



**MASHPEE PUBLIC
SCHOOLS
WELLNESS POLICY**

Submitted by:

Members of The Health Advisory Council

Rev: 12/6/06, 6/4/8, 6/4/09, 5/8/13, 7/8/15, 8/9/17, 4/4/2018, 10/17/2018, 1/16/19, 5/27/2020, 5/12/21

On June 30, 2004, President Bush signed Public Law 108-265, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. Each local educational agency participating in a program authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq) or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq) shall have established a local school wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year.

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act requires that local wellness policies be designed and implemented at the local level. The development of local wellness policies must include local parents, teachers, administrators, school food service, school boards, and the public. The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act states that wellness policies must include goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school based activities that are designed to promote student wellness.

Policies will be reviewed for compliance to the federal law.

Wellness Policy Rationale

- Obesity rates continue to increase in the United States, affecting children, adolescents, and adults of all races, ethnicities, and income levels. Thirty-one percent (31%) of Massachusetts children and teens are obese or overweight according to the National Survey of Children's Health commissioned by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2013.
- Obese children have a seventy percent (70%) chance of being overweight or obese as adults—facing higher risks for many diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and several types of cancers. (CDC, 2013)
- Good eating habits and regular physical activity are critical for maintaining a healthy weight. Unfortunately, less than twenty-five percent (25%) of adolescents eat enough fruits and vegetables each day (CDC, 2013); fifty-one percent (51%) of Massachusetts children and teens are not exercising regularly, compared to forty-six percent (46%) nationwide according to the National Survey of Children's Health, 2013.
- The consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, including sports/energy drinks, by children and adolescents are widespread and continue to grow. There is heightened awareness of the risks of caffeine use, abuse, and even toxicity in children and adolescents. (June 2011, American Academy of Pediatrics) Over sixty percent (60%) of United States children ages 2 to 19 consumed at least one sugar-sweetened beverage daily, and roughly 30% consumed two or more per day according to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey conducted during the period of 2011 to 2014.

The research listed above presents an alarming reality for today's schools, communities, and families. The Mashpee School district acknowledges the vital need to provide a school environment that models health promotion and takes action to combat these rising health risks in children.

Mission Statement

The Mashpee Public School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Demonstrating commitment to the full development of our students and staff, the Mashpee School District endorses the following Wellness Policy developed by its Health Advisory Committee. This policy shall define the goals and means to further our students' understanding of the important role that good nutritional choices and physical activity will have on their lives. Central to this policy statement is the belief that success will be achieved from the combined efforts and encouragement of school staff and parents. We recognize wellness as a critical component to insure a student's academic performance.

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

Nutrition Education Goals

The primary goal of nutrition education is to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being.

- Nutrition education will be encouraged to be integrated across core content and specialized areas as appropriate.
- Professional development activities for nutrition education will be made available to staff.
- The school cafeteria serves as a learning opportunity to allow students to apply critical thinking skills taught in the classroom; for example providing choices.
- Nutrition education will include instruction related to awareness of media literacy as it relates to food advertising and its effects on health.
- Nutrition education will involve sharing information with families and the broader community, PTO, and School Councils to positively impact students and the health of the community.
- School district will provide information to families that encourage them to teach their children about health and nutrition and to provide nutritious meals for their families.
- Students will be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast
- Parents will provide healthy snacks for their children. Candy and certain baked goods such as cakes, cookies, brownies and cupcakes are not considered healthy choices for celebrations in the classroom. Some of the suggestions of healthy snacks could be: fruit cups, vegetables and dip, 100% fruit popsicles, yogurt and pretzels.

- Foods will not be used as a reward or punishment. Silent lunch is prohibited.
 - Mashpee Public Schools food services and school sponsored activities are peanut/tree nut-safe. The MPS district follows the May 2016 DESE Managing Life-Threatening Allergies in Schools guidelines.
 - All foods and beverages offered or sold throughout the school day by individuals or groups other than the Food Services Department must meet the Massachusetts School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages enacted December 5, 2014.

- Staff who are responsible for nutrition education shall be adequately prepared and will regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned. Preparation and professional development activities shall provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with skill practice in program-specific activities and instructional techniques and strategies designed to promote healthy eating habits.

