



Adopted: September 13, 2010

Revised: June 26, 2017; 9/13/21; 6/27/22

534 WELLNESS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment in South St. Paul Public Schools (the District) that enhances student attendance and academic performance by supporting healthy eating, physical activity and general wellbeing. The District is committed to providing a culture that supports whole child wellness, encouraging students in collaboration with families and community members, to maintain lifelong healthy eating habits, physical, social and emotional wellness.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act:** Legislation that allowed USDA the opportunity to make real reforms to the school lunch and breakfast programs by improving the critical nutrition and hunger safety net for millions of children.
- B. **SHAPE (Society of Health and Physical Educators) National Standards:** Guidelines that define what a student should know and be able to do as a result of a highly effective physical education program.
- C. **USDA Smart Snacks Guidelines:** Standards include limits on portion size, calories, sodium, fat, and sugar. The new standards encourage healthier food and beverage options and limit the access to junk food during the school day. By implementing nutrition standards and promoting healthier options outside the cafeteria, we enhance the learning environment and contribute to the overall health and well-being of the students. National nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold outside of school meal programs during the School Day.
- D. **School Day:** The federally defined school day begins at Midnight through thirty (30) minutes after the school's final daily dismissal bell.
- E. **Safe Routes to School (SRTS):** A collaboration with the department of transportation, local government, local public safety (police department), and school district to promote physical activity by making it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school.
- F. **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Dietary Guidelines for Americans (2020-2025):** Cornerstone for Federal nutrition programs and go-to resources for health professionals nationwide that provides food-based recommendations to promote health, help prevent diet-related chronic diseases, and meet nutrient needs.

- G. **Grab and Go Breakfast:** Breakfasts that are served in to-go containers for consumption in classrooms or other spaces that are not part of the cafeteria.
- H. **Second Chance Breakfast:** Breakfast distributed from mobile serving carts stationed throughout the school between first and second period classes.

III. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The district recognizes that nutrition promotion and education and physical activity and other school-based activities that promote student wellness are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education. School breakfast and lunch is promoted in all schools and families are informed of the link between healthy meals, especially a healthy breakfast, and the ability to learn.
- B. The school environment should promote and protect students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by promoting nutrition education and wellness activities, recognizing these as essential components of the education process, and formation of lifelong healthy behaviors.
- C. The district encourages the involvement of students, families, staff, teachers, nutrition service professionals, school health professionals, school board, school administrators, and the public in the development implementation, annual monitoring, periodic review and revising of the Wellness Policy through the district Wellness committee that meets regularly.
- D. Teachers, staff, and nutrition service personnel through participation in worksite wellness opportunities, and role modeling of healthy behaviors support nutrition education and wellness promotion. This is communicated and promoted with consistent messaging throughout the district, as well as to families and the community via posters, website, newsletters, and other means.
- E. All students in grades PreK-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement for integration of nutrition education, physical activity, and wellness promotion into every classroom and physical education (PE), as appropriate. It is also linked with the school food environment, afterschool programs, and nutrition-related community services.
- F. Qualified nutrition services personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and provides clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat. When feasible, the Nutrition Services department will procure food from local sources for the school meals program-supporting farm to school education.

- G. Qualified Child Nutrition personnel will provide allergen information, calorie, saturated fat, and sodium content of meals, as well as nutrition education for students, families, and staff, through the website and school cafeterias. Menus are planned offering a variety of nutrient rich fresh fruit and/or vegetables, whole grains and other minimally processed foods while incorporating locally grown foods into the menus.
- H. Students and staff shall have unrestricted access to free, safe, fresh drinking water at all times throughout the school day. Supervisory staff will facilitate access to water in the cafeteria during meal periods.
- I. The school environment will promote students' emotional and social health by providing safe surroundings for students to grow emotionally and socially.
- J. For the safety and health of students with disabilities and health conditions, including food allergies, the District will make reasonable accommodation in the school environment, according to a student's individual plan.

IV. WELLNESS GOALS

- A. Nutrition Education and Promotion
 - 1. The school district will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:
 - a) offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health and ability to learn;
 - b) part of classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate and offered in coordination with nutrition trained school food service staff as applicable; and
 - c) enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, surveys and field trips.
 - 2. The school district will encourage all students to make age appropriate, healthy selections of foods and beverages, including those sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs, such as through a la carte [snack] lines, fundraising events, concession stands, and student stores.
 - 3. Schools will discourage the use of foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan or behavior intervention plan) and will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.

