

Seymour Board of Education

School Wellness Policy

Policy Intent and Rationale

The Seymour School District promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. The Seymour Public Schools supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. Schools contribute to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student performance potential.

Student Nutrition & Physical Activity

Students will be offered and schools will promote nutritious food choices consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and My Plate along with guidelines by the Connecticut Department of Education; Healthy Foods Certification. In addition, to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity, the Superintendent or designee shall establish administrative procedures so as to control food and beverages sold to students that would compete with the District's Nutrition Services Program.

A. Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals and shall provide clear and consistent messages, reinforcing and positively influencing a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity. Staff will be encouraged to serve as role models for students, demonstrating that healthy eating and physical activity are a valuable part of daily life.

B. Support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance.

School meals will place an emphasis on foods that are nutrient-rich such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, lean meats, legumes, nuts and seeds. Only 1% low fat milk or less will be sold. To ensure high-quality, nutritious meals, foods should be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging. Food items that do not meet Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages that do not meet the requirement of the state statute can only be sold to students at the location of an event that occurs after the school day or on the weekend, provided the sale is not from a vending machine or a school store.

C. Provide opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.

A quality physical education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity. The physical activity goals of the Seymour

Public Schools, is to keep the students in K-12 physically active in order to help increase their overall level of health and well-being. One of the programs incorporated into the elementary classrooms is ABC Fitness which helps keep students focused and energized with physical activity planned breaks in the classroom setting. Exercise is not to be used as punishment.

D. The Seymour Public Schools is committed to improving academic performance for all students.

Educators, administrators, parents, health practitioners and communities must consider the critical role students' health plays in academic stamina and performance and adapt the school environment to ensure students' basic nourishment and activity needs are met.

Competitive Foods

All competitive foods and beverages sold or served during the school instructional day will progressively meet the recommended nutrition standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Program. Foods or beverages sold or served in the district's schools shall include nutritious, low-fat foods and drinks, water, natural fruit juice, fresh or dried fruits at all times when food or beverages are available for purchase by students during the instructional school day according to CT Statute [10-221](#).

Based on Section [10-215b-23](#) CT Statute, the district may not allow any group, such as the PTO, school store, or clubs, to sell or distribute any food or beverage anywhere on school premises from 30 minutes prior to the start of the National School Lunch Program up until 30 minutes after the end of the last lunch wave. Any income from the sale of such food or beverage distributed anywhere on school premises during this timeframe must accrue to the Food Service Account.

Other Foods

Both vending and non-vending machine sale of artificially sweetened drinks to students will not be permitted on school grounds both prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day but will be permitted at the conclusion of the school day at the high school.

In light of serious food allergies, any activities involving food must have prior approval of either the principal or the nurse. Consideration should be given to non-food items as an alternative.

Student Nutrition

The Board recognizes that healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential and to support physical and mental growth and lifelong health and well-being. The link between nutrition and learning is well-documented. Healthy eating is linked to reduced risk for mortality and development of many chronic diseases as adults. Schools should encourage students and staff members to establish and maintain lifelong, healthy eating patterns. Well-planned and well-implemented school nutrition programs have been shown to positively influence student's eating habits.

The School Breakfast/Lunch Programs

The Board believes that the district's nutrition and nutrition services operations should be financially self-supporting and is an essential educational support activity. In compliance with federal law, the district's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) shall be nonprofit. The district's National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program will comply with all the federal requirements for program operation.

School breakfast and lunch is available at all schools. Menus support, promote and reinforce the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans, encouraging increased consumption of nutrient dense foods and beverages, such as fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low fat and nonfat dairy products, (only 1% or lower fat milk will be sold) while limiting levels of cholesterol, fat, saturated fat, trans-fat, sodium and added sugars. Food service staff and customer (student, district staff and parental) feedback is considered in the planning of appealing, varied, nutritious, high quality meals that encourage increased participation in the reimbursable breakfast and lunch programs offered and discourage the purchase of a la carte and vended foods.

