

# BROOKS COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## LOCAL WELLNESS Plan 2023-2024



The policies outlined within this document are intended to create a school environment that protects and promotes the health of our students. This policy applies to all schools in the district. Our commitments to providing nutrition education and regular physical activity, as well as access to nutritious foods for all students, are described here.

### **I. Nutrition Education and Promotion**

Students will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, cafeterias, and school media:

- Teachers will integrate nutrition education into core curricula;
- Nutrition promotion will include participatory activities such as contests, promotions, farm visits, and experience working in school gardens;
- The nutrition education program will be linked to school meal programs, school gardens, cafeteria nutrition promotion, after-school programs, and farm-to-school programs;
- Nutrition education will be offered in the cafeteria as well as the classroom, with coordination between the foodservice staff and teachers;
- Nutrition education will promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and accurate portion sizes;
- Students will have opportunities to taste foods that are low in saturated and trans-fats, sodium and added sugar;
- Staff members responsible for nutrition education will regularly participate in relevant professional development (e.g., training on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and how to teach them);
- Staff will only use approved nutrition curriculum in the classroom. Curriculum developed by corporate interests is prohibited;
- Nutrition education will be provided to families via handouts, newsletters, postings on the website, presentations, and workshops. The school menu will be posted online;
- Staff is strongly encouraged to model healthful eating habits, and discouraged from eating in front of children/sharing food with children during regular class time, outside of activities related to the nutrition education curriculum. Staff is discouraged from eating or drinking out of branded packaging in front of children (e.g., coffee containers with specific company logos);
- Families will be directed to website for information on packing a nutritious lunch for their children.
- Specifically, the nutrition curriculum will encompass:
  - 1.) Promotion of adequate nutrient intake and healthy eating practices;

- 2.) Skill development, such as reading labels to evaluate the nutrient quality of foods, meal planning, and analysis of health information;
- 3.) Examination of the problems associated with food marketing to children;
- 4.) Nutrition themes including, but not limited to USDA's MY Plate, Dietary Guidelines for Americans, adequate nutrient intake (such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats), body image and food safety.

## **II. Nutrition Standards for All Food and Beverages Sold or Served on School Grounds**

### **A. USDA School Meals:**

School meals will include a variety of healthy choices for while accommodating special dietary needs and ethnic and cultural food preferences for all grade levels. All schools shall participate in the USDA school breakfast, lunch, dinner and summer food programs.

#### **In addition:**

- All reimbursable meals will meet nutrition standards mandated by the USDA, as well as any additional state nutrition standards that go beyond USDA requirements;
- The school meal programs will be administered by a team that will include a dietician, business manager and qualified chef. If the district does not employ staff with all three areas of expertise, consultants will be used. All cafeteria staff will be provided training on USDA meal plans/reimbursable meals so they can properly advise students as to the meal components they may/must take, as well as cooking techniques, recipe implementation, sanitation, and food safety;
- All menus will be reviewed by a dietician when possible. When this is not feasible, sample USDA menus or USDA software for menu review may be used;
- Students will be provided at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and 20 minutes to eat lunch after being seated;
- Meals will be served in a clean and pleasant setting and under appropriate supervision. Rules for safe behavior will be consistently enforced;
- High school campuses will be "closed" meaning that students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day;
- Lunch will be scheduled between 11a.m. and 1p.m.;
- Tutoring, club, or organizational meetings will not be scheduled during meal time, unless students may eat during such activities;
- Students will have access to hand washing/hand sanitizing facilities before meals and snacks and cafeteria staff will remind students to make use of them;
- Information on the nutritional content and ingredients of meals will be found on menus, in school newsletters and on the district web-site. Parents and students will be informed that information is available and information shall be kept up-to-date;
- Participation in school meal programs will be promoted. Parents will be notified of the availability of the breakfast, lunch, dinner and summer food programs and will be encouraged to determine eligibility for reduced or free meals. Schools will use nontraditional breakfast service to increase participation, such as breakfast served in the classroom.

### **B. Competitive Foods and Beverages**

All foods and beverages ***sold*** on school grounds to students outside of reimbursable school meals are considered “competitive foods.” Competitive foods include items sold a la carte in the cafeteria, from vending machines, school stores and for in-school fundraisers. *All* competitive foods must comply with the district’s nutrition standards, as well as all applicable state and federal standards. Foods in compliance with these standards may be sold throughout school at any time.

