

Gateway Regional School District Wellness Policy

- I. Purpose:
 - A. Promoting healthy and safe behaviors among students is an important part of the fundamental mission of Gateway Regional School district and serves to provide young people with the knowledge and skills they need to become healthy and productive adults.

- II. Policy:
 - A. The Gateway Regional School District is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and development of lifelong wellness practices by providing a learning environment that ensures each student is emotionally and physically healthy, safe, actively engaged, supported, and challenged.
 - B. The School Wellness Advisory Committee will meet four times a year and encourages broad-based community representation including but not limited to school administration, health professionals, educators, parents, students, and others who work collaboratively to assess the school's wellness environment and oversees the implementation of the Wellness Policy.
 - C. To accomplish these goals:
 - a. Formal, structured health education consists of planned learning experiences that help students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need for making health-promoting decisions and behaviors.
 - b. Learning experiences consider cultural perspectives.
 - c. Comprehensive physical education program.
 - d. School health services intervene with actual and potential health problems, including providing first aid, emergency care and assessment as well as assisting in the management of chronic conditions.
 - e. School counseling, psychological, social services and intervention services to support the mental, behavioral, and social-emotional health of students and promote success in the learning process.
 - f. Promotion of a healthy and safe physical school environment that promotes learning by ensuring the health and safety of students and staff.
 - g. Families and school staff work together to support and improve the learning, development, and health of students.
 - h. Community groups, organizations, and local businesses create partnerships with schools, share resources, and volunteer to support student learning, development, safety, and health-related activities.
 - i. Child Nutrition Programs comply with federal, state and local requirements and are accessible to all children.
 - j. Nutrition education is provided and promoted.
 - k. All foods and beverages made available on campus (including vending, concessions, a la carte, student stores, parties and fundraising) during the school day are consistent with current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

- l. All foods made available on campus for consumption during the school day adhere to food safety and security guidelines.
- m. The school environment is safe, comfortable, pleasing, and allows ample time and space for eating meals.

III. Procedure:

A. Health Education

- a. Formal, structured health education consists of a combination of planned learning experiences that provide the opportunity to acquire the information and skills students need to make health promoting decisions.
- b. Physical Education and Physical Activity Programs
- c. A comprehensive school physical activity program provides a framework for school-based physical education and physical activity. This well-designed physical education program provides the opportunity for students to learn key concepts and practice skills needed to establish and maintain physically active lifestyles throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood.
- d. Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- e. Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- f. Curriculum will be based on the state standards for physical education, and classes are taught by certified or licensed teachers endorsed by the state to teach physical education.

B. School Health Services

- a. School health services will provide support for actual and potential health problems, including providing first aid, emergency care and assessment and planning for the management of chronic conditions.

C. School Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services

- a. Services include psychological, psychoeducational, and psychosocial assessments; direct and indirect interventions to address psychological, academic, and social barriers to learning, such as individual or group counseling and consultation; and referrals to school and community support services as indicated.

D. School Health and Safety, Physical Environment

- a. A healthy school environment will address a school's physical condition during normal operation as well as during renovation, protecting occupants from physical threats, biological and chemical agents in the air, water, or soil, as well as those purposefully brought into the school (e.g., mold, hazardous materials, pesticides, cleaning agents, etc.).

E. Family Involvement

- a. School staff are committed to making families feel welcomed, engaging families in a variety of meaningful ways, and sustaining family engagement. Families are encouraged to actively support their child's learning, development, and safety.
- F. Community Involvement
- a. Community groups, organizations, and local businesses are sought out to create partnerships with schools, share resources, and volunteer to support student learning, development, and health-related activities.
- G. Nutrition Environment and Education
- a. All foods **sold or provided** during the school day **by** the Gateway Regional School District will comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Massachusetts School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages.
 - b. Students receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.
 - c. Nutrition education is offered in the school cafeteria as well as in the classroom, with coordination between the food service staff and other school personnel, including teachers.
 - d. Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
 - e. Division health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
 - f. Nutrition education is integrated into other areas of the curriculum such as math, science, language arts and social studies.
 - g. Schools link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
 - h. Staff who provide nutrition education have appropriate training.
 - i. Students will be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast. All schools in the district give students the opportunity to participate in the breakfast program.
 - j. Life threatening food allergies must always be considered, therefore food meant to be shared in elementary classrooms must receive prior approval from the school nurse.
 - k. Teachers using food as part of the curricula are recommended to adhere to healthy choices and must be essential to the learning of the concept.
 - l. The National Association of State Boards of Education recommends that students should be provided adequate time to eat lunch, at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch, from the time the student is seated.
 - m. Food is not recommended to be used as a reward or a punishment for student behaviors unless it is detailed in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
 - n. Employ a food service director, who is properly qualified, certified and/or credentialed according to current professional standards, to administer the school food service program and satisfy reporting requirements.

- o. All foods made available on campus comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illness in schools.
- p. For the safety and security of the food and facility access to the food service operations are limited to Child Nutrition staff and authorized personnel. For further guidance see the US Department of Agriculture food security guidelines.

IV. Evaluation

- A. The School Wellness Advisory Committee will oversee the implementation of the Wellness Policy. Faculty and staff, parents, and the community will be educated regarding the Wellness Policy through presentations, handbooks, and the district website.
- B. The School Wellness Advisory Committee will assess all education curricula and materials pertaining to wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the state and district's educational goals and standards. An evaluation of the Wellness Policy as well as goals and objectives will be provided to the Superintendent of Schools and the School Committee.

References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School Health Index: A Self- Assessment and Planning Guide. Elementary school version. Atlanta, Georgia. 2017.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School Health Index: A Self-Assessment and Planning Guide. Middle school/high school version. Atlanta, Georgia. 2017.
- Lewallen T. C., Hunt H., Potts-Datema W., Zaza S., Giles W. (2015). The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model: A new approach for improving educational attainment and healthy development for students. *Journal of School Health*, 85(11), 729–739.
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- MASC: Massachusetts Association of School Committees. (2006). School District Wellness Program;
<https://www.masc.org/school-district-wellness-program/>
- Massachusetts Association of School Committee (MASC). School District Wellness Program. Available at: <https://www.masc.org/school-district-wellness-program/>
- National Association of State Boards of Education. Fit, healthy and ready to learn. Available at: <http://www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/fithealthy.htm>.
- United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service. Food safety and emergency preparedness. Available at: [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food Security 7 Emergency preparedness/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Security_7_Emergency_preparedness/index.asp).