File: ADF - WELLNESS POLICY / NUTRITION, FOOD ALLERGIES, PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

MISSION AND GOALS

The District is committed to providing a school environment that enhances the learning and development of lifelong wellness practices. To that end, the District promotes actions, behaviors, and learning that create a healthy and safe environment for all students, faculty, and staff.

It is the School Committee´s goal to promote all students´ physical, emotional, and social well-being through a coordinated school wellness program. Coordinated school wellness improves students´ physical and mental health and enhances their capacity to learn. Our school wellness initiative endeavors to inspire students' short- and long-term health through education and activities that reinforce healthy behaviors and habits, build awareness, and foster a positive mindset.

In order to enhance students' awareness and consideration of self and others' well-being, it is the intent of the Committee that this policy reflects a commitment to the development of the whole child throughout the child's tenure in the District. The wellness policy takes into account the unique health needs and well-being of all children.

The District's Wellness Policy includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing a healthy and safe environment supported by school nursing and other related health services
- Ensuring the availability of nutritious school meals, snacks, and fresh water
- Providing guidance and social and emotional support services
- Offering comprehensive, coordinated health and physical education programs
- Ensuring opportunities for increased physical activity

A link to this Wellness Policy and Implementation Guidelines is posted on the District's website.

FOOD SERVICES

Introduction

It is the policy of the District that all foods and beverages sold to students during the school day on any property under the jurisdiction of the district will meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) school meal and Smart Snacks in School (Smart Snacks) nutrition standards.

School Meal Requirements

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will:

- Comply with the National School Lunch and/or Breakfast standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for the ages/grade levels served, as specified in 7

CFR 210.10 or 220.8, as applicable. Found in identified sections on https://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp

- Include breakfast through the USDA School Breakfast Program
- Allow for at least 20 minutes to eat lunch after purchasing food
- Be appealing and attractive to children
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings
- Offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Offer a variety of whole grains
- Include plant-based protein sources
- Offer low fat, fat-free, and dairy-free milk options
- The healthiest choices, such as salads and fruit, will be prominently displayed in the cafeterias to encourage students to make healthy choices
- Ensure that free water is available in the cafeteria during meal times (consistent with amendments made by section 203 of the HHFKA)
- Endeavor to provide food free of pesticides, herbicides, chemicals, heavy metals, and glyphosate
- School meals will include fresh, locally-grown foods whenever possible
- Ensure strict attention to allergens

Free and Reduced-priced Meals

Applications for free/reduced priced meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year. The application is also available on the district website. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the students and prevent overt identification of eligible students.

Schools must serve students a reimbursable meal, regardless of whether the student has money to pay or owes money. Schools will reach out to the family of a child with an unpaid balance to assess whether the https://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/school-breakfast-program child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

The cafeterias are cashless; all students, regardless of the type of payment they make for school meals or the food being purchased, are given a code to enter at the cash register.

Increasing Participation in the School Meal Program

Students will have the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural, and ethnic favorites.

Food services shall provide periodic food promotions to encourage taste testing of healthy new foods being introduced on the menu.

Morning bus routes will be scheduled to allow students to arrive at school in time to eat breakfast.

Tutoring, club, or organizational meetings will not be scheduled during the lunch period unless students are allowed to consume lunch during meetings.

The district shall use the USDA's Smarter Lunchroom tools and other resources available on the USDA website.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

The sharing of food and beverages with one another during meal or snack times is discouraged due to students with food allergies and dietary restrictions.

Nutrition Information

Nutrition information for all food and food products is available for review on the District website.

Food Safety

All foods made available through the food services department will comply with state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.

Food Allergies / Dietary Restrictions

Student information regarding food allergies and dietary restrictions will be entered into the computerized POS (point of sale) program with parental permission. This will serve as another precaution for protecting students with food allergies and restrictions.

Drinking Water

Free drinking water is available for self-service in the cafeteria during mealtimes and in hallways throughout the day.

Caffeinated Beverages

USDA Smart Snacks standards prohibit the sale of foods and beverages containing caffeine in elementary and middle schools.