### **Brooks County Independent School District Nutrition Standards:**

**The Institute of Medicine’s nutrition standards for competitive foods/beverages in schools has been adopted by the district. A summary of the standards is below.**

#### **Foods**

Only fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, whole grains, low-fat dairy and combination products may be sold, following the standards below:

- Packaged items shall not exceed one serving per package/200 calories;
- Items shall contain no more than 35% of total calories from fat, less than 10% of total calories from saturated fats and zero trans-fats. Exception: The fat content of nuts and seeds will not count against the total fat content of packaged products;
- Items shall contain no more than 35% of calories from total sugars. Exception: Yogurt, may contain up to 30grams of total sugars per 8 oz. serving;
- Items shall contain less than or equal to 200mg of sodium per packaged portion;
- Combination items must contain at least one serving of whole grains, fruit or vegetable, per portion as packaged, in any combination (e.g., ½ serving of fruit and ½ serving of whole grain in one portion).

A la carte items in the cafeteria must be USDA school meal components (200 calorie limit does not apply) AND meet the above fat and sugar limits. A la carte items cannot exceed 480mg of sodium.

*Whole fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds are preferable to processed food items.*

#### **Beverages**

The only beverages allowed to be sold outside of school meals include:

- Low-fat (1%), non-fat or non-dairy milk in 8 oz. portions (plain or flavored less than 22 grams of total sugars per 8 oz.);
- 100% fruit/vegetable juice in 8 oz. portions for elementary and 12 Oz portion for middle school and high school;
- Plain water.
- Powerade Zero and Coke Zero products only at High School Campus

### **C. Additional Foods Available to Students**

## **Fundraising**

- Non-food fundraising is promoted.
- When in-school fundraising involves food, items must meet the district's nutrition standards for competitive foods and cannot be sold for immediate consumption.
- Items that can be offered as fundraisers during the school day on non-exempt days:
  - Food items that meet competitive food nutrition standards such as pumpkin bread with whole grain-rich flour, air-popped popcorn and trail mixes.
  - Food items that are not intended to be consumed at school including, but not limited to, ready-to-bake cookie dough or build-your-own pizza kits.
  - Non-food items such as wristbands, wrapping paper, candles and magazines are alternative options.
- Fundraisers that include food or beverage items that do not meet the competitive food nutritional standards, and are intended to be consumed at a school, must be sold outside the school day (midnight to 30 minutes after the last official school day ends) or on exempt days only.
  
- Texas policy allows six days per campus per school year to sell foods or beverages on campus that do not have to meet federal nutrition standards, and are intended to be consumed at a school. These are considered **exempt fundraiser days**. Each campus will determine the specific dates for the school year.
  - Exempt foods or beverages may be sold anywhere on campus except during meal service times in areas where school meals are sold or consumed.
  
- Fundraising activities that promote physical activity are encouraged.
- Fundraising activities will not promote branded products (for example, Domino's Dough Raising Program, branded candy sales, etc.)

## **Celebrations**

- There are no restrictions on foods or beverages given away including foods or beverages at events such as field days and birthday parties.
- Celebrations that involve food will be limited to one per month and nutritious options should be considered.
- Parents will be made aware in advance of when a celebration with food is taking place and what is to be served;
- Non-food celebrations will be promoted and a list of ideas will be available to parents and teachers.

## **Access to Drinking Water**

- Students and school staff members will have access to free, safe, fresh drinking water at all times throughout the school day. Water jugs and cups will be available in the cafeteria if water fountains are not present, and water cups will be available near water fountains. Supervisory staff will facilitate access to water in the cafeteria. Students will be allowed to bring drinking water from home into the classroom.
- Water will be promoted as a substitute for sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs)
- School staff will be encouraged to model drinking water consumption.

- Maintenance will be performed on all water fountains regularly to ensure that hygiene standards for drinking fountains, water jugs, hydration stations, water jets, and other methods for delivering drinking water are maintained.

### **III. Other**

#### **Marketing<sup>1</sup>**

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, the following guidelines apply:

- Schools will restrict food and beverage marketing to the promotion of only those foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards set forth in the District Wellness Policy;

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<sup>1</sup> National Policy & Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity (NPLAN). District Policy Restricting the Advertising of Food and Beverages Not Permitted to be ***sold*** on School Grounds. Available: <http://nplan.rhine.rockriverstar.com/childhood-obesity/products/district-policy-restricting-advertising-food-beverages>

Examples of marketing techniques include the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos, or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or on its container;
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors;
- Corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on cups (provided by school), posters, book covers, school supplies, or educational materials;
- Corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on school equipment, message boards, scoreboards, or uniforms;
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings;
- Sponsorship of school activities, fundraisers, or sports teams;
- Broadcasts on school radio stations or in-school television, such as Channel One;
- Educational incentive programs such as contests, or programs that provide schools with supplies or funds when families purchase specific food products;
- Free samples or coupons displaying advertising of a product.

