

School Wellness Policy

Purpose

The Haverhill Public Schools recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity are essential for students to maximize their full academic, physical and mental potentials, and maintain lifelong health and well-being. A responsible approach to nutrition and physical activity promotes healthy weight maintenance and reduces the risk of many chronic diseases, including asthma, hypertension, heart disease, cancer, and type 2 diabetes.

Haverhill Public Schools has a responsibility to foster a school environment that helps students learn and maintain lifelong healthy eating and lifestyle habits. Many factors play a role in achieving a healthy school environment, including foods and beverages available to students while at school, nutrition education, opportunities for physical activity and other school-based programs and activities designed to promote student wellness.

A local Wellness Committee is responsible for establishing and measuring the implementation of the district's Wellness Policy. Committee members work collaboratively and offer multiple perspectives to assure the local district Wellness Policy is consistent with the district educational and fiscal goals; optimizes the health and well-being of students; and fulfills the requirements of section 204 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265).

1.0 Local Wellness Policy Committee

1.1 Mission

The District will maintain a Local Wellness Policy Committee that serves the following purposes:

1. Establish standards for all food and beverages available to students on each school campus during the entire school day.
2. Establish goals for student nutrition education, physical activity and other school based activities designed to promote student wellness.
3. Serve as a resource to school sites for local Wellness Policy implementation.
4. Review and evaluate the local Wellness policy standards and implementation.
5. Recommend all policy related standards for final approval and report findings of Policy implementation and evaluation to the School Committee.

1.2 Membership

The Local Wellness Policy Committee membership will include at a minimum:

1. A school board member
2. A representative of the school administration
3. A representative of school food services
4. Student representatives
5. Parent representative
6. Representative of the local community

Optional members may include at a minimum:

1. A staff/faculty representative by building or discipline
2. A school health practitioner
3. A community health practitioner
4. A wellness instructor
5. A Physical Education instructor

School Wellness Policy

The Wellness Committee Chairperson will be a school district employee charged with the primary responsibility for coordinating committee activities related to standards establishment, policy implementation and monitoring and reporting to the School Board.

2.0 Nutrition Guidelines

2.1 School Meals Program

The school meals program will operate in accordance with the National School Lunch Program standards and applicable laws and regulations of Haverhill Public Schools. Schools will offer varied and nutritious food choices that are consistent with the federal government's current Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Menus will be planned with input from students, family members and other school personnel and should take into account students' cultural norms and preferences. Food pricing strategies and food marketing programs will be designed and used to encourage students to purchase nutritious meals.

Students will be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast. All school meals will feature a variety of age-appropriate healthy choices that are tasty, attractive and of high quality. School meals will be prepared in a way that maximizes nutrient density and reduces fat and sodium. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to support a healthy school environment by providing a variety of nutritious foods if meals or snacks are sent from the home.

2.2 Competitive Foods

Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages provided in:

1. School cafeterias offered as a la carte items;
2. school buildings including classrooms and hallways;
3. school stores;
4. school snack bars;
5. vending machines;
6. concession stands;
7. booster sales;
8. fundraising activities
9. school-sponsored or school-related events; and
10. any other location on school property

Nutrition information for a la carte snacks and beverages offered in snack bars, meal service lines, vending and school stores is readily available to students, parents and the school community.

Nutritious and appealing foods such as fruits, vegetables, low and non-fat dairy products and whole grain products will be available wherever food is sold or offered on the school campus during the school day. All a la carte snacks and beverages offered for sale to students during the school day comply with USDA regulations prohibiting the sale of "foods of minimal nutritional value."

- All bread and grain based foods must be whole grain.
- Food shall not exceed 200 calories per item, with the exception of a la carte entrees, which must not exceed calories of main entrée
- Fat limited to 35% or less of calories; saturated fat limited to 10% of calories. Except 1 ounce nuts, nut butters, seeds or low fat cheese.
- No trans fats

School Wellness Policy

- Sugar limited to 35% or less of calories. Except non- fat or low- fat yogurt contains up to 30 grams of sugar per 8 ounce serving, and fruit.
- Nutritional information must be available to students for all non packaged foods; effective August 2013.
- No caffeine except trace amounts.

We will comply with the 2010 Massachusetts Competitive Foods Act

- Fresh fruits and non fried vegetables must be sold at all locations where food is sold, except in non refrigerated or beverage only machines.
- Juice, milk, milk substitute and water are the only beverages to be sold or provided.
- As of August 2013, chocolate milk will be available only if it contains the same amount of sugar or less than white fat-free or low-fat milk.
- No added sugars or sweeteners
- Juice must be 100% and is limited to 4 ounce servings
- Water must be readily available and free to all students all day long.
- No fried foods

2.3 Eating as a Positive Experience

The district will provide an adequate lunch period for students to enjoy eating healthy foods and socializing, scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible. The National Association of School 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.

Recess for elementary grades will be scheduled before lunch when feasible so that children will come to lunch less distracted and ready to eat.

Adequate serving space will be provided and efficient methods of service will be used to ensure that students have access to school meals with a minimum amount of waiting time.

Adequate seating will be available to accommodate all students served during each meal period. Adequate supervision will be provided in the dining area.

The dining area will be clean, orderly and inviting.

2.4 Food Safety

All food service equipment and facilities will meet applicable local and state standards for safe food preparation and handling, sanitation and workplace safety.

