

Purpose and Goals

Waterbury Public Schools (hereinafter, the District) recognizes the link between health and academic achievement, as well as the importance of creating a healthy school environment. The purpose of this School Wellness Policy is to articulate the actions we are taking to comply with USDA regulations under the 2010 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. This policy is designed to help us meet our district goals to support the diet quality, physical fitness, and overall health of our students and staff.

Coordination of Wellness Activities

Waterbury Public Schools will maintain the School Health and Wellness Advisory Council (SHAWAC), an active district-level wellness committee that will meet a minimum of four (4) times per year. The wellness committee, led by the Superintendent, will ensure the wellness policy is clearly communicated to all school personnel, students, parents, and community members. The policy will be posted on the district website and on each school's website.

The district will also support active school-level wellness teams in each school building. These teams will be led by the school principal or designee. These teams will ensure that all school staff, students, and parents are aware of and understand the wellness policy. These teams are responsible for reporting compliance or non-compliance to the district committee. School building teams should meet at least twice a year.

A letter will be posted in a central area in all school buildings inviting members of the community to join the wellness committee. SHAWAC membership will represent all school levels and include parents and caregivers, students, representatives of the school nutrition program and Health & Physical Education department, school health services professionals and staff, school administrators, school board members, and the general public. To the extent possible, the SHAWAC will include school representatives and reflect the community's diversity. Supervised by the Superintendent, members of the SHAWAC will be included in development, implementation, review and update of the wellness policy.

Triennial Assessment

Every three years, the SHAWAC, under the supervision of the Superintendent, will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the wellness policy and practices in Waterbury Public Schools using the Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT). This process will include the following elements:

- a. The current district policy will be compared to a model wellness policy using the WellSAT Policy tool (www.wellsat.org).

- b. The level of compliance with the policy will be assessed in each school by the school-level teams, supervised by the principal, using the WellSAT Practice tool (www.wellsat.org).
- c. The district committee will write a report that describes the district's progress to date in attaining its wellness goals.
- d. This report will be shared with the school community through the district website. This report will also be maintained by the school food authority to share during the state administrative review.
- e. Every three years, the SHAWAC will review the latest national recommendations pertaining to school health and triennial assessment findings. Based on this information, the SHAWAC will suggest any needed updates to the policy to the Board of Education and will create any needed implementation plans to ensure compliance with all elements of this policy.

Nutrition Environment and Services

The District participates in the following USDA Programs: School Breakfast Program (SBP), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), and the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Supper Program. Students and staff are highly encouraged to promote and participate in these programs.

The District will provide breakfast and lunch each day in all schools through the SBP and NSLP. These meal programs are operated in full compliance with the USDA's regulations for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements, as specified in 7 CFR 210.10 and 7 CFR 220.8:

- a. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-220/section-220.8>
- b. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-210/subpart-C/section-210.10>
- c. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards>

The District will maintain water fountains and bottle filling stations in each building so that free drinking water is always available throughout the school day and during mealtimes for students and staff.

The Food Service Department will make reasonable meal modifications on a case-by-case basis, based on written documentation from a state-licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian, and in accordance with federal nondiscrimination laws and USDA regulations.

Food safety will be a key part of the school food service operation, including, but not limited to, current Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) practices and procedures.

After obtaining food, students will have at least 20 minutes to eat lunch. School personnel will schedule enough time to limit the time students spend waiting in line.

Facility design will be given due consideration in renovations and new construction.

All food services staff will receive hiring and annual continuing education/training consistent with current USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutrition Professionals. (<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-03-02/pdf/2015-04234.pdf>)

Promoting meal participation. We are proud of the nutritious meals we provide, and we will take the following steps to encourage participation:

- a. Provide students with opportunities to offer input on food preferences, cultural favorites, and potential new menu items and ideas through surveys, taste tests, and other appropriate feedback mechanisms.
- b. Conduct annual competitive bidding for food products in accordance with procurement regulations to evaluate vendors, introduce updated menu items, maintain nutritional compliance, and ensure cost-effective use of program funds.
- c. Utilize cafeteria marketing strategies, including, but not limited to signage and menu boards, to promote school meal programs and encourage student participation.
- d. Incorporate nutrition education messaging into monthly school menus to reinforce healthy eating behaviors and support nutrition education efforts.
- e. Participation in the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) to provide universal access to school meals at no cost reduces stigma associated with meal participation.

Farm to School Connections. The District values our relationships with local farms and producers and strives to build these connections and support our local economy.

- a. School meals will include fresh, locally-grown foods in school meals from farms engaged in sustainable practices whenever possible, and these foods will be promoted in the cafeteria and on menus.

