

## **SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY**

The Board of Education is committed to providing a school environment that enhances the learning and development of lifelong wellness practices. Therefore, as part of an ongoing effort to create a healthful school environment, it is the policy of the school district that:

- The Food & Nutrition Services program complies with federal, state and local requirements and is accessible to all children.
- Sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education is provided and promoted.
- Patterns of meaningful physical activity connect to students' lives outside of physical education.
- School-based activities are consistent with the district's wellness policy goals.
- Foods and beverages sold on campus during the school day (including vending, concessions, a la carte, and student stores) include a variety of healthy choices and adhere to food safety and sanitary guidelines.
- The school environment is safe, comfortable, pleasing, and allows ample time and space for eating meals and conducting physical activity. Food and/or physical activity are not used as a reward or punishment.

Such policy shall be monitored to ensure schools are meeting the policy requirements.

**RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY**

**To Achieve The Wellness Policy Goals...**

**I. School Health & Wellness Committee**

- a. The school district and/or individual schools will organize a local wellness committee(s) comprising parents, teachers, administrators, students (and possibly health professionals, board members and community representatives) to develop, implement, monitor and improve nutrition and physical activity in the school environment.
- b. The committee(s) will serve as a resource to schools for implementing nutrition and physical activity policies.

**II. Nutrition Education**

- a. Nutrition concepts will be integrated into various subject areas, such as math, science, health and social studies; as well as elective courses, such as home & careers and family & consumer sciences.
- b. Good nutrition is reinforced during classroom snack times, in addition to school meal times.
- c. Students are encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast.
- d. Nutrition education will involve sharing information with parents and the broader community to help and encourage families to teach children about health and nutrition, thereby, positively impacting the health of the community.

**III. Physical Activity**

- a. Physical education courses will have an environment where students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills and knowledge.
- b. Physical education includes the instruction of individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage life-long physical activity and well-being.
- c. State-certified physical education instructors will teach all physical education classes.
- d. Physical activity will be integrated across curricula and throughout the school day. Movement can be made a part of science, math, social studies, language arts, etc.
- e. In accordance with national and state recommended guidelines, the district recognizes the benefits of providing, to the extent practicable, opportunities for students to participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Opportunities include: formal physical education, recess, interscholastic sports, intramural sports, physical activity programs, etc.
- f. Each elementary school should strive, in scheduling programs and activities, to include a daily recess period of at least 20 minutes, which is not used as a punishment or a reward. Where possible, recess should be scheduled before lunch.
- g. Adequate equipment is available for all students to participate in physical activity. Physical activity facilities on school grounds are safe and well-maintained.
- h. The school district will provide information to families and community members to help them incorporate physical activity into their lives and institute programs that support physical activity, such as walking and intramural programs, etc.
- i. It is the intent of the policy to support recreational and other after-school programs for students and community members by allowing access to the district's physical activity facilities outside of the normal school day.

**IV. Other School Based Activities**

- a. After-school programs will encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyles.
- b. The district's wellness policy goals are considered when planning school-based activities (such as school events, field trips, dances, and assemblies).
- c. Foods and beverages sold at fundraisers and school-sponsored events will include healthy choices and provide age-appropriate selections for elementary, middle and high schools. The school district will have a list of recommended foods/beverages to sell, as well as ideas for fundraising activities (which support physical activity events and ideas other than selling food).

## **V. Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available on Campus During the School Day**

- a. Foods and beverages sold on campus during the school day will offer a variety of age-appropriate, healthy choices and should include selections that fall under the *Choose Sensibly* program<sup>1</sup>. Foods sold on campus include: vending machines, a la carte sales, beverage contracts and concession stands/student stores.
- b. Food & Nutrition Services will take every measure to ensure that the foods and beverages they offer meet the nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal regulations/guidelines.
- c. School administration, in consultation with Food & Nutrition Services, will choose the competitive food<sup>2</sup> selections.
- d. Snacks in the classroom will support healthy choices, emphasizing fruits, vegetables and water.

