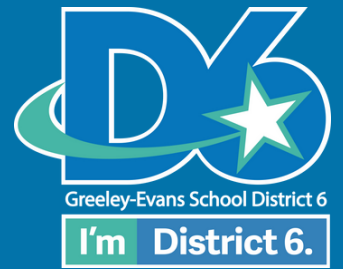


2023-2024



STUDENT ATHLETE SPORTS NUTRITION CURRICULUM

A SPORT NUTRITION EDUCATION CURRICULUM
PROPOSAL FOR GREELEY EVANS SCHOOL DISTRICT 6

PREPARED BY:
COLORADO STATE
UNIVERSITY
FSHN:620



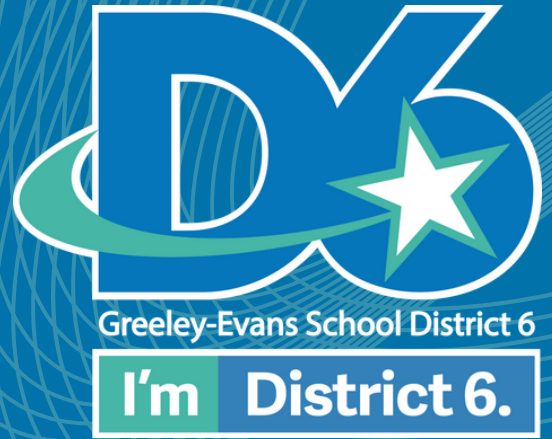


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The implementation of a student-athlete sports nutrition curriculum within Greeley-Evans Weld County School District 6 is a crucial initiative poised to address significant gaps in nutrition knowledge among teenagers, particularly student-athletes. Research consistently demonstrates that adolescents need an adequate understanding of optimal nutrition practices, as inadequate understanding poses risks to their health, performance, and overall well-being. Against this backdrop, athletes within District 6 have voiced a clear desire to acquire comprehensive knowledge on how to effectively fuel their bodies for peak performance.

This desire was present before the creation of the curriculum and has been reaffirmed through a formative evaluation of our curriculum. High school students within the Poudre and the Greeley-Evans school districts provided feedback and insight throughout the curriculum development process, voicing a need for this type of curriculum.

By introducing a dedicated sports nutrition curriculum, the district can proactively support the holistic development of its student-athletes, fostering a culture of health and wellness. This curriculum will equip athletes with essential skills and insights into proper nutrition strategies tailored to their specific needs, enabling them to optimize game day performance, accelerate recovery, and minimize the risk of injuries. Moreover, it will instill lifelong habits that transcend sports, empowering students to make informed dietary choices that contribute to their overall health and vitality.

The benefits of implementing such a curriculum extend beyond individual athletes to encompass the broader school community. The district can cultivate an environment conducive to academic success, physical vitality, and long-term health outcomes by promoting nutrition literacy and wellness-oriented attitudes. Furthermore, investing in student-athlete nutrition education aligns with the district's commitment to holistic student development, demonstrating its proactive approach to addressing the multifaceted needs of its diverse student body.

While beyond our current scope, high-school-age students continuously requested curriculum focus on Eating Disorders and Disordered Eating. While this is outside of our curriculum's scope, this is an area where we hope resources are directed in the future to ensure that this population is safe, happy, and healthy. While these topics are not covered in the current curriculum, we will provide scientifically-based resources to fill this knowledge gap in the meantime.

In conclusion, introducing a student-athlete sports nutrition curriculum is a strategic imperative for Greeley-Evans Weld County School District 6. By bridging the gap between different levels of nutrition knowledge and the expressed needs of student-athletes, this initiative not only enhances athletic performance but also fosters a culture of health, wellness, and academic excellence within the district. Through proactive investment in the well-being of its students, District 6 can position itself as a leader in promoting holistic student development and preparing its athletes for success both on and off the field.

SPORTS NUTRITION CURRICULUM



RATIONALE

Implementing a sports nutrition curriculum course in high schools within Greeley-Evans School District 6 is crucial for several reasons. Research consistently shows that teenagers often lack optimal knowledge of nutrition. By offering a dedicated sports nutrition course, the district can bridge this gap and empower student-athletes with the essential knowledge to fuel their bodies effectively.

Additionally, athletes in District 6 have expressed a desire to learn how to properly fuel their bodies. Providing them with a structured curriculum focused on sports nutrition can enhance their understanding of nutrition's role in athletic performance. With better nutrition, athletes can optimize their energy levels, improve recovery times, and potentially reduce the risk of injuries.

Proper nutrition is not only vital for athletic performance but also for overall health and wellness. The district can instill lifelong habits that promote well-being beyond their athletic careers by educating student-athletes about nutrition principles¹. Teaching students how to make informed choices about their diet can contribute to lower obesity rates, chronic diseases, and other health issues later in life.

