

Wellness Policy

The wellness policy must include, but is not limited to:

- Goals for nutrition education, nutrition promotion, and other school-based activities to promote wellness;
- The Smart Snacks in School standards for all foods and beverages sold to students on campus during the school day, including access to water;
- Standards consistent with federal regulations for school meal programs and the Smart Snacks in School standards for other foods available to students (e.g., food brought from home for classroom events/parties and food used as rewards or incentives);
- Policies for marketing only food and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks in School standards;
- Standards for quality physical education and nutrition education programs aligned to state learning standards that help students develop lifelong healthy behaviors;
- Promotion of activities that provide students opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school;
- Engagement of the community in support of the District's work in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits;
- Establishment of a wellness committee that includes representatives from the school and that permits participation from members of the community;
- Designation of one or more school official(s) to ensure compliance of each school; and
- Direct committee review and assessment of the wellness policy every three years.

Wellness Committee

The District will convene a wellness committee to establish goals for the District-level wellness policy and to oversee its development, implementation, periodic review and updating. The membership of the committee will represent all school levels (elementary and secondary schools). The following parties must be permitted to participate as committee members:

- Parents and caregivers;
- Students;
- Representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., school nutrition director);
- Physical education teachers;
- School health professionals (e.g., health education teachers, nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services, school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists);
- School administrators (e.g., superintendent, principal, vice principal),
- School board members;
- Health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and
- Members of the general public.

The wellness committee is responsible for:

- Establishing committee membership and operating protocol;
- Understanding wellness policy compliance requirements;
- Developing an implementation plan for the wellness policy;
- Recordkeeping;
- Annual public notification of the wellness policy;
- Triennial progress assessments;
- Revising the wellness policy; and
- Leading community involvement, outreach and communications initiatives regarding the wellness policy.

Wellness Policy Implementation Plan

The wellness committee will develop and maintain a plan for implementation, management and coordination of the wellness policy. The District will use online tools or other resources to review and consider evidence-based strategies (e.g., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index) in determining goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and other school-based activities (e.g., school vegetable garden) for each school. *[District Note – the CDC's index cited here can be used to do school-level assessments, create action plans for implementation and to generate an annual report].*

The plan will include:

- An action plan to implement all required elements of the wellness policy.

Annual Notification:

The District will notify families and the public, on annual basis, of the availability of the wellness policy and provide information that would enable interested households to obtain more details. The District is encouraged to provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the District will evaluate its compliance with the wellness policy. The triennial assessment will consider:

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the District are in compliance with the wellness policy.
- The extent to which the District's wellness policy compares to the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy](#).
- The extent to which progress has been made in attaining the goals of the District's wellness policy.

The assessment report will include the position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and their contact information.

Updates to the Policy

The wellness committee will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as priorities change and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued.

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

The District will actively communicate ways in which members of the wellness committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means. The District will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, the availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply for those programs, and District compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Recordkeeping

The District will maintain and make available for public inspection records documenting compliance with the wellness policy. They will be available at www.nthurston.k12.wa.us/Page/469.

Records will include, but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy.
- Documentation of the triennial assessment.
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirement.

Nutrition and Food Services Program**Meal Applications and Eligibility for School Meals**

As a sponsor of the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, the District will provide free and reduced-price breakfasts and lunches to students who qualify in accordance with the programs. The District will distribute the Letter to Households and Free and Reduced-Price Meal Applications to all households at the beginning of each school year. The District will protect the identity of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals in accordance with USDA guidelines for confidentiality and disclosure of student eligibility for such meals.

Meal Patterns and Menu Planning

The District will follow the USDA meal patterns for the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and Smart Snacks in School standards for all food and beverages sold to students on school campus during the school day.

Meal Times

The District will set meal times to allow breakfast to be served as close to the start of the school day as possible and lunch to be served between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. The

length of the meal period will allow enough time for students to be served and eat a complete meal.

Food Safety Plan

The District will establish a Food Safety Plan based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points. Because of the potential liability of the District, the food services program will not accept donations of food other than as provided in this policy without board approval. Should the board approve a food donation, the superintendent shall establish inspection and handling procedures for the food and determine that the provisions of all state and local laws have been met before selling the food as part of the school lunch menu.

