

**Local School Wellness Policy
Thomas Street Elementary School
February 2026 – February 2027**

Rationale:

The link between health of students and learning is well documented. If children are to be successful in school, they cannot be tired, hungry, sick, suffering from drug abuse, or worried that school is an unsafe environment in which they could become a victim of a violent act. It has become apparent that problems such as poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, substance abuse, depression, teen pregnancy, obesity, bullying, and more — can adversely affect not only a child's health, but also his or her ability to learn! And that is precisely why a coordinated approach to school health can make a difference! A coordinated approach to school health improves kids' health and their capacity to learn through the support of families, schools, and communities working together. At its very core, a coordinated approach to school health is about keeping students healthy over time, reinforcing positive healthy behaviors throughout the school day, and making it clear that good health and learning go hand in hand.

Goal:

All students in Thomas Street Elementary School shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices that promote healthy lifestyles. All staff members in Thomas Street Elementary School are encouraged to model a lifestyle of healthy eating patterns and moderate physical activity as a valuable part of their daily lives.

To meet this goal, the Thomas Street Elementary School adopts this school wellness policy with the following commitments to implementing a coordinated approach to school health. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.

In determining these goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness, the Thomas Street Elementary School Health Council has reviewed and considered evidenced-based strategies.

Nutrition Environment and Services The

Thomas Street Elementary School will:

- Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Offer school breakfast and snack programs (where approved and applicable) with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the USDA and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Promote participation in school meal programs to families and staff.

- Operate all Child Nutrition Programs with school foodservice staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code 2001).
- Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code 2002).
- Include goals for nutrition promotion, nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities to promote student wellness.
- Implement Nutrition Standards as adopted by the State Board of Education in accordance with the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4011)
 - Healthy food and beverage choices;
 - Healthy food preparation;
 - Marketing of healthy food choices to students, staff and parents;
 - Food preparation ingredients and products;
 - Minimum/maximum time allotted for students and staff lunch and breakfast;
 - Availability of food items during the lunch and breakfast periods of the Child Nutrition Breakfast and Lunch Programs;
 - Methods to increase participation in the Child Nutrition School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.
- Establish guidelines in accordance with USDA Smart Snacks in Schools for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. (see Nutrition Environment and Services section of the Tools That Work — Your Guide to Success for Building a Healthy School Toolkit that is found on the Office of Healthy Schools website at (www.mde.k12.ms.us/ohs/home)
- Establish guidelines in accordance with USDA Smart Snacks in Schools for the sale of food items for fundraising.
- Use Smart Snacks Resources to educate the school community about the importance of offering healthy snacks for students and staff members.
 - <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks> Smart Snacks Product Calculator:
- The Alliance for a Healthier Generation Smart Snacks Product Calculator is an effective online instrument that has been determined by the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service to be accurate in assessing product compliance with the federal requirements for SmartSnacks in Schools. The calculator can be used for food and beverage products. <https://www.healthiergeneration.org/>

Food Safe Schools

- Implement a food safety program based on HACCP principles for all school meals, as required by the USDA and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs and ensure that the food service permit is current for the school sites. HACCP Principles for K-12 schools can be downloaded at: <http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourcesOverview.aspx?ID=151>
- Develop a food safety education plan for all staff and students, consistent with Fight Bac® (www.fightbac.org) and other national standards for safe food handling at home and in schools.
- Ensure that all staff has received instructions to support food safety on the school campus. Food Safety resources have been developed by the Office of Child Nutrition to assist with the training of school staff members. These resources which include a training power-point presentation, food Safety Post Test and Food Safety Post Test Answer Key can be found on the Office of Healthy Schools website at www.mde.k12.ms.us/ohs/home.
- All school personnel (school board members, administrators, teachers, school nurses, instructional and health services paraprofessionals, foodservice staff, custodians and facilities managers, and administrative support staff) will receive copies of the Local School Wellness Policy that includes food safety policies and procedures and provides for relevant professional development.
- Adequate access to hand-washing facilities and supplies will be available whenever and wherever students, staff, and families prepare, handle, or consume food.
- The food safety assurance plan must address strategies that minimize risks for students and staff who have food allergies and intolerances.
- Encourage students to make food choices based on the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) and the ChooseMyPlate resources, by emphasizing menu options that feature baked (rather than fried foods), whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and reduced-fat dairy products. Read more about HHFKA at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-28/pdf/2013-15249.pdf> and ChooseMyPlate at <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- Establish a cafeteria environment conducive to a positive dining experience, with socializing among students and between students and adults; with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct and voice level; and with adults who model healthy habits by eating with the students.
- Make school meals accessible to all students with grab-and-go breakfasts.
- Provide nutrition information for parents, including nutrition analysis of school meals and resources to help parents improve food that they serve at home on district website.
- Encourage all school-based organizations to use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthy foods for fundraising programs. The sale of candy and other

foods and beverages that do not meet the Smart Snacks Standards are prohibited from being sold as fundraisers during the school day.

