

# Pickens County Board of Education

## Student Wellness Policy

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Pickens County  
Board of Education  
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## **Pickens County Board of Education Wellness Policy**

### **Introduction**

Schools play a critical role in promoting student health, preventing childhood obesity, and combating problems associated with poor nutrition and physical inactivity. Recently the United States Congress passed a law (P.L. 108-265) requiring each school district participating in the National School Lunch and/or Breakfast Program to establish a Local Wellness Policy by July 31, 2006. This is our response to that law.

A healthy school environment goes beyond school meals in the cafeteria. A healthy lifestyle and maintaining a healthy weight requires a combination of healthy food choices and appropriate amount of physical activity. All foods made available on school campuses should offer children nutritious choices, and physical activity should be incorporated into the school day as often as possible. The healthy, physically active child is more likely to be academically successful.

With the recent passage of legislation requiring each Local Education Authority (LEA) to have a local wellness policy in place, the federal government recognizes that a coordinated effort by the entire community including child nutrition professionals, school board members, parents, students, school administrators, and teachers is warranted. These efforts involve adults serving as role models and community members being informed of the policies that improve the long-term health and wellbeing of students. The LEA has a strategic role to play and now is the time to take action.

### **Purpose and Goals**

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and

72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;

Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

The Pickens County School District shall provide school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the wellness plan of the Pickens County School District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, promoting, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades PreK-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks], Summer Food Service Program, Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program).
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

## **I. The Food Service Operation**

### **A. Financial Management**

1. It is acknowledged that the feeding of children is primarily a family responsibility. To supplement their efforts, every school shall operate a

food service program to ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn well.

2. The food service program shall aim to be financially self-supporting. However, the program is essential to education and finances must not take precedence over the nutritional needs of the students. If subsidy of the food service fund is needed, it should not be from the sale of foods that have minimal nutritional value and/or compete nutritionally with program meals.

## **B. Program Requirements**

1. During each school day the food service program shall offer breakfast and lunch under the nutritional guidelines of the USDA's National School Lunch and Breakfast Program. Additionally, the food service program shall offer meals based on the nutrient guidelines in the USDA's After School At-Risk Snack Program to those students in after-school education or enrichment programs. Each school shall encourage all students to participate in these meal opportunities. In particular, the school shall make efforts to ensure that families are aware of need-based programs for free or reduced-price meals and that eligible families are encouraged to apply. The program shall maintain the confidentiality of students and families applying for or receiving free or reduced-price meals.
2. The school food service program shall operate in accordance with the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1996 as amended and applicable laws and regulations of the state of Alabama. School meals must meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommends that no more than 30% of an individual's calories be furnished from fat and less than 10% from saturated fat. Schools shall focus on improving food quality in the school meal programs by increasing the whole grain options, having one percent or less fat milk as the standard beverage, and increasing fruit and vegetables preferably using freshly grown Alabama produce. Preparation of foods in the cafeteria should use cooking techniques to provide fiber and reduce fat, sugar, and sodium in school meals. The number of fried foods and pre-prepared items planned and served each week will comply with the federal guidance for healthy children. Fried potato products (fries, tater tots, etc.) shall be limited to a three (3 oz.) portion size. Baked potato products that have not been pre-fried, flash fried, or deep fat-fried in any way, are the product of choice and may be served more frequently replacing the fried potato products. Food flash-fried by the manufacturer may be served but shall be prepared by a food preparation other than fried. Food pricing strategies shall be designed to encourage students to purchase nutritious items. Procedures shall be in place for providing to families, on request, information about the ingredients and

nutritional value of the foods served.

3. The school food service program shall monitor the nutrient breakdown of their menus. Regardless of menu planning format, nutrient or food based, schools shall analyze the menus offered to students using nutrient analysis software to ensure that USDA guidelines are being met.

### **C. Staffing**

1. The Pickens County Board of Education shall employ a full time certified Child Nutrition Program Director to administer the school food service program and satisfy reporting requirements. This individual must meet, as a minimum, the requirements set forth by the Alabama Department of Education for a Child Nutrition Program Director.
2. Food service directors are strongly encouraged to implement the Alabama Department of Education training program, or equivalent, for all food service personnel. The Alabama Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs is defined as a training initiative for Food Services Directors so that they possess the necessary skills and resources to effectively train food service personnel.
3. Food service directors and staff are encouraged to inform and collaborate with classroom teachers about the school nutrition food service environment and nutrition education.

