

For thirty years OEA Choice Trust provided cost effective health insurance plans to school employees in Oregon.

About two years ago the Trust elected to progress in a new direction. The Board of Trustees felt it was an opportune time to develop new ways of giving back to Oregon public school employees and as a result, the OEA Choice Trust Wellness Grant Program was launched.

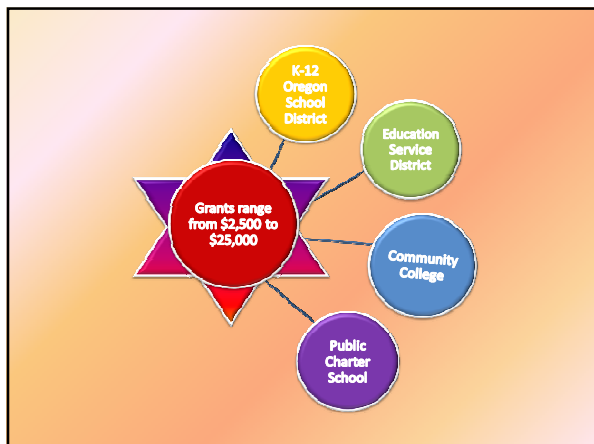
The Trust has a unique opportunity to assist in promoting the health and well-being of Oregon school employees through the provision of wellness grants.

These grants will help produce programs and culture changes for healthy living that go beyond the school setting; to students, parents and communities.

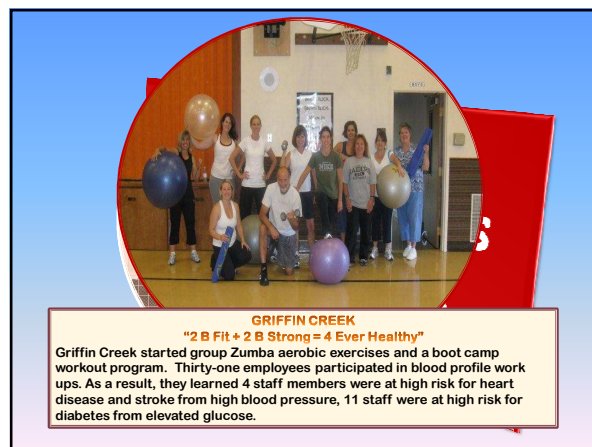
In 2008, OEA Choice Trust introduced a pilot wellness grant program for Oregon public school districts. Eight school districts were invited to apply for wellness grants.

The pilot program proved so successful it has continued and evolved into what the OEA Choice Trust Wellness Grant Program is today.

What are the eligibility requirements?

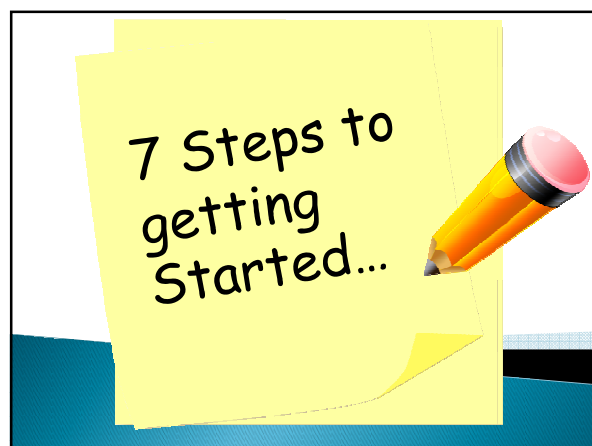


OEA Choice Trust recognizes the many diverse health and wellness issues facing different school locations. That's why our wellness Grant program is designed to allow school employees the flexibility to design and personalize their own programs to best match their individual school's goals for healthier living.



The "Blueprint for Wellness" is a resource developed by OEA Choice Trust for use in implementing and sustaining an effective school employee wellness program. It is designed to guide the user and provide sequential steps to achieve a successful wellness program.

Blueprint for Wellness is also a tool providing examples and links to materials and strategies presenting the user with resources to assist in implementing, continuing and evaluating their school employee wellness program. This tool can help organize your program, and a well-thought out program has the greatest potential to influence changes in school employee health habits.



Step 1

Gain Administrative and Board Support.

Win support for the wellness grant by building a case for why you need school employee wellness. Having administrative support is vital to the success of your grant and without their support succeeding is virtually impossible.

Step 2

Establish a Wellness Coordinator and Create a Wellness Team

Selecting a wellness coordinator(s) is crucial because it will help ensure effective communication, support, and success. The coordinator must be willing to step forward and be the lead person for the grant process. In addition, the coordinator will be a contact between the wellness team, school employees, and OEA Choice Trust.

Step 4

Develop an Operating Plan

A well thought out plan can be a blueprint for wellness activities; can develop ownership and investment. An operating plan should include a mission statement, goals, objectives, and an action plan.

Developing a mission statement helps clarify the vision for your wellness program and assists in establishing goals and objectives. Goals can be both short and long term, but must be realistic. Objectives should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely.

Communication is vital to the success of the process - keep everyone in the loop.

Step 6

Creating a Supportive Environment and Using Incentives

Creating a supportive environment is a long-term project that requires dedication to wellness values. Your wellness team must understand the current environment and envision a healthier one using patience to accomplish their goals.

Work to create a friendly, safe facility with proactive policies and full administrative support.

Everyone likes to win and providing incentives can motivate people and add appeal to your wellness grant. Incentives can build team spirit and make the process more cohesive.

Sources: 2009 Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) Seven Benchmarks: School Employee Wellness: A Guide for Protecting the Assets of Our Nation's Schools, OEA Workplace Guide - Ingredients for Success