Learning about sports nutrition can also help instill a sense of responsibility and accountability in student-athletes. Understanding the impact of their dietary choices on their performance and health can empower them to make more mindful decisions both on and off the field. This sense of ownership over their nutrition can translate into other areas of their lives, promoting personal growth and development.

Providing an opportunity to implement a sports nutrition curriculum in Greeley-Evans School District 6 high schools is a proactive step towards addressing the nutrition needs of student-athletes. "Adolescence can also be a time when forming connections and finding acceptance are particularly high priorities. These pressures may make adolescents more vulnerable to unhealthy messages about weight, food, and exercise that might exist in their social environments²." By offering this curriculum opportunity to students, the district can empower athletes with the knowledge and skills they need to optimize their performance, promote their overall health and wellness, and foster a sense of responsibility and accountability among its student population.

1. Brown R, Seabrook JA, Stranges S, et al. Examining the Correlates of Adolescent Food and Nutrition Knowledge. *Nutrients*. 2021;13(6):2044. Published 2021 Jun 15. doi:10.3390/nu13062044

2. Chandler. The Effects of Diet Culture on Adolescents. *Eating Disorder Hope*. Published December 14, 2022. Accessed April 8, 2024. <https://www.eatingdisorderhope.com/blog/the-effects-of-diet-culture-on-adolescents#:~:text=Adolescence%20can%20also%20be%20a>

STAKEHOLDER BUY-IN

COACHES

A sports nutrition curriculum in high schools is essential for coaches to consider, as it directly impacts the performance and well-being of student athletes. By integrating such a curriculum, coaches can witness enhanced athletic performance among their team members. Proper nutrition not only reduces the risk of injuries but also facilitates faster recovery times and maximizes the effectiveness of training sessions¹. Moreover, healthier and more proficient athletes often translate to greater success for the teams they represent.

TEACHERS

The proposed student-athlete sports nutrition curriculum in high schools not only enhances the well-being of student-athletes but also holds significant benefits for teachers. Research consistently demonstrates that adolescents who receive proper nutrition and engage in regular physical activity exhibit improved academic performance². Thus, implementing such a curriculum aligns with educators' objectives of fostering holistic student development and achieving academic excellence.

PARENTS

It is crucial to highlight the tangible benefits for parents. This curriculum equips their children with essential life skills and ensures that student-athletes receive proper guidance on fueling their bodies for optimal performance. Additionally, the curriculum plays a vital role in dispelling myths propagated through social media, protecting students from potentially harmful trends. This program can positively contribute to long-term impacts such as injury prevention, faster recovery times, improved mental health, academic success, and overall well-being supported by proper nutrition¹. By emphasizing these aspects, we aim to secure the enthusiastic support of parents who stand to gain invaluable peace of mind and assurance regarding their child's holistic development through this targeted educational initiative.

ADMINISTRATORS

This curriculum benefits administrators from all high schools in Greeley-Evans School District 6 by aligning with the district's overarching objectives to foster physical well-being and academic success, this curriculum presents administrators with a powerful tool to fulfill their responsibilities. With a focus on promoting health and enhancing academic achievement, administrators can champion this initiative as a strategic investment in the holistic development of their students, ultimately contributing to the overall success and reputation of their high schools within the district. This program is a flagship initiative for our district, showcasing a model that can be adapted and customized for high schools across the state.

STUDENTS

This curriculum benefits students by empowering them to make informed choices about what they eat, leading to better energy, focus, and endurance during sports and daily activities. As the curriculum was requested by students, students were involved in the process evaluation and will be on the receiving end of the curriculum; they should see the most benefit. This program is a valuable social opportunity for athletes to meet and connect with other student athletes in their community.

SCHOOL BOARD

This curriculum holds significant advantages for the school board, showcasing a proactive response to student voices. Endorsing this initiative demonstrates a commitment to evidence-based decision-making, comprehensively underlining the board's dedication to fostering student success. By prioritizing student-athlete sports nutrition, the school board aligns itself with the holistic development of students, reinforcing the institution's commitment to their overall well-being and growth. This program is a flagship initiative for our district, showcasing a model that can be adapted and customized for high schools across the state.

1. Amawi A, AlKasasbeh W, Jaradat M, et al. Athletes' nutritional demands: a narrative review of nutritional requirements. *Front Nutr.* 2024;10:1331854.

Published 2024 Jan 18. doi:10.3389/fnut.2023.1331854

2. Training A. Enhancing Athletic Performance with Sports Nutrition. UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO. Published October 24, 2023. <https://atp.uidaho.edu/blog/enhancing-athletic-performance-the-science-behind-sport-nutrition/#::~text=1>.



EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Equity considerations for a high school athlete nutrition program encompass various factors, primarily focusing on timing. The scheduling of the program during a before-school time slot poses challenges for some students. Transportation constraints, such as reliance on buses or parental rides with fixed timings due to work or other obligations, may prevent students from participating. Additionally, students may have pre-existing commitments before regular school hours, such as club sports or 2-a-day practices, work, family responsibilities, extra classes, or other extracurricular activities. Some students may also face dilemmas regarding school-provided breakfast, either missing it or feeling uncomfortable attending the program after having breakfast due to social stigmas. Future considerations for enhancing equity in the program could involve scheduling sessions during designated sports physical education classes, traditional practice times, or a portion of lunchtime. This would allow students to balance their nutritional needs with their existing schedules, ensuring greater inclusivity and participation among all athletes. This would require buy-in from coaches and the athletic department to ensure students are able to take away from their allotted practice or lunchtime to participate in this nutrition programming.

Equity considerations for a high school athlete nutrition program are vital when addressing the diverse backgrounds, financial barriers, and cultural sensitivities of student-athletes. Recognizing that students may face financial constraints that impact their access to nutrient-dense foods, the program aims to support all athletes in making healthy choices regardless of economic circumstances. Acknowledging that students often lack control over their family's food choices, the program seeks to empower them to take an active role in their nutrition education. Furthermore, the program ensures that nutrition suggestions are culturally sensitive, refraining from labeling foods as "good" or "bad" to respect various religious or cultural practices. Implicit and explicit bias towards available nutrition and food resources provided by schools and districts also plays a role in student participation with these resources. There may be a stigma surrounding eating a school-provided meal or bringing culturally important foods to school. The curriculum emphasizes that all foods are fuel, and the focus is on educating students to make informed choices that suit their individual needs and preferences. By fostering positive, well-informed conversations surrounding nutrition, the program aims to eliminate shame associated with food access disparities and promote inclusivity among students of diverse cultural backgrounds, races, religions, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses. Ultimately, the goal is to create an environment where all student-athletes feel empowered to prioritize their health and well-being through informed dietary decisions.

We also want to highlight the challenge of delivering comprehensive information within a limited time frame. With only four 30-minute sessions available, addressing the diverse knowledge levels and trust issues among students poses a significant barrier. Students may rely on information from coaches or family members, which may conflict with the program's messaging. Moreover, the brevity of the program may leave students with unanswered questions and fragmented knowledge, leading them to seek information from unreliable sources. To address these challenges, the program aims to summarize the information taught and provide the materials to coaches and school staff. This ensures that key messages are reinforced and aligned across all stakeholders. Additionally, the program will offer trusted resources for students to access factual and vetted information that complements the curriculum. By providing support and reliable sources, the program aims to empower students to make informed decisions about their nutrition despite the constraints of the time-limited format.

We acknowledge that due to time constraints, our current curriculum does not cover topics such as body image, disordered eating, and eating disorders, which were identified as important by students in our formative evaluation. These discussions are crucial, especially for student-athletes, as they are forming their eating habits during their teen years. We believe these topics should be approached with empathy and factual information to avoid perpetuating unhealthy habits or attributing to disordered eating or eating disorders. However, we did not have enough time or resources to dedicate solely to these topics in a manner that would enhance student understanding and provide a safe space for discussion with a qualified individual who could offer mental health support, if needed, within the scope of our current curriculum. We will provide fact-based outside resources for students, presenters, or coaches if they are interested in learning more about these topics from a trusted resource. In future iterations, we recommend including a qualified individual to cover these topics, provide ample resources for any questions, concerns, or conversations that may arise, and provide online resources that may be accessed after the presentation. Our goal in briefly mentioning these topics is not to trivialize them, but to ensure they are handled with care and provide the best opportunity for students to learn factual and helpful information, thus addressing equity considerations in our nutrition curriculum.

By prioritizing equity in high school athlete nutrition programming, schools can help ensure that all student-athletes thrive both on and off the field, regardless of their circumstances or backgrounds.



Formative evaluation was conducted throughout the curriculum development process. High school students indicated that they not only found the curriculum useful but also approved of the topics chosen.



The summative evaluation was piloted by testing survey results on 35 high school-aged students to ensure both readability and the format of the evaluation.



Students expressed a desire for food to be provided and suggested that the curriculum be conducted once a week in the mornings for four weeks.



Students have expressed a need for a curriculum on eating disorders and disordered eating. This is a matter that warrants future consideration and is highly recommended for allocation of future resources.

