

**Instruction**

**Student Wellness Policy**

**Purpose and Goal**

Recognizing the link between student wellness and learning, the Hamden Public Schools (the "District") will provide a comprehensive program to promote nutrition and regular physical activity. The District's goal is to prepare all students to make healthy choices that will support their physical and mental development and lifelong wellbeing. To that end, the District shall prepare, adopt, and implement a Coordinated School Health ("CSH") approach that encourages and reinforces health literacy through a variety of supports and resources.

This Wellness Policy (the "Policy") applies to all students, staff, and schools in the District.

**I. District and School Wellness Committees**

The District will convene a representative District Wellness Committee ("DWC") that shall meet at least three times per year. The DWC shall advise on school health and safety policies and programs, including the development and implementation of this student wellness policy and recommendations regarding its periodic review and update.

The DWC shall be composed of District staff, parents, and community representatives. Permanent members of the DWC shall include the Superintendent or designee, health and athletic department staff, and a food service representative. Each school principal, in collaboration with their school's PTA/PTSA/PTO, shall select one staff member and one parent to represent the school. At his/her discretion, the Superintendent or designee may appoint other members of the DWC, including but not limited to students, school administrators, physical education and health teachers, school health professionals, school health services staff, and mental health and social services staff.

Each school principal shall also establish a School Wellness Committee ("SWC"). Each SWC shall consist of the principal, the school's representatives to the DWC, the school nurse, and at least two members of each of the following groups: teachers, parents, and students. The SWC shall be responsible for educating the school community about and implementing school-based wellness initiatives developed by the DWC, as well as addressing school-specific concerns.

**II. Wellness Plan, Implementation, Monitoring, and Community Engagement**

**Wellness Plan**

The DWC shall develop and maintain a Wellness Plan (the "Plan") to manage and coordinate the execution of this Policy. The Plan shall delineate roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines specific to each school. The topics addressed by such guidelines may include but are not limited to implementation of recommended changes, nutrition standards for foods and

## **Instruction**

### **Student Wellness Policy**

beverages available on campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical education, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.

The DWC shall review and revise the Plan annually in time for the beginning of each academic year. Each fall, the DWC shall develop a new Annual Action Agenda (the "Agenda"), based on the Plan's goals and objectives, that will drive the activities of the DWC over the course of the year. The DWC shall monitor the progress of these goals and objectives throughout the year and report to the Board of Education annually.

### **Triennial Progress Assessments**

At least once every three years, the District shall evaluate compliance with the Policy, including:

- The extent to which District schools are in compliance with the Policy.
- The extent to which the Policy is aligned with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation model wellness policy.
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals set forth in the Plan.

### **Revisions and Updates**

The DWC shall update or modify the Plan based on annual progress monitoring and the triennial assessment, and/or as District priorities and community needs change, wellness goals are met, new developments in health science and technology emerge, and new federal or state standards and guidance are issued. The Policy will be updated as needed following the triennial assessment.

## **III. Nutrition**

### **School Meals**

Our school district is committed to serving healthy meals to children that contain fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and contain zero grams *trans*-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and whose calorie requirements meet the nutritional needs of schoolchildren. The District shall meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations. The school meal programs shall aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

**Instruction****Student Wellness Policy**

All schools within the District participate in USDA and CSDE child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the Healthy Foods Certification (HFC). The District also participates in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

**Staff Qualifications and Professional Development**

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff shall meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. These school nutrition personnel shall refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to identify training that meets their learning needs.

**Water**

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry approved water bottles, filled only with water, with them throughout the day.

