



DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY

Horry County Schools recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. The district is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices.

Food and Beverage Availability

The district is committed to serving healthy meals to students, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk that are moderate in sodium and sugar, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams trans fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification). The district is also committed to meeting the nutritional needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs 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.

All schools within the district participate in USDA child nutrition programs through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and are committed to offering school meals that:

- are accessible to all students
- are planned by nutrition professionals so that the health and nutrition needs of students are met
- are prepared and served by nutrition services personnel that are trained annually in USDA professional standards
- are appealing and attractive to children
- are served in clean, comfortable, safe and pleasant settings
- meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations
- at a minimum, allow students the required time for eating, in accordance with law
- adhere to food safety and security guidelines
- promotes healthy eating and making healthy food choices

Meal schedules in each school will be determined by the principal, but follow the regulations set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). School Breakfast Program (SBP) regulations require breakfast to be served in the morning hours, at (or close to) the beginning of the students' day at school, but prior to 10:00 a.m. Regulations for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) require that lunch be served between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Students in grades PK - 5th, will be provided a minimum of 20 minutes to eat once served, per the South Carolina Student Health and Fitness Act.

Schools will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. The district will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

Competitive foods and beverages

The district is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on school campuses during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold outside of the school meal programs (i.e. competitive foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. More specifically, the Smart Snacks regulations will be in effect during the times when school is in session and apply during the school day and on the school grounds from midnight until 30 minutes after the official school day ends. These regulations ensure that the foods and beverages sold during these times meet specific nutrition standards, with limits on items that are high in fat, sugar, and sodium, and with a focus on healthier options like whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Foods and beverages sold between the times of after the 30 minutes when school has officially ended and midnight (e.g. concession sales at sporting events or other evening school functions) are not governed by Smart Snacks regulations. Foods made available, but not sold, do not have to meet the Smart Snacks requirements, but healthy items are encouraged. Competitive food and beverage sales to students (other than those ala carte items sold by the Nutrition Services program) are not permitted during the identified breakfast and lunch serving times for each school. Any vending machines accessible by students must also be equipped to be unavailable during these same time periods.

All foods that meet the competitive food standards may be sold at fundraisers on the school campus during school hours. The number of fundraisers exempt from the nutrition requirements is approved by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). Beginning with SY 2017-18 and thereafter, the days per exemption is 1 day (up to 30 of 1 day each). SCDE considers applications for additional exemptions above this limit on a case-by-case basis and subject to district policy. Exempt fundraiser foods or beverages may not be sold in competition with school meals in the food service areas during the identified meal service times.

See 2015 SCDE “Smart Snacks” and Exempt Fundraisers Memorandum, for additional information on competitive foods and fundraisers.

Celebrations

Celebrations involving the distribution of food &/or beverages to students may not have more than one food or one beverage that does not comply with the nutrition guidelines. Unless approved by the principal, celebrations should not take place for students within the identified breakfast and lunch serving times for each school. Celebrations cannot be a substitution for breakfast or lunch meals.

District Objectives for Health and Wellness

Nutrition promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques, 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, teachers, parents/legal guardians, students, and the community.

The district will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus and will encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through the use of evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal

programs using research-based practices and through adherence to a policy of 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meeting the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Promotion ideas include nutrition education materials, taste tests, posters, and signage highlighting healthy food and beverage choices.

Nutrition education

The district will teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by all students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that fulfills the following criteria:

- fosters the adoption and maintenance of healthy eating behaviors such as acquiring skills for reading food labels and menu planning
- is part of a sequential comprehensive standards-based health education program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods
- promotes reduced sugar and sodium intake
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise)
- links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, and other school food and nutrition-related community services
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing
- includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff

See policy IHAM, *Health Education*, for more information.

Physical activity

It is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive school physical activity program which includes quality physical education as the foundation; physical activity before, during, and after school; staff involvement; and family and community engagement. Schools may promote opportunities for physical activity via in-school announcements, newsletters, posters, etc. The district is committed to providing these opportunities, and schools will ensure that these varied physical activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education.

The district encourages the use of physical activity as a reward when feasible. Schools shall encourage participation in after-school sports and other non-competitive physical activity programs. Physical activity during the school day (including, but not limited to, recess, classroom physical activity breaks, or physical education) may be limited or restricted as a result of disciplinary action when deemed necessary and appropriate by the school principal or other District official. This does not apply to sports teams/extracurricular activities that are offered under the auspices of the South Carolina High School League or to other sports-related after-school activities. Schools shall not deny a student participation in recess or other physical activities for classroom make-up time. Schools shall not use physical activity as a form of punishment. This does not apply to teams/extracurricular activities that are offered under the auspices of the South Carolina High School League.

Physical education

The district will provide students with physical education using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits and incorporate essential health education concepts. The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.

