

PROGRAM GUIDE



Program Summary and Goals

Whether it's literal or figurative, everyone has a mountain to climb. So, let's get after it together! Climbing any mountain in real life is quite the accomplishment but climbing the equivalent distance is no easy feat, either.

Over the next 8 weeks, participants will be embarking on a journey of epic proportions and MCPS Well Aware would like to challenge everyone to join us! On this journey we will be climbing to the top of Mount Everest. Instead of traveling to Nepal, we will be completing the equivalent climb in cardiovascular, strength, and mindfulness activities.

How to participate:

A typical Everest expedition requires roughly 6-8 weeks from the arrival in Nepal to the return to base camp. Do you want to re-create a hike an Everest-experience exercise routine?

Hiking: Stair climbing and trail hiking will simulate the uphill movement and will build strength and endurance.

Strength Training: Core and legs with squats, lunges, calf raises, and planks. This builds muscles that are crucial for stability and power during the climb. Increase upper body strength with rows, pull ups, and push ups to help you carry the heavy climbing equipment.

Cardiovascular: Engage in long distance activities to build aerobic endurance which is vital for sustained exertion.

Flexibility: Yoga and stretching should be used to improve flexibility, mobility, and balance which are essential for navigating challenging terrain and preventing injuries.

Mindfulness: Practice mindfulness and meditation to improve focus, concentration, and stress management. All are essential for handling the mental demands of the climb.

Participate as an individual by logging your individual activity. All activity counts! Every hour of activity equals 4 miles on the way to your peak. Average at least 4 miles (one hour) per day to get entered into the weekly grant drawing.

Participate as a team/school to increase physical activity, and build a culture of wellness in your school or office. Teams and schools with the most average minutes of activity per member per team will win a grand prize grant.

Summit Seeker Competition Dates

Registration: Monday March 10, 2025
Start: Monday March 17, 2025
End: Sunday May 11, 2025

The Coach's Role

Volunteer coaches serve as program coordinators and champions at their work locations; they are the engine of the wellness program. Schools and central services locations should select an individual or create a team of individuals who will be successful in motivating staff to participate and stay engaged throughout the school year. These individuals may have served as a coach in a previous activity challenge or may be new to the role.

The coach's responsibilities include the following:

- Recruit staff to participate in the challenge.
- Assist all staff members with becoming part of the challenge (e.g., assisting with online Well Aware Fitness Log registration).
- Inform staff about the program via e-mail, staff announcements, lounge bulletin boards, and other preferred communication methods at the coach's work location.
- Train staff on the online tools and provide support as needed, including showing staff how to log in and report activity. (Videos are available on the [Summit Seeker webpage](#) to assist with this task.)
- Provide support and motivation for participants throughout the challenge.
- Collaborate with school/location leadership to ensure program success.

If you previously served as a coach for a Well Aware physical activity challenge, and you are interested in continuing in this role, or if you are interested in serving as a coach for the first time, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

How to Participate in the Summit Seeker Challenge

For adults, regular aerobic exercise leads to:

- Improved cardio-respiratory fitness (heart, lungs, blood vessels)
- Improved muscular fitness
- Lower risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- Lower risk of high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes
- Lower risk of high cholesterol and triglycerides
- Lower risk of colon and breast cancer, and possibly lung and endometrial cancer
- Increased bone density or a slower loss of density
- Reduced depression and better-quality sleep
- Weight control

Participate as an individual by logging your individual activity. Choose your exercise and log your time. All activity counts! Average at least one hour per day to get entered into the weekly prize drawing.

Participate as a team/school to increase physical activity, and build a culture of wellness in your school or office. Teams and schools with the most average minutes of activity per member per team will win a grand prize grant.

Participating as an individual

Participate as an individual by logging your individual activity. All activity counts! Average one hour of activity per week to get entered into the weekly prize drawing.

Participating as part of a team

Gather your coworkers in a team of 3-15 people. Encourage your team to exercise and log their activity. Teams must log a minimum of one hour per member per day to qualify for a grand prize.

Participating as a school

When you register in the online Well Aware Fitness Log, you register under a school or office. Your activity will count in the challenge for that location. If you have changed locations, make sure to update this in the log. Schools must log a minimum of 30 minutes per member per day to qualify for a grand prize.

Log your physical activity time in the online [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) for your chance to win weekly and grand prizes.

Online Well Aware Fitness Log

Your activity will be tracked via the online [Well Aware Fitness Log](#). To participate, you must first register on the [fitness log](#), which can also be found through the [Well Aware web page](#) or the [Summit Seeker webpage](#). You may register for an account and log your activity at any time. **If you participated in any of the previous activity challenges, you do not need to re-register.**

Enter your physical activity type and time. You can log every activity from gardening and housework to yoga, Zumba, and everything in between.

You do not need to enter daily to qualify. Activity for any week can be entered all at one time, but must be logged by the following Monday at 12 noon to count toward the previous week's prize.