Food and beverages outside of the federal meal programs. The District recognizes that, at times, food and beverages are available to students outside the federal meal programs. We aim to limit these occasions; however, when they do take place, the following policies apply:

During the school day:

- a. The District is in compliance with all federal and state nutrition standards for all foods served in the schools.
- b. It is the policy of the District that all foods and beverages sold to students during the school day on any property under the jurisdiction of the district will meet the USDA school meal and Smart Snacks in School (Smart Snacks) nutrition standards. This includes all food or beverage items served or offered (for sale) to students during the school day, from the midnight prior, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school>

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/smart-snacks-nutrition-standards>

- c. These standards apply to all food and beverages sold a la carte in the cafeteria, vending machines, and school stores.
- d. Fundraisers for food to be consumed during the school days are also required to meet Smart Snacks standards, with no exceptions.
- e. Beverages containing caffeine will not be sold on school campuses to high school students.
- f. Teachers or staff are prohibited from using food as a reward in classrooms to encourage student achievement or desirable behavior, unless required in an IEP.

After the school day:

- a. All foods and beverages served via the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) will meet the federal nutrition standards and the requirements of that program
- b. All foods and beverages sold to students during afterschool programs, including aftercare, clubs, and afterschool programming, will meet the same nutrition standards as foods sold during the school day.

Commercial food marketing. The District recognizes that children are targeted with many forms of commercial marketing, including food and beverage marketing. We aim to provide a commercial-free zone in our school buildings. Food and beverage logos and branding are not permitted on any type of equipment or school property, including vending machines, display racks, scoreboards, textbooks, or educational materials (unless required for educational purposes). The only exception is food and beverage logos and branding that appear on the package of a product that meets USDA meal or Smart Snack standards. Food Service will promote healthy food choices with the aid of monthly nutrition information and other visual supports, and will not allow marketing of unhealthful choices in the cafeteria.

Celebrations. The District recognizes the importance of celebrations and special events. Class celebrations for birthdays, holidays, and other events are encouraged to feature fun activities, with outdoor activities specifically encouraged.

Nutrition Education

Waterbury Public Schools recognizes the importance of nutrition education in providing students with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead healthy lives. Thus, we require sequential, comprehensive nutrition education at every grade level that is behavior-focused, interactive, and participatory, to promote student health and wellness. Our curriculum includes nutrition education for students in elementary, middle, and high school and meets state and national standards for Skills-Based Instruction.

Students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 will receive annual interactive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors. Teachers are encouraged to integrate nutrition education into core curriculum areas such as math, science, social studies, and language arts, as applicable.

- a. The District follows all health education curriculum standards and guidelines as stated by the SHAPE America National Health Standards (2024) and the CT State Department of Education Health and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework (2nd edition – 2024). Schools link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
- b. Nutrition lessons and topics are integrated into the curriculum and the health education program, offered at each grade level (PK-12) as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based health education curriculum that meets state and national standards for Skills-Based Instruction.
- c. All health education teachers will provide opportunities for students to practice or rehearse the skills taught through the health education curriculum
- d. Students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 will receive annual nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors. Teachers are encouraged to integrate nutrition education into core curriculum areas such as math, science, social studies, and language arts as applicable.
- e. Nutrition education will be offered in the school cafeteria through posters and signage, and in the classroom, with coordination between school foodservice staff and teachers. Teachers are encouraged to display posters, videos, websites, etc., on nutrition topics from evidence-based sources. Nutrition education will, to the extent possible, link with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community service.
- f. District schools may conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents, and the community. Schools are encouraged to form School Nutrition Teams responsible for these activities. School Nutrition Teams may be composed of, but are not limited to, representatives from the School

Governance Council, Student Council, Parent Teacher Organization, School Administrator(s), food services staff, life management teachers, school nurses, health and physical education teachers, and/or coaches. The District aims to teach, model, encourage, and support students' healthy eating

Physical Education

- a. Physical education is standards-based, using the SHAPE America National Physical Education Standards and Progressions (2025) and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)-developed standards from the Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework (2nd edition – 2024). Physical Education classes are sequential, building from year to year, and the content includes movement education, personal fitness planning and execution, as well as personal and social responsibility development training. Schools will provide physical education that fosters lifelong habits of physical activity. Students shall be able to demonstrate competency through application of knowledge, skill and practice. Physical education curriculum revision will follow a formally established periodic review cycle congruent to other academic subjects.
- b. All Health and Physical Education classes in the Waterbury Public Schools are taught by licensed teachers who are certified to teach Health and Physical Education. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) shall not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students consistently spend a minimum of 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- c. All students will be provided equal opportunity 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.
- d. All District elementary students in each grade will receive physical education for at least 45 minutes per week throughout the school year.
- e. All middle school students in each grade will receive physical education for at least 90 minutes per week throughout the school year.
- f. All high school students enrolled in Physical Education courses in each grade will receive physical education for at least 40 minutes per day throughout the semester in which they are enrolled.
- g. The District physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments, the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment, and/or other appropriate assessment tools, and use criterion-based reporting

for each student.

