

507.9 WELLNESS POLICY

The board promotes healthy students by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. The school district supports a healthy environment where students learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of students. Improved health optimizes student performance potential.

The school district provides a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors. The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school district goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity.

The school district supports and promotes proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance. All foods available on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the school district nutrition standards and be in compliance with state and federal law. Foods should be served with consideration toward nutritional integrity, variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging to ensure high-quality meals.

The school district will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. Toward this end, the school district may utilize electronic identification and payment systems-and will promote the availability of meals to all students.

The school district will develop a local wellness policy committee comprised of parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, physical education teachers, and school health professionals. The local wellness policy committee will develop a plan to implement and measure the local wellness policy and monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

Specific Wellness Goals

- nutrition education and promotion
- physical activity
- other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness
- nutrition guidelines for all foods available on campus
- plan for measuring implementation

The nutrition guidelines for all foods available will focus on promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.

Nutrition Education and Promotion

The school district will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-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.
- links with meal programs, other foods and nutrition-related community services, and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Physical Activity

Physical Education

The school district will provide physical education that:

- is for all students in grades K-12 for the entire school year;
- is taught by a certified physical education teacher;
- includes students with disabilities. Students with special health-care needs may be provided in alternative educational settings;
- K-5, to have 30 minutes of physical activity, not physical education, per day. This requirement can be met through a combination of PE, recess, classroom and other activities. Middle and high school students must have at least 120 minutes of physical activity per week. Again this is not just physical education but can be met with a combination of PE, school and non-school sponsored athletics and other activities where the body is exerted. Should a student wish to meet the requirement outside of school, the student and school district must have an agreement (signed waiver) detailing the outside activity; and
- engages students in moderate to vigorous activity during at least 50 percent of physical education class time.

Daily Recess

Elementary schools should provide recess for students that:

- is at least 20 minutes a day;
- is preferably outdoors; and
- encourages moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity and Punishment

Employees should not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

Physical Activity Opportunities after School

After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage—verbally, and through the provision of space, equipment and activities—daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

Other School-Based Activities that Promote Student Wellness

Integrating Physical Activity into Classroom Settings

For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond the physical education class. Toward that end, the school district will:

- offer classroom health education that complements physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities;
- discourage sedentary activities, such as watching television, playing computer games, etc.;
- provide opportunities for physical activity to be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- encourage classroom teachers to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communication with Parents

The school district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school district will:

- encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the established nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages;
- provide parents a list of foods that meet the school district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards and fundraising activities;
- provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day;
- support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school; and,
- include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a web site, newsletter, other take-home materials, special events or physical education homework.

Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods Available 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 law;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables, legumes and whole grains; and,
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives as defined by the USDA.

Breakfast

To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn, schools will:

- operate the breakfast program, to the extent possible;
- arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve breakfasts that encourage participation;
- notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program, where available; and,
- encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials or other means.

Free and Reduced-Priced Meals

The school district will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. Toward this end, the school district may:

- utilize electronic identification and payment systems; and
- promote the availability of meals to all students.

Meal Times and Scheduling

The school district:

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 15-20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; should not schedule tutoring, club or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary schools) when the schedule allows; and
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

Qualification of Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school district will:

- provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals; and,
- provide staff development programs that include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, nutrition managers and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Foods Sold Outside the Meal (e.g. vending, a la carte, sales)

All foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day will meet nutrition standards as required by state or federal law. For current state guidelines, click here

http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/allfoods_flyer.pdf

Fundraising Activities

There are two types of fundraising – regulated and other. Regulated fundraisers are those that offer the sale of foods or beverages on school property and that are targeted primarily to PK-12 students by or through other PK-12 students, student groups, school organizations, or through on-campus school stores. Regulated fundraising activities must comply with the state nutrition guidelines. All other fundraising activities are encouraged, but not required, to comply with the state nutrition guidelines if the activities involve foods and beverages.

The school district encourages fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages and other considerations. The school district will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel and parents. The District requires pre-packaged snacks for the safety of the students.

If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

Sack Lunches

The District encourages healthy sack lunches brought from home. Pop will not be allowed as part of a sack lunch. However, students will be allowed to bring a pop for a sack lunch if required for a field trip.

Rewards

The school district will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior.

Birthday Parties

Birthday Parties may be celebrated in the student's homeroom. Parents will receive a list of healthy snack suggestions to use for ideas in a variety of ways such as newsletters, district web site etc. Parents will be encouraged to provide pre-packaged items and follow the guidelines set by the district.

Celebrations

Schools should evaluate their celebrations practices that involve food during the school day. The school district will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to homeroom parents and teachers. Each party should include no more than one food/beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for Foods Sold Outside the Meal (above). Parents will be encouraged to provide pre-packaged items.

School-Sponsored Events

Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day, such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances or performances will offer nutritional food options when possible.

Food Safety

All foods made available on campus adhere to food safety and security guidelines.

- All foods made available on campus comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illness in schools.

Summer Meals

Schools in which more than 50 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for at least four weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year, and, preferably, throughout the entire summer vacation.

Plan for Measuring Implementation

Monitoring

The superintendent will ensure compliance with established school district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

In each school:

- the principal will ensure compliance with those policies in the school and will report on the school's compliance to the superintendent; and,
- food service staff, at the school or school district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent.

In the school district:

- the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the school district has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the school district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.
- the Wellness Committee will revise the Wellness Policy and will report to the school board for approval every three years; and,
- the policy will then be distributed to all school principals, parent/teacher organizations, and health services personnel in the school district, posted on the district website and distributed in school handbooks.

Policy Review

To help with the revision of the wellness policy, each buildings principal will review and assess the policy each year to determine compliance, progress and areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the building principal will also review the nutrition and physical activity policies and practices and the provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the school district level to identify and prioritize needs and will be reported to the wellness committee every three years unless immediate action is required.

Legal Reference: Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq. (2005)
Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.,
Iowa Code 256.7(29), 256.11(6)
281 IAC 12.5(19), 12.5(20), 58.11

Cross Reference: 504.5 Student Fund Raising
504.6 Student Activity Program
710 School Food Services