

STUDENT WELLNESS

I. STUDENT WELLNESS GUIDELINES RELATED TO COVID-19

Changes to student wellness protocols, including specific public health precautions related to COVID-19, are outlined in Regulations JHCF-R and GBE-R/JHCC-R. Unless specifically amended in the regulations, all other provisions of this policy remain in effect.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

The Alexandria City School Board is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning through the development of lifelong wellness practices.

III. GENERAL ILLNESS GUIDELINES (WHEN NO DECLARED PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY IS IN EFFECT)

To protect the health of students and staff, students should stay home if they have had any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.0 F or higher in the last 24 hours;
- Undiagnosed rash that is accompanied by fever or itching;
- Bad cough or difficulty breathing;
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours;
- Sore throat, with fever or swollen glands in the neck;
- COVID-19 symptoms in accordance with CDC guidelines;
- New onset of symptoms typical of generalized illness, including being unusually tired, fussy, pale or difficulty waking.

If a student has strep throat or another bacterial infection, he/she should stay home until the antibiotic has been given for at least 24 hours and a health care provider has given permission for the student to return to school.

IV. GOALS

Based on review and consideration of evidence-based strategies and techniques put forth by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and other stakeholders, the School Board has established the following goals to promote student wellness:

A. Nutrition Promotion and Education

- Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Nutrition education is offered in the school cafeteria, with coordination between the foodservice staff and other school personnel. Nutrition education is integrated into the health or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts, and social studies).

- Students are taught the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.
- Staff that provides nutrition education has access to appropriate training and resources.

B. Physical Activity

The Alexandria City Public Schools has a goal of making a program of physical activity available to all grade K-10 students for at least 220 minutes per week on average during the regular school year. (Physical education is not required for 11th and 12th grade students.) For example:

- At the elementary level, students receive an average of 60-90 minutes of physical education instruction per week, plus at least 30 minutes of recess per day for students in Pre-K through grade 5, which may be divided into two periods. In addition to the 160-190 minutes of physical activity, teachers are also encouraged to incorporate two 3-5 minute classroom reboots or “energizers” per day.
- At the middle school level, students receive a minimum of 210 minutes per week of health/physical education instruction. These numbers are averages as students spend somewhere between 3 - 6 weeks in the classroom setting with Health and Family Life Education Instruction.
- Students enrolled in high school health/physical education classes receive an average of 180 minutes of instruction per week. At the secondary level, teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom reboots or “energizers” as well.

As it is the School Board’s intention to continue to hold outdoor recess during cold spells, parents should have their children prepared with jackets, gloves, and hats. Schools will work with families to ensure that children have adequate clothing. In addition, ACPS welcomes and supports partnership and grant opportunities that help provide such items for students who may not have appropriate apparel. The weather-related guidelines for outdoor student activities are found in Regulation JHCF-R.

The Division’s goal for the implementation of its physical activity program is:

- To have students participate in daily physical activity through a variety of means that include but are not limited to physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of active learning strategies into the instructional program;
- To provide students with opportunities for physical activity through a range of before and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics and physical activity clubs; and
- To encourage schools to work with the community to create ways for students to walk, bike, rollerblade or skateboard safely to and from school.

C. Other School-Based Activities

- The school division strives to develop a robust program of physical activity, including physical education, extracurricular activities, and partnering with City agencies and community organizations to promote all aspects of youth wellness.
- Schools encourage parents and guardians to support their children’s participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- Students are provided an adequate amount of time to eat meals in appropriate lunchroom facilities.
- All children who participate in subsidized food programs are able to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
- The availability of subsidized food programs is adequately publicized in ways designed to reach families eligible to participate in the programs.
- ACPS forbids the use of food as a reward/incentive or consequence for misbehavior.
- ACPS implements environmentally-friendly practices in food preparation and service where possible and appropriate.
- The school division promotes activities that encourage physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being among school staff.

V. NUTRITION STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Regulation JHCF-R outlines:

- The standards for all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students on the school campus during the school day; and
- The standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day that promote student health and reduce childhood obesity and are consistent with the applicable standards and requirements in 7 C.F.R. §§ 210.10, 210.11 and 220.8.

Marketing on the school campus during the school day is permitted only for those foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards under 7 C.F.R. § 210.11, or meet the standards for fundraisers discussed in Policy JHCH.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

The School Board encourages parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, school administrators and the general public to participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of this policy with the School Health Advisory Board.

The Student Wellness Team, including the Instructional Specialist for Health & Physical Education, the Director of Nutrition Services and the Health Services Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and developing procedures for evaluating the policy, including indicators that will be used to measure its success.

Implementation procedures include measuring and making available to the public, at least once every three years, an assessment of the implementation of the policy, including the extent to which schools are in compliance with the policy, the extent to which this policy compares to model school wellness policies and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the policy. The results of the triennial assessment are considered in updating the policy.

Adopted: June 1, 2006
Amended: June 12, 2008
Affirmed: June 11, 2015
Amended: August 7, 2017
Amended: June 21, 2018
Amended: September 10, 2020
Amended: September 9, 2021

Legal Refs: 42 U.S.C. § 1758b.

7 C.F.R. 210.31.E3.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:1.

Recover, Redesign, Restart 2020, Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), (Revised July 2020).

Guidance for Schools, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), (Updated May 2020), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>.

Phase Guidance for Virginia Schools, Virginia Department of Health (VDH), (July 1, 2020), <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Final-Phase-Guidance-for-Virginia-Schools-6.9.20.pdf>.

Cross Refs: EBCD Emergency School Closures, Delayed Opening and Early Dismissal
EBCD-R Emergency School Closures, Delayed Opening and Early Dismissal Regulations
EFB Free and Reduced Price Food Services
GBE-R/JHCC-R Use of Protective Face Coverings (Masks) to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19
IGAE/IGAF Health Education/Physical Education
JHCF-R Student Wellness Guidelines
JHCH School Meals and Snacks
JL Fund Raising and Solicitation
KQ Commercial, Promotional, and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships