, KC Healthy Kids**



In addition to planning efforts, the grant will allow for continued program growth throughout the district by establishing taste-testing activities and community-wide celebrations in order to help increase public awareness of the Farm 2 School program. Furthermore, planning activities and resources will be shared with area school districts in order for farm to school education to impact students across Douglas County.





# Physical Education



Physical activity is necessary to a person's well-being. Children are continuously developing physically and emotionally, they are especially affected by the benefits of activity – and inversely, the negative effects of inactivity. Currently, the district has 12 elementary PE teachers serving close to 5,000 students with students receiving instruction every third day. Approximately 2,100 middle school students, receive PE instruction every other day from the district's eight PE teachers. There are ten PE teachers at the two high schools. During the four years a student is in high school, they are required to take one PE course. The district also employs two full time adapted PE teachers.

FitnessGram is an assessment tool that helps to guide instruction. Currently grades four through eight, approximately 5,900 students were assessed and a report was sent home to their families.

It is vital that schools provide

**"My favorite part of my job is seeing students with disabilities have success in physical education. The triathlon was one of my favorite days as an adaptive physical educator in my 20 years. Seeing some of the kids going through the finish line 4-8 separate times because they are having so much fun was AWESOME! The medal ceremony was special, the smiles on the faces and pure joy was worth all the work we put into the event"-Brad Stoll, District Adapted PE teacher**

physical education programs that fit the needs of every child. Langston Hughes PE teacher Reenie Stogsdill said, "My favorite part of my job is watching my students grow from year to year and building relationships with them. Teaching the same kids for six years is very rewarding! It is important for physical education teachers to empower students to adopt an active lifestyle."

Bike safety and fitness is taught in grades 4 and 5 at the elementary level. PE teachers receive a trailer of bikes to teach the unit during the school year. The program expanded to the high school and adapted PE program this year. Adaptive bikes are available to students across the district in order to encourage participation across all levels. During a PE showcasing event at Woodlawn Elementary, PE teacher Shaun Trenholm shared that a student with a degenerative disease received a rousing applause while riding an adaptive bike and is seen often riding at recess.



# Health Education



Many students are not aware of the health benefits in foods and how they affect their bodies. Students in Lawrence are participating in nutrition education in the classroom, cafeteria, school gardens, and through community field trips. Research shows numerous connections between healthy eating, improved behavior, and academic performances.

Nutrition related field trips provide hands-on experiences that motivate and engage all learners.

In May, 847 second-graders gathered at the Douglas County Fairgrounds to participate in the Body Venture and Nutrition Experience, an interactive exhibit on the body systems. A variety of other nutritional stations round out the half-day of active learning.

New during the 2017-2018 school year was the third-grade nutrition experience, Garden Chefs. Supported by a \$4,250





**“For me [as a student], if I put in perspective of where my food comes from, I thought it came from a truck a long way away, but actually it’s close and fresh!” – Carlie Miller, West Middle School 7th Grader**

grant from the Kansas State Department of Education, 645 students learned about the importance of reading labels, understanding added sugars and alternative sweeteners, and received a behind-the-scenes tour of their school kitchen. Lastly, students baked spinach “monster muffins” from scratch, utilizing natural sweeteners and fresh ingredients.

A Day at the Farm is the fourth-grade trip. In January, 834 fourth-graders journeyed to the Douglas County Fair Grounds to participate in rotating stations that centered around eating healthy and the role that large agriculture plays in their lives.

In seventh-grade, 418 Nutrition & Wellness students toured local farms across the city. The objective of this field trip is to focus on sustainability, local agriculture, understanding where food comes from, and connecting classroom nutrition lessons with life experiences.



# Student Initiatives



Walking and running outside of the school day is yet another way to increase physical activity for Lawrence kids. All 14 elementary schools have a marathon club. This school year elementary students ran over 41,663 miles. Students receive incentives as they strive to reach their marathon goal of 26.1 miles. Parents and community volunteers provide the supervision for these programs. RunLawrence and Lawrence Memorial Hospital help to provide the financial sustainability for the clubs, donating nearly \$10,000.

**"I love helping with marathon club. It's awesome to see how excited the kids are to get started running each day. I feel like they would come out every day, if that was an option."-Mindy Hidalgo, Broken Arrow Mom and Marathon Club Coordinator**



"Over the course of this year the Prairie Park garden has grown to be a vital part of our school. We are teaching our student the importance of sustainability by collecting our fruits and vegetables at lunch and feeding them to the 1000s of worms we are raising to create compost for our garden. Along with the worms our students have learned to harvest vegetables and work with the kitchen staff to serve them on the salad bar at lunch. Our students truly enjoy composting, harvesting and providing food for our school."-David Williams, Prairie Park Elementary Principal



All elementary school students have two 15-minute recesses. Some schools provide a recess running club in addition to before and after school marathon clubs. A course is marked off and students and teachers record their laps. Students are rewarded for the number of miles they complete.

