

Teachers Focus On Wellness, For Themselves

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Casey Kelly/KMXT

For most adults, finding the time to exercise and eat right can be challenging. But the teachers and classified employees of the Kodiak Island Borough School District have a new tool to help them meet those challenges. The district, which two years ago instituted a student wellness policy, is now offering a voluntary wellness program for staff. KMXT's Casey Kelly has more.

In the empty gym at Kodiak High School, Eric Linscheid leads Margaret Reed through a variety of stretching exercises, designed to improve 10 physical skills, including stamina, strength, agility and balance.

(Stretches
1 :20s "just
a stretch [nat sound fades].")

Linscheid, a physical education and health teacher at the high school, is the leader of the Kodiak Island Borough School District's new staff wellness program. The program, which is a combination of diet and exercise, is based on clinical studies that have proven to decrease heart disease, risks from diabetes, and bad cholesterol, while increasing good cholesterol and making people feel more energized.

(Linscheid :16s "need
1 to get what they want.")

Linscheid

says the program is designed to take into account the skill level of those taking part, since everyone starts at a different place and has a different set of needs and goals. The first step is having everyone change one small thing about themselves.

(Linscheid
2 :18s “…go
after the next change.”)

He calls
for a four-month commitment during which participants will keep track of their progress on the Internet. So far there are about 10 teachers and staff members signed up, from both town and village schools. Linscheid says one major component of the program, are its weekly meetings.

(Linscheid
3 :20s “…to
where they wanna go.”)

Reed, who
works at the district’s central office, says she’s already noticing a difference in her own attitude toward getting healthy.

(Reed 1 :08s “…part
of my life that’s a habit.”)

Her goal is
mainly feeling better about herself overall, but says there are other benefits she wouldn’t mind seeing as well.

(Reed 2 :03s “…would
always be a good thing.”)

Linscheid
admits that it can be hard for most adults to stick to a diet or exercise program. But he says if they do it will pay off not just in their personal lives, but in how they perform in their jobs as well. And for teachers that can be especially important.

4 (Linscheid :05s “…and
so that’ll be reflected.”)

Although he says there have been attempts in the past to get staff to think about their health and wellness, this is the first time Linscheid can recall the district offering a comprehensive program to its employees.

I’m Casey
Kelly.

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