School Wellness Impact Report

Nebraska Extension’s The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), Nebraska Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed), and Food, Nutrition and Health teams, with support from The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE)/Team Nutrition (TN) and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), provides schools with the opportunity to collaborate with Extension team members to develop, modify and carry out their school wellness policies. School wellness policies are multi-faceted, and can be difficult to navigate. Extension team members help by providing training and technical support related to the review and writing of their school wellness policies, assessing the need for and implementing Smarter Lunchrooms strategies, writing grants, connecting with partners, and helping schools with nutrition education and nutrition promotion efforts that help to improve the health of students and staff at Nebraska schools.

Reach

Nebraska Extension school wellness efforts impacted schools in 39 school districts in 30 counties across Nebraska

Impact

39 School Districts
11 were eligible for SNAP-Ed/EFNEP

21,228 Students
Impacted by the school wellness activities

113 School Staff Trained

Smarter Lunchroom Impact

Funds from NDE/Team Nutrition and Nebraska DHHS provided Nebraska schools with $1,000 mini grants to implement SLM strategies in their cafeteria to promote student choices of whole grains, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, fruits, vegetables and legumes.

Scorecard Focus Areas Improved at Post

- 75% schools improved in “Focus on Fruit”
- 55% schools improved in “Vary the Vegetables”
- 45% schools improved in “Highlight the Salad”
- 30% schools improved in “Move More White Milk”
- 65% schools improved in “Boost Reimbursable Meals”
- 80% schools improved in “Lunchroom Atmosphere”
- 65% schools improved in “Student Involvement”
- 60% schools improved in “School Community Involvement”

20 Schools
5,981 Students
School Wellness Success Stories

“The appearance of the cafeteria is more inviting and we have received positive comments regarding the offerings on the salad bar from those who visit from the community. We anticipate that with the addition of 6th grade to the building next year, more parents will attend meals, expanding the reach of the nutrition messages on the menu board.”

- Activities Director, Raymond Central

“The cafeteria staff is proud of the meals they are serving—so much so that they are taking pictures of meals and posting them! That is a first! Teachers are starting to notice the change in the meals and ordering lunch. The meals look so great, that the kitchen staff will start to prepare all of the meals for the child care that is on location.”

- School Food Service Manager, St. Bernard’s Catholic School

“We are working on our wellness policy and the techniques that we implemented from the Smarter Lunchroom grant are included. We also plan to use the scorecard to continue to assess the cafeteria environment and ensure that we are making a positive impact and providing an atmosphere that encourages nutritious eating habits.”

- Principal, Valparaiso Elementary

Top Photos:
BlueJay Cafeteria:
Seward Elementary School

Bottom Photo:
Salad Bar: Crete High School

Photos by Natalie Sehi