- Provide parents, caregivers, vendors, and any other community members who provide or are likely to provide foods prepared for consumption at school events with appropriate food safety information in handbook, newsletters, and on school enews.³

Physical Education/Physical Activity

The Thomas Street Elementary School

will:

- Provide 150 minutes per week of activity-based instruction for all students in grades K-8 (in accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference-2014 Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards 27.1).
- Provide Physical Education/Activity in accordance with the Physical Education Rules and Regulations as approved by the State Board of Education in compliance with the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4012).
- Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities, which are student centered and taught in a positive environment.
- Instruction must be based on 2013-2014 Mississippi Physical Education Frameworks.
- Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007 (Senate Bill 2369).
- Incorporate 5 to 10 minute physical activity sessions in classrooms to teach subject areas and to make transitions between different lessons (Examples can be found at www.movetolearnms.org Provide staff-monitored recreational activities that promote moderate physical activity during all outdoor and indoor recess times.
- Collaborate with local recreational departments and youth fitness programs to promote participation in lifelong physical activities.
- Create opportunities for students to voluntarily participate in before- and afterschool physical activity programs like clubs.

Health Education

Minimum requirements:

The Thomas Street Elementary School will:

- Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007, which requires 45 minutes per week of health education instruction as defined by the State Board of Education for grades K through 8.
- Instruction must be based on the Mississippi Contemporary Health for grades K8.



Integrate Health Education into other subject areas

(<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/ohs/home>) (Click on Health in Action).

Physical Environment

Minimum requirements:

The Thomas Street Elementary School will:

- Ensure that there are no pad locks or chains on exit doors; exits should never be obstructed (in accordance with Mississippi State Fire Code). Ensure that all exit signs are illuminated and clearly visible.
- Ensure that all chemicals are stored properly (in accordance with the Material Safety Data Sheet www.msdssearch.com).
- Refer to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook for Public Playground Safety (www.cpsc.gov); for federal guidelines for playground safety. Ensure that fire extinguishers are inspected each year and properly tagged.
- Complete yearly maintenance of the heating and cooling system in your school; check coils, filters, belts, etc. in order to maintain safe operation and healthy air quality.
- Conduct at least one emergency evacuation drill per month.
- Every school will have an anti-bullying policy that outlines procedures for dealing with bullying situations in the school.
- Ensure that two means of egress are available in each classroom in case of an emergency; if there is only one door, designate a window (properly sized) as a means of egress.
- Never use extension cords as a permanent source of electricity anywhere on a school campus.
- Comply with the applicable rules and regulations of the State Board of Education in the operation of its transportation program (in accordance with the MS Code 37-41-53; State Board of Education Policies 7903, 79()4, and 7909; and Accreditation Standard #29).
- Inspect all buses on a quarterly basis and ensure that they are well maintained and clean. Require that all bus drivers have a valid bus driver certificate and a commercial driver's license and operates the bus according to all specified safety procedures.
- Maintain a record of yearly motor vehicle reports on each bus driver and evidence that each driver has received two hours of in-service training per semester. (SB Policy 7903)
- Ensure arrival of all buses at their designated school sites prior to the start of the instructional day.
- Conduct bus evacuation drills at least two times each year. (SB Policy 7904)

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- Provide facilities that meet the criteria of: (MS Code 37-7-301 (c) (d) (j); 37-11-5, 49 and 45-11101; and Accreditation Standard #29).
- Provide facilities that are clean.
Provide facilities that are safe.
- Provide proper signage that explains tobacco, weapons, and drugs are prohibited on the school campus and at school functions.
- Provide operational facilities that are equipped and functional to meet the instructional needs of students and staff (in accordance with the Mississippi School Design Guidelines at <http://www.edi.msstate.edu/gui/lines/design.php>) 5(2000).
- Provide air conditioning in all classrooms, Code 37-17-6(2)(2000) □ Comply with the requirements for Safe and Healthy Schools:
- Maintain a comprehensive School Safety Plan on file that has been approved annually by the local school board. (MS Code 37-3-81 and 37-3-82(2); and Accreditation Standard #37.1); see the School Safety Manual and the MDE School Occupational Safety and Crisis Response Plan at: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/safe-and-orderly-schools/school-safety> State Board Policy EBB (1990) prohibits the possession of pistols, firearms or weapons by any person on school premises or at school functions.

The Thomas Street Elementary School will:

- Install exhaust fans in restrooms to eliminate odors.
- Install locks on classroom doors in order to create security from the inside. Install security cameras on the school campus.
- Utilize regularly scheduled meetings with the School Health Council, school board members, etc. to determine and discuss the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges associated with implementing and maintaining your school's healthy and safe environment. (at least 4 times per year)

Health Services

The Thomas Street Elementary School will:

- Ensure all school nurses are working under the guidelines of the 2013 Mississippi School Nurse Procedures and Standards of Care.
- Provide for teachers and staff training regarding signs and symptoms of asthma. (MS Code Sections 37-11-71 and 73-25-37)
- Every child who has been diagnosed with asthma must have an asthma action plan on file in the school office.

