

Wellness Policy

Wellness Policy: The is committed to providing an environment that promotes and protects our children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the district to:

- Engage teachers, students, food service professionals, health professionals and other community members in implementing, monitoring, and updating district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies semi- annually.
- Provide all students from Pre-K through Grade 12 with opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Sell and/or serve food and beverages that meet or exceed the nutritional recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Healthy Hungry Free Kids Act (HHFKA)*.
- Provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet or exceed the health and nutritional needs of students, including the nutritional content of such foods. The nutritional content of such foods will be made available through web sites or some other convenient format. Accommodations may be made, whenever possible, for the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning. The district will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for the student to eat.
- Participate in available federal school meal programs.
- Provide nutrition education and physical education Pre-K through Grade 12 in order to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity. Schools will also establish connections between health education programs, school meal programs and related community services.
- Ensure that schools will not use food or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior unless such foods meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually as set forth within this policy (with the exception of IEP accommodations). Schools will not withhold food or beverages as a negative consequence. Physical activity will not be used as a negative consequence.

Wellness Practices and Protocols

To achieve these policy goals, the District adopts the following Implementing Protocols:

I. School Health Advisory Council

A School Health Advisory Council (“Council”) will monitor, review, and as necessary, recommend revisions to the District’s Wellness Policy and Implementing Protocols. The Council will serve as a resource to schools for implementing the policy and protocols as part of its overall mission. It will report annually to the Superintendent, or designee, and principals, or designees, of each school who will take appropriate steps to ensure that the Wellness policy and Implementing Protocols are followed. Members of the Council will include individuals who represent the schools and community such as: parents, students, representatives of the school lunch program, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers and health professionals. Council members will be appointed by the superintendent or designee.

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

A. School Meals

1. Standards:

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

- Meet or exceed nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations
- Be appealing to children and be served in clean and pleasant settings
- Offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA)
- Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain; and do not contain hydrogenated fat

The nutritional content of school food meal items will be made available on menus, a website, and on cafeteria menu boards.

2. 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:

- To the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program;

- Notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program at participating schools
- Encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

3. Free and Reduced-priced Meals. Schools 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 school meals.

4. Meal Times and Scheduling. Schools:

- Will provide students with a reasonable time to eat after sitting down for breakfast and sitting down for lunch
- Should schedule meal periods at appropriate times
- Will provide students access to handwashing before they eat meals or snacks

5. Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

6. Sharing of Foods and Beverages. Schools should discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

B. Foods and Beverages Sold Individually

This section applies to food and beverages that are sold individually such as foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, vending machines, cafeteria a la carte (snack) lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.

1. Elementary Schools. Food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, water, or any beverage approved by nutrition and portion size standards, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

2. Middle and High School. In the middle and high school, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte (snack) lines, vending machines, and student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards.

3. Beverages.

Allowed: water, seltzer water without added sugars or artificial sweeteners. Natural flavoring or carbonation is allowed. All juices should be 100% fruit and vegetable with no added sugars, juice portions will comply with nutritional and portion size standards. Milk allowed is to be unflavored low fat(1%or less)and fat free or flavored milk with no more than 22 grams of sugar per 8 oz serving size; low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent non dairy beverages (to be defined by USDA)

Not Allowed: soft drinks; sports drinks; iced teas; any fruit or vegetable juice that is not 100%..

4. Foods. A food item sold individually:

- Will have less than 35% of their total calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and hydrogenated fat combined (although hydrogenated fats have been completely eliminated as of 2009);
- Will have less than 35% of its weight from added sugars
- As lower sodium food products become available, food items will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.
- Caloric value of foods will meet the standards of the HHFKA .

A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 100% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

5. Portion Sizes. Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually will comply with the HHFKA guidelines to those listed below:

In the case of a la carte entrees and side dishes should not exceed the calorie count of entrée items of equivalent portion size offered as part of the National School Lunch Program.(

6. Fundraising Activities. Whenever possible, fundraising activities will encourage healthy food choices and/or will promote physical activity (such as: fun runs, walks, car washes, etc.).

7. Snacks. Snacks served during the school day 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. Candy should not be served for a snack or at all at school. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations.

- 8. Rewards.** Schools will not use food, candy or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior. Physical activity will not be used as a negative consequence.
- 9. Celebrations.** Schools will encourage parents and teachers to have food-free parties and celebrations. Information on food allergies will be made available to teachers.
- 10. School-sponsored Events.** Every effort will be made to encourage the sale of healthy and good-tasting foods and beverages at such events.

III. Nutrition Education and Promotion

A. Goals. The Winchester School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. The District's goal is to provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

1. Provides students, as part of a standards/research-based program, with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
2. Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices
3. Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise).

B. Communications with Parents. The District will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. Examples of such support may include: sending home nutrition information, posting nutrition tips on school websites, and providing nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The District will provide parents a list of foods that meet the District's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.

The District will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day.

C. Food Marketing in Schools. School-based food marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (as discussed above). School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

D. Staff Wellness. Winchester School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will support staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

IV. Physical Education and Physical Activity Opportunities

A. Physical Education (P.E.) K-12. All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities and special health-care needs should receive physical education as required.

B. Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting. 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 physical education class. Classroom health education will complement 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.

C. Daily Recess. All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

D. Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School. Schools will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs, as the budget allows.

E. Physical Activity and Punishment. School staff will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

F. Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours. To the extent possible, school spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. Facilities are available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs in a manner consistent with School Committee Policy.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

A. Monitoring. The Superintendent or designee will monitor the district-wide wellness policy goals. Each school principal or designee will monitor the implementation and functioning of the policy goals in his/her school and will report on the school's performance to the school district Superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or District level, will comply with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report to the Superintendent or designee and the School Health Advisory Council.

The Superintendent or designee will receive from the School Health Advisory Council, a summary that reports on District-wide compliance with the District's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the District.

B. Policy Review.

The District will, as necessary, revise the wellness policy and develop plans to implement any necessary changes.