- h. Students are moderately to vigorously active for at least 50% of class time during most or all physical education class sessions
- i. All Health and Physical Education teachers are required to participate in professional development within their content area at least three times per year. Professional development opportunities will be focused on physical education/physical activity topics and competencies specifically for physical education teachers.
- j. Waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education class time or credits are not granted.

Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program that includes the following components: physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, walking and bicycling to school, and out-of-school-time activities. The district is committed to providing these opportunities, but will also ensure that these varied opportunities are in addition to, and not considered as a substitute for Physical Education

- a. Physical activity during the school day will not be withheld as punishment for any reason. Teachers and other school personnel are prohibited from denying physical activity or exercise, or withholding opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess and physical education) as punishment. Physical Education class time, recess, or other opportunities for physical activity are not withheld as a means of enforcing the completion of academic work. Appropriate alternate strategies have been developed as consequences for negative or undesirable behaviors.
- b. To the extent practicable, the District will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The District will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.
- c. Through formal, joint and/or shared use agreements with the Board of Education, indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities are open to students, their families, and the community outside of school hours in order to provide expanded physical activity opportunities.
- d. The District will support community partners to encourage activity for as many students as possible.

- e. The District ensures that students with special physical and cognitive needs have equal physical activity opportunities, with appropriate assistance and services.
- f. All schools encourage extracurricular physical activity programs wherever possible. All high schools and middle schools offer interscholastic sports programs. Pre-K to Grade 8 schools offer intramural sports, and the district as a whole offers a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students.
- g. Wherever appropriate, the District shall continue to advocate with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments, etc., to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school (i.e., Safe Routes to School Programs).
- h. School spaces and facilities are available on request to students, staff members, community members, and community agencies/organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. These opportunities include before, during, and after the school day, and by reservation on weekends and during school vacations, whenever possible. The district will continue to reinforce this strategy. District policies concerning safety and security will apply at all times.

Recess. All elementary school students, including all PK to Grade 8 school students, have a minimum of twenty (20) minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity and provide space, equipment and an environment that is conducive to safe and enjoyable activity.

- a. Outdoor recess will be offered when the weather is feasible for outdoor play, at the discretion of the building administrator based on his/her best judgment of safety conditions.
- b. In the event that the school or district must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. Each school will maintain and enforce its own indoor recess guidelines.
- c. Recess will complement, but never substitute for Physical Education classes. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and may serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.
- d. Students enrolled in comprehensive middle schools are exempt from the daily recess requirement; however, they are encouraged to provide opportunities for pre- or post-lunch physical activity when possible.

Physical Activity Breaks. The District recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn when provided with periodic breaks to be physically active or stretch. The District

recommends teachers provide short (3-5 minute) physical activity “brain breaks” to students during and between classroom times. These physical activity breaks will complement, but never substitute for Physical Education, recess, and class transition periods.

Active Academics

- a. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction whenever possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies, and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day. Opportunities for physical activity in other subject lessons can be used as reinforcement, reward, and celebration for achievement, positive behavior, and completion of assignments. Classroom teachers may also provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes as appropriate and/or provide physical fitness activities after school
- b. The District strives to support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, and making available current research on the connections between brain development, cognitive learning and movement.
- c. Teachers are encouraged to serve as role models by being physically active alongside their students whenever feasible.

Before and After School Activities. The District offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activities either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods such as clubs, physical activity in aftercare programs, intramural sports, interscholastic and varsity sports, summer recreational programs, etc.

Active Transport. The District strives to support active transport to and from school, such as walking or biking. The District may promote this behavior by:

- a. Designation of safe or preferred routes to school – sidewalks
- b. Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students
- c. Promotion of the Safe Routes to School program to students, staff, and parents via newsletters, websites, and local newspapers
- d. Utilization of crossing guards
- e. Identifying existing crosswalks on streets leading to schools

- f. Creation and distribution of maps of school environments (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, roads, pathways, bike racks, etc.)

Employee Wellness

School staff members are encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors.

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on February 19, 2015, February 4, 2016, November 17, 2025.**