

Lower Merion School District

Policy No.:	254
Section:	STUDENTS
Title:	STUDENT WELLNESS
Date Adopted:	4/24/06
Date Revised:	5/15/23; 6/12/17

254 STUDENT WELLNESS

Purpose

The Lower Merion School District is committed to a multidimensional approach to wellness in our community. Wellness, as we consider it, is both a sustained state and an ongoing, active process, rather than a single point in time. Wellness includes emotional, social, physical, academic, personal, environmental, and occupational fulfillment.¹

Equity is part of this multidimensional framework. Our commitment to wellness requires that we provide a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment through equitable access to educational programs and activities (see Policy/AR 101 - Equity). These features of our system are designed to foster a sense of belonging for all members of our school communities, which is a critical component of overall student wellness.

Why is this important? When we consider wellness as a holistic concept, we are better positioned to understand the relationship between various dimensions of wellness and their impact on student growth. We want to foster student agency, and to create an environment in which developmentally appropriate opportunities to exercise that agency empower students to take ownership of their own wellness. This is critical not only to their experience in this community, but to their quality of life as they move into the next phase of their lives after they graduate.

With this understanding, we also are able to implement practices in service of overall student wellness by positioning resources – including funding, programs, policies, initiatives, and supports – to target those needs on personal and systemic levels. It is imperative that these include both proactive efforts to promote student wellness as well as responsive measures to address individual, group, or district-level needs.

Definitions

Agency: The desire, ability, and power to take an active role in shaping one’s own future.²

¹ New Hampshire Department of Education: [Dimensions of Student Wellness](#).

² Bandura, 2006; Vaughn 2018.

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Belonging: A state of self-acceptance and connectedness with others.³

Developmentally appropriate: A comprehensive educational perspective that supports optimal healthy development for every child, ensuring that goals and experiences are both consistent with the abilities and learning skills of a child and challenging enough to promote their progress and interest.⁴

Empathy: The ability to recognize and understand another’s perspective or position.⁵

Educational programs: Any curriculum or combination of units or subjects intended to fulfill an identified educational, professional, or vocational objective.⁶ Includes, but is not limited to, early childhood education, elementary and secondary education, postsecondary education, special education, job training, career and technical education, and adult education.⁷

Holistic: Consideration of the whole child, beyond traditional academic supports.⁸

Nutrition: Consumption of a healthy diet appropriate to the distinct and unique needs of one’s stage of life, with a focus on development of healthy dietary patterns to maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases throughout one’s life span.⁹

Wellness: A conscious, deliberate process that requires a person to become aware of and make choices for a more satisfying lifestyle.¹⁰ Wellness is interconnected and multidimensional, with emotional, social, physical, academic, personal, environmental, and occupational facets.¹¹

³ Swarbrick, 2006; 2012.

⁴ NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice Position Statement

⁵ Schwartz, 2002.

⁶ 38 USC § 3501(a)(5)

⁷ US Department of Education, 34 CFR § 99.3.

⁸ District-specific definition.

⁹ USDA Dietary Guidelines

¹⁰ Swarbrick, 2006; 2012.

¹¹ New Hampshire Department of Education: [Dimensions of Student Wellness](#).

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Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall prepare and administer procedures to monitor the District's programs and curriculum to ensure compliance with state and federal law, this Policy, related policies and established guidelines or administrative regulations.

The District shall ensure the continued existence of a Wellness Committee comprised of at least one of each of the following: School Board member, District administrator, District food services representative, student, parent/guardian, member of the public, District physical education teacher, District counselor or other mental health professional, and school nurse. Additional members may be chosen pursuant to the accompanying regulation.

The purpose of the Wellness Committee is to review Board policies and administrative regulations, procedures and practices regarding wellness and to recommend revisions to the Board and administration regarding these policies, regulations, procedures and practices.

This policy and accompanying regulation are intended to address the multidimensional aspect of wellness needs of individuals within the community and of the community as a larger system. In the development and ongoing review of this policy and accompanying regulation, the Superintendent or designee and established Wellness Committee shall include both proactive efforts to promote student wellness as well as responsive measures to address individual, group, or district-level needs.

Policy and regulation development and review shall also include any federal or state guidance, including all established federal nutrition and physical education standards, to ensure compliance with state and federal law. The Superintendent or designee and the Wellness Committee shall also take into account any new developments in health science, information, and emerging technology.

The Administrative Regulations shall, at minimum, address the following topics:

1. **Nutrition:** A comprehensive nutrition program consistent with federal and state requirements, including educational programming about healthy nutrition and access at

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reasonable cost to foods and beverages that meet established nutritional guidelines.

2. **Physical Education:** Physical education courses and opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day, including educational programming designed to encourage lifelong physical activity.
3. **Multidimensional Wellness Programming:** Educational programming for grades K-12 that is designed to educate students about the interconnected and multidimensional aspects of wellness, including emotional, social, physical, academic, personal, environmental, and occupational wellness.

References:

Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 101 (Equity)