

# **Wellness Policy Goals and Guidelines**

**for  
Lawrence County School System**

*Board Approved May 10, 2021*

The Wellness Policy requirement was established by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and further strengthened by the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010. It requires each Local Education Association (LEA) participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or Breakfast program to develop a Wellness Policy. The unique needs of each school under the LEA's Jurisdiction can be addressed.

**Introduction:**

Heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States. Major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, are often established in childhood.

It is the intent of the Lawrence County School District that students develop good eating habits and appreciate the kinds of food necessary to maintain good health. Children who participate in school meal programs have better nutritional intake than those who do not. In addition, participation in the School Breakfast Program has been shown to improve standardized test scores, improve attendance, decrease tardiness and improve participation in class.

It is also the intent of the Lawrence County School District to provide adequate time for physical exercise to develop a habit of lifelong fitness for our students. Physical education provides life skills that encourage students to be active and fit for life. It has a positive impact on students' physical, mental, and emotional health.

**Public Participation and Updates:**

A District School Wellness Policy Committee will be established to provide school district-wide leadership and general public participation in the development, implementation, and update of the School Wellness Policy, goals and guidelines. The Wellness Policy, updated information, annual progress reporting, and triennial assessment will be made available to the public through the district website and social media.

**Monitoring:**

The school district superintendent will ensure compliance with established district-wide School Wellness Policy. In each school, the principal will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's

compliance to the superintendent. Schools are encouraged to organize a school health council to develop, implement, monitor, and review school nutrition promotion and physical activity promotion.

School nutrition staff at the district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent. In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA Administrative Review findings and any resulting changes.

The school district superintendent or a designee will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel in the district.

**Policy Review:**

To help with the evaluation of the district's School Wellness Policy, each school in the district will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs. Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review its nutrition and physical activity policies, its provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity, and its nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district and individual schools within the district will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

**Component 1: Nutrition Promotion**

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs.

- A. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

- B. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff and teachers, parents, students, and the community.
- C. The school district shall provide parents a list of ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards and fundraising activities.
- D. School staffs are encouraged to model healthy eating habits. They are role models to the students.

### **Component 2: Nutrition Education**

- A. Nutrition education will be integrated into other areas of the curriculum such as math, science, language arts and social studies.
- B. Goal setting and decision making skills that enhance personal, family and community health shall be encouraged.
- C. Nutrition education information will be reviewed by a qualified, credentialed nutrition professional.
- D. Each school is encouraged to establish a school garden, to be used as an outdoor classroom for nutrition, science, and other lessons.
- E. Staff shall integrate experiential education activities, - such as gardening, cooking demonstrations, farm and farmers' market tours - into existing curricula at all grade levels.
- F. Nutrition education messages from the classroom will be modeled in the cafeteria and across campus by offering locally-grown food whenever possible within the reimbursable federal meal program.

### **Component 3: Other School Based Activities that Promote Student Wellness**

Local wellness policy goals are considered in planning all school-based activities.

#### ***Addendum 1: ALSDE Smart Snack Exemption/Fundraising Guidelines***

- A. Occasional class parties and celebrations are exempt from the guidelines. However, providing healthful options is strongly encouraged. A list of healthy alternatives can be requested from the local Child Nutrition office.
- B. All after-school and off-campus activities will be exempt.

- C. School instructional staff shall collaborate with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families. Guest speakers invited to address students shall receive appropriate orientation to the relevant policies of the school district.

**Component 4: Nutrition Guidelines for all Foods and Beverages**

***Addendum II: USDA National School Lunch Meal Patterns***

***Addendum III: USDA Smart Snack Standards***

- A. All food and beverages available on the school campus during the school day will comply with the federal regulations for:
  - a. School meal nutrition standards, and the
  - b. Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
    - Vending Machines
    - A la Carte sale
    - Fundraisers
    - Beverage contracts
    - Concession stands
    - Student stores
- B. Food providers will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meet federal, state, and local laws and guidelines. Food providers will offer a variety of age appropriate healthy food and beverage selections for elementary, middle, and high schools.
- C. Food Vendors who repeatedly send foods that do not comply with USDA Smart Snack standards may no longer do business with the schools.

**Component 5: Policies for Food and Beverage Marketing**

- A. Marketing and advertising will only be allowed for those foods and beverages that meet the federal nutrition guidelines and Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

- B. Examples of marketing techniques include the following:  
handouts, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, school assemblies, educational incentive programs that provide nutritious food as a reward, in-school television, samples or coupons promoting water, pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines, sales of fruit for fundraisers, and coupons for discount gym memberships.

### **Component 6: Eating Environment**

- A. The Lawrence County Board of Education agrees with the National Association of State Board of Education's recommendations that students should be provided adequate time to eat, at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch, from the time the student is seated.
- B. Lunch periods are scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible.
- C. Cafeterias include enough serving areas so that students do not have to spend too much time waiting in line. Dining areas are attractive and have enough space for seating all students.
- D. Drinking water is available for students at meals.
- E. Food is not used as a reward or punishment for student behaviors, unless it is detailed in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- F. Schools will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
- G. Schools shall discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.
- H. To promote lifelong positive eating behaviors, students, staff and visitors are not allowed to bring bottled or canned carbonated drinks or commercial or fast food into the lunchroom during lunch or breakfast unless these items are contained in a thermos bottle and/or plain wrapper/container.