Competitive Foods

Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages sold or provided in:

- A la carte items in school cafeterias
- School stores and snack bars
- Vending machines (including the staff/faculty room)
- Fundraisers

The School Day is defined as beginning at midnight prior and ending 30 minutes after the final bell.

All foods (i.e. Competitive foods) available to students during the school day will follow Smart Snack Standards and the Massachusetts nutrition standards, whichever is stricter. Reference: MA 105 CMR 225.000: Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools.: https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school

The Committee recognizes the value of fundraisers for school-sanctioned student groups and clubs. Student fundraising activities involving the sale of competitive foods or beverages are permitted to the extent that federal and state laws and regulations allow and may occur with the permission of the Superintendent or designee.

Smart Snacks nutrition standards apply to all foods and beverages sold to students through district-sponsored fundraisers. There are no exemptions in Massachusetts.

Food Served at Parties and Celebrations

In Elementary Schools, due to concerns about food safety and food allergies, children will be recognized on their birthdays by being given special privileges, such as being line leader or teacher's helper for the day. No food will be provided by the school for classroom celebration. We encourage families to bring in healthy choices for snack time wherever possible.

Food Served or Sold in Before/After Care Programs, Clubs, and After School Programming

Foods and beverages served or sold to students in before/aftercare, whether run by the school or an outside party will meet A-List standards.

Food as a Reward or Punishment

Schools will not use food or beverages as rewards for academic, classroom, or sports performances or as a punishment. However, Individual(ized) Academic Plans (IAP) or Individual(ized) Education Plans (IEP) may use food as a reward when it meets the students' needs.

Food and Beverage Marketing on School Property and in Educational Materials

Food and beverage advertising and other marketing includes the name or depiction of products, brands, logos, trademarks, spokespersons, and characters.

The District only permits marketing on school property during the school day of those foods and beverages that meet Smart Snack nutrition standards, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity. ALL advertising of food and beverages that cannot be sold to students during the school day/do not meet Smart Snack nutrition standards is prohibited.

Advertising or marketing of foods that do not meet Smart Snack standards is prohibited on:

- School property (i.e. any property or facility owned or leased by the school district or school, such as school buildings and campus, outside and areas adjacent to school buildings, athletic fields, parking lots, buses, or other facilities used at any time for school-related activities) unless posted thirty minutes after the school day ends or later. Please note, those posted at that time will need to be removed before the start of the next school day.

- Signs, banners, scoreboards
- Educational materials
- Food displays, vending machines, and food and beverage containers and coolers
- In school publications and media (i.e. advertisements in school publications, school radio stations, in-school television, computer screensavers, school-sponsored Internet sites), and announcements on the public announcement system

Given concerns about student exposure to marketing, district schools will no longer participate in incentive or fundraising programs that promote foods that do not meet Smart Snack programs. Parent Teacher Associations are asked to research new fundraising opportunities to replace programs promoting unhealthy foods. For inquiries about what food items meet criteria for fundraising, please contact Rob Kilham, Food Services Director, at rkilham@bbrsd.org.

Staff Training

The USDA Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition Programs are followed to ensure that professional development in the area of food and nutrition is provided for food service directors, managers, and staff. New and current food service directors must have at least 12 hours; new and current managers must have at least 10 hours; new and current staff must have at least 6 hours of training. Requirement information available at: www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-03-02/pdf/2015-04234.pdf.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

Introduction

The District's Nutrition Education teaches skills that are behavior-focused, interactive, and participatory when possible.

Nutrition Education is provided and promoted in Fitness and Health classes and through the Nurse's Offices so that students acquire the skills and knowledge to make healthy food choices.

Nutrition education will provide the knowledge and skills necessary to promote life-long health and wellness.

Nutrition topics shall be integrated within the comprehensive health education curriculum, the broader curriculum where appropriate, and harmonize with the school meal program whenever possible.

Nutrition education will encompass awareness of agriculture and the food system, and promote experiential learning (for example through field trips to local farms and growing a school garden).