Food service management and cafeteria staff are active members of school food service and nutrition professional organizations and participate in activities that promote professional growth and development, that are based upon current nutrition science and national health recommendations. The district's food service director and cafeteria managers, shall at a minimum, be certified in food safety and sanitation. In addition, all cafeteria staff is formally trained in Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) food safety and sanitation requirements. Foods are purchased and/or prepared utilizing low-fat methods allowing for maximum nutrient retention, such as baking and steaming, promoting good health and nutrition. All foods served meet or exceed the minimum nutrition standards set by the USDA and state statutes for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

Cafeteria Environment

Parents are encouraged to supply their children with naturally nutrient-rich foods and beverages such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats, legumes, nuts and seeds. Soda brought from home is strongly discouraged.

Students will be provided with a clean, pleasant, and safe environment for eating meals, which will include convenient access to hand washing facilities and to free, safe and fresh drinking water. In accordance with state law, a minimum of twenty minutes will be allowed for lunch between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Cafeterias will serve as an additional source of nutrition education, using posters and signage to promote good nutrition and food choices.

The cafeteria environment is where students have:

- A setting that is safe and comfortable.
- Consistent rules enforced for safe behavior.
- Appropriate supervision during school meals and recess.

School personnel should discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times given concerns with allergies and other restrictions on some children's diet.

Fundraising

All fundraising projects involving the sale of food and beverages to students on school premises are required to always follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverage requirements of the state statute, unless they are sold to students at the location of an event that occurs after the school day or on the weekend, provided the sale is not from a vending machine or a school store.

A healthy school environment should not be sacrificed because of a dependence on revenue from high-added fat, added sugar and low-nutrient foods to support school programs. Nutrient-rich food items will be encouraged as products sold for fundraising projects. The sale of nonfood items is strongly encouraged to be used for fundraisers.

All fundraisers involving food or beverages must first be approved by the Director of Nutrition Services and then the Superintendent of Schools for final approval. It is recommended that organizations operating concessions at events that occur after the school day or on the weekend market healthy food choices at a lower profit margin to encourage student selection. The display and advertising of foods with minimal nutritional value is strongly discouraged.

Nutrition Practices in the Classroom

Healthy snacks such as those following the Connecticut Nutrition Standards limiting portion size, total fat, saturated fat and grams of added sugar are strongly encouraged. The use of food items as part of a student incentive program is strongly discouraged. Nonfood alternatives are strongly encouraged for classroom celebrations. Should a classroom celebration use food items, adherence to the guidance from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards is strongly encouraged. Food will not be used as a reward or punishment.

Parent/Guardian Information

Nutrition Services will provide families with the ability to monitor their children's food purchases at all grade levels. Nutrition information for school breakfast and lunch menu items is available upon request of the Nutrition Services Program. Nutrition information for ala carte, vended items, and items sold by the school stores, may be accessed on the State Department of Education, Child Nutrition website as all meet Connecticut Nutrition Standards.

Nutrition education will be provided to parents beginning at the elementary level. The goal will be to continue to educate parents throughout middle and high school levels.

Nutrition education may be provided in the form of handouts, postings on the school website, articles and information provided in district or school newsletters, presentations that focus on nutritional value and healthy lifestyles, and through any other appropriate means available to reach parents.

Wherever possible, information will be provided to parents on healthy snack, breakfast and lunch ideas, nonfood birthday celebration ideas, calcium needs of children and healthy portion sizes, food label reading guidelines and fun activities to encourage physical activity outside of school.

Faculty Information

Wherever possible, nutritional information will be made available to staff members through a variety of means such as in-service training, curriculum and publications which will include, but not be limited to alternative birthday celebrations, activities to increase physical activity in the classroom, healthy snack choices, alternative nonfood reward options and alternatives to withholding recess as a consequence for student actions.

The goal is to:

- Encourage all school staff to improve their own personal health and wellness.
- Create positive role models.
- Build commitment of staff to promote the health of students.
- Build commitment of staff to help improve the school nutrition and physical activity environment.

Nutrition Education

Nutrition education topics shall be integrated within the health education program and be consistent with the State of Connecticut's Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework. Nutrition education shall be designed to help students learn nutritional knowledge, including but not limited to, the benefits of healthy eating, essential nutrients, nutritional deficiencies, principles of healthy weight management, the use and misuse of dietary supplements, and safe food preparation, handling and storage; nutrition-related skills, including but not limited to, planning a healthy meal, understanding and using food labels, and critically evaluating nutritional information, misinformation, and commercial food advertising; and how to assess one's personal eating habits, set goals for improvement and achieve these goals to foster life-long habits of healthy eating.

