

Instruction

Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness)

The New Milford School District will use the following strategies to strive toward optimum wellness of the school community as a part of a coordinated school health model.

1. **Establish and maintain a district wide *Wellness Advisory Council* with the purpose of**

- Explaining the policy to the school community;
- Monitoring the implementation of the policy;
- Evaluating the policy progress;
- Making recommendations for policy revision; and
- Serving as a collaborative hub for information, resources and strategies for the schools and community.

Members of this council shall consist of but not be limited to the following members:

- District Food Service Director
- Registered dietitian
- Local health practitioner
- School nurse
- Physical education and health education teachers
- Family and consumer science teacher
- Student representative
- School board member
- District administrator
- Parent

2. **Nutrition education**

- Nutrition education shall be a part of a comprehensive, sequential K-12 health education curriculum.
- The goal of nutrition education is to provide students with age-appropriate, fundamental and comprehensive knowledge of nutrition and how it relates to their overall health and to learn skills and foster decision making that promote healthy eating behaviors.
- Revise health education curriculum K-8 to reflect current district, state and national guidelines and standards for nutrition education.
- Collaborate with physical educators in their curriculum revisions for a coordinated school health and wellness approach to K-12 health and physical education that includes nutrition education.

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- Collaborate with nutrition and food services to reinforce messages on healthy eating and allow students to practice healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education will be taught by qualified health educators, family and consumer science educators or, in the elementary schools, by certified teachers who have received curriculum-specific preparation and professional development.
- Nutrition education is encouraged in other content areas to reinforce and support health messages.
- Utilize a standard health education assessment tool (i.e. Health Education Assessment Project) district wide to assess nutrition education.
- Utilize recommendations from *Wellness Advisory Council* for program improvements.
- Utilize the *Wellness Advisory Council* to plan and promote age-appropriate nutrition education to parents at all grade levels.

3. Physical Education and Physical Activity

The New Milford Public School district shall provide physical activity and physical education opportunities that provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead a physically active lifestyle.

• Physical Education Instruction

- As recommended by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, Physical Education (NASPE) classes shall be standards-based and sequential, building from year to year. Content will include movement, personal fitness, and personal and social responsibility. NASPE recommends physical education 150 minutes/week for elementary school-aged students, and 225 minutes/week for middle and high school students.
- NASPE standards state that students shall spend at least 50% of P.E. class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Students should be able to demonstrate competency through the application of knowledge, skill, and practice.
- Children should be exposed to a wide variety of physical activities.
- Self-monitoring is encouraged so students can see how active they are and can set their own goals.
- Intensity of activities should be individualized.
- Feedback should be focused on the process of doing your best rather than on product.
- Teachers should be active role models for health and fitness.
- Developmentally appropriate components of a health-related fitness assessments (e.g. President's Council) should be introduced to the students at an early age to prepare them for future assessments.
- Each child will receive his/her own baseline.

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- Technological advances should be utilized to support the curriculum (e.g. heart monitors, pedometers, computerized fitness programs).
- Revise 9-12 physical education curriculum to reflect a coordinated health and physical education program that is based on wellness and fitness.
- Develop a wellness elective for the high school level that incorporates a final assessment that requires a fitness and nutrition plan for lifetime fitness and wellness.
- Study scheduling barriers and investigate strategies to increase the amount of weekly physical activity at all grade levels.
- Utilize recommendations from the *Wellness Advisory Council* for program improvements.

- **Daily Recess**
 - On typical school days, recess shall be offered daily for a minimum of 30 minutes for all K-6 students.
 - During inclement weather, efforts should be made to provide an indoor back-up plan for physical activity opportunities.
 - Physical activity opportunities (e.g. intramurals and clubs at all levels and interscholastic sports at the middle and high school level) shall be offered daily before school and/or after school.
 - Extended periods (periods of two hours or more) of inactivity are discouraged for elementary school-aged children.
 - Physical activity or energizing breaks should be incorporated into the academic classroom. Physical education and health instructors can be a resource for this information.

- **Physical Activity and Discipline**
 - Physical activity is not to be used as punishment. School employees may not require students at any grade level to perform a physical activity as a form of discipline.
 - Opportunities for physical activity during the regular school day for elementary students may not be withheld as a disciplinary consequence for misbehavior, incomplete assignments or other misconduct.

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- **Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours**
 - School facilities should be made available to facilitate physical activity events.
 - Agencies using the facility are responsible for leaving the facilities in the same condition as they were found.
 - Plan and sponsor community events that focus on fitness and wellness.
- **Health Fitness Assessment**
 - In elementary school, teacher observation will be used to assess student's performance based on the benchmarks of the curriculum.
 - Fitness or activity logging will begin in the upper elementary school.
 - Beginning in the middle school, and through high school, a health-related fitness assessment will be administered. Students will receive results and use them as a baseline in understanding their own levels of fitness, create fitness goals and plans, and log activities identified to achieve these goals.

