

7590	Wellness Policy
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Philosophy

Congress passed the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, which requires by law that by the first day of the school year in 2006, each school district participating in the National School Lunch Program adopt local school wellness policies that address healthy eating and physical activity.

The Ballston Spa Central School District (BSCSD) and the Board of Education (BOE) believe in a Coordinated and Comprehensive approach to staff and student wellness, and have looked at eight different components that directly have an impact on health and wellness:

- a. Nutrition
- b. Health Education
- c. Physical Education and Activity
- d. Safe and Healthy Environment
- e. Social and Emotional School Climate and Mental Health
- f. Counseling, Psychological and Social Services
- g. Health Services
- h. Family, School and Community Partnership
- i. Staff Wellness

This policy is an ongoing work in progress, and as the BSCSD schools continue to assess, implement, and evaluate their individual healthy school plans, these reflections will be recommended to be added to this policy accordingly.

A. Nutrition

The BSCSD believes that a hungry child cannot learn properly and that healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability, and ability to learn.

Therefore:

1. School food service staff will ensure compliance with the nutritional guidelines for foods and beverages as set forth by the USDA for the National School Lunch and Breakfast program and Smart Snacks in School.
2. Nutrition services policies and guidelines for reimbursable meals shall not be less restrictive than federal and state guidelines require.

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3. The BSCSD shall provide a pleasant eating environment with enough space and serving areas to ensure that all students have access to school meals with minimal wait time.
4. The BSCSD shall not schedule tutoring, clubs, or organizational meeting or activities during mealtimes, unless students are allowed to eat during such activities.
5. Foods and beverages sold outside of the school meal program during the school day, such as those in vending machines or school stores, will meet nutritional guidelines as set forth by the USDA for Smart Snacks in Schools.
6. The BSCSD will ensure that nutrition education is a component of health education and physical education classes.
7. The BSCSD discourages the use of food as a reward or punishment in schools. The BSCSD encourages integration of nutrition education into academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular programming as appropriate.
8. School nutrition programs will promote fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat or fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, with health-enhancing nutrition practices.
9. All students will have access to free, clean drinking water throughout the school day.
10. Classroom Parties/Celebrations:
 - a. **The BSCSD encourages and prefers the use of non-food items at classroom parties and celebrations.** If food is going to be served at classroom parties and celebrations items must come from the approved food list developed by the District Health and Wellness Committee. Additionally, food items must be store bought and prepackaged and include an FDA approved label with all ingredients listed.
11. Fundraising Activities:

The BSCSD encourages fundraisers that promote children’s physical and nutritional Health and will follow the guidelines as set forth by the USDA for allowable fundraisers in school.

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B. Health Education

Healthy living skills shall be taught as part of the regular instructional program. The K-12 Health Education Program, within the New York State Health Education mandates, shall provide the opportunity for all students to understand and practice concepts and skills related to health promotion and disease prevention.

C. Physical Education and Activity

The BSCSD believes that Physical Education and physical activity is an essential element of each school's instructional program. The primary goals for schools' physical activity components are 1) to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for specific physical activities to maintain students' physical fitness, to ensure students' regular participation in physical activity, and 2) to teach students the short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthful lifestyle.

Therefore:

1. The BSCSD will submit and follow an approved New York State Education Department Physical Education Plan as outlined in the Commissioner's regulation section 135.4. A copy of the plan can be obtained from the Director of Athletics.
2. Students shall be given opportunities for physical activities through a range of programs including but not limited to intramurals, interscholastic athletics and clubs.
3. Physical activity shall be implemented into the school day whenever possible.
4. Recess is *in addition* to regularly scheduled physical education class.
5. ***School staff shall not withhold participation in recess from students, or cancel recess to make up for missed instructional time.***

D. Safe and Healthy Environment

A safe and healthy environment supports academic success for all students; safer school communities promote healthier students, and healthier students do better in school and make greater contributions to their community.

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The BSCSD will continue efforts to keep school or district-owned facilities open for use by students, parents/caregivers, and community members outside of school hours in order to help promote an active, healthy lifestyle.

E. Social and Emotional School Climate and Mental Health

Schools play a key role in promoting mental health in all children and young people, recognizing that student's learning and development is supported by environments that explicitly promote mental health. The impact is the greatest when all staff members are involved in mental health promotion as it relates to every area of the school – the culture, policies, curriculum, and activities.

The policy affirms our commitment to providing safe, welcoming, and supportive environments that promote a culture of respect and equity; explicitly embeds social and emotional learning into the curriculum, including mental health instruction in Health Education programs; ensures families, students, and staff are key partners in mental health and wellbeing initiatives; and works collaboratively with local health professionals and the community to foster a common understanding of the benefits of mental health. .

The goals of the Ballston Spa Central School District to accomplish these are to:

- Promote positive mental health for all staff and students;
- Utilize explicit instruction, carefully chosen curriculum and supporting materials, and multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their growth in mental and behavioral health through the use of our Multi-tiered System of Supports;
- Educate and support the school community on a variety of approaches that are culturally sensitive to support mental health;
- Increase the skills of students, staff, parents/caregivers, and the school community to recognize signs of mental health conditions through trainings and well-vetted resources from local, regional, and state mental health organizations;
 - Link students and families to a range of available supports
 - Provide guidance and resources to parents/caregivers on how to talk to their children about mental health
- Decrease stigma related to talking about mental health; and
- Provide support to students living with mental health challenges, their peers, and parents/caregivers.

F. Counseling, Psychological & Social Services

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The BSCSD is committed to supporting programs for staff, students, and their families that promote social and emotional well-being to optimize conditions for teaching and learning. Schools shall provide a supportive environment that includes the service of school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers. Such an environment shall encourage students, families, and staff to request assistance when needed and shall link them to school or community resources.

G. Health Services

Academic achievement will be supported by providing services from qualified health care professionals in the school health offices, while collaborating with community health liaisons. An effective health care delivery system will strive to optimize the mental and physical health of student and staff.

H. Family, School and Community Partnerships

The BSCSD believes in fostering solid family, school, and community partnerships, as these partnerships positively impact student wellness and shall be included in wellness planning whenever possible.

Community partnerships shall be developed and maintained as a resource for BSCSD programs, projects, activities, and events.

I. Staff Wellness

A healthy staff can more effectively perform their duties and serve as powerful role models for healthy living. The district will move forward in this direction through the work of the District Wellness Committee that will assist in the development and implementation of staff wellness activities.

Monitoring and Policy Review

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with the established district-wide wellness policy. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will provide an annual report to the District Health and Safety Committee.

42 USC § 1758(b); 7 CFR § 210.11; 79 FR 10693; Education Law § 915; 8 NYCRR § 135.4

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