

Wellness/Performance Center opens

ETHS students began the 2019-20 school year with a completely renovated Wellness & Performance Center, thanks largely to a pledge from alumnus Michael B. Arrington, ETHS '61. A former varsity football player, Arrington pledged \$330,000 to the ETHS Foundation to support a new strength and conditioning center at the high school.

The facility, named the Michael B. Arrington Wellness & Performance Center, will serve all ETHS students who take physical education (PE) classes and participate in sports-training programs. The Wellness Center replaces an outdated weight room with a facility that is equipped to serve students with varied physical abilities and a wide range of strength, size, and biomechanical differences.

Designed with school pride in mind, the center has an open floor plan and features modern, adaptable cardio equipment and training stations. "All of us at ETHS are truly grateful to Mike Arrington," said ETHS Superintendent Eric Witherspoon. "His generosity will benefit all students as we expand our wellness and athletic opportunities."



Michael B. Arrington

In conjunction with opening the new center, the ETHS PE Department is enhancing curriculum for this school year and working to meet equity goals. A strength and conditioning specialist at ETHS will work in tandem with physical education teachers and coaches on individualized fitness plans for each student, allowing for differentiated instruction and adaptations for all learners, including those with disabilities. Also, more than 200 ETHS students are enrolled in Sports Specific Training, a new PE option for athletes who want to take their athletic performance to the next level.

Excited about the renovation at ETHS, Arrington studied conditioning centers at other area schools and made a commitment to a facility with the best possible equipment and a dynamic aesthetic that



Photo by Ozzie Ramsey

ETHS athletes do strength conditioning in the school's new Michael B. Arrington Wellness & Performance Center.

speaks to Wildkit pride. "I'm honored to provide this gift to my alma mater," remarked Arrington, an entrepreneur and real estate investor who founded Arrington Travel, the largest single-stockholder corporate travel management firm in the United States.

"The new facility will without a doubt be the finest high-school facility of its kind in Illinois," he added. "It will allow ETHS athletes, as well as the entire student body, an opportunity to achieve optimum results for peak performance."

ETHS Athletic Director Chris Livatino, ETHS '91 noted the far-reaching and long-lasting impact of the contribution, stating, "The new Wellness Center may be the most significant facility improvement we've ever made towards increasing the performance of all of our athletic programs at ETHS."

The center is the latest in a series of transformative gifts to ETHS. According to ETHS Foundation Executive Director Joanne Bertsche, the generosity of ETHS alumni underscores how they value their ETHS experience and their dedication to advancing the high school campus for today's Wildkits.

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