

Blount County Schools Wellness Policy

The Blount County 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. Therefore, the following practices, programs, and activities are supported by the Blount County Board of Education:

Nutrition Promotion and Education

Blount County Schools provide nutrition education to aide in the development of health, growth, and intellectual advancement for all grades. A daily menu for lunch and breakfast are developed based on USDA food guidelines. Students are taught that healthy eating patterns require thoughtful decision making such as choosing to eat more fruits and vegetables during meals and snacks. School gardening and visiting local farms are encouraged for all grade levels.

School Meals / Nutrition Standards

Schools will participate in federal school meal programs, including National School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Seamless Summer Option. Reimbursable meals served shall comply with these programs' meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie restrictions as appropriate for the age/grade level served. Schools will serve students a reimbursable meal regardless of whether the student has money to pay or owes money and will reach out to the family of a child with an unpaid balance to assess whether or not the child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Applications for free/reduced-price meals will be provided to families at the beginning of the school year and are also available on the district website. All schools will ensure that every student is given a code to enter at the cash register for meal purchase to protect student privacy. Consumption of competitive foods in place of school meals will be discouraged by limiting competitive food choices during mealtimes in the cafeteria. After obtaining their food, students will have at least 20 minutes to eat lunch. Free, safe, and fresh drinking water will be available in the cafeteria during meal times and throughout the school day. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when available. All foods and beverages served on campuses during the school day shall meet federal and state nutrition standards and USDA Smart Snacks in School guidelines (link below). Smart Snacks nutrition standards apply to all foods and beverages sold to students through school-sponsored fundraisers, unless an exemption applies. Each school will be allowed to hold 30 exempt fundraisers per school year during which any food or beverage may be sold per the Alabama USDA Smart Snack in School Nutrition Implementation Guidelines. High School Principals are encouraged to limit the sale of beverages with caffeine to high school students.

<https://www.alsde.edu/sec/cnp/snp/Forms/Smart%20Snack%20and%20Fundraiser%20Guidance%20and%20Implementation.pdf#search=smart%20snacks>

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school>

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutrition Professionals. These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

Physical Education and Physical Activity Opportunities

Blount County Schools believe that students learn healthy behaviors while experiencing positive outcomes in motor skill development. Physical Education teachers provide physical activity that fosters positive long-standing habits by focusing on cognitive skills, attitudes, and academics. Students receive a minimum of 30

minutes of daily physical activity in grades K-5 and a minimum of 50 minutes for grades 6-8. Recess is a part of daily activities for students in elementary grades. All Physical Education teachers are certified and receive professional development specific to physical education and activity. The school district prohibits exemption from physical education for the purpose of other courses.

Wellness Promotion

Teachers are encouraged to use non-food alternatives as rewards; such as extra recess when time allows. Physical activity may not be assigned to students as a consequence of poor behavior or punishment for any reason; such as running laps or jogging around a playground. Recess, PE, or other physical activities will not be withheld from students as a punishment for poor behavior or incomplete class work.

Healthy food options will be comparably priced and prominently displayed in the cafeteria to encourage students to make healthy choices. Food service providers should be sensitive to the nutrition environment when displaying logos/trademarks on school grounds. An effort will be made to remove advertising from the cafeteria. Existing vending machines and coolers with logos will be replaced when possible.

Policy Implementation

The district wellness committee will meet quarterly throughout the year. Students, parents, staff and/or community members are welcome to join the committee and participate in the implementation, review, and update of the wellness policy. A district and school contact will be designated with the responsibility to ensure that the schools meet this policy. The district will ensure school and community awareness of this policy by making it available on the district website. The wellness committee shall conduct a quantitative assessment of policy implementation every three years using the Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT: 3.0). A triennial progress report with information about each school's wellness related activities will be shared with the entire school community on the district website. The district wellness committee will revise the policy as needed.

Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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