See policy IHAE, *Physical Education*, for more information.

All students will be provided equal opportunities to participate in physical education classes. The district will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

Other activities that promote student wellness

The district will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity facilities. The district will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes. Schools in the district will coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or the district's curriculum specialists.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state, or association recognition for efforts or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy including, but not limited to, ensuring the involvement of the district wellness committee.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy guidelines. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

Community partnerships

The district will develop and enhance relationships with community partners (e.g. hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

District Wellness Committee/Coordinated School Health Advisory Committee

Horry County Schools will convene a wellness committee (CSHAC – Coordinated School Health Advisory Committee) that meets at least once per year to establish district wellness goals and to oversee school health and safety policies and programs including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. CSHAC committee members will include, to the extent possible, parents/legal guardians, students, representatives of district nutrition services, physical education teachers, school health professionals, the board, school administrators, and the general public. The designated officer for ensuring district compliance with the wellness policy and oversight of CSHAC will be Ben Prince, Chief Operations Officer of HCS, 335 Four Mile Rd., Conway, SC 29526, (843) 488-6700.

Annually, the district will notify the public about the content and implementation of the wellness policy and share any updates to the policy. The district will also publicize the name and contact information of the district's CSHAC spokesperson with information on how the public can become involved with the wellness committee or obtain additional information on the wellness policy. The information for this annual review can be gathered through and utilized in the district's strategic planning process.

Every three years, CSHAC will assess its compliance with the policy, how it compares to model wellness policies published by state and federal agencies, and the district's progress in attaining the goals of the policy. The results of this assessment will be made available to the public to showcase the wellness efforts being made by the district and how each school is in compliance with the wellness policy. Following this assessment, the district will update or modify the policy as necessary and share these changes with the public.

Recordkeeping

The district will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy. Documentation maintained by the district will include, but will not be limited to:

- the written wellness policy
- documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public
- documentation of efforts to review and update the policy, including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the district uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the district wellness committee (e.g. copy of meeting notice posted on the district website)
- documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements
- the most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy
- documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy has been made available to the public

Food and Beverage Marketing

The district is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on school campuses during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards such that only those foods that comply with or exceed those nutrition standards are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students. These standards do not apply to marketing that occurs at events outside of school hours, such as after school sporting events or any other events, including school fundraisers.

Contracts for goods or services that include a food and beverage marketing component executed after June 30, 2017, must conform to federal nutrition standards. No exceptions will be granted.

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing includes any oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- brand names, trademarks, logos, or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container
- displays, such as on vending machine exteriors
- corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on school equipment that is displayed during the school day, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards, or backboards (*Note: Immediate replacement of these items is not required; however, the district will replace or update scoreboards or other durable equipment when existing contracts are up for renewal or to the extent that it is financially feasible over time so that items are in compliance with this policy.*)
- corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on food service materials and equipment (e.g. cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans, etc.) or on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books, or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered, or sold by the district
- advertisements in school publications or school mailings
- free product samples, taste tests, or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product

It is recommended that schools avoid participation in fundraising or cooperate incentive programs that promote a message inconsistent with the wellness goals of the district.

Adopted June 16, 2025

Legal References:

- A. United States Code of Laws, as amended:
 - 1. Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-296, 124 Stat. 3183.
 - 2. 7 CFR Part 210 - National School Lunch Program
- B. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:
 - 1. Section 59-10-10, *et seq.* - Physical education, school health services, and nutritional standards.
 - 2. Section 59-10-330 - Coordinated School Health Advisory Council (CSHAC).
 - 3. Section 59-10-350 - Length of elementary school lunch period.
 - 4. Section 59-32-30 - Comprehensive health education program; guidelines and restrictions.
- C. Code of Federal Regulations, as amended:
 - 1. National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Goods Sold in School, 7 C.F.R. § 210 and 220.
 - 2. Local School Wellness Policy Implementation, 7 C.F.R. § 210 and 220.
- D. S.C. State Board of Education Regulations:
 - 1. R43-168 - Nutrition standards for elementary (K-5) school food service meals and competitive foods.
 - 2. R43-238 - Health education requirements.
- E. S.C. State Board of Education Academic Standards:
 - 1. 2009 Academic Standards for Health and Safety Education.
 - 2. 2014 SC Academic Standards for Physical Education.
- F. Other:
 - 1. 2015 SCDE “Smart Snacks” and Exempt Fundraisers Memorandum.
 - 2. National Standards for Physical Education, NASPE (National Association for Sport and Physical Education).
 - 3. National Health Education Standards, Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards.
 - 4. USDA Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - 5. USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - 6. USDA Guide to Smart Snacks in School (2022).
 - 7. USDA Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs (2015).
 - 8. South Carolina School Food Service Program Reference Manual 2020 Edition

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

PAGE 7 – HORRY COUNTY SCHOOLS - DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at:

<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.