### **D. Adequate Eating Space and Time and Appropriate Use of Food**

1. Students and staff shall have adequate space to eat meals in pleasant surroundings and shall have adequate time to eat. After being seated with their meal, students must have a minimum of 15-20 minutes to consume their meal. Safe drinking water and convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene must be available during all meal periods.
2. Rewards and incentives for academic performance should be given careful consideration as to the messages they send to students receiving them. If food is included in recognition of academic performance, it should be used in the general celebration of the achievement not as the reward.
3. Food shall not be withheld from students as punishment.

### **E. Food Safety**

1. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCAP) plans and guidelines must be implemented to prevent food illness in schools.

2. All food service equipment and facilities must meet applicable local and state standards concerning health; safe food preparation; handling, and storage; drinking water; sanitation; and workplace safety.
3. All food service workers must submit an annual TB Skin Test Report to the central office as a part of their personal file.

#### **F. Equipment**

1. Schools may not use Child Nutrition Program funds to purchase new fryers for the school lunch/breakfast program. Frying as a method of preparation for foods served in school meals, ala carte lines, snack lines and school stores should be limited with the goal of eliminating fried items.
2. Schools should pay special attention to portion sizes and assist students in selecting the appropriate amount of food.

## **II. Nutrition Education and Promotion**

### **A. Instructional Program Design**

1. Nutrition education topics shall be integrated within the sequential, comprehensive health education program taught at every grade level, pre-kindergarten through twelfth. The nutrition education program shall focus on students' eating behaviors, be based on theories and methods proven effective by published research, and be consistent with the state's/district's health education standards/guidelines/framework. Nutrition education shall be designed to help students learn:
  - a. Nutritional 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 preparations, handling and storage;
  - b. Nutrition-related skills, including but not limited to planning a healthy meal, understanding and using food labels, and critically evaluating nutrition information, misinformation, and commercial food advertising; and
  - c. How to assess one's personal eating habits, set goals for improvement, and achieve those goals.

2. Nutrition education instructional activities shall stress the appealing aspects of healthy eating and be participatory, developmentally appropriate, and enjoyable. The program shall engage families as partners in their children's education.
3. Food is not used as a reward or punishment for student behaviors, unless it is detailed in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

#### **B. Staff Qualifications**

Staff responsible for nutrition education shall be adequately prepared and regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned. Preparation and professional development activities shall provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with skill practice in program-specific activities and instructional techniques and strategies designed to promote healthy eating habits.

#### **C. Educational Reinforcement**

School instructional staff shall collaborate with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families. Guest speakers invited to address students shall receive appropriate orientation to the relevant policies of the school/district.

#### **D. Staff as Role Models.**

School staffs are encouraged to model healthy eating behaviors. Schools should offer wellness programs that include personalized instruction about healthy eating and physical activity.

#### **E. Coordination of Programs**

1. The food service program shall be closely coordinated with nutrition instruction. Food service staff shall work closely with those responsible for other components of the school health program to achieve common goals.
2. All nutrition instruction shall provide a consistent learning experience that reinforces the objectives of the school food service program and will comply with the Dietary Guidelines

for Americans where appropriate.

#### **F. Nutrition-Related Health Problems and Modified Diets**

1. School counselors and school health services staff shall consistently promote healthy eating to students and other staff. These professionals shall be prepared to recognize conditions such as obesity, eating disorders, and other nutrition-related health problems among students and staff and be able to refer them to appropriate services.
2. The school food service program will comply with USDA's disability requirements for modified diets. The school food service program is strongly encouraged to meet ethnic dietary requests as recommended by USDA.

### **III. Physical Activity**

#### **A. Instructional Program Design**

1. Schools are encouraged to integrate physical activity across curricula and throughout the school day.
2. Physical education courses will be the environment where students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills and knowledge.
3. Physical activity participation will take into consideration the "balancing equation" of food intake and physical activity.
4. Physical education includes the instruction of individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage life-long physical activity.
5. The school provides a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted.

#### **B. Staff Qualifications**

1. Daily physical education classes for all students in grades PreK-12 must be taught or supervised by teachers certified in physical education.
2. All elementary physical education classes must be taught via one of

the following options:

- a. A certified physical education teacher is employed to teach physical education.
- b. An aide may provide instruction in physical education while under the supervision of a certified physical education teacher.
- c. Classroom teachers are certified to teach physical education only to their own classes.

### **C. Teacher -to- Student Ratio**

The physical education class size should be consistent with other classes in the school. In situations involving classes that exceed the ratio of 1:30 (teacher to students), administrators must guarantee student safety and assure that instruction provides for achievement of the required content set forth in the *Alabama Course of Study: Physical Education*.