You will not be able to log any activity completed prior to the previous two weeks. This assures that individuals are staying consistent with their entries and activity.

For the purpose of prizes, you will be able to enter a maximum of two hours of activity per day.

Teams

If you are motivated best through the camaraderie of working together, you may form teams and compete for prizes and bragging rights. You may choose to be on a team with colleagues from your school, your office, or across MCPS; teams are not limited to one location. In addition, each location may have multiple teams. Once you have agreed to join a team, a team captain must be selected to establish the team on the [Well Aware Fitness Log](#). See the "Online Tools" section of this guide for additional details. Teams must be made up of 3 to 15 individuals and all team activity will be averaged to ensure a fair competition.

Online Tools

The Summit Seeker Challenge will be managed using two online resources:

1. The [Summit Seeker web page](#)
2. The [Well Aware Fitness Log](#)

Both pages will offer competition updates, tools for registering and using the fitness log, and tips and motivation to keep moving.

Well Aware Fitness Log

The [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) is the main resource for this competition. The log allows participants to track activity, log progress, and become eligible for prizes. The fitness log also displays competition updates—including leading teams—to promote friendly competition and peer support to help motivate you to reach your goals.

As always, you can view your individual statistics in the Reports section of the log.

Registering on the Fitness Log

The first time you visit the [Well Aware Fitness Log](#), you will be prompted to register. You must enter and then confirm your e-mail address and confirm that you have read and accept the Terms of Service (available on the site). When you submit this information, you will receive a welcome e-mail that contains your username and password. Use this username and password to access the [Well Aware Fitness Log](#). During your first visit to the log, you can update your information to a username and password of your choice. Keep your log-in information in a safe place. You can register at any time. If you lose or forget your username or password, [e-mail Well Aware](#) for assistance.

If you have changed positions, locations, or schools since you registered, make sure to update your location data. To do this, click on the ACCOUNT drop-down box. Choose PROFILE. Update your school or office location in the drop-down box on that screen.

Creating a Team on the Fitness Log

To establish a team, all participants must first register on the [Well Aware Fitness Log](#). One team member should take the lead as team captain, who will establish the team using the fitness log. The team captain must log into the fitness log and select team members to invite to join the team. Once invited, team members will receive an e-mail and must confirm their team membership by following directions in the e-mail. As with all Well Aware programs, you are not required to participate on a team.

For complete instructions and assistance with forming a team, you can watch a help video on the [Summit Seeker webpage](#) or ask the coach at your location.

Competition Prizes

Prizes will be awarded at regular intervals during the challenge to reward consistency and keep motivation high. Remember: Prizes are not the end goal; they are meant to keep you focused on living an active life. To accumulate activity toward prizes—

- Log your activity into the fitness log.
- Choose your activity from the drop-down menu in the Cardio tab of the fitness log. Input the time that you performed the activity and scroll down to click SAVE CARDIO LOG ENTRY.
- All individuals on a team accumulate time toward team prizes.
- Team activity will be averaged for awarding prizes.
- All individual activity will accumulate toward individual prizes.
- For school staff, individual activity will count toward a school grand prize.

The prizes are—

Weekly Participation Prize

Every week, five participants who have averaged one hour of activity per day and entered this activity into the fitness log, will be randomly chosen as weekly prize winners. They will win a \$250 grant to promote wellness at their school or office. This prize can be won only once by an individual during the 8-week challenge. Prizes are subject to audit. Prior to the grant being sent, a form will need to be submitted detailing the exact plan for the grant to be used.

Team Grand Prize

The top 15 teams with the most average activity time throughout the 8-week challenge will receive a \$500 grant to promote wellness in their schools, offices, or depots. Prizes are subject to audit. Prior to the grant being sent, a form will need to be submitted detailing the exact plan for the grant to be used.

Golden Sneaker Team Prize

In addition to their grant, the top team overall with the most average activity throughout the 8-week challenge will win the Golden Sneaker Trophy and bragging rights until the next challenge.

School Grand Prize

The top 15 schools with the most average activity time throughout the 8-week challenge will receive a \$500 grant to be used for physical education equipment or to support staff wellness. Prizes are subject to audit. Prior to the grant being sent, a form will need to be submitted detailing the exact plan for the grant to be used.

In case of a tie for any of the above prizes, a winner will be drawn at random from qualified teams.

Spirit Award

Do you have a coworker that goes above and beyond to promote wellness within your school/office? Has someone made a positive change in their life and you think they should be recognized? Nominate your coworker by submitting an application for the chance to win a spirit award and a healthy cooking demonstration for your location.

Next Steps

If you are confirmed as a coach at your location, start spreading the word about Summit Seeker at your location. If you are a participant, encourage and motivate your coworkers throughout the challenge.

Remember to register on the [Well Aware Fitness Log](#). On Monday March 17, 2025 you will receive an e-mail in your MCPS Outlook inbox prompting you to participate in the challenge. Click on the link in your e-mail and get ready to move!