Nutrition education shall be based on current science, research and national guidelines. Nutrition education shall be standards-based using the CT State Department of Education's Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework at all grade levels from K-12. Nutrition education shall be part of comprehensive school health education and shall also be included where feasible, into classroom content across areas such as science, language arts, culinary and family consumer and consumer science. Staff members responsible for nutrition education shall be adequately prepared and participate in professional development.

Teachers and school food service staff can display posters, show videos, and post websites on nutrition topics. Students will receive positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal about healthy eating from school personnel. Health instructors should act as role models for healthy eating. The health benefits of good nutrition should be emphasized.

Physical Education

The District's Physical Education program develops the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective domain of all students grades K-12. Students in grades 4, 6, 8 and 10 participate in the Connecticut State Fitness Test in order to measure their level of fitness in areas of flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, and muscular strength and endurance.

The physical education curriculum is based on the CSDE Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework. Lessons are designed to provide appropriate scope and sequence for all activities, and modifications are made in order to include all students. Class size is sufficient to insure appropriate instruction and feedback opportunities. Daily equipment and facility inspection, along with modifications of rules, ensure a safe learning environment. Repairs are made to the facility and equipment is replaced when a danger exists. Rules to games may be modified in order to prevent injuries based on class size, ability of students, or condition of a facility. Students are encouraged to assist one another in order to create an emotionally safe environment. Physical education teachers are offered in-service training in order to increase their knowledge in the area of physical education.

The elementary schools require students K-5 to participate in up to 40 minutes of structured physical education per week. Students in K-5 are also given a minimum of 15 minutes per day to be physically active during recess. The middle school physical education program requires students to participate for up to 45 minutes in structured physical education every other day for two terms during the year. High school students are required to participate in physical education for a half a year in grades 9 and 10. Beyond the grade 9 and 10 physical education requirements, the high school physical education curriculum allows students to choose the activities they participate in, with a focus on fitness and lifetime activities.

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities after school. The middle school and high schools offer a variety of inter-mural.

Recess

Recess provides opportunities for physical activities, which helps students, stay alert and attentive in class and provides other educational and social benefits. School administration shall encourage and develop schedules that provide a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes within every full school day for K-5 students to enjoy supervised recess. Recess shall complement, not substitute for, physical education classes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Superintendent or designee will invite suggestions and comments concerning the implementation and improvement of the school wellness policy from community members, including parents, students and representatives of the nutrition services department, the school board, school administrators, the local health department and the public.

The membership of the District Wellness Committee shall include the Director of Nutrition Services, a parent representative, an administrative representative, a physical education and/or

health representative, a Board of Education representative, and two students. The committee shall meet a minimum of twice per school year to review nutrition and physical activity policies, evidence on student health impact, and effective programs and program elements. The committee shall prepare a report annually for the Superintendent and the Board, evaluating the implementation of the policy and regulations and include any recommended changes or revisions.

At least every three years, the Board will measure and make available to the public an assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy. In this triennial assessment, the Board will indicate to where improvements have been made or need to focus on. Additionally, in accordance with federal law and applicable regulations, the Board will inform and update the public including parents, students and the community about the content and implementation of the wellness policy and this will be done on an annual basis. This information will be found on the district website.

All schools must adhere to the CT State Statute ([10-215b-23](#)) regarding the sale and distribution of competitive foods in the National Lunch Program.

It is recognized that there may be rare special occasions when the school principal may allow a school group to deviate from these guidelines. However CT State Statute (10-215b-23) must be adhered to at all times.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-16b](#)- Prescribed courses of study

[10-215b-23](#)- Lunches, breakfasts and the feeding programs for public school children and employees.

[10-221](#)

[10-225b](#)- Duties of the state board of education re feeding programs

[10-216](#)- Payment of Expenses

[10-215b-1](#) - State board of education regulation - Competitive foods PA224 An Act Concerning Childhood Nutrition in Schools, Recess, and Lunch Breaks

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

Action Guide for School Nutrition and Physical Activities - Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and Child/Family/School Partnerships, May 2005

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Department of Education, Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and
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Seymour, Connecticut