Nutrition education will be taught at every grade level (K-12). For example:

- Elementary, middle, and high school students will receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education.

- At the elementary level, the components of healthy nutritional practices are taught through game play, physical activity, and classroom lessons.
- Health classes promote eating fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products, healthy protein, as well as low-fat and fat-free dairy products or non-dairy alternatives.
- Students in grade 8 learn about functions and sources of macronutrients and micronutrients as well as key components of a balanced diet in Middle School Health and Wellness.
- In High School Health and Wellness, students expand on essential nutrients and strategies for developing healthy lifelong nutrition choices.
- Nutrition education also incorporates lessons helping children acquire skills for reading nutrition labels, building awareness of misleading marketing strategies, and creating healthful menus.
- Whenever possible, the Fitness and Health Department links with the Department of Nursing and the Food Service Director to collaborate on the school meal program, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services.

Department of Nursing

The school nurses actively promote healthy eating to students through:

- Individual advice
- Collaboration with Fitness and Health teachers
- Newsletter articles about benefits of eating healthy breakfasts, healthy food choices, and about the benefits of physical activity
- Bulletin board displays about healthy snacks, eating breakfast, exercise, etc.
- Working with families to increase their understanding of the importance of whole foods, fruits and vegetables, and exercise (daily physical activity) for everyone in the family

Fitness and Health Education and Opportunities

Fitness and health education and opportunities for physical activity are essential elements of each school's instructional program. The program shall provide the opportunity for all students to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to participate in a lifetime of healthy physical activity.

- All school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness and increase physical activity are consistent with local policy goals, Massachusetts State Frameworks and the National Frameworks for Physical Education and Health.
- Students are provided opportunities for physical activity during the school day through Fitness and Health courses and during recess period for elementary school students.

- Families should not assume that the school is or will be responsible for ensuring that their children will receive ALL of the national recommendations for moderate and vigorous activity during the daily school hours. Families need to encourage additional physical activity in order to achieve the standard for moderate to vigorous exercise on a daily basis.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (P.E.) K-12

Physical Education (P.E.) Curriculum

The District's comprehensive physical education curriculum identifies the progression of skill development in grades K-12. The physical education curriculum will be aligned with established state physical education standards. Physical education curriculum revision will follow a formally established periodic review cycle congruent to other academic subjects.

Physical Education (P.E.) Classes

The instructional focus is teaching the knowledge and skills needed to live a healthy and active lifestyle and foster enjoyment for lifelong physical activity. Physical education classes will provide a safe physical and social environment where students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills, and knowledge. Physical education classes will include instruction in individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage lifelong physical activity.

All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health care needs, and in alternative educational programs, will participate in physical education classes equivalent to:

Grades	**Frequency & Duration of Physical Education.**
Kindergarten and Grade 1	45 minutes one time per week.
2 - 5	45 minutes one time per week.
6 - 8	Grade six meets for 48 minutes every other day for one semester. Grades 7 and 8 meet for 48 minutes every other day for the whole school year.
9 - 12	Grades 9-12 meet for 48 minutes every other day for the whole year. The year that students take Health (also for 48 minutes every other day, all year), Physical Education is optional.

Physical Education (P.E.) Exemptions

Students may receive exemptions from Physical Education class due to disability, religious, or medical reasons. Physical Education class may not be substituted by participating in school athletics or outside of school physical activities.

Physical Education (P.E.) Teachers

Physical education for grades K-12 is required to be taught by a certified/licensed teacher who is endorsed to teach physical education. The District shall provide all physical education teachers with annual professional development opportunities that are focused on physical education/physical activity topics and competencies specifically for physical education teachers.

Physical Education (P.E.) Facilities and Equipment

Adequate and well-maintained equipment will be available for all students to participate in physical education classes.

Physical activity facilities on school grounds will be safe.

The District will develop joint-use agreements with community partners in order to provide expanded physical activity opportunities for all students and community members.

Daily Recess

All elementary school students will have a minimum of 20 minutes of daily, supervised recess.

