RATIONALE

The Lincoln Public Schools are committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being and ability to learn. Students who are fit, healthy, and ready to learn are better prepared to be successful in school. The Lincoln School Committee takes seriously the research and data that indicates the increased incidence of obesity among children. In the short term, overweight children may exhibit compromised health which can affect school attendance and academic performance. Long-term, overweight children have a higher risk for developing chronic diseases as adults. What is true for students is also true for our staff members. A healthy staff can more effectively perform their professional duties and serve as appropriate role models for their students. While wellness is not solely the responsibility of the schools, the Lincoln Public Schools are committed to a comprehensive approach to school health built on standards-based health and physical education curricula, healthy eating in school and staff wellness. While these are the core elements addressed in this policy, the other components of a comprehensive approach to school wellness including health services, mental and social health, a safe school environment and parent/family environment are also important. These additional components may be addressed at the school level through a variety of programs and/or initiatives included in the school's wellness objectives as part of its School Improvement Plan.

The purpose of this policy is to specify the District's Wellness goals for all schools, providing clear direction for principals, teachers and other school staff, as well as students and parents. This policy meets the requirements of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 and the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act.

Goals will be provided in the following categories:

1. District Wellness Committee
2. Health Education, including nutrition
3. Nutrition guidelines for ALL foods available in schools
4. Child Nutrition Operations (Food Service)
5. Cafeteria environment
6. Food safety and security
7. Physical education and physical activity
8. Staff wellness
9. Implementation, monitoring and assessment

The Lincoln School Committee shall establish a District Wellness Committee, as required by RI General Law (16-21-28). A member of the School Committee shall co-chair the Wellness Committee with the Superintendent or her/his designee. The purpose of this Committee shall be to:

- provide direction and support (resources) to individual schools for the implementation of this policy;
- make recommendations to the District regarding specific aspects of the policy; utilizing evidence-based strategies and techniques
- evaluate the implementation of this policy on a regular basis; at least once every three years
- make recommendations to the Lincoln School Committee for revision of the policy as may be required by changes in federal or state regulation.

The District Wellness Committee will meet at least twice during the school year. All meetings are public and will be posted on the district website.

The membership of the Committee should include representatives from all of the constituent groups that are important to the implementation of the Wellness Policy. An annual recruitment effort will take place (website, school notices/newsletter, personal outreach) to solicit representation of the following:

- District Food Service Director
- School Principals – elementary, middle and high school
- School Nurse Teacher
- Health/PE Teacher
- Guidance Counselor
- Students (especially MS/HS)
- Social Worker
- Parents
- Local Partners: McColl Field Y, Town Parks and Recreation Dept., community healthcare professionals

Each school is encouraged create its own Wellness Committee which may be a subcommittee of the School Improvement Team. Each school shall address one or more of the components of the District's Wellness policy in its School Improvement Plan. Principals shall be responsible for the implementation of the district policy and the school's goals at the building level.

The Wellness Committee shall be responsible for an annual report to the Lincoln School Committee that reflects the efforts of the District and the individual schools to implement the Wellness Policy, specific concerns/areas in need of improvement identified by the District and/or at the school level as well as indicators of achievement in the area of policy implementation.

NUTRITION EDUCATION AND WELLNESS PROMOTION

Nutrition education in the Lincoln Public schools will be provided as part of a K-12 standards-based, sequential, age appropriate, comprehensive health education curriculum, in accordance with RI General Law (16-22-4), that includes nutrition themes and topics aligned with the RIDE Health Education Framework. Health education will be delivered by certified teachers at each grade level, and designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills to promote and protect their personal health over the course of their lives. Nutrition education should be integrated across the curriculum, whenever possible and appropriate, and will be communicated and supported with consistent messaging throughout the schools, through cafeteria programs, health fairs, field trips, after-school programming and assemblies and any other appropriate opportunities.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND SCHOOL MEALS

All Lincoln schools will participate in both the School Breakfast and National School Lunch programs and all foods served will meet or exceed both the current USDA Nutrition Standards for School Meals as well as the RI Nutritional Requirements. Schools will use methods to serve breakfasts that encourage participation such as breakfast before school, grab-n-go style breakfast, etc. All schools will notify students, parents, and guardians of the availability of the School Breakfast Program. All meals will promote fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat and low-sodium unprocessed items, in accordance with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Locally sourced RI products will be used as much as possible.