### **D. Standards/ Requirements Based**

1. Daily physical education is required in Grades K-6: No exceptions, no substitutions. Recess or lunch time activities should not be substituted for the physical education program. A minimum daily instructional period of at least 30 minutes in elementary physical education is required and a minimum of 60 minutes weekly in health education.
2. Grades 7 and 8 may have a minimum of 50 minutes of physical education daily.
3. For Grades 9-12, a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction is required for one unit of credit in physical education and a minimum of 70 clock hours of instruction is required for one-half unit of credit in health education.

### **E. Community/ Family Involvement**

1. Information will be provided to families to help them incorporate physical activity into their student's lives.
2. Schools are encouraged to develop relationships with community programs and to allow those programs to use the school's physical activity facilities outside of the normal school day with proper authorization.
3. Schools shall encourage families and community members to institute programs that support physical activity.

#### **IV. Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods on Campus**

##### **A. The School Environment**

1. Food providers will be sensitive to the school environment in displaying their logos and trademarks on school grounds.
2. Advertising messages are consistent with and reinforce the objectives of the education and nutrition environment goals of the school.
3. Advertising of foods or beverages in the areas accessible to students during meal times must be consistent with established nutrition environment standards.
4. Food items and beverages sold or served *after* a normal school day do not have to meet the Alabama State Department of Education Nutrition Policies. School Day means, for the purpose of competitive food standards implementation, the period from the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

##### **B. Nutritious Food Choices**

Every school shall ensure that all foods sold in vending machines, school stores, and cafeterias are in compliance with the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools standards. Healthy products must be priced at a level that encourages students to purchase them.

1. Foods and beverages sold or served during a normal school day shall meet nutritional standards and other guidelines set by the current Alabama Implementation of USDA Smart Snacks in School and Fundraising Activities Policy effective July 1, 2015.
2. Food items in competition with the CNP scheduled meal time may not be sold or provided free of charge to students. These include but are not limited to food items purchased through school organizations and those donated from outside sources.
3. Classroom snacks feature healthy choices.

##### **C. Vending Machines**

1. The guidelines for foods sold in vending machines shall meet nutritional standards and other guidelines set by the Alabama State Department of

Education Nutrition Policies. Foods and beverages sold in vending machines must be in compliance with the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools standards. Vending machines may not be used during school breakfast and lunch periods.

2. Beverage contracts should include those vendors that will offer water, non-carbonated calorie-free flavored water, fruit juices with 100% fruit juice, sports drinks, 1% fat or skim milk. The advertisement on vending machines shall only display healthy choices.
3. Nutrition information for products sold at vending machines and school stores is readily available
4. Families, teachers, students and school officials are engaged in choosing the competitive food selections for their local schools.

#### **D. Fundraisers**

1. All fund raising activities shall comply with the Alabama Implementation USDA Smart Snacks in School and Fundraising Activities Policy.
2. Schools should be encouraged to sell healthy foods and non-food items, to demonstrate publicly the school's commitment to promoting healthy behaviors among students, families and the communities, while helping schools meet their financial needs. Instead of selling less nutritious food items, try some of these suggestions as fundraisers:
  - \*Fresh fruit/fruit baskets
  - \*Nuts
  - \*Popcorn
  - \*Tupperware
  - \*Gift-wrap and ribbons
  - \*Carnival
  - \*Talent Show
  - \*Gift certificate
  - \*Jewelry and etc.
2. Promotional activities will be limited to programs that are requested by school officials to support teaching and learning. All promotional activities in school will be connected to activities that encourage physical activity, academic achievement or positive youth development and are in compliance with local guidelines.
3. Nutrition education is incorporated during classroom snack times, not just during meals. Foods and beverages sold as fundraisers include healthy choices and provide age appropriate selections for elementary schools, middle schools and high schools.

#### **V. Monitoring and Policy Review**

##### **A. District**

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

### **B. School**

The principal or designee at each school will ensure compliance with nutrition and physical activity policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the superintendent or designee on an annual basis.

### **C. Food Service**

The food service staff at each school will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within the school food service areas. The Child Nutrition Director will observe and document compliance during an on-site visit to each school at least once a year.

### **D. Wellness Committee**

The Wellness Policy Committee will meet at least once per year to review policies, needed updates or changes to be implemented for the following school year. Anyone wishing to participate in decisions concerning the wellness policy may contact Carmen Burton @ burtonc@pickens.k12.al.us.

## **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

**For all other FNS nutrition assistance programs, State or local agencies, and their sub-recipients, must post the following Nondiscrimination Statement:**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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