

Fall River Public Schools

Wellness Policy



Fall 2024
Fall River School Committee

FALL RIVER SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

The Fall River School District considers the health and well-being of its students and staff the highest of priorities and as such, promotes comprehensive physical and nutritional as well as social and emotional wellness initiatives as an integral part of the total learning environment. School staff members contribute to the basic overall health status of students through the support and promotion of wellness policies and procedures based on documented evidence that shows improved health and well-being optimizes student academic performance.

District Goals which will provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors for students and staff:

1. To provide a safe, healthy school environment
2. To support and promote proper dietary habits and healthy food choices
3. To provide and support opportunities for physical activity
4. To provide and support an environment that supports social and emotional wellness
5. To establish and maintain a District Wellness Advisory Council
6. To educate staff, students and family adults regarding the Wellness Policies including the rationale for its various components

A. Nutrition Education

- Nutrition education shall be integrated into various areas of classroom learning activities.
- Nutrition education shall be an integral part of food service programs and activities.
- Nutrition education shall be shared with families and the broader community to positively impact students and the overall health of the community.
- Student health services staff shall recognize conditions such as obesity, eating disorders, food allergies and other nutrition-related health problems, and initiate appropriate intervention and/or referral strategies.

B. Nutrition Standards for Foods Items

- All foods made available during the school day shall comply with current USDA Dietary Guidelines.
- All food items provided for classroom or school celebrations shall be ordered through the District's food service department.
- Food items shall not be used as incentives or rewards for individual student behavior or accomplishments.
- School staff shall neither accept nor provide home-baked goods for distribution to students.
- Food items shall not be used as classroom project materials.
- Foods and beverages sold or provided at beyond-the-school-day school sponsored events (i.e. school dances) shall include healthy choices that comply with USDA Dietary Guidelines. (Refer to John C. Stalker Institute Food and Nutrition A-List <https://johnstalkerinstitute.org/resources/school-snacks/alist/>.)
- Any food item to be sold as a school fundraiser by staff or school support group shall meet USDA Dietary Guidelines or be offered along with either a second food item that does meet those Guidelines, or a non-food item.

C. School Meal Program

- District administrators shall contract with a food service provider that is properly qualified, certified and/or credentialed according to current professional standards, to administer the school food service program and satisfy reporting requirements.
- District administrators shall maintain a coordinated and comprehensive outreach and promotion plan to ensure maximum participation in the school meal program for breakfast and lunch.
- Students shall be provided with adequate time to eat meals, at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch.
- Lunch periods shall be scheduled as near to the middle of the school day as possible.
- School staff shall promote participation in all available nutrition programs (e.g. school lunch, school breakfast, after-school snack, and summer food service programs).

D. Physical Activity

- The District's Physical Education Department Head shall ensure that all physical activity goals are continually being met.
- Physical education courses shall create an environment where students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills and knowledge.
- All physical education instructors shall be state certified in physical education.
- Physical education classes shall have a student/teacher ratio that is in compliance with the District's current teacher contract.
- The time allotted for physical education shall be consistent with research, national and state standards.
- Elementary school schedules shall provide at least one daily recess period.
- Physical education shall not be withheld from students for such remedial work as interventions, tutoring and other academic work, or for music lessons.
- *Recess shall not be withheld from students for classroom misbehavior or for such remedial work as interventions, tutoring, music lessons or academic make-up work. If however, a student's behavior in any class is judged to present an imminent safety, health or welfare concern to him/herself, other students or staff members, and/or is in violation of the District's Code of Conduct, a principal or designated administrator may temporarily withhold recess from the student. In such cases, the Code of Discipline will be followed, parents or guardians will be notified, and a plan to address behavioral concerns developed.
- Physical education courses shall include individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage life-long physical activity.
- Adequate equipment shall be available for all students to participate in physical education classes.
- School staff shall provide a physical environment that is safe and meets the needs of all students.
- Information shall be provided to families to help them incorporate physical activity into their children's lives.
- School staff shall provide physical activity programs for students outside of the normal school day.
- School staff shall encourage families and community members to help institute programs that support physical activity.

* Refer also to the District's Student Handbook for more information regarding recess.

E. School-Based Activities

- After-school programs shall encourage physical activity and healthy habit formation.
- Wellness Policy Standards shall be followed when planning all school-based activities such as school events, field trips, dances, and assemblies.
- District and individual school staff shall endorse opportunities to work with families, students and community organizations to provide nutrition education, physical activity and other options for promoting student wellness.
- Individual school-based Wellness Teams and staff carrying out District Wellness Policy initiatives shall employ communication methods, be it print or electronic, best suited to reach members of their own school community.

F. Wellness and Staff

- Positive nutritional, physical, social and emotional environments shall be promoted.
- Wellness opportunities shall be provided for all staff.
- Staff shall serve as positive role models for students.
- Staff shall support the physical, social and emotional health and fitness of all students.

G. Wellness Advisory Council

- A District Wellness Advisory Council shall be established to create a Wellness Policy, evaluate progress and make revisions.
- The Council shall meet at a minimum of four times annually with membership including, but not limited to:

Superintendent or designee
 District Health and Physical Education Director
 District Food Service Director
 Registered dietitian
 Local health practitioner
 District Nursing Supervisor
 Parent representative
 Student representative
 School Committee member
 Community partners

- The Wellness Advisory Council shall serve as a resource to school staff.

H. Policy Compliance/Review

- The Superintendent or designee, in collaboration with school-based administrators shall ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- Each school principal shall review the Wellness Policy with their staff at the beginning of each school year, as well as with new staff throughout the year as part of their onboarding, to ensure awareness and compliance with school staff and school community.
- Food service staff shall ensure compliance with nutrition policies within food service areas.