Meal Pricing

The Board of Directors shall determine paid meal prices annually and for the National School Lunch Program and follow Paid Lunch Equity regulations. Adult meal prices shall be set to allow teachers, administrators, and parents to demonstrate their support for school meal programs by occasionally eating with students. The price must be the price charged to students paying the full meal price plus the value of federal reimbursement for paid meals and the USDA Food Value.

USDA Foods

The District will endeavor to use the full entitlement of USDA Foods made available under the Federal Food Distribution Program for school meal programs.

Non-Profit School Food Service Account

The District will maintain a non-profit school food service account. All revenues shall be used solely for the school meal programs and to improve the quality of the food service program for the students being served. Food sold a la carte and food sold to other school entities will be priced to recover, at a minimum, food costs.

Meal Charge Policy

In order to allow students to receive nutritious meals, prevent over-identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school means, and maintain the financial integrity of the nonprofit school nutrition program, the District will establish a written meal charge process for students eligible for reduced price meals and students that are not eligible for meals. The meal charge policy will be communicated to households each year so that school district employees, families and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges.

Children with Special Dietary Needs

The District will establish procedures to accommodate children with special dietary needs when a diet prescription form is signed by a licensed medical authority. The District food service department will work with the school's 504 Coordinator to accommodate student special dietary needs.

Civil Rights

The District will follow USDA Food and Nutrition Civil Rights and nondiscrimination policies.

Procurement

The District will follow all state and Federal guidelines when procuring food for the Federal School Meal Programs and as part of District procurement procedures, establish a procurement plan and Code of Conduct consistent with the Uniform Grant Guidance; 2 CFR 200. Food specifications shall be written in a manner to procure food products that meet the school meal pattern requirements.

Smart Snacks Standards in School

All foods and beverages sold to students on campus during the school day (e.g., vending machines, DECA school stores, bake sales, and other school fundraisers) must meet USDA Smart Snacks standards. No food or drink items will be sold unless they have been approved by the principal or school official responsible for oversight of the Smart Snacks standards or, as designated in the wellness policy.

Best Practices for Meal Service

The Superintendent will make reasonable efforts to ensure:

- Student participation in the breakfast and lunch programs is encouraged;
- Any student may eat in the school cafeteria or other designated place;
- Schools provide varied and nutritious food choices consistent with the applicable school meal program guidelines;
- Healthy foods are competitively priced;
- Meal prices are conspicuously posted in each cafeteria or designated meal area;
- Seating for meals is uncrowded and occurs in a pleasant and safe environment;
- Supervision during mealtime is appropriate and rules for mealtime behavior are consistently enforced;
- Bus schedules allow students to arrive in time for participation in the School Breakfast Program;
- Alternate breakfast service models are implemented so that students have access to breakfast meals.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, and unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. In addition, students will be allowed to bring with them and carry throughout the day approved water bottles (filled only with water).

Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus are strongly encouraged to meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, including:

- Foods brought for celebrations and parties. The District will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
- Classroom snacks brought by parents. The District will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snack nutrition standards.
- Rewards and incentives. The District will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Foods and beverages will not be withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus during the school day. The District will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas.

- Schools will encourage fundraisers promoting physical activity (such as walk-a-thons, Jump Rope for Heart, fun runs, etc.).

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through:

- Implementation of at least ten or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using Smarter Lunchroom techniques.
- Ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Additional promotion techniques that the District and individual schools may use are available at <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/>

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals.

Family and Community Involvement

In order to promote family and community involvement in supporting and reinforcing nutrition education in schools, the district will encourage the following actions and opportunities:

- Nutrition education materials and breakfast and lunch menus are made available to parents;
- Parents are encouraged to promote their child's participation in the school meals program. If their children do not participate in the school meals program, parents should provide their children with healthy snacks/meals;
- Families are invited to attend exhibitions of student nutrition projects or health fairs;
- Nutrition education curriculum includes homework that students can do with their families (e.g., reading and interpreting food labels, reading nutrition-related newsletters, preparing healthy recipes, etc.);
- School staff are encouraged to cooperate with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for student projects related to nutrition, as appropriate; and
- School staff consider the various cultural preferences in development of nutrition education programs and food options.