# Staff Initiatives



## Accomplishments

- 726 site-based flu shots
- 226 walkers in Walk Kansas
- 6 EAP staff workshops
- Partnership with Genesis
- 258 employees participating in Walk-to-ber
- 28 employees took part in a 12-week intensive healthy eating program
- 225 participates in cooking classes from the Merc
- 585 employees took fitness classes through Parks and Recreation
- 2 district wellness days
- The district received the Breast-Feeding Employee Support Award from Kansas Breast-feeding Coalition for the district communication plan
- 9 monthly district wellness meetings

"I joined the district wellness team this year. I have participated in seminars to help me with managing stress, wasting time, caring for aging parents, and eating healthy, to name a few. I felt that I benefited personally from attending each of these sessions. It has also been interesting and informative to hear what some of the other schools in the district have done to promote wellness for the staff in their buildings."-Sherry Slade, Lawrence Diploma Program

## Challenges

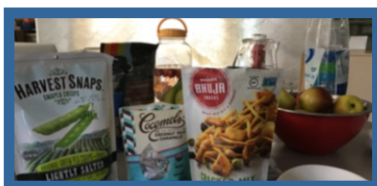
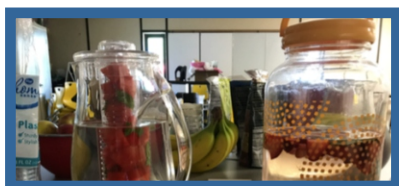
- Communicating wellness initiatives
- Providing a variety of wellness offerings for certified and classified staff

## Next Steps

- Schedule a fall and spring intensive healthy eating program
- Schedule two district wide wellness fairs
- Increase community partnerships
- Increase the number of wellness representatives from each school and department
- Meet with each school and department to personally explain the benefits of EAP
- Post fall and spring wellness posters in each building and department

## Self-Care Week

The health and wellness coordinator for Deerfield Elementary planned a week of self-care for the staff. Those that work in education find it hard to do self-care and it's pretty unheard of during the midst of a school day. So, with the help of Deerfield's instructional coach, an empty classroom was transformed. Each day staff could go to this classroom and even sign up for a 20 minute break covered by either the instructional coach or the health and wellness coordinator.



# Financial Report

- **\$2,000** Cottin's True Value Hardware & Rental garden supplies
  - **\$17,20** Kansas Green Schools Grant worm and composting grant
  - **\$4,250** Kansas State Department of Education ServingUp MyPlate Grant
  - **\$9,550** Lawrence-Douglas County Community Foundation new gardens grant
  - **\$15,000** Lawrence-Douglas County Community Foundation high school bike programming and adaptive triathlon grant
  - **\$1,400** Lawrence Memorial Hospital Elementary marathon club donation
  - **\$8,250** Run Lawrence Elementary marathon club donation
  - **\$24,865** Topeka Community Foundation Healthy Lifestyles Grant
  - **\$1,000** True Value Foundation Matching garden supplies
  - **\$3,000** University of Kansas Garden Grant partnership with KU and the science department at SWMS
  - **\$44,976** United States Department of Agriculture Farm to School Planning Grant
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- **\$131,496** Total Grants and Donations
  - **\$58,000** District Supported Farm 2 School Budget

# Thank You

**“It has been good to see the coordinated efforts across the district to support the health and well-being of our students. From tier one mental health presentations in health classrooms to instruction about the importance of good nutrition and healthy choices to actually providing fresh nutritious choices in the cafeteria through the Farm 2 School Initiative, students were able to learn and apply new information that will help them live healthy balanced lives into adulthood. ”**  
**-Mark Preut, Assistant Principal, Lawrence High School**

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Follow us on Facebook and Instagram!  
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We're on the web at:  
Farm 2 School - [www.usd497.org/farm2school](http://www.usd497.org/farm2school)  
Food Service - [www.usd497.org/foodservice](http://www.usd497.org/foodservice)

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Our overarching vision is to have Lawrence Public School children enjoy healthy foods that maximize local products and bolster student achievement and wellness. This is a joint effort from our schools, businesses and public health leaders who have committed time, energy and resources and are actively working in collaboration to support our wellness initiatives. Thank you to our generous funders. Their support has taken us to where we are today.