4. School Nutrition Program

- Establish a *School Nutrition Subcommittee* of the *Wellness Advisory Council*. This subcommittee will consist of but not be limited to the Food Services Director, a registered dietitian, teachers who teach nutrition education, a parent and a student. The subcommittee will assist the school district in implementing and monitoring the regulations regarding the school nutrition component of the policy.
- The Food Services Director must be certified by the "National School Nutrition Association" at level three or a registered dietitian. The district will provide staff development for all nutrition professionals according to their levels of responsibility.
- The District shall continue to provide meals that follow the USDA requirements for Federal School Meal Programs under 7 CFR Part 210 and 220.

The New Milford Public School district strongly encourages the sale and distribution of nutrient-dense foods for all school meals, functions and activities. This includes all before- and after-school activities, including clubs, sports, and PTA functions. Nutrient-dense foods are those foods that provide students with calories rich in the nutrient content needed to be healthy and include whole grains, fresh fruits, vegetables, and low fat dairy products. In an effort to support the consumption of nutrient-dense foods in the school setting, the district has adopted nutrition standards governing the sale of food, beverages and snacks on school grounds. They are delineated below and are to be used as minimal guidelines.

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- All food items made available for sale to students aside from the reimbursable National School Breakfast Program, and National School Lunch Program in the New Milford Public School District shall meet the standards set forth in the Connecticut State Department of Education Healthy Snack List. It is recognized that there may be rare special occasions when the school principal may allow a school group to deviate from these standards, but those special occasions must be recorded and included in the Council's annual report.
- A breakfast in the classroom concept shall be piloted in the elementary schools, and the breakfast program shall be made available in the Middle School. Education regarding the breakfast program shall be provided for staff and parents.

Snack Categories: The healthy snack standards group snack items into three categories, including: (a) Beverages; (b) Snacks and Desserts; and (c) Fruits and Vegetables.

a) Acceptable beverages include:

- **Milk** - No more than 32 grams total sugar per 8 ounce serving (4 grams per ounce) for skim or 1% flavored milks (includes both naturally occurring lactose or milk sugar and added sugar). Serve low-fat dairy products (skim and 1% milk). Milk may not contain artificial sweeteners.
- **Dairy Alternatives** such as soy milk and rice milk - No more than 32 grams total sugar per 8 ounce serving (4 grams per ounce). No more than 35 percent of total calories from fat and no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat per serving. Dairy alternatives may not contain artificial sweeteners.
- **Fruit or Vegetable Juice (100%)** - 100 percent juice is exempt from the sugar standard.
- **Water** - Includes flavored waters without added sugar, artificial sweeteners or caffeine, and water with added juice but no added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners.
- **Beverages Portion Sizes** - Limit portion sizes of all beverages to no more than 12 ounces (except water).

b) Snacks and Desserts:

This category addresses chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, peanut butter and other nut butters, jerky, cookies, animal/graham crackers and cereal bars, granola bars, bakery items (e.g., pastries, toaster pastries, muffins, soft pretzels), frozen desserts, ice cream, cheese, yogurt and smoothies (made with low-fat yogurt or other low-fat dairy alternatives and/or fruit/juice).

- **Fat** - No more than 35 percent of total calories from fat **and** 7 grams maximum per serving (with the exception of nuts, seeds, peanut and other nut butters and cheeses).

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- **Saturated Fat and Trans Fat** - No more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat and/or trans fat **and** 2 grams maximum per serving.
 - **Added Sugar** - No more than 35 percent by weight **and** 15 grams maximum per serving (excludes sugars naturally occurring in fruits, vegetables and dairy). For smoothies (made with low-fat yogurt or other low-fat dairy alternatives and/or fruit/juice), yogurt and pudding, no more than 5 grams **total** sugar (added and naturally occurring) per ounce. Snacks may not contain artificial sweeteners.
 - **Whole-Grain Foods** - Encourage the availability of whole grains and foods containing fiber. Provide choices of whole grains and naturally occurring grains (those with minimal/trace amounts of added fat and no added sugar). Limit grain-based snack items made from enriched flour.
- c) **Fruits and Vegetables:**
- Make quality fruits and vegetables available at any place snack items are sold. For example, dried fruit in vending machines, fresh fruit like pineapple slices or melon cubes or fresh vegetables like baby carrots in á la carte lines and school stores. ("Quality" means fruits and vegetables prepared and packaged without added fat, sugar, or sodium.)
- **Fat** - No more than 35 percent of total calories from fat and 7 grams maximum per serving.
 - **Saturated Fat and Trans Fat** - No more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat and/or trans fat and 2 grams maximum per serving.
 - **Added Sugar** - No more than 35 percent by weight and 15 grams maximum per serving.
 - **Portion Sizes** - If products meet the preceding standards for fruits and vegetables, they may be served in the following portion sizes:
 - 1/2 cup minimum for quality fruits and vegetables
 - 1/2 cup or 1 ounce for vegetables or fruits with added fat
 - 1.5 ounces for dried fruit
- In order to accommodate students and staff with dietary restrictions, whenever several sources of protein are provided at the same time, care will be given to offering as diverse a selection of protein sources as possible (i.e., red meat (from mammals), poultry, fish, dairy, and/or plants.)
 - Snacks, including beverages, brought from home by students should be nutritious. Classroom snacks should reinforce the importance of healthy choices. Teachers should encourage students to adhere to the list of snacks recommended by the District's Nutrition Standards.
 - Foods defined as giving minimal nutritional value shall not be sold anywhere on school premises.

