

Did you know MPS has a Health & Wellness Advisory Council? This group has a wide range of representation including school administrators, nurses, guidance, teachers, parents, community leaders and student delegates. Our mission is to provide and develop educational Health & Wellness resources, and to promote and support the physical and social/emotional health of our school community. The council serves as a common ground for all grade levels to share ideas and look for support in areas of need. We would like you to be aware of some of the initiatives developed by teachers, administrators, and outside support groups that are going on in our schools:

### **Roland Green Preschool**

- The Preschool Staff adopted and implemented PBIS – Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports programming which helps develop social and emotional wellness. This program has been successfully instituted at the Robinson and Jordan/Jackson Schools.
- Some of the monthly classroom themes address topics such as Five Senses, Staying Healthy, and Safety which can include science experiments, book pairings and other activities.
- The Roland Green Parent Group created a raised garden next to the school's playground. Students were able to participate in the planting, watch the plants grow and sample the harvest with their parents.
- The Roland Green Parent Group held a Fall Social to foster a closer school community outside of classroom hours.

### **Robinson School**

- Last Spring, the Robinson students enjoyed a bountiful first season for their raised garden beds which were a result of a grant and local plant donations. The fresh grown vegetables were donated to the Mansfield Food Pantry throughout the summer. This fall, the Cafeteria created a "Harvest of The Month" dish for students to enjoy.
- Robinson is looking to expand their outdoor garden, and is currently trialing our first hydroponic indoor garden.
- Student and family events such as Family Game Night, held in November and sponsored by MESA, encourages positive interaction which in turn promotes a healthy environment.

### **Jordan/Jackson**

- Our district's original outdoor garden was recently expanded and fencing was installed – students and teachers worked side-by-side to make this happen.
- In addition to beautiful flowers for cross-pollination, the produce was plentiful with students donating over 150 lbs of squash and potatoes to the Food Pantry.

- This past fall students completed a bench building and picnic table assembly as a memorial to our beloved school counselor Diana Mobley. She would have loved nothing more than to see a class eating lunch outside together.
- The BOKS (Build Our Kids Success) morning program is a continued success under the guidance of Assistant Principal Sarah McCracken. Students are able to get their heart and brains going before school and learn important nutrition bits.
- Many teachers at Robinson and J/J have integrated morning reflection into their curriculum, and "brain breaks" with physical activity are used throughout the district.
- The Hockomock Area YMCA continues to be a support to our schools by sponsoring school events such as our growing Walk To School Days.

### **QMS**

- With the support of PAC, QMS has added a fitness club, boys and girls running club, and a board game club which is guided by school psychologists and gives students a new way to develop social, developmental, and cognitive skills.
- PAC continues to sponsor school events such as Joani Geltman, child developmental expert, who presented to parents in October.
- Ski Club will be resuming weekly Friday night trips to Wachusett Mountain in January. The club has expanded from its original two buses several years ago to seven buses of energized middle school students.

### **MHS**

- Curriculum at MHS now requires two semesters of physical education and two semesters of health class. This has allowed the high school to expand PE choices to include walking and fitness, yoga and fitness, team sports, recreational games, and strength and conditioning. These options will allow students to find the activity that works best for them.
- School Counselors are spending time in health classes once a month at QMS and MHS to augment health material and provide a stronger foundation to work with students.
- Breakfast is now being served at MHS. We know that a good breakfast will fuel our kids for the day and keep them more focused. Robinson, J/J and QMS continue to serve daily breakfast.
- High School Administrators promoted a well-received "No Homework" Thanksgiving Break in order for students to "recharge their batteries" and come back to school well-rested and re-energized.

The Health & Wellness Advisory Council is committed to supporting the physical and mental health among our community of students, teachers and families. We will continue to advocate for innovative approaches in our district to add to our support system for students and staff. Look for future news in your school newsletter.