



Get Organized Make Goals, Spread the Word, Measure Your Progress

Getting Started and Setting Goals:

It is important to remember that there is no one "correct" way to get started. Some schools like to start with a wellness committee. Others need more time to get like-minded adults working together on a program. Don't get mired in building a minutely detailed battle plan and don't get overwhelmed by trying to change everything at once. Pick a goal and move forward. Remember, despite what the industrial food companies want us to believe making small changes to the food we eat (decreasing processed food, sugar sweetened beverage and increasing fruits and vegetables and water) has the biggest bang for the buck in improving wellness outcomes. Go for the low hanging fruit and jump in.

Some schools like a top-down approach to change. Putting together a wellness committee is one way to get things moving in the right direction.



Wellness Committee:

Remember to be inclusive. Some of your most ardent wellness champions may not work in classrooms. Look for input from: custodial staff, administrators, safety patrol, school food, school nurse, social worker etc.

There are many great resources for how and why to have a wellness committee in your school.

Here are some of our favorites. The resources listed below will give you an ideas for suggested council composition, how to structure meetings, record minutes and function according to school guidelines. Again, don't be put off by long, wordy documents. All you need to begin is a (small) group of (fairly) like-minded people willing to tackle this issue, together:

https://www.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/wwj4dq/09-875_SWCToolkit.pdf

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/wellness/5378.htm>

<http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/WellnessPolicies.html>



Wellness Mission Statement:

Mission statements are useful for *making a public declaration* about what your school values and prioritizes. The mission statement might grow out of the work of your wellness committee.

A mission statement is an opportunity for you to define your school's goals for a culture that promotes health and wellbeing for all of its members. While some people dismiss mission statements as empty words, when done correctly, a mission statement can serve as a powerful testament to your schools' commitment and values.

At the minimum, mission statements should accomplish three things: 1) State your purpose, 2) commit to action and 3) articulate value and/or beliefs. Again, there is no right or wrong way to craft a mission statement. Do what feels right for your school. In general: shorter is better than longer; the more people participate, the more inclusive your statement will be; make it public and visible.

Here is an example from the University of Maine's Employee Wellness program:

"To improve the health, well-being and quality of life of all University of Maine at Farmington employees by empowering people to promote and model positive attitudes and behaviors through a lifelong commitment to wellness."



Setting Goals:

It is important for your wellness leadership to *set realistic goals that can be articulated and tracked*. The "S.M.A.R.T" system is an easy and effective way to map out your schools wellness and food literacy objectives:

S.M.A.R.T: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Reasonable and Timely:

- **Specific:** Make sure your goals are clear-cut, detailed and specific
- **Measureable:** When will you know or decide that you have accomplished your goal.
- **Achievable:** It is important that you set goals that (with some work and perseverance) your community can achieve.

- Reasonable: Making change takes time and may require some outlay of funds. Consider how much time, money and personnel resources can you call on.
- Timely: Set a clear (and visible) timeline for your goals. Make deadlines and hold team members accountable. Keep people update on your progress.



Communication:

A significant part of successful wellness and food literacy campaigns is the ability to get your *entire* school community on board and excited about your efforts. Once you begin your wellness journey, members of your community (in addition to grant makers) will want to hear, understand and celebrate what you have accomplished. A strong communication strategy can help you to do this. The FoodFight food literacy toolkit provides you with a variety of tools you may find helpful in this regard.



FoodFight food literacy posters: Print and post in high visibility, high traffic areas. Refer to your posters in your school communications and reinforce the message whenever and wherever appropriate. (printable posters to be attached)



Additional tools:

Flyers to parents (see attached)

Letter for teachers (see Facts of Employee Wellness from Alliance for a Healthier Generation)

Community outreach (letter to potential community partners)