B. Physical Activity

1. Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television;
2. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and
3. Classroom teachers are encouraged to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate. The District will make every effort to provide physical activity training for all teachers.
4. All K-12 students will receive P.E. (at least 50 minutes per week for elementary school students, 50 minutes every other day for middle school students, 50 minutes every other day during a 12 week trimester for 9th and 10th grade high school students, and physical activity electives will be available to 11th and 12th grade high school students) during the school year.
5. The District will provide physical education classes that meet the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and District Priority benchmarks that are based partially on SHAPE, and should be taught by certified Physical Education staff to promote enjoyable lifelong healthy behavior and lifestyle.
6. Withholding physical activity such as recess or Physical Education shall not be used as punishment. Physical activity may not be assigned or withheld to students as a consequence of poor behavior or punishment for any reason.
7. Elementary students shall have a supervised recess break daily, preferably outdoors and before lunch. Elementary students shall have a minimum of 20 minutes for recess each school day.
8. Schools shall make outdoor and indoor physical activity facilities available for community use when not being used for school activities.
9. School age childcare programs shall encourage daily physical activities.
10. The District will provide Safe Routes to School support for active transportation. Support includes but is not limited to:
 - a) Encouraging parents, students, and staff to actively commute to and from, and/or at school, when it is safe to do so.
 - b) Coordinating with district departments and other entities that are involved in Safe Routes to School efforts such as local, county and state public works, police, non-profits, and local public health.

- c) Working with these partners, the school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to actively commute to, from, and/or at school.
- d) Promoting Safe Routes to School program and resources to staff, parents, and students via newsletters and websites and social media.
- e) Providing secure bike storage (or bike racks) at all schools.
- f) Support planning/technical assistance to individual schools.

C. Social and Emotional Wellness

- 1. The District will encourage student understanding of the impact of emotional and social health on overall well-being.
- 2. The District will promote student wellness through prevention of high-risk behaviors, including but not limited to: e-cigarettes, alcohol, tobacco, unsafe driving practices and aggressive behaviors. The district encourages an environment where students feel safe to disclose issues of abuse.
- 3. The District will partner with community agencies to assist students and their families to access available health and mental health resources and social services to address healthy eating, physical activity, mental well-being, and related chronic disease prevention.

D. Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

- 1. The Wellness Committee identify and disseminate wellness resources, and perform other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff. Schools will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy behaviors such as: drinking water, healthy eating habits, being physically active, and demonstrating healthy social and emotional well-being.
- 2. When feasible, the District will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school.
- 3. Professional learning will promote District staff's understanding of the connections between academics and health.

E. Communications with Families

- 1. The school district recognizes that families have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and emotional and social well-being. The District will promote educational opportunities for students and families to learn about the impact positive emotional well-being has on one's health.

2. The school district will support families' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. The district encourages families to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value. The school district will encourage families to send only healthy classroom snacks that meet the Smart Snack Guidelines, as outlined in the Family Handbook.
4. The district discourages students from bringing food/drink items for birthday celebrations.
5. The school district will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support families' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.
6. The district will provide opportunities for parents/guardians to view online what students are purchasing with their lunch money, as well as the nutritional content of foods on the menus, which will enable parents/guardians to encourage their students to make healthy food choices. The school menu will be posted online.

V. STANDARDS AND NUTRITION GUIDELINES

A. School Meals

1. All schools within the district will participate in USDA child nutrition programs, which may include the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Care Snack Service, Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP), Special Milk Program (SMP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO), and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). All programs will meet or exceed all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.
2. Qualified nutrition services personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students.
3. Menu planning will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body to the best of its ability.
4. Nutrition services personnel will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings.
5. The district will make free, safe and unflavored drinking water available to all students during mealtimes at every site.