Lincoln Public Schools will work closely with its Food Service Manager to offer affordable, nutritious, and appealing meals and will incorporate strategies, such as taste tests, signage, promotions and student food advisories, to improve food quality and student satisfaction so as to encourage participation in school meal programs. 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. Students and their families will be provided with information about the nutritional content of all school meals.

Schools will utilize an electronic identification/payment system for all students to support participation in the school meal programs in order to prevent any social stigma.

The District will ensure that all children eligible for free/reduced meals will have the opportunity to participate by means of frequent outreach to families and coordination with appropriate state agencies.

Parents/guardians who elect to provide their child with meals outside of the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program are encouraged to send healthy foods in age-appropriate portions for their child and refrain from providing foods or snacks with minimal nutritional value, including retail fast-food.

The cafeteria environment will allow for a relaxed and enjoyable environment where students have adequate space to eat in clean and pleasant surroundings with access to hand washing or hand sanitizing facilities before meals. The time allowed for lunch shall be adequate (a minimum of 20 minutes) to ensure that all students have a reasonable amount of time to eat.

Free, safe and unflavored drinking water will be available to all students and staff throughout the day and throughout the school building, including during mealtimes, through access to water fountains or filling stations.

Marketing or promotion of foods and beverages that do not meet federal USDA and RI nutrition standards is prohibited as per RIGL 16-21-7.1 School-based marketing will be consistent with the District's nutrition education curriculum and the promotion of good health. As such, schools will limit marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet or exceed nutrition standards for reimbursable meals and competitive foods and beverages. The promotion of healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and water is strongly encouraged. Visual aids in cafeterias will reinforce lessons learned in Health classes to educate students about good nutrition. The advertising of any food or beverage that may not be sold in schools during the school day is prohibited on any school property.

COMPETITIVE FOODS AND BEVERAGES – SOLD OR OFFERED

The integrity of the school nutrition environment depends on the quality of ALL foods and beverages sold or served at school Pre K- 12. Foods that provide little nutritional value compete with healthy eating at school. The School District must also consider the need to protect students with special dietary limitations.

All foods and beverages sold outside of the reimbursable school meal program on school premises, before, during, and up to one hour after school, must comply with the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools regulations and RI General Law (16.21.7) for the sale of only healthier snacks and beverages. This includes cafeteria ala carte, any vending machines, school stores, or food fundraising efforts.

Foods/Snacks Nutrition Standards

Only fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, whole grains, non-fat or 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.
- Items shall contain no more than 35% of weight from total sugars.
- Items shall contain less than or equal to 200mg of sodium per packaged portion
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food or be a grain product that contains at least 50% whole grain; combination items must contain at least 1⁄4 cup of fruit and/or vegetable

Beverages

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

- Low-fat (1%) plain, non-fat flavored or plain milk in 8 oz portions for elementary schools and 12 oz portions for middle and high school, including nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives as permitted
- 100% fruit/vegetable juice in 8oz portions for elementary school and up to 12 oz portions for middle and high school
- Plain or carbonated water of any size (up to 12 oz portions of water flavored with 100% fruit juice for middle and high schools only)
- No artificial sweeteners
- No caffeine

Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day are encouraged to meet the nutrition standards for meals and for foods and beverages sold individually or, at a minimum, offer an equal number of healthy options. In addition, all foods and beverages provided by the school or any outside provider during before/after school daycare should meet the guidelines of USDA Smart Snacks in Schools and RIGL(16.21.7).

