
A STUDENT VISION TO PROMOTE MENTAL WELLNESS AND SELF-LOVE

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About two weeks ago, on March 11th, 2020, Cameron Heights' 3rd annual mental health assembly was held. This year, the mental wellness committee decided to take a different approach with a theme of self-love and mental wellness. We presented this theme through many mediums such as dancing, singing, videos, speeches, and through community organizations. I, along with Maria, another executive, got to witness the entire planning journey starting from our first meeting till the date of the assembly. This article will briefly outline the steps that were taken behind planning this very assembly, how we planned it, its significance, the challenges the committee faced, as well as what can be expected from future mental health assemblies.

A GLIMPSE OF BEHIND THE SCENES: The committee started meeting every Tuesday during lunch in the Library's Cameron Learning Commons room. At the beginning, all of the group members were first taught to get along with each other. Charlotte Kovacs, one of the executives, is a part of a mental health group called WAYVE (Wellness, Acceptance, Youth Voices, Empowerment), she taught us a mental wellness practice that allowed everyone to get into the mental wellness mood just before each meeting. This allowed to set the tone strong for the entire planning session.

HOW WE ACHIEVED OUR GOALS

It all started with one afternoon when I talked to Ms. Main, our teacher sponsor, about starting the planning of this year's mental health assembly. Meena Waseem, who used to lead the assembly in the previous years has already graduated which means no one was leading the meetings at the time. I planned a time for the committee to meet, and that happened to be on a Tuesday.

On our first meeting, the qualified members all met together for the first time. We started off by brainstorming some ideas as well as establishing the executives for outside communication: Maria Khan, me, Jessica Awad, and Charlotte Kovacs.

By the second meeting, we divided the entire group into different committees: content committee, speaker's committee, performer's committee, audience involvement committee, and communications committee. The content committee was responsible for searching for statistics, information, and resources. The speaker's committee assisted in finding in and out of school speakers. The performer's committee helped search for talents that could represent our assembly's theme of self-love or mental wellness. The audience involvement committee assisted in the audience involving portion of the assembly. The communications committee was responsible for handling our instagram page, @chci.mha2020. The executives were responsible for running and planning meetings.

We continued to have weekly meetings every Tuesday to work on the assembly.

Right before the winter break, I and the performer's committee held auditions for the assembly. We had many great talents audition and three acts made it through: Amanda Braam with her original song, Marina Simonovic with her self-coreographed dance performance, and Breanna Jeris and Florenca with their modern dance performance.

Around the beginning of February, Rebecca, a representer of WAYVE started attending our meetings. She started getting involved with our meetings and further assisted us in the content of the assembly and also planned a WAYVE presentation of her own.

By early March, the entire committee started getting into rehearsal mode. We held rehearsals all three days before the assembly.

SIGNIFICANCE

This assembly's significance was to promote mental wellness and self-love to our audience of a thousand. It also took place to provide knowledge about resources that are in school and out of school. We also had Greg, a social worker at our school, speak about "living in the moment." These resources were meant to leave a lasting impact on the audience in hopes that they will help them throughout the audience's lifetime. The tips we mentioned are especially useful for this historical time that we are going through currently.

FUTURE ASSEMBLIES

As far as it goes for the future assemblies, we are definitely learning constantly about our audience. Me and Maria are in Grade 10 currently, so quite young to lead the planning of an entire assembly. But both of us have learned a lot more about leadership throughout this entire planning journey.

Nevertheless, we are hoping that this assembly will be approved as mandatory next year as half of the school did show up to our assembly this year.

If you would like to learn more about mental health or about the annual CHCI mental health assemblies follow us on Instagram @chci.mwa2021. We are always open to new people joining our committee, and if you would like to participate in the planning and/or perform you can contact me @rhythm.dang at the beginning of the next school year.

If you would like to know more about the assembly, follow us on Instagram @chci.mwa2021

If you would like to participate in the planning, perform, and/or MC the assembly for next year, contact me on Instagram @rhythm.dang