

STUDENT WELLNESS

The Board recognizes that student wellness and good nutrition are related to students' physical and psychological well-being and their readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that supports student wellness, healthy food choices, nutrition education, and regular physical activity. The Board believes that students who learn and practice healthy lifestyles in their formative years may be more likely to be conscious of the importance of good nutrition and exercise as adults, practice healthy habits, and reduce their risk of obesity, diabetes and other chronic diseases.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- Foods of minimal nutritional value: foods which provide less than a minimum of 5 percent of the recommended dietary intake (RDI) for each of eight specified nutrients per serving per 100 calories. The eight nutrients to be assessed are – protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, niacin, riboflavin, thiamine, calcium, and iron.
- Food as a Reward: foods which are provided immediately following a good behavior/act as an incentive for such behavior.

Nutrition Standards for School Meals

The school unit will ensure that meals provided by its Food Services Program meet the nutrition standards established by federal regulations.¹ Sales of foods and beverages that compete with the school lunch program (and/or school breakfast program) must be in compliance with the Board's policy EFE, Competitive Food Sales/Sales in Competition with the School Food Services Program.

Assurance

This policy serves as assurance² that school unit guidelines for reimbursable meals are not less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act.

¹ Title 7-U.S. Department of Agriculture, Chapter II-Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, Part 210-National School Lunch Program (7 C.F.R. § 210).

² See 42 U.S.C. § 1751(a)(2).

Foods Sold Outside the School Nutrition Program

The Board recognizes that proceeds from the sale of foods and beverages outside of the School Meal Program are a significant source of funds for student activities and/or authorized community/RSU organizations.

Therefore, as allowed by Maine Department of Education Rule Chapter 51, the Board permits the sale of food and beverages outside the total food program to:

- a. School staff;
- b. Attendees at RSU-sponsored events held on RSU property; and
- c. The public at community events held on RSU property in accordance with RSU Policy.

The Board, as authorized by Chapter 51, hereby authorizes funds raised through authorized sales outside the total food service programs to accrue to the sponsoring school, approved student organization, or other Board approved Community organization in accordance with applicable administrative procedures.

Student Fundraising

Student organizations will be encouraged to engage in fundraising projects that are supportive of healthy eating and student wellness. Primarily non-food items shall be used for fundraising. In accordance with Maine Department of Education Rule Chapter 51, foods and beverages sold for fundraising purposes shall not be sold during the school day. When foods and beverages are sold to raise funds for schools, student, and/or other approved activities, the students, staff, parents, school and/or community-approved organization involved in such sales are strongly encouraged to sell healthy food options. Any such fundraising must be approved by the building principal and comply with Board policies on fundraising.

School-sponsored Student Events. In accordance with Maine Department of Education Rule Chapter 51, foods and beverages of minimal nutritional value are prohibited at school-sponsored events during or outside the school day that are not open to the general public.

School-sponsored Community Events. When foods and beverages are sold to attendees at community events sponsored by the school or held on school property, students, staff, parents, or school sponsored organizations involved in such sales are encouraged to include healthy food options. Organizations are encouraged to differentiate the pricing of food items to encourage the purchase of healthy items.

Nutrition Education

Nutrition education will be integrated into the instructional program through the health education program and/or the curriculum as aligned with the content standards of Maine's system of Learning Standards. Nutrition education should focus on skills students need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors. Students should receive consistent nutrition messages throughout the schools, including classrooms, cafeteria, and school-home communications.

Physical Activity

The school unit will strive to provide all students developmentally appropriate opportunities for physical activity through physical education classes, recess periods for elementary school students, and extracurricular activities (clubs, intramural and interscholastic athletics). School programs are intended to build and maintain physical fitness and to promote healthy lifestyles. The schools should encourage parents to support their children's participation in physical activities, including available before- and after-school programs.

Other School-Based Wellness Activities

The schools, with prior approval of the Superintendent/designee, may implement other appropriate programs that support consistent wellness messages and promote healthy eating and physical activity.

The Board may approve policy, regulations or guidelines for refreshments served at parties or events during the school day or may delegate the responsibility for such regulations or guidelines to administrators at the district or school level.

RSU schools will not use foods 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 behavioral punishment, (except when stated in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP)).

The school unit may develop programs that encourage staff to learn and engage in healthy lifestyle practices.

Implementation and Monitoring

The Superintendent/designee shall be responsible for the implementation or the wellness policy, for monitoring efforts to meet the intent of this policy, and for reporting to the Board on an annual basis.

