

WELLNESS: PHYSICAL AND NUTRITIONAL HEALTH

I. Purpose

The purpose of Administrative Regulation ADF-R is to define a wellness and nutrition policy that supports the Child Nutrition and WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Reauthorization Act of 2004 and as amended by the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010.

II. Background

Washington County Public Schools, hereinafter referred to as WCPS, is committed to creating a school culture that promotes and protects children's health, physical and emotional well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating, social skills, health education, and physical activity. WCPS is committed to providing a healthy work environment for employees and to promote personal health as a model for students.

III. Definitions

Within the context of this administrative regulation, the following definitions apply:

- A. Accommodation: An adaptation of this regulation on the basis of a student who is or may be eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act.
- B. Educational Partners: Outside agency providing educational services to students. Examples: Bester Community of Hope, University of Maryland Ag. Extension Nutrition Educators, Washington County Health Department.
- C. School Day: The period from the midnight before, to thirty (30) minutes after the end of the official school day.
- D. Smart Snacks in School: A snack or entrée that must first meet the following general nutrition standards:
 - Be a grain product that contains fifty percent (50%) or more whole grains by weight (have a whole grain as the first ingredient); or
 - Have as a first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or
 - Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; and
 - Meet the nutrient standards for calories, sodium, sugar, and fats set forth by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

IV. Policy Statement/Procedures

A. Food and Nutrition Services

The goal of Food and Nutrition Services is to provide nutritious and appealing meals in an environment that promotes healthy eating and the development of lifelong healthy behaviors that foster sound nutrition and physical activity.

1. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) will meet the nutritional standards and regulations as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

2. Students must be given adequate time to eat breakfast and lunch. Lunch periods should be scheduled and organized so that students have fifteen (15) actual minutes to consume their lunch.
3. The Food and Nutrition Services Director will determine the availability and accessibility of all foods and beverages to students for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

B. Nutritional Guidelines for Foods and Beverages Served/Sold to Students During the School Day

1. Foods and beverages available during the school day will include a variety of healthy choices that are of excellent quality, appealing to students, and served at the proper temperatures. Foods and beverages available during the school day will minimize use of saturated fat, sodium, and sugar and eliminate trans-fat as defined by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. Foods and beverages sold during the school day, through, but not limited to, Food and Nutrition Services, vending machines, school store, and fundraisers, will adhere to regulations outlined by the USDA and/or MSDE, and will meet the *Smart Snacks in Schools* nutrition standards as outlined in Exhibit ADF-E(1). In addition, beverages containing caffeine will not be available for sale on school campuses during the school day.
3. To ensure compliance with section 2 above in elementary schools, only the Food and Nutrition Services Department is authorized to sell food and beverages to students. Further, students in grades PK-5 will only be allowed to purchase one (1) Smart Snack food and/or one (1) beverage item per day outside the traditional meal plan to encourage the consumption of a nutritious meal.

C. Guidelines for Food and Beverages Provided During the School Day to Students

1. School based celebrations that occur after the first instructional bell involving food and beverages that do not meet Maryland Nutritional Standards for all Foods Sold in Schools (Smart Snacks) are limited to no more than four (4) times per year. Schools are encouraged to develop alternatives to the use of foods and beverages for school celebrations. Suggestions are outlined in Exhibit ADF-E(2). To the best of its ability, schools will notify parents/legal guardians in advance of celebrations involving food and beverages so the parents/legal guardians may alert their student's teacher of known food allergies or other medical conditions related to food. Food used for celebrations must be pre-packaged, store purchased, and include an ingredient list with allergens identified unless they are a fresh fruit or vegetable. Schools will designate food items needed for these celebrations.
2. Staff and school organizations will not use candy or other food that does not meet Smart Snack rules during the instructional day. Staff are encouraged to use nonfood items as a reward. Food provided to students that meet smart snack rules must be pre-packaged unless it's fresh fruit or vegetable. It is the responsibility of the person providing food to students to check if they have any food allergies or other medical conditions to verify the product is safe for them to consume.
3. With the exception of school-based celebrations, for health and safety reasons, parents/legal guardians or visitors are only permitted to bring in food that is intended for consumption by their individual student.

4. For health and safety reasons, students are only permitted to bring in food for their own personal consumption.
5. Food may be used during classroom lessons when it is part of a curriculum plan. Parents/legal guardians will be notified of a food activity and a permission slip will be required for participation in the activity. Educational partners who offer tastings as part of nutrition education must be ServSafe certified. Food used for classroom lessons should consist of healthy choices. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to ensure food allergens have been identified and communicated to parents/legal guardians in advance and obtain permission for their child to participate. Teachers must be certified in food safety when foods prepared as part of the classroom lesson will be sold.

