

Wellness Policy

With the passing of the Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004 and the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 by Congress, the school recognizes the role it can play in the building nutrition knowledge and skills in children to promote healthy eating and physical activity choices. This law requires local education agencies participating in a program authorized by the objectives of the wellness policy are to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity.

The main goal of nutrition education is to influence student's eating behaviors. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating is demonstrably linked to reduced risk for mortality and development of many chronic diseases. Schools and school communities have a responsibility to help students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to establish and maintain lifelong healthy eating patterns.

Schools also have a responsibility to help students establish and maintain lifelong habits of being physically active. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, regular physical activity is one of the most important things people can do to maintain and improve their physical health, mental health, and overall well-being. Regular physical activity reduces the risk of premature death in general and of heart disease, high blood pressure, colon cancer, and diabetes.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a total school environment that promotes and supports student health and wellness, helps to reduce childhood obesity, and meets the requirements of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the School that:

- The School will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- The School will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Wellness Committee

The School will create a School Wellness Committee to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The Committee also will serve as a resource to the School for implementing those policies. (The Wellness Committee should consist of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.)

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

The School should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, the School should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria new boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

III. Nutritional and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Physical Promotion. The School aims to teach, encourage, and support health eating by students. The School should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level of a part of the sequential, comprehensive, standard-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;

- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other schools foods, and nutrition related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Staff Wellness: The School and Cambridge Education Partners value the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education Goals

The School will identify opportunities for physical activity to be incorporated into the school day. Students in preschool through grade 12 shall participate in daily physical education that enables them to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness; emphasizes self-management skills including energy balance (calories in minus calories out); is consistent with state/district's standards/guidelines/framework; and is coordinated within a comprehensive health education curriculum.

Special emphasis should be placed on promoting an active lifestyle in preschool through primary grades as health habits are established at a young age. Accommodations shall be made for students with disabilities, 504 plans, and other limitations.

Students shall be provided opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and after-school programs including intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. The School Letter will ensure compliance with nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

School food service staff at the school will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the School Letter.

The School Letter will develop a summary report every year on compliance with the School's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. That report will be provided to the Board of Directors

and also distributed to the Wellness Committee, parent/teacher organizations, and school services personnel.

Policy Review: To help with the initial development of the School's wellness policies, the School will conduct a baseline assessment of the existing nutrition and physical activity environment and policies.

Assessment will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of the improvement. As part of that review, the School will review its provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and the nutrition and physical education policies and program elements.