

# Duluth Edison Charter Schools

# DECS Wellness Policy

Annual Report 2019-2020

## **Health and Wellness Highlights for 2019-2020:**

### **District Wide Calming Rooms**

The purpose of the calming room is offer a quiet space where all students can go to calm down and practice self- regulation skills. This is a positive and proactive intervention in place to help students learn to regulate their emotions and behaviors so that they are prepared to learn and so that they do not elevate to a point that might cause behavior incidents or referrals.

### **Mindfulness at a Distance**

In an effort to prepare for distance learning and the needs of our students across our district, school counselors collaborated to develop an eight week mindfulness moment plan. Teachers were then encouraged to implement mindfulness moments within their websites, online classrooms, or during a zoom morning meeting. The mindfulness moments consisted of skills such as deep breathing exercises, yoga, meditation and progressive muscle relaxation.

### **Restorative Practices**

District wide training in restorative practices such as restorative language, community building circles and mediation were provided. Students and staff continue to actively and supportively engage in these practices.

Duluth Edison Charter Schools continue to provide wellness education and opportunities to students and staff. DECS believes students and staff need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and thrive. Good health fosters student attendance and education. In compliance with Section 204 of Public Law 108-265 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, the DECS Wellness Committee provides this annual report for the 2019-20 school year.

The four components reviewed and required by policy include:

- 1) Nutrition Education
- 2) Physical Activity
- 3) Other school-based wellness activities, and
- 4) Nutritional guidelines for all foods available on campus during the day (Minnesota Department of Education, 2007).

This report highlights areas of growth and the improvement through action plans put in place by the committee members and wellness coordinator. Due to the brief summary of each area, this report does not highlight the depth of changes and growth that occurs throughout the academic year.

### **Riding for a Cause**

As a part of health and wellness goals, staff had the opportunity to participate in a couple of different events. The events were two-fold, by also supporting the charities Autism Speaks and US Food Banks. In the former event, staff committed to multiple weeks of riding and tracking their mileage, sharing their efforts with their teammates. Although many of the rides were done independently or with family members, the group made an effort to gather and have a socially distanced ride for the camaraderie for working as a team for a common purpose.

The latter event was done in a socially distanced race form. Participants signed up for a 10 or 25-mile ride. The majority of the participants met to do the ride together, choosing a location that would accommodate the two distances while allowing for camaraderie and shared effort.

Overall, these events created a positive and fun way for staff to engage with one another, support positive organizations, and maintain their own wellness goals.

### **Taher Food Service Management Company rolls out new App!**

The Taher Food4Life app provides menus specific to the school you attend. It also provides nutritional information, along with food allergy information for each food item on the menu. In addition, it provides the latest nutritional news and events happening in the world of nutrition within Taher, Inc.

# Duluth Public Schools Academy

## Wellness Policy

### Health and Wellness Highlights for 2019-2020:

#### Partnerships with the Second Harvest Northern Lakes food Bank

##### **Back Pack Program:**

In 2019-20 the Back Pack program through partnership with the Second Harvest Northern Lakes Food Bank was expanded to include all K-5 students within the district. The Back Pack provides a bag of nutritious, non-perishable food for students to eat during the weekend when school is not in session. Each bag contained a variety of items including a main entrée, breakfast items, fruit, snack and often juice of shelf-stable milk. During the 2019-20 school year 119 students participated in the Back Pack program.

##### **Food Rescue Program:**

Students are encouraged to utilize "Sharing Bins" located in the cafeterias to return any factory sealed/unopened food. This food is then given to the local food bank for distribution to other agencies to feed those in need.

Please note this report reflects a progressive change and improvement to our wellness education program. Activities, trainings, and opportunities listed are in addition to previous accomplishments. If you are interested in reviewing previous reports, please contact me at:

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*Minnesota Department of Education (2007)  
Local wellness policy: A guide for development  
and local wellness policy development tool.  
<http://education.state.mn.us>*

### 2020 Virtual Field Day

Field Day is an important spring tradition at our school. It is a significant day for our students and our staff. We felt that in these incredibly challenging times of distance learning, continuing this event in a unique way would help us stay connected as a community and support one another in a fun and meaningful way. As we followed up with students and their families many found it to be a fun and meaningful way to be physically active together and with our entire school community.

OPEN (Online Physical Education Network) is a national public service organization that provides curriculum and training support to more than 90,000 teachers in all 50 states. We used their resources to help us organize our school's participation in a virtual field day. All field day events are designed to be done indoors or outdoors using common household items.

#### Running of the Torch Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raPpNzceLNE&feature=youtu.be>

### COVID-19 Response

Due to the unique situation from COVID-19, we have shared many resources to encourage both physical and mental staff health and wellness. The nursing department shared information with all staff about how to help decrease the spread of respiratory illness. For example, videos on handwashing, covering your coughs and sneezes, and the importance of not touching your face, especially the eyes, nose and mouth. Links to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) were shared with staff so they had direct access to ever changing information. The MDH COVID-19 hotline phone number was shared with staff so they could have the ability to ask personal, specific questions regarding their individual situation.

Human resources department shared information regarding resources available to staff, to help in times of stress. For example Sand Creek monthly newsletters with information on COVID-19: Reducing Fear & Anxiety, Maintain Healthy Lungs, Try An Addiction Medicine Physician, Improve Depression With Talk Therapy, and COVID-19 Links: Worth A Look. Also from Sand Creek, an article titled Normal Reactions to an Abnormal Events, and a free webinar titled Stressed Out and No Place To Go. Work from Home Ergonomics were given to all staff to help with staff injury prevention for the staff working from home.

### Meals

Starting on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 plans were in full swing to provide meals to those families that count on school meals each day. Stringent cleaning and sanitizing efforts in our kitchens were amped up to provide students safe and nutritious meals and to keep our staff safe. Opportunities were provided for parents to pick up meals at schools or have them delivered. Meals were available at various hub stops throughout the city or home delivery was provided for those without transportation. Thanks to federal funding all of the meals we provided were free of charge to our participants. During the distance learning period this spring we were able to provide meals to 170 different students on a daily basis. .