

District: Western Line School District
Section: J - Students
Policy Code: JG - School Wellness Policy

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

This school board affirms its commitment to providing a healthy environment for students and staff. The board directs the superintendent to coordinate the components of the district's wellness policy. The wellness policy shall be developed with the involvement of the district's "Healthy and Fit School Advisory Committee" with representation from the local school board, school administrators, school food service personnel, students, parents and the public.

As required under Section 204 of Public Law 108-265, at a minimum, the wellness policy will

1. Include goals for nutrition education, physical education and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness in a manner that the local school district determines is appropriate;
2. Include nutrition guidelines selected by the school district for all foods available on each school campus in the district during the school day, with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;
3. Provide an assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture, as applicable to schools; and
4. Establish a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy, including designation of one or more persons within the district at each school, as appropriate, charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the district's wellness policy.

RATIONALE:

The U. S. Congress recognizes that schools play a critical role in creating a healthy environment for the prevention of childhood obesity. The link between nutrition, physical activity, and learning is well documented. Healthy eating and activity patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating and physical activity, essential for a healthy weight, are also linked to reduced risk for many chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes. Schools have a responsibility to help students learn, establish and maintain lifelong healthy eating and activity patterns. Well planned and effectively implemented school nutrition and fitness programs have been shown to enhance students' overall health, as well as their behavior and academic achievement in school. Staff wellness also is an integral part of a healthy school environment, since school staff can be role models for healthy behaviors.

GOALS

All students in Western Line School District shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices and enjoyable physical activity choices for a lifetime. All staff in Western Line School District is encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. To meet this goal, the Western Line School District adopts this Wellness Policy with the following

commitments to nutrition, physical activity, comprehensive health education, nursing services, marketing a healthy school environment, and implementation. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed jointly and collaboratively with a diverse group of internal and external stakeholders, including but not limited to the following: students, parents, teachers, administrative personnel, nurses, coaches and community-based partners. This Wellness Policy shall be distributed to all students, parents, and staff. Principals will post this policy in a visible and accessible location in their respective schools and ensure that students and staff are aware of and supportive of this policy. Staff development at the administrative level will be provided so that all offices and services throughout the district are aware of, and are supportive of, the elements of this policy.

COMMITMENT TO NUTRITION

The Western Line School District will:

- Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition programs.
- Offer school breakfast and snack programs (where approved and applicable) with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition programs.
- Encourage school staff and families to participate in school meal programs.
- Operate all Child Nutrition programs with school food service staff that are properly qualified according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EE-2E).
- Establish food safety as a key component of all school food operations and ensure that the food service permit is current for the Food Service school site.
- Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EEH).
- Provide adequate time for students to eat and enjoy school meals (a minimum of 15 - 20 minutes at breakfast and 18 - 25 minutes at lunch).
- Establish a cafeteria environment conducive to a positive dining experience, with socializing among students and between students and adults; with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct and voice level; and with adults who model healthy habits by eating with the students.
- Eliminate all non-nutritious foods/beverages and add nutritious and appealing options (such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, trail mix, beef jerky, reduced-fat milk, reduced-fat yogurt, reduced-fat ice cream, baked chips, reduced-fat cheese, 100% juice, and water) whenever foods/beverages are sold or otherwise offered at school during school hours including parties and celebrations. See Appendix A for guidelines and options.
- Eliminate all non-nutritious items from vending machines that are accessible to students during the day. Only 100% juice, milk, and water will be available.
- Demonstrate good nutrition by not consuming non-nutritional snacks in the presence of students during school hours. The consumption of non-nutritional snacks by faculty and staff must be confined to the staff lounge or items must be contained in a non-labeled container or thermos.
- Eliminate foods as rewards for student accomplishments and the withholding of food as punishment (e.g., restricting a child's selection of flavored milk at meal time due to behavior problems or not allowing a child to purchase ice cream due to behavior problems). See Appendix

B for example of non-food rewards.

- Use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthy foods for fundraising programs for all school based organizations. The sale of candy is prohibited. See Appendix C for alternative fundraising ideas.
- Provide nutrition information for parents, including nutrition analysis of school meals and resources to help parents to improve foods they prepare and serve at home.

COMMITMENT TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Provide physical education for all students (In accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference 2004 Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standard 32, Appendix B and 33.)
- Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities, which are student centered and taught in a positive environment.
- Implement the 2006 Mississippi Physical Education Framework.
- Incorporate 5 to 10 minutes physical activity sessions in classrooms to teach subject areas and to make transitions between different lessons (e.g., Take Ten!, Mind and Body, etc...).
- Provide staff-monitored recreational activities that promote moderate physical activity during all outdoor and indoor recess times.

COMMITMENT TO COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION

The Western Line School District will:

- Provide 1/2 Carnegie Unit of comprehensive health education for graduation (2004 Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).
- Implement the 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework for grades 9-12 (2004 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).
- Offer comprehensive health education in grades K - 8 (2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework).
- Implement the nutrition strand of 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework.
- Emphasize the disease and prevention strand in the 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework.
- Participate in USDA Nutrition programs such as Team Nutrition Schools and the Healthier US School Challenge. The school will conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents, and the community. The school team responsible for planning nutrition activities will include school food service staff, school nurses, health and PE teachers, coaches and additional staff, as appropriate.

COMMITMENT TO NURSING SERVICES

The Western Line School District will:

- Provide nursing service to all students in each school, which will include counseling education on health related topics.
- Participate in the total health education of students, which will include coordination between the home and the school and formation of health policies in the schools.
- Develop and implement health plans for students with special needs.
- Provide health assessments for students.

COMMITMENT TO MARKETING A HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The Western Line School District will:

- Provide positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting. All school personnel will help reinforce these positive messages.
- Promote healthful eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at school events (e.g., school registration, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-service, and other events).
- Provide a healthy and safe environment by prohibiting smoking and/or the use of tobacco in any form by all employees, students, visitors and guests in/on all buildings and grounds.
- Involve students in planning for a healthy school environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys, and attention will be given to their comments.
- Eliminate advertising and other materials on the school campus that promote foods of minimal nutritional value.
- Work with local media, such as the television stations, newspaper, and radio, to inform the community about the health problems facing Mississippi children, as well as the need for and benefits of healthy school environments. See Appendix E for marketing resources.

COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENTATION

The Western Line School District will:

- Establish a plan for implementation of the School Wellness Policy.
- Assign each Principal of each school the responsibility for implementing the School Wellness Policy.
- Establish and support a School Health Council at each school that addresses all aspects of a Coordinated School Health Program, including a Wellness Policy.
- Conduct an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy. This evaluation will include measures of public awareness of the policy, and the correlations to improvements in students attendance, achievement and health. Both quality and quantity data will be studied. The findings of this evaluation will be used to further improve wellness efforts and outcomes for all, especially the students we serve.

NOTE: Please refer to the Mississippi Local School Wellness Policy - Guide for Development, available from the Mississippi Department of Education at their Web Site:
<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/HealthySchools/Initiatives.html>

The Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard for this policy is standard 31.

CROSS REF.: Policies ICI - Health and Physical Education
JGC - Student Health Services

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