All fund-raising projects sponsored by staff, students and/or parent organizations (outside the times above), including sports concessions and student or family events are encouraged to meet the nutrition standards and support the District's commitment to send strong, positive messages about how student, staff and family health is valued. Non-food and fundraisers that promote physical activity are strongly encouraged.

The use of food rewards or incentives in the schools and classrooms to encourage student achievement or desirable behavior is strongly discouraged. The rare occasions that may provide an exception to this policy directive should be reported on the Wellness Evaluation prepared by the Principal.

CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

Classroom and school celebrations will not be centered on food, except if the food items are part of a curriculum-related activity. While not prohibited, parties should be framed so as to discourage the consumption of unhealthy food items and should encourage food items that meet the nutrition standards. The District shall allow parents/guardians the right to refuse their child's participation to partake of food brought to school from the homes of other students or from sources other than the District's food service provider.

The use of food or candy as a reward, incentive, or punishment in the classroom or school environment is prohibited. Offering physical activity as a reward is strongly recommended, and school staff is encouraged to use other non-food alternatives as rewards. Offering physical activity as a reward is strongly recommended, and school staff is encouraged to use other non-food alternatives as rewards.

The distribution of candy by students in the classroom and on school grounds is strongly discouraged. Staff are prohibited from distributing candy for any reason.

Parents/guardians must be given advance notice of any classroom or school activity where food will be served. Due to food safety and allergy issues, ingredient lists for all food/beverages will be available upon request.

FOOD SAFETY/FOOD SECURITY

The food offered to students in the schools must not only be nutritious but must also comply with food safety and sanitation regulations. The quality of food is determined both by the food's nutrient value and by the standards by which it is prepared. Additionally, the increase in the numbers of both students and

staff members who have serious food allergies requires that schools take steps to ensure that food brought into schools does not pose a threat to student and staff safety. For this reason, ALL food brought to school to feed more than one student should meet the District's Wellness Standards, be prepared, stored and transported under hygienic conditions. Additionally, all requirements included in the District's Food Allergy Policy (cite) must be met. The Principal of the school shall be responsible for ensuring the safety of all students and staff in this regard.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Physical activity is critical to a child's healthy weight and lifestyle as well as to his/her ability to focus in the classroom. To ensure that all students are adequately active during the day, physical activity needs to be incorporated into the daily schedule of the school. While Physical Education classes provide a specific environment in which students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills, and knowledge of personal fitness goals and practices, all teachers should recognize the importance of including some physical activity within their classrooms.

Recognizing the role and interest of parents/families in helping to keep children healthy and active, the school district and individual schools will provide information to parents about the importance of daily physical activity as well as opportunities available in the community that may be of interest to families.

Physical Education

Physical Education shall be provided for all students in Grades K-12 according to RIGL 16-22-4 which requires an average of 100 minutes per week of Health/Physical Education with curriculum aligned with standards and performance indicators of the RI Physical Education Framework and RI Health Education Framework. Recess, free play, and after-school activities shall not be counted as physical education.

All students in Grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive Physical Education as proscribed by state regulation. Participation in other activities involving physical activity (e.g. interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement and students will not be given waivers or exemptions unless provided a written note from a qualified health provider. Students will spend at least 50% of physical education time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Physical Education instruction shall be provided by certified, highly qualified teachers. Professional development will be provided as needed and appropriate to ensure the quality of instruction, the safety of students and to motivate educators to stay current and enthusiastic about the curriculum goals and maintain their role as a physical activity professional in the school building. The district will provide adequate, safe, and appropriate facilities for Physical Education instruction at each school. Class size will be appropriate for instruction and meet the requirements of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

Physical Activity

Recess:

A daily recess period, preferably outdoors, of at least 20 minutes shall be provided to all students in grades K-5 in accordance with RIGL 16-22-4.2. The School District will provide appropriate outdoor space and equipment. Recess or other physical activity shall not be taken away from students as a form of punishment unless the safety of a student(s) is a concern. Inappropriate exercise or other physical activity shall not be used for the disciplinary purposes. Regularly scheduled physical activity and physical education time shall not be sacrificed in order to provide extra instructional time or to complete class work absent a compelling circumstance, which shall be approved and documented by the principal of the school.