In accordance with Section 111 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265) the district will implement food and safety program for the preparation and service of school meals based upon the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles.

3.0 Nutrition Education

3.1 Classroom

Students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of classroom nutrition education learning experiences that include the following characteristics:

School Wellness Policy

Nutrition Knowledge: including but not limited to the benefits of healthy eating, essential nutrients, nutritional deficiencies, principles of healthy weight management, the use and misuse of dietary supplements and safe food preparation, handling and storage.

Nutrition related Skills: including but not limited to planning a healthy meal, understanding and using food labels, and critically evaluating nutrition information and commercial food advertising.

Assessment of personal eating habits: setting goals for improvement and planning to achieve those goals.

Nutrition lessons will be designed for integration into other areas of the curriculum such as math, science and language arts and social studies; will be integrated within the sequential comprehensive health education program; will incorporate physical activity lessons; and will be based upon the most recent dietary guidelines for Americans and the USDA My Plate.

The nutrition education program will engage families as partners in their children's education.

The district's local Wellness Policy Committee will assess all nutrition education curricula and materials for accuracy, completeness and consistence with both the district's educational and wellness policy goals.

The Staff responsible for nutrition education will be adequately prepared and participate regularly in professional development activities to effectively deliver an accurate nutrition education program as planned.

Preparation and professional development activities will provide basic knowledge of nutrition, skills practice in program specific activities and instructional techniques, and strategies designed to promote health eating habits.

4.0 Physical Activity

4.1 Physical Activity during the School Day

Students will be given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through daily recess periods, physical education classes, and walking programs. Schools will promote an environment supportive of physical activity.

4.2 Physical Activity Before and After School

Students will be given opportunities for physical activity through a range of after school programs including intramurals, interscholastic athletics and physical activity clubs, whenever and where ever possible.

4.3 Physical Education Classes

Physical Education classes are taught by state certified instructors in an environment where students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills and knowledge.

Physical Education will include the instruction of individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage lifelong physical activity.

School Wellness Policy

Time allotted for physical activity will be consistent with the most research and current national standards, where ever and whenever possible. According to the National Association of State Boards of Education, elementary school students shall receive 150 minutes/week of physical education. Middle and high school students shall receive 225 minutes/week of physical education.

4.4 Creating a positive Environment for Physical Activity

Teachers will not use physical activity as a form of punishment.

Opportunities for physical activity (e.g. recess, physical education class) will not be withheld as a form of discipline.

This guidance does not apply to extracurricular sports teams.

5.0 Other School based Activities to Promote Student Wellness

5.1 Food Sold For Fundraising Activities

The district will encourage non food items to be sold as part of the school-sponsored fundraising activities. When food is sold it will conform to the same standards as competitive food sales:

- No foods of minimal nutritional value will be sold on the school campus during the school day with the exception of bake sales sold as school fundraisers.

5.2 Cafeteria

The school cafeteria will serve as a “learning laboratory” enabling students to apply critical thinking skills taught in the classroom and other venues. Attractive and current nutritional educational materials will be prominently displayed in dining areas.

Nutrition education will be offered in the school dining room as well as in the classroom and other venues, with coordination between foodservice staff and teachers.

School meals will be marketed to appeal to all students who will be encouraged to choose and consume a full meal.

Competitive foods (a la carte snacks and beverages) will be marketed to promote healthful choices over less nutrient dense items.

5.3 Healthy Parties and Classroom Celebrations

The district recognizes that classroom parties and celebrations are a tradition at school. School staff and parents are encouraged to include healthy food offerings, as defined in this policy at school parties and events to support a healthy environment throughout the district.

Food and beverages for classroom parties should conform to the same standards as competitive food sales:

- No food of minimal nutritional value will be sold on the school campus during the school day

School Wellness Policy

5.4 Food Used as a Reward or Punishment

Teachers and school staff will not use food as a reward or punishment for students. For example, they will not give coupons for fast food meals as a reward for an “A” on a class project or withhold snacks as a punishment for bad behavior.

6.0 Faculty, Staff & Food Service Roles in a Healthy School Environment

6.1 Professional Development

District food service staff and faculty are encouraged to become full partners in the District’s wellness goals. In support of this goal, nutrition and physical activity educational opportunities will be provided to all district and food service staff. These opportunities will address diverse topics related to healthy lifestyles, nutrition and physical activity and will be provided in the form of educational and informational materials, presentations and workshops.

District and food service staff are encouraged to model healthy eating behaviors.

7.0 Policy Implementation

7.1 Monitoring

On each school campus, one individual will be assigned to ensure compliance with standards of the Local Wellness Policy in his/her school. This individual will report on the schools compliance to the chairperson of the local Wellness Committee.

The Director of the school food services will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within the school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Chairperson of the local Wellness Committee.

7.2 Reporting

The Chairperson of the local Wellness Committee will report on the District’s compliance with the wellness policy to the school board and then be distributed to other interested parties and groups as the school board sees fit.

7.3 Policy Review

To help with the initial development of the district’s Wellness Policy, the local Wellness Policy Committee may conduct a baseline assessment of the schools existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of these school–by-school assessments can be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments can be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas of improvement. The district will, as necessary, revise the Local Wellness Policy and develop work plans to facilitate its implementation.