



## Healthy Shenanigans

To: Jeannine M. Durkin, Acting Superintendent

From: Matthew Stahl, Principal Wang Middle School

Date: February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019

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Jeannine Durkin and Sharon Lagasse were interested in finding ways to get our district staff active in some healthy activities during the school day through the Health and Wellness Committee. They combined their efforts with the district's current "Shenanigans", which are activities designed between schools to help build community among and within our schools.

As a result, two health-oriented "Shenanigans" were designed and implemented over the course of 6 weeks leading up to the Winter Break. The first one was a weight loss competition that had staff at 13 schools as well as downtown staff participating. While this was an anonymous competition and there is no way to know exactly how many people participated at each school or at central office, collectively the teams lost over 850 pounds over the 6 weeks.

The step competition was a challenge to see who could take the most steps during the day and determine which school had the highest average number of steps per day. This challenge was designed to get people active, encourage more movement in their classrooms, get them out in the halls talking to their co-workers, get them doing something together as a team, and help them get healthier. The goal was to help build school culture, while also helping them to change their habits by getting them more active at school. There were 22 schools participating, as well as members of the central office staff. In all, there were 279 people competing in the step challenge from all across the district. Over the 6 weeks, the participants in the step "Shenanigan" collectively took 66,930,765 steps. That is over 29,000 miles walked by Lowell Public Schools employees between January and February during the competition.

The goal of these "Shenanigans" was not only to get people to develop some healthy habits, but also to help build culture both within and between the schools. People were out and about at their schools, they were challenging one another to keep "stepping" or shedding

pounds, and overall it seemed like everyone enjoyed participating. Special thanks needs to go out to Sharon Lagasse and Aramark for funding amazing kick-off and wrap-up parties for these events and sponsoring all of the prizes awarded to the weekly and overall winners. Additionally, another special thanks to Heather Green (Daley School) for designing the interactive spreadsheet for these Healthy "Shenanigans". Hopefully, people developed some new, healthy habits and strengthened the culture at their schools or in their offices.