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- Know the district anaphylaxis policy. Providing training by a healthcare professional, preferably a school nurse, for the individuals that will be responsible for implementing the policy at the school site. (MS Code Sections 37-11-71 and 7325-37)
- The school nurse should attend at least one MDE sponsored training each school year.
The school nurse should submit health services data on the 10th of each month for the previous month.
- Offer comprehensive health services for students in grades K-12, through the employment of school nurses, as a means to academic success.
- Work with students, parents, and local healthcare providers to effectively manage and treat chronic diseases.
- Promote healthy lifestyles through school and community events (PTA meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).

Counseling, Psychological and Social Services/Social and Emotional Climate

The Thomas Street Elementary School will:

- Adhere to the details outlined in the Licensure Guidelines (436 or 451) when hiring guidance counselors and psychologists. The state does not have a policy specifically outlining the requirements for a school social worker. For licensure as a social worker in the state of Mississippi, a candidate must: provide verification of a baccalaureate degree in social work from a college or university accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and scores a minimum of 70 on the ASWB basic exam.
- Abide by Mississippi Code 37-9-79 (Amended 2014) as the school provides for counseling and guidance for students.
- Hire school guidance counselors with a minimum of a Master's Degree in Guidance
And Counseling, or in an emergency situation, an appropriate certification as determined by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development. MS Code 37-9-79 — (Amended 2014-Senate Bill 2423)
- Hire school counselors who agree to abide by the American School Counselor Association Code of Ethics.
- Ensure that all school guidance counselors provide comprehensive counseling services such as:
 - Academic and personal/social counseling.
 - Student assessment and assessment counseling.
 - Career and educational counseling.
 - Individual and group counseling.
 - Crisis intervention and preventive

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counseling. ○ Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, the State Department of Education shall require that local school districts conduct in-service training on suicide prevention education for all school district employees.

Thereafter, only new employees are required to have training.

- The Mississippi Department of Mental Health will be responsible for developing the content of the training (HB 263).
- Referrals to community agencies.

- Educational consultations and collaborations with teachers, administrators, parents and community leaders.
- Education and career placement services. ○ Follow-up counseling services. ○ Conflict resolution. ○ Professional school counselors must spend a minimum of eighty percent (80%) of their contractual time to the delivery of services to students as outlined by the American School Counselor Association.

Family Engagement and Community Involvement

The Thomas Street Elementary School will:

- Invite parents and community members to participate in school health planning by serving on the local School Health Council.
- Invite family or community members to eat a meal at school.
- Provide resources and training to parents on health-related topics, parenting skills, child development, and family relationships.
- Update parents on school health successes through monthly newsletters and/or email. Sponsor a Family Fitness Night with Healthworks Increase PTA/PTO Membership.
- Plan Healthy Rewards for students and encourage parents to do the same.

Employee Wellness

The Thomas Street Elementary School will:

- Make as a Requirement that all staff are aware of the Mississippi State and School Employees' Health Insurance Plan that has been enhanced to include My Active Health, a wellness and health promotion program designed to help individuals live a healthy lifestyle and increase their overall wellness benefit — <http://www.MyActiveHealth.com/Mississippi>
- Promote health and reduce risk factors through professional and staff development programs, providing information flyers and newsletters, introducing incentives for participating in healthy practices and activities, and offering an employee assistance program.
- Provide health promotion programs for school staff to include opportunities for physical activity, health screenings, nutrition education, weight management, smoking cessation, and stress reduction and management. • Organize employee walking teams or clubs.

Marketing a Healthy School Environment

The Thomas Street Elementary School will:

Eliminate advertising or promoting unhealthy food choices on the school campus. Advertising must be restricted to only those foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks in School Nutrition Standards.

- Provide positive, consistent, and motivating messages about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting.
- Use school announcement systems, internal TV channels, school website, Facebook, text messaging and other social media to promote health messages to students and families.

Create awareness of the link between the health of students and academic performance.

Implementation

Minimum requirements:

Implementation

The Thomas Street Elementary School will:

- Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.
- Designate one or more persons to insure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written.
- Establish and support a School Health Council (SHC) that addresses all aspects of a coordinated school health program, including a school wellness policy (Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated, Section 37-13-134).
- Conduct a review of the progress toward school wellness policy goals each year to identify areas for improvement.
- Prepare and submit a yearly report to the school board regarding the progress toward implementation of the school wellness policy and recommendations for any revisions to the policy as necessary.
- Use monitoring instruments, developed by the Office of Healthy Schools, to conduct a self assessment that identifies strengths and weaknesses toward implementation of the minimum requirements. Monitoring instruments can be downloaded at <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/ohs/home> - Click on Resources

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

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Mississippi Department of Education
The Office of Healthy Schools
359 North West Street, Suite 207
Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0771 601.359.1737