## **VI. Food Safety/Environment**

- a. All foods and beverages available on campus should comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.
- b. Schools, to the extent possible, will provide students adequate time to eat, at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 15 minutes for lunch, from the time the student is seated.
- c. To encourage children to eat breakfast, schools will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program, notify parents and students of its availability, and make healthy breakfast items more accessible (e.g. "grab & go" packaging, vending items, sell at school store, etc.).
- d. Lunch periods are scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible.
- e. Schools should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
- f. Dining areas are clean and have enough space for seating students.
- g. Students will be reminded and encouraged to clean their hands before eating.
- h. Food is not used as a reward or a punishment for student behaviors, unless it is detailed in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- i. Students will be discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about sanitation, allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

## **VII. Food & Nutrition Services Program**

- a. Food & Nutrition Services is an essential educational support activity that aims to be financially self-supporting.
- b. Food & Nutrition Services will ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn well.
- c. The district will employ a food & nutrition services director, who is properly qualified, certified and/or credentialed, to administer the school food service program.
- d. All school food service personnel shall have adequate training in food service operations, and are considered an integral part of the school community.
- e. Schools will prevent the overt identification of students eligible for free and reduced-price school meals by using electronic identification and payment systems.
- f. For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the food service operations are limited to food service staff and authorized personnel.

## **VIII. Monitoring/Review**

- a. The superintendent (or designee) will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.
- b. School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent or designee.

<sup>1</sup> *Choose Sensibly* was initiated by the New York School Nutrition Association to provide support to schools seeking to change the buying patterns of their students. By adopting standards for a la carte snacks and beverages that support the Dietary Guidelines and identifying those choices, school food service departments hope to educate students to make wise choices for snacks. This campaign is designed to be implemented school-wide wherever snacks and beverages are offered or sold. See appendix for actual document.

<sup>2</sup> USDA defines competitive foods as foods offered at school, other than meals served through USDA's school meal programs (i.e., school lunch, school breakfast, and after-school snack programs).

## **References/Resources**

- Action for Healthy Kids: [www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org)
- Action for Healthy Kids, Arizona State Team: [www.asu.edu/educ/eps/CERU/Guidelines/CERU-0401-210-RCC.pdf](http://www.asu.edu/educ/eps/CERU/Guidelines/CERU-0401-210-RCC.pdf).
- Alabama Action for Healthy Kids: [http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/AFHK/team\\_center](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/AFHK/team_center)
- Centers for Disease Control: [www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth)
- Food and Research Action Center: [www.frac.org](http://www.frac.org)
- Getlinger, Mary Jane, et al., Food waste is reduced when elementary-school children have recess before lunch. Journal of the American Dietetic Association, September 1996 \* Volume 96 \* Number 9 \* p906 to p908
- Healthy Hearts For Kids: [www.healthyhearts4kids.org](http://www.healthyhearts4kids.org)
- Healthy Steps: [www.pecogit.com/HealthySteps](http://www.pecogit.com/HealthySteps)
- Journal of the American Dietetic Association, February 2005: Nutrition and the School Environment
- Keys to Excellence: [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org)
- Model School Wellness Policies: [www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org](http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org)
- Move For life: [www.nysphysicalactivity.org/move](http://www.nysphysicalactivity.org/move)
- National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity: [www.nanacoalition.org](http://www.nanacoalition.org)
- National Association for Sport and Physical Education: [www.aahperd.org](http://www.aahperd.org)
- National Association of State Boards of Education: [www.nasbe.org](http://www.nasbe.org)
- New York State School Food Service Association-Choose Sensibly: [www.nyssfsa.org/indnews\\_item.cfm](http://www.nyssfsa.org/indnews_item.cfm)
- Nutrition Integrity: [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org)
- School Health Index: [www.apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/](http://www.apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/)
- Statewide Center for Healthy Schools: [www.nyshealthyschools.org](http://www.nyshealthyschools.org)
- Texas Department of Agriculture: Square Meals [www.squaremeals.org](http://www.squaremeals.org)
- United States Department of Agriculture-Dietary Guidelines for Americans: [www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines](http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines)
- United States Department of Agriculture-Team Nutrition: [www.fns.usda.gov/tn](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn)
- United States Department of Agriculture: [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov)
- Walk and Bike to School: [www.walktoschool-usa.org](http://www.walktoschool-usa.org)
- Wisconsin Association of School Boards: [www.wasb.org/policy/focusoct03.html](http://www.wasb.org/policy/focusoct03.html)