**Competitive Foods and Beverages, Celebrations and Incentives, and Fundraising**

The District is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on campus during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (i.e., "competitive" foods and beverages) shall meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Hamden voluntarily participates in Healthy Food Certification with the State of Connecticut Department of Child Nutrition. Connecticut's Healthy Food Certification Nutrition Standards are more stringent than USDA'S Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards. By complying with Healthy Food Certification, the District commits to selling snack items during the school day that meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards, which focus on limiting fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, and sugars, moderating portion sizes, and promoting increased intake of nutrient-dense foods such as whole grains. The Connecticut Nutrition Standards are based on current nutrition science and recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and national organizations such as the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The Connecticut State Department of Education's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages is used to select only foods and commercial products that meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards to be made available for purchase on school campuses during the school day (outside of USDA school meals), including those purchased from school stores, a la carte lines in the cafeteria, and in-school fundraisers.

**Instruction****Student Wellness Policy**

All foods offered on campus, including foods offered during celebrations or as an incentive, shall meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

The District shall encourage school-based organizations to use items other than food products in their fundraising efforts. Fundraising activities that involve serving or selling food and occur on school property must comply with the Connecticut Healthy Food Certification standards.

**IV. Nutrition Promotion and Education****Nutrition Promotion**

Nutrition promotion positively influences 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. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. 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.

The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs.

**Nutrition Education**

The District aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by 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, as well as through the educational component of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.
- 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 and exercise).

**Instruction****Student Wellness Policy**

The District shall follow health education curriculum standards and guidelines as adopted by the Connecticut State Department of Education. Schools will link nutrition education activities with the school health curriculum. Pre-K through grade twelve instructional staff will integrate nutritional information from the Connecticut State Department of Education's Health and Safety Education Curriculum Framework into lessons as developmentally appropriate.

**Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools**

The District is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and engage in physical activity throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. The District strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on District property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the District is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of the District to protect and promote students' health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with this Policy. It is the policy of the District to maintain exclusive authority and control over all food and nutrition related advertising on District property.

**V. Physical Activity and Physical Education**

The Department of Health and Human Services recommends that children and adolescents should participate in sixty (60) minutes of physical activity each day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program that includes physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, walk and bicycle to school, and out-of-school time activities, and is aligned with the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) standards and CSDE's Physical Education – A Guide to K-12 Program Development 2000. The District shall strive to provide these varied opportunities in addition to, not as a substitute for, physical education.

Physical activity during the school day, including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks, or physical education) shall not be withheld as discipline, except when a student poses a danger to the health or safety of other students or school staff. This shall not be construed to prevent the District or a school from imposing academic or behavioral requirements for participation in athletics. The District shall suggest to teachers and school staff alternative ways of managing behavior that do not involve withholding physical activity.

All students in kindergarten through grade six will, to the extent appropriate for the individual child, have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a daily basis. In accordance with Section 10-221o of the Connecticut General Statutes, all elementary schools

**Instruction****Student Wellness Policy**

must provide students with a period of time devoted to physical exercise of not less than twenty (20) minutes each school day.

**VI. Other Activities to Promote Student Wellness**

The District is committed to integrating wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity facilities. The District shall endeavor to coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and wellness such that all efforts are intended to be complementary in promoting student wellbeing and development. District schools are encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas for the purpose of promoting student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in science and mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or the District's curriculum staff.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes  
 10-16b Prescribed courses of study.  
 10-215 Lunches, breakfasts and the feeding programs for public school children and employees.  
 10-221 boards of Education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures.  
 10-215a Non-public school participation in feeding program.  
 10-215b Duties of state board of education re feeding programs.  
 10-216 Payment of expenses.  
 10-215b-1 State board of education regulation – Competitive foods.  
 10-221o Lunch periods. Recess.  
 10-221p Boards to make available for purchase nutritious, low-fat foods.  
 National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program;  
 Competitive Foods. (7 CFR Parts 210 and 220, Federal Register, Vol. 45, No. 20, Tuesday, January 29, 1980, pp. 6758-6772)  
 The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Public Law 108-265.  
 Connecticut State Department of Education's Physical Education – A Guide to K-12 Program Development (2000)  
 Connecticut General Statutes  
 10-221o Lunch periods. Recess (as amended P.A. 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform, and P.A. 13-173, An Act Concerning Childhood Obesity and Physical Exercise in Schools.

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HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
 Hamden, Connecticut