



CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Wellbeats is “the missing link” that enables greater fitness and wellbeing at home

The Minneapolis Public Schools, with about 6,200 teachers and staff, had been through a severe winter storm in 2019 that forced school closures, distance learning and the inability for employees to use gym memberships or get out of the house to exercise. “We had already been thinking about ways to help our employees stay physically active if something like that happened again,” says Lindsay, the district’s employee wellness coordinator.



Lindsay
Employee Wellness
Coordinator

Then COVID-19 hit in March of 2020, causing school closures and distance learning. It was especially bad timing because Lindsay was on maternity leave. “We partnered with our health insurance provider on a trial of the Wellbeats program,” Lindsay explains. In the month of April, while Lindsay was on leave, about 300 district teachers and staff used Wellbeats classes to work out at home and to also enjoy mindfulness and nutrition classes. When Lindsay returned to work, her inbox was flooded with emails from staff with messages like “We need to keep this,” and “This is a lifesaver.”

Over the summer, Lindsay gathered ample evidence of the program’s value along with one particularly



Minneapolis Public Schools

CLIENT SUMMARY

- Among the largest state public school districts
- 6,200 teachers and staff
- 100 public/special education, alternative and charter schools

KEY CHALLENGES

- COVID-19 caused school closures and distance learning
- Gym closures limited employee exercise options
- Individual and family stress increased

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Virtual fitness appeals to all ages:** “We were pleasantly surprised that our biggest user group is our 51-60-year-olds.”
- **High demand for mental wellbeing:** “The most highly played class in August was ‘Anxious of Future.’”
- **Surprise added benefit:** “We have teachers from kindergarten through high school that have recorded a Wellbeats workout to play with their students.”

powerful endorsement: “I heard from an administrative union official on behalf of his members, who said he assumed the benefit would continue; so many people had reached out to him.” District leadership was sold, and Wellbeats was rolled out to the entire district in July. Even though school was not in session, class plays jumped over 1,500 in July and over 2,000 in August.



“Wellbeats has been really successful with our employees,” Lindsay explains. “They are juggling kids at home, family members at home, and work from home. They needed a fitness solution they could implement in their daily lives during those quick breaks between lunch times, work times and nap times. We continue to see the most class plays between 5 and 25 minutes. It’s great because it makes fitness accessible to everyone, regardless of their fitness level.”

In addition to physical wellbeing, emotional and community wellbeing are district wellness program pillars, and Wellbeats offers mindfulness classes to help address these needs. “The most highly played class in August was ‘Anxious of Future,’” says Lindsay. “It’s so important that we offer programs that blend with mental, emotional and community wellbeing.”

Leading By Example

Leveraging the interest in Wellbeats classes at home, Lindsay designed a custom Wellbeats challenge for the month of August. “We promoted the Jump Start Challenge and it was very well received,” she says. “We included meditations, simple exercises, and neck and back activities. The challenge really resonated with people. We had several hundred participate.”

The district takes advantage of its extensive network of 150 Wellness Champions throughout its schools and district offices. Lindsay is leading by example and hoping the Wellness Champions follow her lead.

“Every Monday I launch a class play of the day,” she explains. “Employees can do the class any day that week. We track their clicks, and they can earn wellness points for participating.” Classes Lindsay has featured include neck and back exercises and a yoga energizer. “We encourage people to make suggestions. The feedback has been great. We’re getting about 50 to 60 people doing the class plays of the day.”

Lindsay considers Wellbeats “the missing link” in the district’s comprehensive wellbeing program. “In the past, employee wellness had been focused so much on gym memberships,” she explains. “You miss a big portion of your population. For us to be able to provide this program to a greater segment of our population – and to offer it free – is a huge benefit. We have been wanting something like this for a long time. I’m really pleased with the engagement we’re seeing in Wellbeats.”

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