D. Guidelines for Food and Beverages Sold after the School Day

After the school day, foods and beverages that support healthy choices shall be made available to students, staff, and the community through vending and concession stands when the building is in use.

E. Nutrition & Physical Education

1. Nutrition Education

The school system will develop and implement a curriculum in nutrition education as part of its instructional program in Comprehensive Health Education, in accordance with the Code of Maryland Administrative Regulations (COMAR) 13A.04.18.

- a. Nutrition Education will be included in health education, physical education, and other curricular areas as appropriate each year for all students in Grades K-8. There will be a health education program in high school designed to enable students to meet the MSDE and WCPS one-credit graduation requirement and to select health education electives.
- b. Nutrition Education will be aligned with the National Health Education Standards and the Maryland State Curriculum for Comprehensive Health Education.
- c. Nutrition Education will be included in other curricular areas as appropriate including concepts such as the conversion of nutritional panels, keeping food journals, and tracking calories.

2. Physical Education

The school system will develop and implement a curriculum in physical education as part of its instructional program in Comprehensive Physical Education, in accordance with COMAR 13A.04.13.

- a. A Physical Education program will be provided each year for all students in Grades K-8 and in Grades 9-12 in order to enable students to meet the MSDE and WCPS one-credit graduation requirement and to select physical education electives.
- b. Physical Education will be aligned with the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America's National Standards and the Maryland State Standards. All physical education classes shall be taught by a certified physical education teacher.
- c. All students, including students with disabilities, special healthcare needs, and in alternative education settings, shall participate in physical education. Student

activities involving physical movement, e.g. interscholastic or intramural sports, shall not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.

- d. Physical education instruction will promote understanding of the components of fitness and healthy lifestyles. Students will spend at least 60% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- e. Physical Education will be included in other curricular areas as appropriate, including the use of short activity breaks and kinesthetic classrooms.
- f. A wide variety of physical education classes will be offered in high schools based on interest by students and availability of certified instructors.

F. Physical Activity

- 1. Physical activity will be encouraged to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short-and long-term benefits of a physical and healthy lifestyle.
- 2. Students will be provided opportunities for physical activity during the day through daily recess periods, physical education classes, and integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum. Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (i.e. running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (i.e. recess, physical education) for disciplinary reasons.
- 3. Each elementary school will provide at least twenty (20) minutes daily recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity through provision of adequate space and equipment.
- 4. Each middle school will promote an opportunity to participate in extracurricular and/or co-curricular physical activity programs such as clubs and intramurals.
- 5. Each high school will offer an Interscholastic Athletic Program, in accordance with COMAR 13A.06.03, and will promote an opportunity to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular physical activity clubs and/or intramurals.
- 6. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities and students with special healthcare needs in accordance with law and regulation and without regard to gender. (See Board of Education Policy IGDK and WCPS Administrative Regulation IGDK-R)
- 7. Schools should discourage extended periods (i.e. periods of two (2) or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be active as program guidelines allow.

G. Marketing of Food and Beverages

- 1. This section pertains to marketing of foods and beverages which includes but is not limited to videos, audio recordings, website links and headers, newsletters, posters, signs, vending machine graphics, and scoreboards.
- 2. Marketing materials in place at the time of the approval of this administrative regulation are not covered by this regulation, however replacements or alterations of graphics not

meeting this regulation are encouraged. When items excluded as part of this article are replaced or refurbished they must be brought into compliance with subparagraph 3 of this section.

3. When marketing foods and beverages only those items that meet the Smart Snacks in Schools nutritional standards are allowed.
4. Marketing of foods and beverages will also comply with Board of Education Policy KHB – “Advertising in the Schools.”

H. Healthy and Safe Environment

1. A healthy and safe environment supports academic success for all students. Safer communities promote healthier students that are more likely to succeed in school and make positive contributions to their community.
2. Buildings, grounds, structures, buses, and equipment will meet applicable health and safety standards, including environmental air quality, and be kept inviting, clean, safe, and in good repair.
3. All Board of Education buildings, grounds, and vehicles will maintain an environment that is free of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs in accordance with Board of Education policies.
4. Safety procedures and appropriate training for students and employees will promote personal safety and a violence- and harassment-free environment.
5. The staff of WCPS will work to create an environment where students, visitors, and employees are respected, valued, and accepted with high expectations for personal behavior and accomplishments in accordance with Board of Education Policy JFC and Policy JFH as well as Administrative Regulation JFH-R.