#### **Food used as reward or punishment**

Research clearly indicates that the use of food to reward/reinforce desirable behavior and academic performance, etc. has negative, unintended consequences. The use of food as a reward and withholding food as a punishment are strictly prohibited.

### **IV. Physical Activity**

#### **Physical Education**

All K-12 students will receive daily physical education (150 minutes per week for elementary school students and 225 minutes per week for middle and high school students) for the entire school year. Physical Education will be standards-based, using national and state-developed standards. Physical Education classes will be sequential, building from year to year, and content will include motor skills, concepts and strategies, engagement in physical activity, physical fitness, responsible behavior and benefits of physical activity. Physical education programs will meet the needs of all students, including those who are not athletically gifted, and actively teach cooperation, fair play, and responsible participation. Students will be able to demonstrate competency through application of skills.

- Teacher to student ratio will be reasonable, about 1:25;
- The school will provide adequate space/equipment and conform to all safety standards;
- The school prohibits the use of physical activity and withholding of physical education class and other forms of physical activity as punishment;
- All Physical Education classes will be taught by a qualified physical education teacher and at least 50% of class time will be spent in moderate to vigorous activity;
- Physical education staff will receive professional development on a yearly basis;

### **Physical Activity**

All students will have opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class on a daily basis. Classroom health education will reinforce the knowledge and skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle. Students will be encouraged to reduce sedentary time, and will not be required to engage in sedentary activities for more than two hours without an opportunity to stretch and move around. Short (3-5 minute) “energy release” physical activity breaks will be provided between classes in elementary school.

Teachers will be expected to incorporate opportunities for physical activity in the classroom whenever possible and will be encouraged to serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students.

### **Recess**

All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess before the lunch period, during which moderate to vigorous physical activity will be encouraged. Outdoor recess will only be withheld in the event of extreme weather, as defined by the district (this may vary regionally). In the event that recess must be held indoors, teachers and staff will follow indoor recess guidelines, developed by the school’s Wellness Committee, to ensure adequate physical activity for students.

### **Physical Activity Programs**

Elementary, middle, and high school will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs and intramural programs. High school and middle school will offer interscholastic sports programs to all students.

### **Safe Routes to School**

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 walk and bike to school. For example, crossing guards may be stationed around the school to facilitate safe walking and biking commutes. The school will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts.

### **V. Implementation, Evaluation and Enforcement<sup>2</sup>**

A. This wellness policy was developed by the district School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), a group comprised of individuals from the following groups: parents, teachers, students, school administration, food service director, nurses, counselors, community members and other school staff. The council is active—meetings are held four times during the school year to review and revise, if needed, policy content and to design and evaluate implementation plans throughout district schools. The district SHAC shall also undertake additional tasks as consistent with the wellness policy guidelines issued by the USDA. All meeting dates and times will be posted on the school district’s website and meetings will be open to the public.

In addition to the district School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), Brooks County I.S.D. will continue with individual campus CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) Committees. The principal of each campus shall be responsible for the selection of at least three parents along with a representative of each of the following components addressed in the Coordinated School Health program:

- 1.) Health Education
- 2.) Nutrition Services
- 3.) Physical Education
- 4.) Health Services
- 5.) Staff Wellness Promotion
- 6.) Parent and Community Involvement
- 7.) Counseling and Mental Health Services
- 8.) Healthy and Safe School Environment

At least one of these members will attend the district SHAC meetings as a liaison. The parents will automatically be welcome as SHAC members. It will also be the campus principals’ operational responsibility to ensure that the school complies with the regulations of the District Wellness Policy.

B. The campus CATCH Committee will meet twice in the school year. Once in the Fall, to ensure implementation of proposed improvements, then a second time in the Spring to conduct a review of their respective campuses using the School Health Index Self-Assessment Tool to identify areas that are not yet fully compliant. This group will report their findings to the campus principal and develop with him/her a plan of action for improvement.

C. Food Service Director and School Health Coordinator will present all findings, recommendations, and plans to the Superintendent and the School Board.

The following information will be included in an annual report: (1) the extent to which each school is in compliance with the wellness policy, (2) a comparison of the district policy to model local school wellness policies; (3) the progress made in attaining the goals of the policy; (4) any recommended changes to the policy; (5) a detailed action plan for the following school year to achieve annual goals and objectives; and (6) any additional information required by the USDA. The annual report shall be posted on the school district website and mailed to all district families before the start of the following school year.

Policy revisions will take into account new research and evidence on health trends, new national and state standards and guidelines, new state and federal initiatives, local evaluation data, changing district priorities, and other issues.

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