- School staff are encouraged to model healthy eating habits whenever in the presence of students

Physical Activity Goals

The primary goal of physical activity is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

- Physical activity should be integrated across curricula.
- A daily recess period will be provided for grades K-6, which cannot be withheld as a consequence of behavior. Recess will be held before lunch since research indicates that physical activity prior to lunch can increase the nutrient intake and reduce food waste.
- Each school will provide a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activities for all students, not limited by athletic ability.
- Information will be provided to families to help them incorporate physical activity into their children's lives.

Nutrition Guidelines

It is the policy of the Mashpee Public Schools that meals offered under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are consistent with the Healthy, Hunger-free Kids Act of 2010. Guidelines for reimbursable meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to the law.

In addition to the School Breakfast programs, competitive foods and beverages sold or provided to students 30 minutes before the beginning of the school day until 30 minutes after the school

day ends must comply with the Massachusetts School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages Act (52:125) signed into law in Massachusetts on July 30, 2010. Foods and beverages offered to students in vending machines must comply with the standards at all times.

A student's lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. Schools must establish standards to address all foods and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside of school meal programs. Schools must ensure that reimbursable school meals meet the program requirements and nutrition standards set forth under the 7 CFR Part 210 and Part 220. All foods made available on school property during regular school day hours will comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans where applicable.

- Food providers will offer a wide variety of age-appropriate healthy food and beverage selections. Every effort will be made to offer a minimal amount of processed foods. Fresh products will be encouraged to be used as much as possible.
- The consumption of unflavored bottled water by students throughout the school/classroom will be permitted during the school day, except where water could be deemed a hazard to equipment or an activity.
- Promotional activities in schools are encouraged to be connected to activities that promote physical activity, academic achievement or positive youth development and are in compliance with Mashpee Public Schools policy.
- In the interest of wellness for all students and staff food available at parties, celebrations, or meetings will be healthy choices. Candy and certain baked goods such as cakes, cookies, brownies and cupcakes will not be considered healthy choices.
- During regular school day hours, soda, sugary drinks and unhealthy snacks will not be offered for sale to students in any school building whether for themselves or any other person.
- Nutrition education is incorporated during classroom snack times, not just during meals. Foods and beverages sold at fundraisers should include healthy choices and provide age-appropriate selections for all schools.
- Advertising messages are consistent with and reinforce the objectives of the education and nutrition environment goals of the school.
- Advertising of foods or beverages in the areas accessible to students during meal times must be consistent with established nutrition environment standards.

Eating Environment

- The National Association of State Boards of Education recommends that students should be provided adequate time to eat lunch, at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch, from the time the student is seated.
- Lunch periods are scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible.
- Cafeterias include enough serving areas so that students do not have to spend too much time waiting in line.
- Dining areas are attractive and have enough space for seating all students.
- At all schools, water is available for students at meals at no cost. At the Quashnet School and at the Mashpee Middle-High School, bottled water is also available to students for an additional cost.
- Children should be encouraged to clean hands prior to consuming food.

Child Nutrition Operations

- The child nutrition program will aim to be financially self-supporting. However, the program is an essential educational support activity. Budget neutrality or profit generations will not take precedence over the nutritional needs of the students.
- The child nutrition program will ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn well.
- The school will strive to increase participation in the available federal child nutrition programs (e.g. school lunch, school breakfast, after school snack and food service programs).
- Employ a food service director, who is properly qualified, certified and /or credentialed according to current professional standards, to administer the school food service program and satisfy reporting requirements.
- All food service personnel shall have adequate pre-service training in food service operations.

Other School-Based Activities

Policies established under this category create a school environment that provides consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and being physically active.

- After school wellness oriented programs will encourage physical activity and healthy habit formation.

- Local wellness policy goals will be considered in planning school-based activities (such as school events, field trips, dances, assemblies).
- Support for the health of all students is demonstrated by hosting health screenings, helping to enroll eligible children in Medicaid, and other state children's health insurance programs.
- The Mashpee School District's wellness committee will be composed of families, teachers, administrators, and students to plan, implement and improve nutrition and physical activities in the school environment.
- The opportunity for fitness activities and nutritional education workshops will be offered to the staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- School Committee will ensure compliance with the Mashpee Public Schools' Wellness Policy. In each school, the Principal or designee will ensure compliance with the Mashpee Public Schools' Wellness Policy and will report on the school's compliance to the Superintendent or designee.
- School food service staff at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Food Director. In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.
- Wellness Committee will review the policy annually, and present any modifications to the School Committee for approval.