

Sterling City Independent School District Wellness Plan 2024-2025

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Sterling City Independent School District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children’s health, wellness, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and vending.

Therefore, it is the plan of Sterling City Independent School District to:

- engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, reviewing, and revising district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- provide students in grades K-12 with opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- ensure that foods and beverages sold and served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines of Americans.
- provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- have all schools in the District participate in available federal school meal programs to the maximum extent possible.
- provide nutrition and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity and establish linkages between health education and school meal programs with related community services.

I. School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

The District will create, strengthen, or work within the existing School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) to develop, implement, monitor, review, evaluate, and as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies and plans. The School Health Advisory Council will serve as a resource to school sites for implementing policies. The School Health Advisory Council will conduct a triennial assessment of the Wellness Policy and Wellness Plan in the 2024-2025 school year. The School Health Advisory Committee will be made up of school administration, staff, parents, and community members. The School Health Advisory Committee will solicit for volunteers by posting information on the District's website.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children.
- be served in clean, pleasant settings.
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations.
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables.
- serve only fat free chocolate, fat free strawberry, and 1% milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (as defined by the USDA).
- ensure that half of grains served are whole grain.
- have taste-tests of new entrees and obtain survey information from students for selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthy, and appealing food choices.
- ensure all children have breakfast made available to them in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn.
- operate the School Breakfast Program.
- notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through articles, take-home materials, or other means.
- make every effort to eliminate any school stigma attached to and prevent the overt identification of students who are eligible for free and reduced priced meals.

Sterling City Independent School District will:

- provide continuing professional development for professionals as part of the District's responsibility to operate the food service program.
- meet and follow the Smart Snacks developed by the USDA for all food and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte, snack lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through district sponsored school programs for students after the school day.
- not use foods or beverages sold individually, especially those that do not meet the nutritional standard for foods and beverages, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not be withheld (including food served through school meals) as punishment.
- allow each campus 6 exempt fundraiser days. Foods sold during an exempt day must not be sold in competition with school meals service or consumed in the school meal service area. The principal will submit exempt days at the beginning of the school year or as soon as schedules/events are confirmed.
- restrict/eliminate student access to vending machines. The District does not currently possess vending machines.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Goal 1: Sterling City ISD's food service staff and teachers will consistently promote and share healthy nutritional messages and information in the cafeteria, classrooms, and other appropriate settings with students, staff, parents, and community members.

Sterling City Independent School District aims to reach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. The District will provide nutritional education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction on subjects such as math, science, language arts, social studies, and elective subjects.
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health enhancing nutrition practices.
- emphasizes calorie balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise).
- links with school meal programs and nutrition related community services.
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis of food marketing and includes training for teachers and other staff.

- encourages classroom teachers to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.
- Publishes breakfast and lunch menus on the District's website.

IV. Physical/Mental Health Opportunities and Physical Education

Goal 2: Sterling City ISD will provide an environment that fosters safe, enjoyable and developmentally appropriate activities for all students.

All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive at least 35 minutes of daily physical education using an age-appropriate, sequential physical curriculum consistent with national and state standards. All high school students have at least 45 minutes of physical education and activity made available to them after they have completed their mandatory 1 credit for high school physical education. All K-12 students involved in physical education programs within our district will spend at least 50% of the class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity. Parents and students will be informed of local and area mental health resources through the District's website and Counselor's office.

Certified physical education teachers teach physical education.

All elementary students will receive at least 10 additional minutes of supervised recess each day outdoors as weather permits.

Students, parents, staff, and community members have access to an outdoor walking path equipped with exercise stations and a District operated swimming pool that is open during the summer months.

V. Other School Based Activities

Goal 3: Sterling City ISD will create an environment that promotes healthy eating and physical activity by allowing sufficient time for students to eat meals in a clean, safe, and comfortable cafeteria.

- provide students with at least 20 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.
- schedule lunch between 10:40 am – 1:00 pm.
- provide access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before eating meals or snacks.
- take reasonable steps to accommodate tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g. orthodontia, high tooth decay risk);
- discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meals or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diet.

The food service and custodial staff is responsible for maintaining the cafeteria.

VI. Monitoring and Plan Review

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with the established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. District administrators will ensure compliance with the district policies and will report on the school's compliance to the District superintendent or designee.

School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the school principal or superintendent.

(Revised May 13, 2024)