

## ***Staff Wellness Appendix***

### **Who?**

Wellness matters for every school and district staff member – from the facilities teams charged with keeping buildings clean and sanitized, to teachers delivering content in a way they never have before, support staff whose wraparound responsibilities have become even more central to student success, and school and district leaders leading the charge in this great adaptation through the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **What?**

Wellness for staff means their physical, mental, and emotional needs are being met.

Staff are burdened. Teachers are being asked to innovate on a completely new level, and are pouring their energy into new teaching styles and building relationships with students both in-person and virtually. Where are faculty and staff alike drawing their energy and motivation to continue this work? This question should be top of mind for school and district leaders.

### **Why?**

Schools have a responsibility to take care of their staff just as they take care of students. Staff wellness should be a top priority in the 2020-21 school year and in the years that follow. We will get the most out of our staff when we invest most in them.

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## How?

<b>Create the space for staff to express concerns, share experiences, and ask questions.</b>	
<b>Resources</b>	<b>Suggestions for Action</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta Strong4Life - Supporting Your Staff’s Emotional Wellness</a> Use this tool to prep before entering the space with your staff. Understand how to facilitate an effective conversation about their well-being.</li><li>• <a href="#">Staff wellness checks</a> Use this tool to gauge where your staff are mentally, emotionally, and physically in a brief survey format.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create a “check-in” system or consistent opportunity for staff to share their thoughts.</li><li>• Consider providing a dedicated virtual and/or physical space and time for teacher breaks with discussion prompts on topics that address well-being.</li><li>• Collaborate with local/regional mental health organizations, health experts, and physicians to host a district summit for staff/employees.</li></ul>
<b>Implement regular wellness activities and involve staff in the planning and implementation.</b>	
<b>Resources</b>	<b>Suggestions for Action</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">(Video) Playbook for Healthy School Communities: Staff and Teacher Well-being</a> Utilize this 13-minute video to understand how to facilitate Kaiser Permanente’s Thriving Schools Playbook for Staff and Teacher Well-being.</li><li>• <a href="#">Playbook for Healthy School Communities: Staff and Teacher Well-being</a> This easy to use, checklist-style tool will help you to implement critical “plays” that will help meet the needs of your staff.</li><li>• <a href="#">Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta Strong4Life Educator and Staff Wellness</a> These tools from Strong4Life include 1-pagers on things like “Mindful Minutes,” “Feeling Energized,” “Letting Go,” and “Preparing for the Workday.”</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create peer support groups/teams for people in similar roles in the schools/district.</li><li>• Partner with a community fitness center to hold virtual exercise classes.</li><li>• Try out a focused day of the week where different wellness topics are made a priority, i.e. “Wellness Wednesday.” Champion a school health professional, trained parent, or community member to lead this.</li></ul>

**Intentionally provide opportunities and resources for staff to understand how to cope with stresses and practice healthy habits and self-care.**

Resources	Suggestions for Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">BeWell State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP)</a> Organize a training for your staff on how to get the most out of the SHBP program or simply promote the program’s resources, which include fitness and health tracking capabilities, tips and tricks for stress management, webinars, health coaching, recipes, and more.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">CDC – Coping with Stress</a> Share this resource for information and resources on how to cope with stress and anxiety, along with a listing of national hotlines for crisis-related services.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Emory University School of Medicine’s Wellness Guides</a> Utilize these webinars during purposeful wellness breaks for staff – watch as a group and then discuss what resonated and how the tools can be applied to daily routines.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Georgia Department of Behavioral Health &amp; Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) 2x2 Series: Daily Self-Care Tips and Support for Managing Life</a> The 2x2 Series is held live twice weekly, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and each session provides attendees with mental health tips about managing stress, grief, work/life balance, and wellness.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Healthier Generation COVID-19 and Back-to-School for Employers and Employees</a> Share this website with staff looking to engage with quick videos and lists of tips on how to stay healthy at home with fitness breaks, hydration, and self-care. Go the extra mile by using these resources as group discussion starters.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Mental Health Technology Transfer Center – Tools for Educators During a Public Health Crisis</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage your district’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAPs exist to support employees with their health and wellness – often offering counseling services among other resources.</li> <li>• Establish Professional Learning Communities around topics of interests or concerns among staff.</li> <li>• Create a Staff Wellness corner or page on your school’s website where teachers and staff can go to easily access the above-mentioned information.</li> <li>• Encourage staff to stay on top of their personal health by going to appointments and participating in health screenings as needed.</li> <li>• Partner with your district’s school nutrition staff to promote and encourage healthy eating habits among staff.</li> <li>• Keep messaging consistent for policies and procedures around staying healthy, what to do if you become sick, and paid time off/leave. Encourage this information to be consistently disseminated by the same person to alleviate any confusion.</li> </ul>

Share this 1-pager with staff and encourage them to place it in a location they'll see often – it's filled with reminders, tips, and associated apps to stay calm and healthy throughout the pandemic.

- [Rmc Health's Employee Wellness Smart Guide](#)

Share this resource with the individuals/team leading the staff wellness effort – it includes messaging and ideas about how to promote wellness among school employees.

- [National Alliance on Mental Illness – Georgia \(NAMI GA\) Support Groups and Programs](#)

Make these resources available and known to staff looking to engage in a support group. This website should be checked regularly for staff training opportunities including webinars and online education.