- Schools will preferably hold recess outdoors, weather permitting.
- Schools will encourage, verbally and through the provision of space and equipment, moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Physical Activity as a Reward or Punishment

We strongly recommend staff use physical activity as a reward when feasible. For example, extra recess may be provided when time allows.

Students shall not be required to engage in physical activity as punishment. For example, students may not be singled out to run extra laps or perform other physical activities that the entire class is not engaged in, as a behavioral consequence.

Recess, Physical Education, or other physical activities will not be withheld from students as a punishment for poor behavior or incomplete class work.

Optional Physical Activity Opportunities After School

School-based activities are offered beyond the school day to enhance the learning in fitness classes.

The High School, Middle School, and Elementary Schools, as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. The District will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students.

Additional District Practices to Promote Wellness

Beyond Nutrition and Physical Education and Food Services, the District can broaden and amplify its impact on student and community wellness through additional policies and practices.

Nursing Services

- All students and staff have access to nursing health services.

- Requirements for physical examinations and immunizations are enforced according to the Department of Public Health guidelines.
- Student health concern information relevant to the students' participation in school is collected and parent permission is obtained in order to share this information with appropriate faculty and staff.
- A unit of food allergies is taught to all students in elementary school by classroom teachers and nurses.
- Annual health screenings are conducted each year according to the Department of Public Health guidelines.
- The school nurses are prepared to respond to any type of emergency that may occur at school including disaster, terrorism, and pandemic outbreaks.
- There is a medical director for the school health program available to consult with the school nurses and Superintendent as needed.
- Parents of children who do not have health insurance are referred to Mass Health or the Children's Medical Security Plan.

Healthy and Safe Environment

The District will provide a safe environment before, during, and after school:

- All buildings will meet health and safety standards and codes.
- All schools will be free of tobacco, nicotine delivery services including e-cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs.
- The District will stay abreast of emerging data relevant to the health of the school community.
- The schools will have zero tolerance for violence and harassment.
- The District supports Social and Emotional Health (see below).

Social and Emotional Health

The District values the social and emotional well-being of students, faculty, and staff, and:

- The District encourages a culture where everyone is valued and treated with respect, and fosters appreciation and respect for differences.
- Provides a supportive environment that includes counseling, guidance, and social work.
- Encourages students to develop skills to express thoughts and feelings respectfully and responsibly.
- Facilitates student participation in the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey and other screening programs as determined by the District in order to collect data to be used for program development, student support, and risk assessment.

- Refers identified at-risk students to the appropriate resources.
- The social and emotional health of students is additionally supported by outside community resources when warranted.

Staff Wellness

The District values the health and well-being of every staff member. Personal efforts to maintain a healthy lifestyle are supported and encouraged.

- The health and safety of all staff is a priority for the District.
- The District provides a work environment that is consistent with occupational safety laws.
- An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all employees.
- Staff members are encouraged to use the Fitness Center at the High School before and/or after school hours.
- School staff members shall be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. For example, by participating in programs and contests, and being spotlighted for healthy habits in communications.

Waste Disposal

The District recognizes its responsibility to the environment and takes steps to preserve it for future generations by:

- Recycling
- Composting food waste when possible
- Reducing waste generation to the extent possible (i.e. think before you print)
- Modeling environmentally sound practices and involving students and staff

The District Wellness Committee

The District Wellness Committee has been established to adopt student wellness as one of the core values in the District and ensure that the District has a system in place to protect and improve District health.

Committee Structure

Parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public are encouraged to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local school wellness policy.

Committee members will be recruited by the Superintendent, the School Committee, and existing District Wellness Committee members. The opportunity to participate on the District Wellness

Committee will be shared in District communications (i.e. email, social media, bulletin boards, newsletters, and word of mouth).

The Superintendent is responsible for appointing committee members and replacements as needed as well as appointing a liaison between the Superintendent's Office and the District Wellness Committee.