### **Component 7: Child Nutrition Operations**

- A. The Child Nutrition Program will aim to be financially self-supporting. However, the program is an essential educational

support activity. Budget neutrality or profit generation will not take precedence over the nutritional needs of the students. If subsidy of the child nutrition fund is needed, it will not be from the sale of foods that have minimal nutritional value and/or compete nutritionally with programs meals.

- B. The Child Nutrition Program will ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn well.
- C. The schools will strive to increase participation in the available Child Nutrition Programs (e.g. school lunch and school breakfast).
- D. All food service personnel shall have adequate pre-service training in food service operations.
- E. Schools must eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as "grab-and-go" or classroom breakfast.

### **Component 8: Food Safety/Food Security**

- A. All foods made available on campus comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illness in schools.
- B. For the safety and security of the food storage and facility, access to the food service operations are limited to the Child Nutrition staff and authorized personnel only. After hours use by other groups must have CNP prior approval and supervision.

### **Component 9: Physical Activity/Education and Promotion**

#### **Addendum VI: CDC-Strengthen Physical Education in Schools**

- A. Physical Activity Education
  - a. Physical education courses will be the social environment where students learn, practice, and are assessed

on developmental appropriate motor skills, social skills, and knowledge.

b. All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity for the entire school year. In Alabama that requirement is a minimum daily instructional period of at least 30 minutes in K-8<sup>th</sup> PE. It is recommended, however, that students in Grades 7-8 receive a minimum of 50 minutes of physical education daily

c. Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (*e.g.*, running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (*e.g.*, recess, physical education) as punishment.

d. Policies will encourage that state-certified physical education instructors teach all physical education classes.

e. Physical activity education will take into consideration the “balancing equation” of food intake and physical activity.

f. Physical education will include the instruction of safe and enjoyable individual activities, non-traditional as well as traditional competitive and non-competitive team sports, to encourage life-long physical activity for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted.

#### B. Physical Activity Promotion

a. In order for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.

b. Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television.

c. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons and classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.



d. All elementary, middle, and high schools will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. All high schools and middle schools, as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

e. Encourage the approved use of school facilities for physical activity outside of school hours. Schools are encouraged to develop relationships with community programs.

a. The district recognizes that school gardens and farm visits can offer physical activity opportunities, as well as agricultural education, by engaging students in activities such as planting, harvesting, and weeding. Teachers and students are encouraged to take advantage of these physical activity opportunities during the school day as well as through field trips and after-school activities.

b. Due to a decrease in daily nutrition and exercise habits in middle school and high school students the school district will incorporate early intervention events to emphasize the importance of nutrition and exercise habits for lifelong wellness. (One Mile Wellness Run 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade, County Field Day, ACES Pizza Farm, Farm to School fieldtrips, LC Children's Policy Council Have A Fit Day, etc.)

#### **Component 10: Staff Wellness:**

- A.** The school district highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- B.** School staff participates in the BC/BS Health Assessment.
- C.** Each school should establish and maintain a Staff Wellness Committee composed of at least one staff member, school dietitian or other health professional, and recreation program representative.

- D. The Staff Wellness Committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The Staff Wellness Committee should distribute its plan to the District Wellness Committee annually.

**Component 11: Implementation, Monitoring and Review:**

To measure the success of the school wellness program, the following statistics shall be gathered for comparison every 3 years:

- A. The number of students in each school
- B. The ADP in the School Breakfast program
- C. The ADP in the School Lunch Program
- D. The length of the breakfast service
- E. The length of the lunch service
- F. The average number of physical activity minutes available to each student
- G. The number of elementary students receiving physical education
- H. The number of middle school students receiving physical education
- I. The number of high school students receiving physical education
- J. The number of minutes physical education is provided to elementary students
- K. The number of minutes physical education is provided to middle school students
- L. The number of minutes physical education is provided to high school students
- M. The total number of school days elementary students are required to attend physical education during the current school year
- N. The total number of school days middle school students are required to attend physical education during the current school year
- O. The total number of school days high school students are required to attend physical education during the current school year.
- P. List of indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities that are open to students, their families, and the community outside of school hours.

- Q. The methods PE teachers use to promote student participation in a variety of community physical activities.
- R. School clubs/intermural groups that offer physical activity opportunities BEFORE and/or AFTER school.
- S. The physical activity, fitness, healthy eating, or weight management programs and incentives offered to your school staff.
- T. The ways the school staff is encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors for the students.
- U. Any Wellness Activities/Community Events that your school hosts. (i.e. fun runs, health fairs, Bike to School Days, Jump Rope for Heart, field trips related to nutrition and physical activity)

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