

RJ Bailey Celebrates Wellness Month



Richard J. Bailey School in Greenburgh kicked off **Wellness Month** on February 10th. Wellness events were organized by Assistant Principal Mrs. Constantine, School Nurse, Mrs. Baratta, and several members of the PTA. Students were invited to visit school with their parents in the early evening. Exercise activities were organized by the school's physical education teacher along with instructors from Yoga Journey and the Tai Chai School. Samples of healthy food and vegetable soup (prepared by RJ Bailey students) were on hand. Guest speakers from Blythedale Children's Hospital discussed injury prevention and nutrition and display tables were hosted by Hudson Valley Poison Education Center, the American Heart Association and Westchester County Department of Health (including a hand washing demonstration).

At R.J. Bailey School, March is **Wellness Month**, which stresses choosing healthy lifestyle choices such as increasing exercise, eating healthy foods, studying hard and getting plenty of sleep. The staff at R.J. Bailey organized several events throughout the month. *Workout Wednesdays and Flexible Fridays* gave students and staff the opportunity to start the day with a short work out provided by the physical education



teachers Mr. Vandiver and Mr. DeMaria. The "*Power Up With Colorful Fruit and Vegetables*" program ran for three weeks. Each Monday morning, the school nurse made an announcement indicating the color of the week and the health benefits of eating fruits or vegetables of that color. Students were given the opportunity to bring in a snack featuring the week's color and serve it to their classmates. Mrs. Constantine and Mrs. Baratta visited the classrooms to take pictures of students serving their snacks and discussing healthy lifestyle choices. Each class voted on a student to represent their class in the school wide snack-off contest. The school's food service contractor, Aramark, incorporated the color of the week into lunch menus. Yogurt was donated by Dannon and offered to students to sample throughout the month.

A school wide *Snack- Off Contest* took place on March 24, 2009, "*On Track for a Healthier You Day*". Students researched their snack and presented the nutritional value of the snack to official judges. Students prepared portfolios with the recipe, pictures of them preparing the snack, research on the fruit or vegetable what they were serving and any other pertinent information about the snack.



In addition, there was a school-wide volleyball tournament, organized by the PE teachers, which provided an opportunity for an extra gym period that day. The tournament was a chance for students to have fun while exercising with staff at their grade level. The PTA will prepare a cookbook featuring

these recipes. A gardening project is planned for the future.

In early March, students participated in the *Fit Kids Challenge*, a 10-day activity during which students awarded themselves points for healthy lifestyle behaviors which included eating fruits and vegetables, engaging in an hour of physical activity daily and limiting screen time. RJ Bailey also participated in *No Junk Food Week* during the third week of March. Students focused on healthy snacks for one week, avoiding less healthy options. Teachers were encouraged to have healthy snacks for birthday celebrations during the month of March.

Wellness Month activities for the month of March were featured on the *Wellness Bulletin Board* outside the Nurse's office.