

Wellness Policy School District 126

The School Board and our District Wellness Committee are committed to providing intellectually stimulating school environments that promote and protect children's health, social and emotional well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating, physical activity and other behaviors that contribute to student wellness. Good health fosters student attendance and education. Children and adolescents need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.

To meet this commitment, the District will be guided by the following policy goals:

- A. The health of our students is essential to their academic success. When faced with conflicting priorities or issues of implementation, this policy will be interpreted in a way that favors student health.
- B. All students in grades K-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a daily basis.
- C. With regard to nutrition promotion, the District shall encourage students to increase their consumption of healthful foods during the school day.
- D. With regard to nutrition promotion, any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school during the school day, will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
Additionally, the District shall create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits, including offering the following healthy foods that comply with the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- E. Schools will provide access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; take into consideration the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- F. The School District supports a coordinated approach to school health which includes: comprehensive health education, physical education, school health services, school nutrition services, counseling, psychological, and social services, healthy school environment, school- site health promotion for staff, and family and community involvement.
- G. The School District will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, and monitoring, and reviewing District-wide wellness policies.

Physical Activity

A. During the School Day

Physical activity includes regular instructional physical education, co-curricular activities, and recess at the elementary level. Substituting any one of these components for the others is not appropriate. All students shall be encouraged to participate in regular physical activity and provided with appropriate opportunities for participation. All students will receive physical education that implements the State adopted physical education common curriculum goals, content standards and grade level benchmark standards for students. All students will be encouraged to further participate in physical activity through co-curricular activities and recess.

The District will encourage the integration of physical activity with the academic curriculum based on research findings relating to physical activity and learning. Recognizing the critical importance of sufficient physical activity for students, schools will withhold recess only on an occasional basis as part of an individual or school-wide behavior plan.

Physical education will not be withheld as punishment.

B. Before and After School Activities

Students will be encouraged to participate in physical activity through before-and/or after-school programs including intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs. To encourage broad participation in co-curricular activities, the District will work to reduce financial barriers to participation and increase affordability through scholarships, subsidies, and other methods.

C. Parent and Community Support

Schools will encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events. The District will seek ways to make it safer and easier for students to walk or use other non-vehicular modes to travel to and from school. When appropriate, the District will collaborate with other community organizations on initiatives encouraging physical activity.

D. All elementary schools will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all days during the school year. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

E. **Outdoor recess** will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play.

F. In the event that the school or district must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable.

On an annual basis, physical education teachers and Administrators shall review and affirm receipt of the Illinois Department of Health's concussion information sheet.

Physical Education teachers shall remove from class participation any student who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury. The Principal and/or teacher shall notify parents or guardians about the possible concussion or head injury.

Any student who has been removed from physical education class participation because s/he has exhibited signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury shall not be permitted to return to physical education class until the student's condition is assessed by a physician, and the physician gives the student written clearance that it is safe to return to class.

Nutrition Education

A. Fostering Lifelong Healthy Eating Habits

Students will receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt lifelong habits of healthy eating. Students will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, and cafeterias.

B. Nutrition Education Curriculum

District curriculum standards and guidelines will include nutrition education. Nutrition education will be consistent with the State adopted common curriculum goals, content standards and grade level benchmarks for students. The aim of the curriculum will be for students to acquire knowledge and skills to understand and make healthful nutrition choices that contribute to growth and vitality and help prevent chronic disease. Nutrition education activities should be coordinated with the food service program, the core curriculum and the school health program, as appropriate and should be enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and participatory.

C. Community Involvement

Schools will promote family and community involvement in nutrition education, such as developing school gardens and providing students with opportunities to learn about sustainable agriculture and how food is grown in the community.

Other Activities That Support Student Wellness

Health Clinics

The District will strive to provide access to School-Based Health Clinics for all students, as fiscally possible.

Nutrition Standards

Decisions regarding the sale of foods in addition to the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program meals will be based on nutritional goals, not solely revenue.

A. National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs

The District's food service operations will provide nutrient-dense tasty food that includes a variety of food options and offers a variety of fruits and vegetables. The Superintendent will set nutrition standards that meet or exceed those set by the National School Breakfast and Lunch programs. To the extent possible, the District will operate the National School Breakfast Program in all schools and employ strategies that encourage participation in the program. Recognizing the importance of sufficient time to eat and of a pleasant, relaxed eating environment, schools will adopt a minimum number of minutes that students have to eat breakfast and lunch and will consider other strategies, such as recess before lunch, that contribute to healthy eating.

B. Competitive Foods

Competitive foods include classroom parties, foods used during classes as part of the learning process and anything that competes with breakfast and lunch programs. Competitive foods shall meet nutrition and portion size guidelines set by the Superintendent with input from the Wellness Advisory Committee. Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture shall not be distributed by staff or sold to students on school campuses during the school day. The Superintendent will develop "Healthy Snacks" and "Healthy Parties" nutrition guidelines as part of the administrative rules and provide parents and teachers with a list of examples of healthy, affordable food choices for snacks and parties.

The Board of Education supports a high quality food servicing-quality competitive foods that are not under the direct control of the District food services operations shall be sold during the school breakfast and lunch service times.

In addition to reimbursable meals, the District food service operation sells a la carte food.

Nutritious foods are encouraged when used as part of a social or cultural event in the schools. During the school day, schools should limit the use of food at celebrations that are not related to the curriculum. Parents and staff are encouraged to provide party foods that are consistent with the Healthy Parties guidelines and to serve such items after the lunch hour whenever possible.

The use of candy as a reward for academic performance or good behavior is strongly discouraged. Other foods as an incentive, or reward, or as part of the curriculum for students should be used judiciously, taking into consideration the nutritional value of food being served and the frequency of use.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers. The District will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas.

The Wellness Committee shall be responsible for:

- A. assessment of the current school environment;
- B. review of the District's Wellness policy;
- C. presentation of the Wellness policy to the Board for approval;
- D. measurement of the implementation of the policy; and
- E. recommendation for the revision of the policy, is necessary.

Before the end of each school year, the Wellness Committee shall recommend to the Superintendent any revisions to the policy it deems necessary and/or appropriate. In its review, the wellness committee shall consider evidence-based strategies in determining its recommendations.

The Superintendent shall report annually to the Board on the Wellness Committee's progress and on its evaluation of the policy's implementation and areas for improvement, including status of compliance by individual schools and progress made in attaining the policy's goals.

The Superintendent is also responsible for informing the public, including parents, students and community members, on the content and implementation of this policy.

The District shall assess the Wellness Policy at least once every three (3) years on the extent to which schools in the District are in compliance with the District policy, the extent to which the District policy compares to model wellness policies, and the progress made in attaining the goals of the District Wellness Policy. The assessment shall be made available to the public on each individual school's web site.

District 126 Wellness Committee

Craig Gwaltney, Superintendent

Robert Condon, Director of Special Education

Patricia Yerkes, School Nurse

Caitlin Dorgan, School Nurse