Monitoring may include surveys or solicitation of input from students, parents, staff, and school administrators.

Reports may include, but are not limited to:

- A. The status of the school environment in regard to student wellness issues
- B. Evaluation of the school food services program and compliance with nutrition guidelines
- C. Summary of wellness programs and activities in the schools
- D. Feedback from students, parents, staff, school administrators and wellness committee
- E. Recommendations for policy, program or curriculum revisions

Appointment and Role of the Wellness Committee

The Board shall appoint a district-wide Wellness Committee comprised of at least one of each of the following:

- A. Board member;
- B. School administrator;
- C. Food Services Director/designee;
- D. Student representative;
- E. Parent representative; and/or
- F. Community representative.

The Wellness Committee may also include:

- A. School nurse;
- B. Teacher(s);
- C. Guidance counselor;
- D. Social worker;
- E. Community organization or agency representative;
- F. Other staff, as designated by the Board; and/or
- G. Other persons, as designated by the Board

The Wellness Committee shall serve as an advisory committee in regard to student wellness issues and will be responsible for making recommendations related to the wellness policy, wellness goals, administrative or school regulations and practices, or raising awareness of student health issues.

With the prior approval of the Superintendent/designee, the Wellness Committee may survey parents, students and the community and/or conduct focus groups or community forums.

The Wellness Committee shall provide periodic reports to the Superintendent/designee and, as requested, to the Board.

Wellness Goals

The Board has identified the following goals associated with student wellness:

Goals for Nutrition Education

The schools will provide nutrition education that focuses on the skills students need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.

The schools' nutrition education will be provided in a sequential, comprehensive health education program aligned with the content standards of the Maine system of Learning Standards.

Nutrition education will be integrated into other subjects as appropriate to complement, not replace, the health education program.

The school unit will provide foods that meet or exceed the federal nutrition standards, adequate time for students to obtain food and eat, lunch scheduled at appropriate hours of the day (OR: as close to the middle of the school day as possible), adequate space to eat, and a clean and safe meal environment.

Consistent nutrition messages will be disseminated throughout the school unit in the classroom, the cafeteria, and school-home communications.

Administrators and staff will be encouraged to model nutritious food choices and eating habits.

Appropriate professional development will be provided for food services staff.

Goals for Physical Activity

The physical education program will provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to be physically fit and take part in healthful physical activity on a regular basis.

Students will develop motor skills and apply them to enhance their coordination and physical performance.

Students will demonstrate responsible personal and social behaviors in physical activity settings.

The physical education curriculum will be aligned with the content standards of the Maine system of Learning Standards.

Physical education classes will keep all students involved in purposeful activity for a majority of the class period.

Physical education classes will provide opportunity to learn for students of all abilities.

The schools will provide a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable physical activity and fosters the development of a positive attitude toward health and fitness.

The schools shall not withhold opportunities for physical activity as a means of punishment.

The schools will provide facilities adequate to implement the physical education curriculum for the number of students served.

Schools will promote efforts to provide opportunities for students to engage in age-appropriate activities on most days of the week in both school and community settings.

The schools will provide opportunities for physical activity through a variety of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramural sports, interscholastic athletics and physical activity clubs.

Appropriate professional development will be provided for physical education staff and other staff involved in the delivery of such programs.

Goals for Other School-Based Activities

Goals of the wellness policy will be considered when planning school or classroom parties, or events keeping in mind that food is not to be used as a reward. Foods may be brought into the classroom by students/parents as part of a special occasion such as a school party or other event. School events containing food should be considered an opportunity to reinforce nutrition lessons and put lessons into practice. Foods brought in for celebrations should follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. These foods should include fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy foods and low fat whole grain products. Foods high in fat and sugars will be used sparingly.

Parents will be encouraged to provide nutritionally sound snacks from home and food for classroom parties or events.

Schools will encourage maximum participation in school meal programs.

Schools will encourage parents and students to take advantage of developmentally appropriate community-based after-school programs that emphasize physical activity.

The schools will encourage parents to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

As feasible, school physical activity facilities will be made available after school hours for student, parent and community use to encourage participation in physical activity.

School administrators, staff, parents, students and community members will be encouraged to serve as role models in practicing healthy eating and being physically active, both in the school environment and at home.

School-based marketing of foods and beverages, such as through advertisements in school publications, school buildings, athletic fields, and other areas accessible to students should support the goals of the wellness policy.

The schools are encouraged to cooperate with agencies and community organizations to support programs that contribute to good nutrition and physical activity.

Legal Reference: 42 U.S.C. § 1751

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