## **Appendix**

- Laws concerning Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value and Competitive Foods
- New York *Choose Sensibly* program

**LAWS CONCERNING FOODS OF MINIMAL NUTRITIONAL VALUE  
AND COMPETITIVE FOODS**

FEDERAL REGULATION: Part 210.11 of the National School Lunch Program and Part 220.12 of the School Breakfast Program regulations prohibit certain foods from being sold in food service areas during the breakfast or lunch period.

FOODS OF MINIMAL NUTRITIONAL VALUE: A food that provides less than 5 percent of the US RDA for eight specified nutrients per serving, and/or per 100 calories. The nutrients specified are protein, vitamins A and C, niacin, riboflavin, thiamine, calcium, and iron.

The prohibited foods specifically include soda water, water ices (excluding ices containing fruit or fruit juice), chewing gum, hard candy, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, fondants (soft mints, candy corn), licorice, spun candy (cotton candy) and candy-coated popcorn.

NEW YORK STATE LAW: This law regarding the sale of non-nutritious foods is even more stringent. Chapter 647 of the Laws of 1987 prohibits the sale of the above-mentioned items, including all candy, from the beginning of the school day until the end of the last scheduled meal period in all parts of the building, in all public schools, regardless of whether or not the school participates in the Federal Child Nutrition Programs.

A public school cannot sell or serve soda or candy of any type in the student store or from a machine located anywhere in the building before the last lunch period ends.

In a non-public school, the only time foods of minimal nutritional value are not allowed to be sold to students is during the lunch period; the food service area is the only location that they may not be sold.

COMPETITIVE FOODS: The sale of competitive foods may be allowed in the food service area during the lunch period only if all income from the sale of such foods accrues to the benefit of the nonprofit school food service or the school or student organizations approved by the school.

## **New York School Nutrition Association Choose Sensibly Program**

To help ensure the health and well being of the children in our schools, NYSNA developed a program, called Choose Sensibly. The program puts the Dietary Guideline recommendations into practice by identifying snacks that are moderate in fat, sugar and sodium.

While we cannot force students to change what they select to eat (they must make that change for themselves), we can provide the education component to help them learn to make that choice. This program encourages students to apply what they are being taught in the classroom in order to make wise snack selections. Reading nutrition labels to make sensible choices is a skill students can develop with practice. Learning to make sensible choices will provide children with knowledge of nutrition that they can use throughout their lives. We can provide information which can help children select wisely. After looking at many possible ways of accomplishing this, NYSNA decided to adopt one that is easy to monitor.

To be considered a *sensible choice*, a snack should contain:

- One serving per package
- Fat = 7 grams or less
- Saturated Fat = 2 grams or less
- Sodium = 360 mg or less
- Sugar = 15 grams or less

For beverages, the standards are:

- One serving per package
- All low fat milk and low fat flavored milk
- Juice drinks must contain at least 25% real juice
- Water or flavored waters without added sugar, artificial sweeteners or caffeine
- Beverages with 10 mg or less of caffeine per serving

The program:

- Promotes the value of education and information to help children make informed choices.
- Follows the dietary guidelines to choose foods that support good health.
- Recognizes there are not good and bad foods, but that some foods are better nutritional choices.
- Is easy to implement and has a message, sensible choice, which is easy to understand.

This is not a simple problem. It will take years to change eating habits, but this is a first step. Additionally, the rest of the school district should be encouraged to do the same things, in school stores, classroom parties, PTA sales, etc. This is not the only answer, but it is one small step towards changing a trend.