The District Wellness Committee shall have, at a minimum, representation from the following departments:

- Nursing
- Health and Fitness
- Teacher
- School nutrition/food service
- Parent representative
- School Committee representative
- Student representative
- School Administration
- Board of Health
- Community Youth Coordinator
- School Resource Officer

Function

The District Wellness Committee is responsible for the District Wellness Policy. It will develop, implement, monitor the progress of, conduct periodic review of, update, and disseminate the District Wellness Policy.

Committee members will be charged with making recommendations concerning school health/wellness policies, programs, and practices, in accordance with the District's needs and local, state, and federal law in the areas of:

- Health education
- School nutrition
- Physical education
- Social and emotional well-being

The District Wellness Committee will:

- Make recommendations regarding the establishment/function of school building-based wellness teams and initiatives.

- Address recommendations and suggestions from the group represented on the committee from the schools and community.
- Gather input from schools that may be affected by said goals and objectives.
- Incorporate general health data reflective of the community.
- Gather and disseminate information about current District programs and practices relating to student health.

The District Wellness Committee is charged with identifying goals and objectives for the school year.

- These goals and objectives must be observable and/or measurable.
- The committee must also establish a process or self-assessment tool to evaluate progress in reaching the goals and objectives.

The District Wellness Committee will meet at least four times during the school year.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for ensuring that the wellness policy is implemented throughout the schools and posted on the District's website. Schools shall promote the wellness policy to faculty, staff, parents, and students and post on each schools' website.

Annual Report

An annual report will be submitted to the Superintendent and the School Committee. The following information should be included in the report:

- Accomplishments during the school year
- Areas for development going forward based on identified goals and objectives

Triennial Evaluation

The District Wellness Committee shall conduct a thorough assessment of the wellness policy and its implementation every three years. The assessment will examine the extent to which our wellness policy compares to model policies, the appropriate implementation of our policy, and the progress we have made in achieving our goals. The assessment results will be shared with the Superintendent, School Committee, and the public, and will be posted on the District website. The District Wellness Committee shall use this assessment, along with the latest national recommendations pertaining to school health, to update the wellness policy and its implementation guidelines.

School Wellness Teams

The District Wellness Committee and Superintendent shall establish School Wellness Teams at each school in the District. The School Wellness Teams work at the school level to:

- Implement the District Wellness Policy in their school
- Provide input and feedback on policy and implementation to the District Wellness Committee

- Monitor progress towards goals
- Identify and communicate obstacles with implementation of the District Wellness Policy
- Ensure that school-specific plans and progress are reported on their school's website and shared with the local school community

The School Wellness Team can be composed of school administration, nursing, teachers, parents, and students.

The School Wellness Team meets quarterly.

REFERENCES

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, 1999

Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, John C Stalker Institute, Harvard School of Public Health, & Boston Public Health Commission. 2012. Healthy Students, Healthy Schools: Revised Guidance for Implementing the Massachusetts School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages

DPH FAQ on Competitive Food and Beverages
Memo: https://mcusercontent.com/d8f37d1a90dacd97f207f0b4a/files/f93d4749-5ecd-3681-0841-10ae641217f5/MA_Competitive_Foods_Memo_September_2023.pdf

USDA Smart Snack guidelines: https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school

CDC Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child
Model https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wscc/index.htm

The USDA Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition
Programs www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-03-02/pdf/2015-04234.pdf

M.G.L. 111:223 (School nutrition)

M.G.L. 71:3 (Physical education)

105 CMR 215 (Standards for School Wellness Committees)

105 CMR 225 (Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools)

105 CMR 200 (Physical Examination of School Children)

https://tools.johnstalkerinstitute.org/alist/alist.pdf

Approved: Berlin-Boylston/Union #60 School Committee - December 8, 2010

Boylston School Committee - December 8, 2010

Berlin School Committee - December 13, 2010

Berlin Boylston Regional School Committee - August 27, 2024

Revised: Berlin-Boylston Regional Transition School Committee - March 5, 2019

Berlin Boylston Regional School Committee - August 27, 2024

Berlin-Boylston Regional School Committee - February 11, 2025