6. Nutrition service personnel shall adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines
7. The district will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of students and families who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals by using computerized meal accounts and promoting online application completion and encouraging ALL households to complete applications for Educational Benefits. The negative meal balance procedures will be communicated to all families at the beginning of each school year through the Family Handbook.
8. The district will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
9. The district will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down (10 minutes to eat breakfast and a minimum of 20 minutes to each lunch) for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day. The district will make every effort to offer recess before lunch at elementary schools to increase student nutrient intake and reduce food waste.
10. The school district will discourage tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
11. The district will provide elementary students a place to hang outerwear prior to coming into the cafeteria when recess is scheduled immediately before or after the lunch period.
12. Grab and Go Breakfasts will be provided at all schools for students that arrive after the regular breakfast period. Second Chance Breakfast will be offered at the secondary school level.

B. School Nutrition Service Program/Personnel

1. The district shall designate a Nutrition Services Director to be responsible for the district's food nutrition services program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act guidelines for all elementary and middle school foods offered at the high school will be consistent with the USDA Guidelines for Americans.
2. All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals.

C. Competitive Foods and Beverages

1. The district will require that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the regular school day will meet USDA Child Nutrition Standards (Smart Snacks). This includes but is not limited to concessions, school stores, beverage contracts and all other instances where food or beverages are provided or sold. No foods and beverages containing caffeine will be sold during the school day.
2. Before and Aftercare (childcare) programs are encouraged to comply with the district's nutrition standards unless they are reimbursable under USDA school meals program, in which case they must comply with all applicable USDA standards.

D. Other School-Based Activities

1. Student wellness will be a consideration for all foods offered, but not sold, to students on the school campus, including those foods provided through:
 - a) Celebrations and parties. Classroom celebrations are encouraged to focus on physical activities rather than food. Healthy food choices (in compliance with USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards) will be encouraged. Caution will be exercised when offering foods and materials that may cause allergic reactions.
 - b) Classroom snacks brought by parents. The school district will provide parents a list of suggested foods and beverages that meet USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards posted on the school district's website or otherwise made available to the public. Non-food items will be strongly encouraged.
2. Rewards and incentives. Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan or behavior intervention plan) and will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.
3. Fundraising. The district will only have non-food fundraising. Catering through the district Nutrition Services Department is allowed. The school district will make available to parents and teachers a list of suggested healthy fundraising ideas on the school district's website and in the Family Handbook.

E. Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

1. School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion.
2. Schools will restrict food and beverages marketing to the promotion of only those foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- A. After approval by the school board, the wellness policy will be implemented throughout the school district. The Wellness Committee will share the wellness policy with district staff at the beginning of each school year.
- B. The Wellness Committee will have a minimum of four meetings per year to help ensure monitoring of the policy.
- C. Monitoring and an in-house assessment will be repeated annually by the Wellness Committee to help review Wellness Policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement and/or revision. Measurable outcomes will be determined by the wellness committee.
- D. The school district's Nutrition Services Director or designee will ensure compliance in food service area and provide an annual report to the superintendent setting forth the nutrition guidelines and procedures for selection of all foods made available through the school food service program as well as the most recent MDE review, findings and updates.
- E. The Superintendent shall designate appropriate staff, parents, students, and community members to serve on the Wellness Committee that will have the responsibility to ensure the implementation and compliance of the wellness policy. The Wellness Committee will ensure compliance with the policy and measure progress towards district goals.
- F. The Wellness Committee will support monitoring and evaluation of the Wellness Policy, and will make recommendations regarding the policy to the superintendent and School Board.
- G. The committee will conduct an assessment of the wellness policy every three years to assess compliance with the wellness policy, compare the district wellness policy with model wellness policies, and assess progress in attaining the goals of the wellness policy.
- B. The report of the triennial assessment will be given to the School Board in addition to being kept on file, and posted on the district website. The report will include an assessment on compliance, the extent to which our wellness policy compares to model wellness policies, and progress made in achieving goals.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 121A.215 (Local School District Wellness Policy)
42 U.S.C. § 1751 *et seq.* (Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act)
42 U.S.C. § 1758b (Local School Wellness Policy)
42 U.S.C. § 1771 *et seq.* (Child Nutrition Act of 1966)
7 U.S.C. § 5341 (Establishment of Dietary Guidelines)
7 C.F.R. § 210.10 (School Lunch Program Regulations)
7 C.F.R. § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Regulations)

Local Resources: Minnesota Department of Education, www.education.state.mn.us
Minnesota Department of Health, www.health.state.mn.us
County Health Departments
Action for Healthy Kids Minnesota, www.actionforhealthykids.org
United States Department of Agriculture, www.fns.usda.gov