

OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY AND PROGRAM

The Ouachita Parish School System is committed to the optimal development of every student and believes that schools should provide a campus-wide environment where students are taught positive, safe, and health-promoting skills and values. This policy outlines the school district's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. This policy and program applies to all students, staff, and schools in the district.

WELLNESS LEADERSHIP

The Superintendent or his/her designee is responsible for the development, maintenance, and implementation of and compliance with district-wide wellness policies and programs.

SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

The School Board has established the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and appointed thereto the following: the Superintendent, the district's Child Nutrition Program Supervisor, parents of students, individuals representing the community, physical education teachers, health education teachers, school counselors, school board members, school administrators, and other school health professionals.

The School Health Advisory Council will meet at least 1-2 times per school year to establish goals for and oversee the district's wellness policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this policy. Notice of the date, time, and location of council meetings will be published on the district's website.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Implementation

Each school in the district will form a school-level wellness committee to implement the school and district wellness policies. The school wellness committee should include, to the extent possible, physical education and health teachers, other teachers, parents, administrators, classified staff, the school nurse, and members of the public, as appropriate. Each school wellness committee will use the Wellness School Assessment Tool for Implementation to complete a school-level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index, create an action plan, and generate an annual progress report to be submitted to the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The school-level assessment shall be completed by March 1st of each school year.

Triennial Assessment

At least once every three (3) years, the Superintendent or his/her designee will conduct an assessment to measure implementation of and compliance with the district's Wellness Policy and Program.

School-level assessments will be compiled and a Triennial Assessment Report will be developed and made available to the public. The report will describe the extent to which the district's schools comply with the district's Wellness Policy and Program, the extent to which the district's Wellness Policy and Program aligns with model wellness policies, and progress made in attaining the goals of the Wellness Policy and Program.

Recordkeeping

The Superintendent or his/her designee will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the Wellness Policy and Program at the Ouachita Parish School Board central office. Documentation maintained in this location will include, but will not be limited to:

- a copy of the written Wellness Policy and Program,
- documentation demonstrating that the policy and assessments have been made available to the public,
- documentation of efforts to review and update the policy, including an indication of whom was involved in the process, their relationship to the school system, and method(s) used to provide stakeholders with notice of their ability to participate,
- documentation of compliance with the annual public notification requirements,
- the most recent Triennial Assessment of the policy, and
- documentation that the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Wellness Policy and Program has been made available to the public.

Updates to the Wellness Policy and Program

The district will update or modify the Wellness Policy and Program as appropriate based on the Triennial Assessment and/or as district priorities change, community needs change, wellness goals are met, new health science, information, and technology emerges, and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued.

Communications, Community Involvement, and Notification of Policy

The district is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the Wellness Policy and Program. The district will provide parents and the public with information regarding improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and application procedures, and descriptions of and compliance with nutrition standards. The district will use electronic mechanisms, such as e-mail and/or displaying notices on the School Board's website, and/or non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations, and/or sending information home to parents, to ensure that families and the public are aware of the district's wellness policies, programs, and initiatives.

On its website, the district will annually inform families and the public of information about this policy, including its content, any updates to it, implementation status, contact information of the district official(s) coordinating the School Health Advisory Council, and information on how the public can get involved with the Wellness Program process and similar activities and initiatives.

NUTRITION

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day, including at mealtimes, throughout every school campus.

Standards and Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods and Beverages Sold to Students

The district will encourage students to make nutritious food choices and ensure that all foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day support healthy eating and are consistent with federal and state regulations.

School Meals

Reimbursable school meals shall meet requirements found in the USDA's Nutrition Standards for School Meals. The district is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk, that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams trans-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification), and that meet the nutritional needs of school children within their calorie requirements. District schools are committed to offering school meals that:

- are accessible to all students;
- are appealing and attractive to children;
- are served in clean and pleasant settings; and
- meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages, outside the federally regulated child nutrition programs, that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day (referred to as "competitive" foods and beverages) will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day and create an environment that reinforces the development of health eating habits. These standards apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold which may include, but are not limited to, a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, and snack or food carts.

Standards for Other Food and Beverages Provided, but not Sold, to Students

All foods and beverages which are offered during the school day on school campuses will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

The district has developed the following guidelines for foods and beverages which are provided, but not sold, during the school day:

- **Celebrations and parties.** The School Health Advisory Council has prepared a list of healthy party ideas, including non-food celebration ideas, for parents and teachers - a copy of which may be found in the parish handbook and on the district website.
- **Classroom snacks brought by parents.** The district's School Nutrition Services has prepared a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards - a copy of which may be found in the parish handbook and on the district website.
- **Rewards and incentives.** The School Health Advisory Council will provide teachers and other relevant school staff with a list of alternative ways to reward children - a copy of which may be found on the district website.

* Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward or withheld as punishment for any reason.

Nutrition Promotion

The district will promote, market, and advertise, healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout school buildings, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

Nutrition Education

The district will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is designed 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 integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise); and
- links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, and other school foods and nutrition-related community services.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

It is the intent of the district to protect and promote student health and to provide consistent health-related messaging. Foods and beverages marketed or promoted on school campus during the school day will be restricted to those that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

As the district reviews existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment and/or product purchasing and replacement, its decisions will reflect these marketing guidelines.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education

The district will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum shall promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits.

Students in grades K-8 shall receive physical education for at least thirty (30) minutes per day throughout the school year. High school students are required to have a minimum of 1.5 Carnegie units in physical education to graduate.

The physical education program shall promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments and shall use criterion-based reporting for each student.

Physical Activity

Students in grades K-8 are required by state law to receive at least thirty (30) minutes of physical activity per day. High school students shall be encouraged to incorporate physical activity into their day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive school physical activity program. Such programs reflect strong coordination and synergy across all of the components: quality physical education as the foundation; physical activity before, during and after school; staff involvement and family and community engagement. Schools will ensure that varied physical activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education.

To the extent practicable, the district will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active.

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)

The district recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, elementary and secondary students will be afforded periodic opportunities to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. Teachers are encouraged to provide short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time at least three (3) days per week. Such physical activity breaks should complement, not substitute, physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

Active Academics

Teachers are encouraged to incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into "core" subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies and others) and to do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day. The district supports classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement. Teachers should serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE STUDENT WELLNESS

The district will strive to integrate other wellness activities and programs across the entire school setting to create environments that are conducive to healthy eating and physical activity and convey consistent health messages. The district will coordinate and integrate initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work toward the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

Schools are encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or the School Board's curriculum experts.