I. Social and Emotional Well-Being

1. Recognizing the value of social and emotional well-being of students and the importance of a healthy school climate, students will have access to programs and services that promote student safety and well-being.
2. WCPS shall promote a supportive environment that includes guidance, counseling, and pupil personnel services that encourages students, families, and staff to access services and links them to community resources.
3. Students will learn communication skills to promote healthy relationships and success in school and in the community.
4. Students will become culturally responsive to the unique differences in others by demonstrating positive interpersonal relationships.
5. Students will learn strategies and coping mechanisms to balance school and outside activities to prevent stress-related illnesses.

J. Staff Wellness

The Board of Education highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and offer activities, policies, and/or programs that support efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Reasonable accommodations can be made to have locations in school

facilities available and scheduled times before and after duty hours provided for activities and programs, which promote the health and well-being of staff. Each school will establish and maintain a staff Wellness Committee that will develop a multi-faceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan will be based on input solicited from school staff and should encourage healthy eating, physical activity, stress management, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle.

K. Plan for Measuring Implementation

1. Implementation

- a. Oversight of the wellness policy and administrative regulation shall be conducted jointly by the Supervisor of Health, Physical Education, and Athletics and the Director of Food and Nutrition Services.
- b. Washington County Public Schools' Wellness Committee membership includes, but is not limited to, representatives from all school levels, the school nutrition program, the county health and physical activity program, school administrators, school health professionals, community members, students, and parents/legal guardians. They will meet four (4) times a year and are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the wellness policy and administrative regulation to ensure they are properly implemented and progress is made in improving and maintaining the wellness of students and staff. The Wellness Committee will also serve as a resource to schools for implementing the policy and regulation.
- c. Individual school wellness plans will be developed and implemented as part of the school improvement plan.
- d. The Wellness Committee will complete an onsite audit annually of twenty percent (20%) of schools to determine the extent to which each school is compliant with this administrative regulation. The audit will cover an onsite review of programs as well as a survey of student and parent/legal guardian impressions of the school environment pertaining to wellness. The Committee may choose to use data obtained by other sources if available and not more than one (1) year old.
- e. Staff responsible for implementing this administrative regulation must adhere to training requirements as set forth by USDA.

2. Review and Reporting

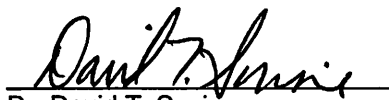
- a. This administrative regulation will be reviewed in accordance with the WCPS administrative regulation review process.
- b. In each school, a designated school administrator will report annually on the progress of the individual school's wellness programs and goals as outlined in the school improvement plan as well as the compliance with this administrative regulation to the Superintendent or their designee.
- c. The Director of Food and Nutrition Services will report annually on the compliance with this administrative regulation with the food service areas.
- d. The Supervisor of Health, Physical Education, and Athletics will report annually on compliance with this administrative regulation relating to health education, physical education, and physical activity.

- e. The Superintendent or their designee will provide a report on the progress of implementation and compliance with this administrative regulation to the Board of Education bi-annually or at the discretion of the Board.
- f. The Wellness Committee is responsible for submitting a triennial assessment to the Maryland State Department of Education on the implementation and progress toward meeting the goals of the wellness policy and having the assessment results posted on the WCPS website.
- g. WCPS will involve parents/legal guardians, students, representatives of Food and Nutrition Services Department, the Board of Education, school administrators, and the public in amending or revising this administrative regulation as needed from time-to-time.
- h. WCPS will inform the public of the wellness policy annually and any changes to the policy and/or the accompanying administrative regulation will be posted on BoardDocs and the WCPS website.

L. Exceptions to this Administrative Regulation

- 1. An exception to this administrative regulation may be granted to a student if a student's Individual Education Program (IEP) team or Section 504 team determines that certain exceptions need to be made based upon the individual student's needs.
- 2. When considering an exception to this administrative regulation, consideration should be given to the intention of this regulation and if the accommodation can meet the intention of ensuring healthy lifestyles and habits.
- 3. Prior to holding an IEP or Section 504 meeting a school-based team including a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, School Psychologist, or similarly certificated staff in collaboration with the student's parent/legal guardian may implement an accommodation on a trial basis prior to an official IEP or Section 504 meeting.

Approved:



Dr. David T. Sovine
Superintendent of Schools
Date: October 10, 2024

Administrative Regulation adopted: August 13, 2014. Revised: September 5, 2017. Revised: March 8, 2018. Amended: October 10, 2024.
Washington County Public Schools