



PRINCIPAL
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UNT DALLAS

DESIGN THINKING SHOWCASE
PIC
LEADERSHIP
COLLABORATION

Showcasing the 2020 Cohort
Design Thinking Campus Action Projects

Friday, May 20, 2022

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The Wonders of Wellness of TCC South Collegiate



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The collegiate high school experience is stressful under the best of circumstances. For a year and a half, our collegiate high school students experienced school like never before. They no longer had daily interactions with teachers, staff, and most importantly, their peers. They struggled to navigate the “new normal” of a mostly virtual world.

Throughout the pandemic, many of our students were isolated from strong support systems embedded in our school practices and procedures that were designed and effective for students who attended school in-person. Although we had students who struggled throughout the years, we never experienced such high volumes of disengagement. Our Wonders of Wellness design project sought to understand the relationship between students’ overall wellness and their engagement in school activities to lead to more successful outcomes.

We wanted to ensure our students had a strong sense of belonging, remained engaged with our school community, and exhibited positive mental wellness. We knew we had to do something to help students and staff mitigate feelings of isolation and separation initiated by the need for the virtual learning environment.

To build community, strengthen relationships, connect with each other on deeper levels, and improve academics and attendance, TCC South/FWISD Collegiate High School wellness club members, the principal, and three faculty and staff members incorporated yoga and mindfulness sessions school-wide to explore the benefits of personal wellness activities.

Despite the challenges of limited in-person attendance, our students and staff learned about mindfulness during virtual group sessions. We learned the importance of self-awareness, self-regulation, and the need to routinely practice self-care. These sessions helped us know when to use self-regulation strategies such as yoga/stretching, breathing techniques, journaling, and reflection to relax, ground ourselves in the moment, and connect with each other during very stressful times.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Campus faculty
- All Students

MEASURES OF SUCCESS & IMPACT

- In spring 2021, our yoga and mindfulness sessions gained traction quickly. By the 3rd virtual yoga session, 200+ participants were online engaging as a community.
- In-person attendance increased from approximately 25 students per day in Semester I to nearly 1/3 of our students (about 90) attending school during Semester II.
- Student-teacher communication improved throughout the semester.
- Several seniors were not on track to graduate from high school, but in the end, they fulfilled all requirements. All of them earned their diplomas and 79% completed their associate’s degrees in spring 2021.
- Empathy interviews dispelled assumptions, so that we could address the root causes for disengagement. On surveys, 79 out of 80 students (99%) responded positively to the 2 questions:
 - What is your personal experience regarding the yoga activity provided for you? (i.e. How did this activity make you feel? What benefits did you experience?)
 - How do you think an experience such as this will benefit members of our school community in the future?
- Our school was awarded two grants, The Blue Zones Project for \$2000 and a UNT Health Science Wellness Grant for \$10,000, to support future endeavors and implement our Wonders of Wellness programs at TCC South Collegiate.