

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Code</i>
	<b>WELLNESS POLICY ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION</b>	ADF

## **Preamble**

As outlined in the Holliston Public Schools' (HPS) Strategic Plan, we believe in educating the whole child. This policy describes our approach to promoting the healthy development of every student in our district. HPS is also committed to promoting healthy lifestyle choices for faculty and staff, as they serve as role models for students. HPS will endeavor to support parents'/guardians' efforts to keep their children healthy by providing information on nutrition and providing opportunities for daily physical activity.

### **I. Introduction**

Research strongly shows that good nutrition, physical activity, and social-emotional well-being are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes.

Inadequate consumption of specific foods, including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades. [i][ii][iii] Research also suggests that sugar has negative impacts on memory and learning.[iv][v]

Students who are physically active perform better academically.[vi][vii][viii][ix]

HPS has also identified social-emotional development as vital to every student's health and wellness.

In our annual goal setting process, HPS will consider district improvement goals related to wellness.

### **II. Duties and Responsibilities**

HPS should convene a representative Holliston Wellness Council (HWC) that meets at least four times per year to 1) recommend goals for school health and safety programs, 2) serve as an advisory board to the School Committee, and 3) make recommendations regarding the Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition (Wellness Policy), subject to final approval by the Holliston School Committee.

HWC should serve as a resource to parents/guardians and may send home nutrition information and post nutrition tips on school websites.

The HWC membership will represent all school levels (elementary and secondary schools) include (to the extent possible) but not be limited to: parents/guardians; students; representatives of the school nutrition program; physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals; school administrators; school committee members; health professionals; and the general public.

The superintendent or designee(s) should convene the HWC and facilitate development of and updates to the Wellness Policy, and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy.

HPS should actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy, and implementation status. HPS will make this information available via the district website and/or district-wide communications.

At least once every three years, HPS should evaluate compliance with the Wellness Policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the HPS Wellness Policy.

### **III. Nutrition**

#### **A. School Meal Program**

HPS is committed to serving healthy, affordable meals to children, which 1) include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products, 2) are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams of *trans* fat per serving, and 3) meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal program's objective is to provide a healthy meal to school children, mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices.

All schools within HPS participate in the USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma related to receiving free and reduced-price school meals and ensure the anonymity of eligible students.

The American Heart Association recommends that children ages 2-18 consume no more than 25 grams (six teaspoons) of added sugar per day. Therefore, the school food services director should consider this recommendation when designing menu selections or choosing snacks to offer students.

Schools should communicate with students and parents/guardians about foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthy, appealing choices. This may be achieved through taste-tests, menu suggestions, Wellness Council meetings, and surveys regarding the menu. In addition, HPS should share nutritional information about school lunches with parents/guardians and students through menus, the HPS website, or point-of-purchase materials.

Where practicable, lunch will follow the recess period to better support learning, behavior, and healthy eating.

#### **B. Staff Qualifications and Professional Development**

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet state and federal hiring and professional development requirements.

#### **C. Access to Foods and Beverages During the School Day**

HPS is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students for purchase on school property during the school day (e.g. vending machines, school stores) support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold outside of the school meal program (e.g., "competitive" foods and beverages) will come from the **John C. Stalker Institute of Food and Nutrition's "A-List" (the Stalker "A List")**.

#### **D. Celebrations and Rewards**

All foods offered on the school campus should meet or exceed the Stalker “A List” nutrition standards, including the following situations:

1. The Holliston School Committee encourages the use of non-food activities (i.e., mystery reader, star of the day, etc.) and/or combining celebrations in order to limit the quantity of food coming into the classroom.
2. HPS will provide to parents/guardians the Stalker “A List” and/or a school-specific snack list, subject to school nurse approval, to help educate parents/guardians about healthy snack choices.
3. If a child does not have a snack one day, the snack provided should be on the Stalker “A-List.” Exceptions may be made for children with medical conditions and/or documented special needs. Students should report to the classroom teacher or health office if a snack is needed.
4. Food should not be withheld as a punishment or consequence. The Holliston School Committee discourages the use of food or beverages as rewards or incentives.

#### **E. Fundraising Activities**

Fundraising activities cannot include the sale of food to students on school premises during the school day.

#### **F. Nutrition Education**

HPS will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is consistent with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks;
- Encourages students to be physically active beyond physical education classes;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- Encourages classroom teachers to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate; and
- Includes nutrition education training for appropriate teachers and other staff.

#### **G. Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools**

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day should be on the Stalker “A-List.”

#### **H. Breakfast**

Well-nourished children perform better in the classroom. Through newsletter articles, take-home materials, and the HPS website, schools should encourage parents/guardians to provide a healthy breakfast for their children.

#### **I. Scheduling of Meals**

Whenever possible, schools should:

- provide time for students to eat within the parameters of the school schedule
- provide the opportunity for students to wash or sanitize hands before and after meals or snacks
- take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (i.e. orthodontia or high tooth-decay risk)

#### **IV. Physical Activity**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. HPS is committed to providing opportunities to contribute to that goal.

Teachers and other school personnel are strongly discouraged from curtailing or withholding opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as a disciplinary consequence. Students may be kept in from recess or excluded from a Physical Education class if the removal is necessary to protect the health, safety, and/or welfare of the student and/or other students and staff. Missed recess will not be used as a consequence for unfinished work, work avoidance, or missed homework. Alternative movement activities will be provided, if possible, if said consequence occurs.

##### **A. Physical Education**

HPS should provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education.

All students should be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. HPS will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

All elementary students in each grade should receive wellness/physical education for at least 50 minutes per week throughout the school year.

All middle school students are required to take the equivalent of one academic year of wellness/physical education during their three years at the school. All high school students are required to take one term of wellness/physical education each year.

##### **B. Recess (Elementary Schools)**

All full-day elementary school students should have at least 25 minutes of supervised recess per day, whenever possible. When outdoors, schools should encourage physical activity through the provision of age appropriate playground equipment, open space and verbal cueing.

##### **C. Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)**

HPS recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students should be offered periodic opportunities, independent of classroom transition periods, to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week.

##### **D. Before and After School Activities**

Secondary schools will offer interscholastic sports programs when resources and interest permit. Whenever possible, programs will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students.

## **V. Other Activities that Promote Student and Staff Wellness**

Schools in the district are encouraged to coordinate content that promotes student health, including social-emotional education, across curricular areas.

### **A. Staff Wellness and Health Promotion**

HPS encourages staff member participation in health promotion programs on healthy eating and weight management, which are available through the Town of Holliston, and are free or low-cost.

### **B. Professional Learning**

When feasible, HPS will offer professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class).

### **C. Parent/Guardian Communication**

HPS may provide information about physical education and other opportunities for school-based physical activities before, during, and after the school day. HPS should support parents'/guardians' efforts to keep their children active by sharing information about physical education and gross motor activities.

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Legal References:	Sec. 204, P.L. 108
Policy Cross Reference:	ADA; BA; EFDA; JJE; TLTA ; JJE
Procedure Reference:	

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[iv]Ted M. Hsu, Vaibhav R. Konanur, Lilly Taing, Ryan Usui, Brandon D. Kayser, Michael I. Goran, and Scott E. Kanoski. “Effects of Sucrose and High Fructose Corn Syrup Consumption on Spatial Memory Function and Hippocampal Neuroinflammation in Adolescent Rats.” HIPPOCAMPUS, Feb. 2015, Volume 25: 227–239

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