Classroom Movement Breaks:
Schools will discourage extended periods (longer than 2hrs.) of inactivity. Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and reduce time spent on sedentary activities. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject areas and classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons whenever possible and appropriate.

Before/After School Activities:
All elementary, middle, and high schools are encouraged to offer before/after school activities and extracurricular programs that promote and provide opportunities for physical activity. Schools should make an effort to offer a range of physical activities, such as clubs, classes, intramural and interscholastic activities, etc., that meet the needs, interests and abilities of all students.

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members outside of the school day and should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity programs with the proper approval of school officials. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

STAFF WELLNESS
The Lincoln Public Schools value the health and well-being of every staff member. As is the case with students, healthy staff members are more successful and better able to meet the obligations that are part of their employment. A sub-committee of the District Wellness Committee will develop a plan to promote staff health and wellness. The purposes of this plan shall be to:

- Encourage all school staff to improve their personal health and wellness;
- Improve staff morale;
- Support positive role modeling;
- Build the commitment of staff to promote the health and wellness of students; and,
- Build the commitment of staff to help support the district's efforts to improve the health of the school environment.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT
This Wellness Policy, along with updates on progress reports, will be posted on the District's website to inform the school community and the public about the content and implementation of the District Wellness Policy. Annual school communications will notify members of the school community about the availability of the current Wellness Policy. At least one printed copy will be available in every school building.

Implementation will be included in the District's Strategic Plan. Each school's School Improvement Team (SIT) will be responsible for addressing the policy through its School Improvement Plan. The full implementation of this policy will require the support of staff, students and families at the local school level. Procedures to guide the implementation of the policy will be developed by the Wellness

Committee and provided to all those responsible for their implementation and/or impacted by this policy. Information for students and parents will be included in Student Handbooks. Principals will be responsible for submitting the school's Annual Wellness Assessment to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent, together with the individual school principals, shall monitor and may make changes to the implementation procedures to assure their appropriateness and effectiveness to the extent that any changes do not diminish the requirements set forth in the policy required by state and federal regulation.

Any changes required by Federal or State Regulations governing district health and wellness policies shall automatically override the policy as stated here. The District Wellness Committee will be responsible for periodic review to ensure compliance with Federal and State regulations.

ADDENDUM

1. USDA Local School Wellness Policy Regulation:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/local-school-wellness-policy

2. RI General Law (16-21-28), Health and Wellness Subcommittee:
http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-21/16-21-28.HTM

3. RI General Law (16-22-4), Instruction in Health and Physical Education:
http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-22/16-22-4.HTM

4. RI General Law (16-21-7.1), Unhealthy Food/Beverage Advertising:
http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-21/16-21-7.1.HTM

5. RI General Law (16-21-7), Healthier Snacks and Beverages:
http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-21/16-21-7.HTM

6. Public Law (111-296, Section 204), Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act

7. Public Law (108265, Section 204), Child Nutrition WIC ReauthorizationAct:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthy/108-265.pdf

8. Rhode Island Nutrition Requirements:
http://www.rihsc.org/uploads/8/2/7/6/82768452/ride_2018_regulations_governing_nutritional_requirements_for_school_meals_and_competetive_foods.pdf

9. USDA Nutrition Standards for School Meals:
https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals

10. USDA Competitive Foods/Beverage Nutrition Standards ("Smart Snacks"):
https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks

11. RI General Law (16-22-4.2), Free Play Recess:
http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/PublicLaws/law16/law16157.htm

12. RI Physical Education and Health Education Framework:

http://www.ride.ri.gov/instructionassessment/othersubjects.aspx

13. USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans:
http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/

First Reading Revised Policy:	6/10/13
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First Reading Revised Policy	1/8/23
Second Reading Revised Policy	2/12/24
Approved:	2/12/24

TOWN OF LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE, Lincoln, Rhode Island