

WELLNESS POLICIES ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION

The Valley Stream Union Free School District #24 is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, the Board of Education adopts the following goals and objectives:

- The School District will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals and other interested community members in developing implementing and reviewing District-wide nutrition and physical activity policies through the establishment and maintenance of a Wellness Committee.
- All District students will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school through the school lunch and breakfast program will meet or exceed the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, and the program requirements and nutrition standards set forth in federal regulations.
- All food and beverages sold outside of the school meals programs on the school campus at any time during the school day will meet the nutrition standards set forth in federal rules regarding nutrition standards for all foods sold in school (also known as "smart snacks"). Nutritional information will be available at each building and updated when new products are introduced.

- For purposes of this Policy, “school campus” means all areas of District property accessible to students during the school day; “school day” means the period from the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day; and “competitive food” means all food and beverages other than meals reimbursed pursuant to federal food programs available for sale to students on the school campus during the school day.

- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools will participate in available federal meal program including the School Breakfast Program (if the need is determined by annual survey).

- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity in accordance with New York state curriculum standards and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. Wellness Committee and School Health Councils

The District and/or individual schools will create, strengthen, or work with the District Wellness Committee and within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus School Meals

Meals served through the *National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs* will:

- Be appealing and attractive to children;

- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal statutes and regulations;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables, salads, whole grains and low fat items;
- Permit the sale of fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables, if processed pursuant to federal regulations, as exempt from nutrition standards;
- Serve only low fat (1%) and fat-free milk nutritionally equivalent no-dairy alternative (as defined by the USDA); and

Schools will engage students and parent representatives, through taste-tests of new entrees, and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. This information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards or other point-of-purchase materials.

Free and Reduced-Priced Meals

Efforts will be made to ensure that families are aware of programs available for free or reduced price meals and encourage eligible families to apply. Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-priced school meals. Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; promote the availability of school meals to all

students; and/or use non-traditional methods for serving school meals, such as “grab-and-go” or classroom breakfast.

Meal Times and Scheduling

Schools will provide students with at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch:

- Schools will schedule meal periods at appropriate times;
- Schools will not schedule tutoring, club, or organization meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during those activities;
- Schools will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- Schools will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk.)

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the District’s responsibility to operate a food service program, the food service vendor will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their level of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

Schools will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (e.g., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte (snack) lines, fundraisers, school stores; etc.)

The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in the schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, whenever possible, food in the schools should be sold as balanced meals. When available, foods and beverages sold individually will meet the nutrition standards set in federal regulations for competitive foods regarding whole grains, fruits, vegetables, calories, fat, saturated fats, sugar, sodium and caffeine. The sale of fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables will be permitted if processed pursuant to federal regulations, as exempt from nutrition standards.

Beverages Allowed

Water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by the USDA).

Beverages Not Allowed

Soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages

containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages and other considerations. The District will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program

Rewards

Schools will not use food or beverages, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations

Schools will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above). The District will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

School Sponsored Events, such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances or performances

Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

Fund Raising Activities

The District shall promote non-food items to sell, or activities (physical or otherwise) in which to participate. Student groups or staff conducting fundraisers off of the school campus or outside the school day will meet the standard for foods and beverages sold individually (above). Outside organizations (e.g. parent groups, booster clubs) conducting fundraisers that take place off of the school campus or outside the school day will be encouraged to follow this Policy.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion

The District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools will integrate nutrition education throughout the curriculum and engage in nutrition promotion that is consistent with the New York State Education Department's elementary health curriculum. The District will teach media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing. Staff members who provide nutrition education and promotion will be appropriately certified and trained.

Communications with Parents

Parents will be encouraged to support the District's efforts at providing a healthy diet and daily physical activity for students. The District and schools will offer healthy eating resources for parents, send home nutrition information, and provide nutrient analysis of school meals. Schools will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including

beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages.

The District/schools will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day. Parent/guardians will be encouraged to support efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. This support will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

IV. *Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education*

Daily Physical Education (P.E.)

All students, including students with disabilities, special healthcare needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education two times per cycle (K-3 25 minutes 2x's a cycle; Grades 4-6 45 minutes 2x's a cycle) consistent with NYS Department of Education requirements. A certified physical education teacher will teach Physical Education. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

All students will have at least 20 minutes as day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Schools will discourage extended periods (i.e. periods of two or more hours) of inactivity.

Physical Activity and Punishment

Teacher and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

Safe Routes to School:

The District will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the District will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts.

The District will explore the availability of federal “safe routes to school” funds, administered by the State Department of Transportation, to finance these improvements.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning prior approval and safety will apply at all times.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring

The Superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established District-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the Superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or District level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within the food service areas and will report on this matter to the school principal.

The Superintendent or designee will provide the Board of Education with a triennial assessment on District-wide compliance with the District's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies based on input from the schools. The assessment will also include how this Wellness Policy compares to model wellness policies and progress made in attaining the goals of the Policy. Parents, students, food service professionals, physical education teachers, school health professionals, school administrators, the general public, and the Board of Education will participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of this Policy. The District will annually inform and update the public (including parents, students and others in the community) about the content and implementation of this Policy.

The Superintendent will develop administrative regulations to ensure compliance with this Policy.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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