Nutrition Education

The District's K-12 nutrition education curriculum will align with the Washington State Health and Physical Education K-12 Learning Standards and will be designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote healthy behavior.

The District's nutrition education K-12 curriculum should include, but not be limited to, the following concepts:

- Age-appropriate, developmentally-appropriate, and culturally relevant nutritional knowledge, including:
 - the relationship of nutrition and food nutrients to physical performance and body composition;
 - the benefits of healthy eating;
 - essential nutrients;
 - nutritional deficiencies;
 - the principles of healthy weight management;
 - the use and misuse of dietary supplements;
 - safe food preparation, handling, and storage; and
 - appreciation of cultural diversity related to food and eating.
- Age-appropriate nutrition-related skills, including how to:
 - gather and analyze health information;
 - analyze nutrition information to plan and prepare a healthy meal;
 - understand and use food labels,

- evaluate nutrition information, misinformation, and commercial food and advertising; and
- assess one's personal eating habits, set goals for improvement, and achieve those goals.

Health and Physical Education

The superintendent will adopt and implement a comprehensive physical education curriculum aligned with the Washington State Health and Physical Education K-12 Learning Standards. The District will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum. The physical education program will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits.

Physical Education Requirements and Waiver Policy

The District will grant waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education classes only in cases where it determines such waiver, exemption or substitution is absolutely necessary. All high school students are required to complete a minimum of three semesters (1.5 credits) of physical education. Students may be excused from this fitness requirement under [RCW 28A.230.050](#). Such excused students will be required to demonstrate proficiency/competency in the knowledge portion of the fitness requirement, in accordance with written District policy.

A physical education waiver is defined as release from class (not taking physical education at all), not receiving credit, and/or being held accountable for the knowledge portion of physical education per statute.

Professional Learning

The District will, subject to available resources, offer ongoing in-service and professional learning opportunities for staff in the area of health education, physical education and physical activity. Professional learning will help District staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing District reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

Quality Physical Education

Schools will implement a physical education program which includes instruction and practice in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns; knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance; knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness; responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others; and values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.

Physical Activity during the School Day

The District recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Schools will encourage teachers to:

- Incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.
- Provide short physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

Physical Activity Before and After School

The District offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods (e.g., physical activity clubs, intramurals, sports, etc.)

Recess

Each school will offer physically active daily recess opportunities that align with state and national recess recommendations and maintain safe and age-appropriate equipment to use during recess. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active. Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, brain boosters/energizers, or physical education) should not be used or withheld as punishment. The imposition of limitations on physical activity during the school day may only be used as a response to safety concerns.

Family and Community Engagement

The District will offer opportunities to promote family and community involvement in supporting and reinforcing physical education and physical activity in the schools. Schools should ensure:

- Physical education activity ideas are sent home with students;
- Families are invited to attend and participate in physical education activity programs and health fairs;
- School staff are encouraged to cooperate with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for students to participate in physical activity programs.
- Families are actively notified of opportunities and invited to participate in school-sponsored physical activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

The District will offer, subject to available resources, opportunities that focus on staff wellness issues, and/or identify and disseminate wellness resources in coordination with human resources staff.

Active Transport

The District will identify safe and active routes to and from school to promote alternative transport methods for children, such as walking and bicycle programs. The District will encourage this behavior by engaging and promoting activities such as:

- Designation of safe or preferred routes to school;

- Promotional activities such as participation in International Walk to School Week, National Walk and Bike to School Week;
- Promotion of safe routes program to students, staff, and parents via newsletters, websites, local newspaper;
- Use of crossing guards;

School District Facilities

Access to school sites will be provided through permitting use of facilities to community youth sports groups consistent with the District's facilities use policy, community college, and municipal joint use agreements and partnerships with youth organizations so additional opportunities are available for all youth in the community to participate in quality physical activity, fitness, sports, and recreation programs.

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