SPORTS NUTRITION CURRICULUM



CURRICULUM SUMMARY

- **Day 1:** This portion of the curriculum educates about basic nutrition principles and what the different nutrients do. Basic nutrition includes meals that are balanced throughout the day to include proteins, fruits and vegetables, grains, and dairy/dairy alternative. Additionally, it covers moderation and balance and how there is room for every food. Finally, it covers the importance of hydration.
- **Day 2:** This portion of the curriculum details pre and post game day fueling and recovery. This 30 minute lesson includes fueling for game day in terms of what food groups, hydration practices and overall timing best prepares your body for exercise. Additionally, we discuss food groups for recovery as well as hydration practices and the overall timing of both these topics for ideal recovery after exertion. At the end of the lesson we have a quick discussion and knowledge check to help students apply these teachings to their current practices.
- **Day 3:** This portion of the curriculum covers finding and vetting sources of nutrition information and common supplements as well as their uses and potential complications. Students will complete an activity that is designed to identify current sources of information they tend to trust. Finally, Day 3 will address health concerns surrounding supplement use and the importance of finding evidence-based information.
- **Day 4:** This portion of the curriculum provides an opportunity for students to test their knowledge from Days 1-3. Students will create their ideal game-day meal plan given what they learned in the curriculum. In small groups, and then as a class they will share and reflect on their game day meal plan, as well as be prompted to reflect on key points from lessons 1-3. They will also have an opportunity to ask questions and have their questions answered from throughout the curriculum.

****Curriculum and supporting materials were developed by Thomas Aquilino, Madeleine Breza, Madeleine Clausen, Hannah Dunlop, Abigail Figan, Abigail Howk, Rachel Madden, Maggie Peddicord, Michelle Shu, and Morgan Stout**

SPORTS NUTRITION CURRICULUM

SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES



Templates for the following resources are located on Canva:

1. Instagram Template:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAF8nhxWqbo/phUvXIXeUfK68fIJ4KyCaw/edit?utm_content=DAF8nhxWqbo&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

2. Facebook/ X Template:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAF8nk4MPas/wk2Mf8EPqrylOKG9_s6mVg/edit?utm_content=DAF8nk4MPas&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

SPORTS NUTRITION CURRICULUM

COMMUNICATIONS MATERIALS

Subject: Empowering Student-Athletes: Introducing a Sports Nutrition Curriculum

Dear [Recipient's Name],

I am thrilled to share an exciting initiative within Greeley-Evans Weld County School District 6, a student-athlete sports nutrition curriculum designed to empower our young athletes with essential knowledge and skills for optimal performance and lifelong health.

Research consistently highlights nutrition's critical role in teenagers' lives, particularly student-athletes. These young individuals require a nuanced understanding of how to fuel their bodies effectively to enhance their performance and safeguard their health and well-being. Recognizing this need, we have developed a curriculum tailored to the specific needs of our student-athletes.

This curriculum is the result of feedback from high school students and peers who have expressed a clear desire for comprehensive nutrition education. It aims to equip student-athletes with the knowledge and tools to optimize their performance, accelerate recovery, and minimize the risk of injuries. Moreover, this curriculum will instill lifelong habits that transcend sports, empowering students to make informed dietary choices that contribute to their overall health and vitality.

By investing in student-athlete nutrition education, we are enhancing athletic performance and fostering a culture of health and wellness within our district. We believe that this initiative aligns with our commitment to holistic student development and will position District 6 as a leader in promoting the well-being of its students.

Thank you for your support of this important initiative. Together, we can empower our student-athletes to reach their full potential on and off the field. More information regarding the time and location of this curriculum will be provided soon.

Sincerely,

Greeley-Evans Weld County School District 6

SPORTS NUTRITION CURRICULUM



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

While we understand the significance of offering resources to promote healthy eating habits and body image and addressing eating disorders and disordered eating, these topics were beyond the scope and expertise of our current curriculum. For future iterations, we recommend allocating resources and funding to address these crucial yet challenging topics in a manner that aligns with our mission of educating students and promoting healthy eating habits.

- Body Confident Sport
 - <https://www.bodyconfident sport.com/>
- Fort Collins eating disorder counselors and therapists (lalunacenter.com)
 - <https://www.lalunacenter.com/fort-collins-eating-disorder-therap>
 - Bloom Counseling & Nutrition | Eating Disorder Treatment | Fort Collins, CO (bloomcounselingandnutrition.com)
 - <https://www.bloomcounselingandnutrition.com/>
- Find Therapists and Psychologists in 80521 - Psychology Today
 - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/80521>
- Beyond The Mirror Counseling & Wellness | holistic therapy | 110 West Harvard Street, Fort Collins, CO, USA
 - <https://www.beyondthemirror.org/>