

RSU #74 DISTRICT WELLNESS

The RSU #74 school district recognizes the importance of physical and psychological health, and acknowledges the relationship between personal wellness and academic performance.

Additionally,

RSU #74 believes that students who learn and practice healthy lifestyles in their formative years may be more likely to be conscious of the importance of good nutrition and exercise as adults, practice healthy habits, and reduce their risk of obesity, diabetes, and other chronic diseases. The practice of healthy choices by positive role models has a direct impact on students by inspiring continued healthy lifestyle choices. RSU #74 is committed to providing a school culture that supports staff and student wellness. The schools will provide a physical and social environment that encourages safe physical activity and fosters the development of a positive attitude toward health and fitness. Relevant professional developments will be provided for school staff.

School Wellness Committee

To help achieve these policy goals, there will be a district wellness committee who is appointed and meet regularly.

The district wellness committee shall serve as an advisory committee in regard to student wellness issues and is responsible for making recommendations related to the wellness policy.

With the prior approval of the superintendent or their designee, the district wellness committee may survey parents, students, and the community and/or conduct focus groups or community forums.

The district wellness committee shall provide periodic reports to the superintendent or their designee and, as requested, to the RSU #74 school board.

The current district RSU #74 wellness policy must be shared with the community via the RSU #74 district website. Copies are also available in each of the RSU #74 district schools.

Appointment and Role of the Wellness Committee

The district-wide wellness committee strives to include representation of at least one of each of the following:

- board member
- school administrator
- food services director/designee
- high school and middle school student representatives
- parent representative
- community representative
- school nurse
- PE teachers

The wellness committee may also include:

- teacher(s)
- guidance counselor
- social worker
- community organization or agency representative
- other staff, as designated by the board
- other persons, as designated by the board

NUTRITION STANDARDS

The district ensures that all meals provided by its food services program meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established under the Healthy Hunger-free Kids Act of 2010 (www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dietaryspecs.pdf). To the extent possible, school meals shall include adequate time for eating, should be scheduled at appropriate times, provides student access to hand washing and/or sanitizing, and whenever possible, recess will follow lunch, where applicable.

During the school day, foods and beverages sold outside of the school meal program (i.e., “competitive” foods and beverages) must meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School Nutrition standards, at a minimum. All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing must be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. 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 (USDA Smart Snacks in School rule). 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.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; in-school television, ~~such as Channel One~~; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; sales of fruit for fundraisers; and coupons for discount gym memberships.

Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

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

- Be appealing and attractive to children;
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at 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 nondairy alternatives (to be defined by the USDA);

- Ensure that all grains served are whole grains as required; and
- Include access to free drinking water

Breakfast

To encourage all children to 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 & promote a School Breakfast Program;
- arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation. Notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.

Meal Times and Scheduling

Schools:

- will provide students with adequate time to eat after sitting down for breakfast and for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11am and 1pm;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- strive to schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary schools);
- provide students access to handwashing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks;
- are allowed to eat lunch without the constraints of outdoor attire; and
- should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (*e.g.*, orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

School food service staff, at the school or district level, ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and report on this matter to the superintendent. In addition, the school district reports on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the district has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

Fundraising Activities

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities may not involve food or are encouraged to use only foods that meet the above nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually. (USDA Smart Snacks in School rule). Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district has an available list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

All food and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs during the school day (“competitive” foods and beverages) shall, at a minimum, meet the standards established in USDA’s Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools (Smart Snacks) rule. The standards are available at <http://fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>.

Snacks:

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs must make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving whole grains, 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 school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The district has an available list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

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

Rewards

Schools are encouraged not to use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and may not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment. Instead, all schools within the district must encourage using physical activity as a reward.

Celebrations

Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (USDA Smart Snacks in School rule.) The district has an available list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

School-sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances)

Foods and beverages offered at school-sponsored events outside the school day are encouraged to meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (USDA Smart Snacks in School rule).

Nutrition Education and Promotion

RSU #74 aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should 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;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes and provides training for teachers and other staff.

Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

RSU #74 strives to provide all students developmentally appropriate opportunities for physical activity through physical education classes, recess periods for elementary school students, and extracurricular activities (clubs, intramural, and interscholastic athletics). School programs are intended to build and maintain physical fitness and to promote healthy lifestyles. The schools should encourage parents to support their children's participation in physical activities, including available before-school and after-school programs.

Physical Education (P.E.) K-12

All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, should be scheduled to receive a minimum of 45 minutes/week for elementary students and 90 minutes/week for middle school students for the entire school year of physical education. All students in grades 9-12 including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, should be scheduled to receive, at a minimum, an average of 137 minutes/week for four semesters of physical education. All physical education is taught by a certified physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) are not a substitute for meeting the physical education requirement. Students must spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

All elementary school students should be scheduled to 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.

Schools should discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. 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 where they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

All middle and high schools must offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. All high schools and middle schools, as appropriate, must offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools should offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all faculty, students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

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

Physical Activity and Punishment

Teachers and other school personnel may not use physical activity or withhold opportunities for physical activity as punishment where practical.

Safe Routes to School

The school district assesses and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety applies at all times. Refer to Policy KF – Community Use of School Facilities for more specific information.

Communications with Parents

The district supports parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites and monthly lunch 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/school has an available list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities for parents.

The district/school provides information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and supports parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Staff Wellness

RSU #74 highly values the health and wellbeing of every staff member and plans to implement activities and policies that encourages administrators, staff and visitors to model nutritious food choices, physically active lifestyles, and healthy eating habits. The district wellness committee may also explore and make recommendations to staff wellness issues.

Other School-Based Wellness Activities

The schools, with prior approval of the superintendent/designee, may implement other appropriate programs that support consistent wellness messages and promote healthy eating, physical activity, and other healthy living choices.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & POLICY REVIEW:

The superintendent/designee shall be responsible for the implementation of the Wellness Policy, for monitoring efforts to meet the intent of this policy, and for reporting to the school board/community on an annual basis. Monitoring may include surveys or solicitation of input from students, parents, staff, and school administrators. In each school, the principal or designee ensures compliance with those policies in his/her school and reports annually on the school's compliance to the school district superintendent or designee.

Reports may include, but are not limited to:

- The status of the school environment in regard to student wellness issues;
- Evaluation of the school food nutrition program and compliance with nutrition guidelines;
- Summary/list of wellness programs and activities in the schools;
- Feedback from the Health Advisory Council/Wellness Team, or its subcommittees; and
- Recommendations for policy, program or curriculum revisions.

Any person who observes practices inconsistent with the District Wellness Policy should contact the school principal. If inconsistencies are still not adequately addressed, any person may contact the superintendent.

The District Wellness Committee will review the District Wellness Policy and other related policies as needed and make necessary recommendations for revisions to the superintendent or designee.

Legal Reference: 42 U.S.C. §1751