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Meal Readiness:

Schools shall schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods in all elementary schools. Middle schools shall schedule recess before lunch whenever possible.

Environment:

The cafeteria environment shall be maintained as a place where students have a relaxed, enjoyable climate, and adequate space to eat with clean and pleasant surroundings. The display of corporate logos and trademarks are prohibited. There should be adequate time to eat meals. (The School Nutrition Association recommends at least 20 minutes sit down time for lunch and 10 minutes sit down time for breakfast.) Convenient access should be made available to hand washing or hand sanitizing facilities before meals.

At the Middle School and the High School nutrition information for products offered under the National School Lunch Program, and á la carte will be clearly visible and displayed near the item's availability site. Vending machines, school stores, and fundraising events shall have nutrition information readily available.

Student Incentives:

Schools shall not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and shall not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Classroom celebrations:

Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day. Schools should encourage celebrations that promote physical activity. Parents, guardians and families shall receive guidance from the Nutrition Advisory Council on foods that are appropriate for celebrations, which include healthy choices and serving sizes.

Fundraising:

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities shall not involve ready to eat food, and shall use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The Nutrition Advisory Council will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

5. Other School Wellness Activities

- A. Parent/Guardian/Staff Information: Nutritional information should be provided to parents and staff members through newsletters, publications, health fairs, and other activities focusing on, but not limited to...

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1. Healthy snack ideas
 2. Healthy lunch ideas
 3. Healthy breakfast ideas
 4. Nonfood birthday celebration ideas
 5. Calcium needs of children
 6. Healthy portion sizes
 7. Food label reading guidelines
 8. Fun activities to encourage increased physical activity inside and outside of school
- B. Require staff to consider health/wellness/nutritional implications in scheduling and promoting school activities (i.e. lunch, recess, assembly programs, extra-curricular activities, etc.)
1. Staff should promote appropriate student dress for recess during all seasons
 2. Recess is ordinarily outdoors every day unless extreme weather, safety or other conditions make outdoor recess imprudent or impractical. The principal, in consultation with the nurse, should have the discretion to determine if recess needs to be held inside.
 3. When recess must be indoors, staff should make every effort to provide opportunities for physical activities on a regular basis
 4. Provide assembly programs that promote healthy lifestyle choices
 5. Provide extra-curricular physical activities
- C. The district highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and shall plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff members to maintain a healthy lifestyle and that encourages staff members to serve as role models.

6. Marketing and Promotion

The New Milford BOE has established a coordinated school health program in order to provide a well-rounded approach to wellness. An integral component of this model is the involvement of students, parents and the community as a whole. Student, parent and community based marketing of the wellness plan will be consistent with district-wide nutrition and physical education and health promotion concepts. Indeed, the classroom, the cafeteria and school activities should provide and promote a clear and consistent message that explains and reinforces healthy eating and physical activity habits. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet nutrition standards for meals or for food and beverages sold individually.

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Students will have a strong voice in order to promote ownership in creating a positive nutrition and physically active environment. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy is encouraged.

The district will support parent's efforts to provide a healthy diet. The district will offer an annual event designed to support healthy food and activity choices while giving parents an opportunity to share their practices with others in the school community. Healthy nutrition tips will be posted on the district's web site along with nutrient analysis of school menus.

Engaging staff in the creation of a positive, healthy environment is crucial to the success of this policy. Nutrition and physical activity education opportunities to promote staff health and role modeling behavior is encouraged.

Community support of this initiative is integral to the wellness policy's success. A community environment that supports healthy lifestyles and choices is key to creating a well-rounded picture for children and their families. The school district needs to carry its wellness message beyond the district's gate. Participation on key healthy community-based initiatives will help to achieve school-parent-community coordination. Some additional opportunities worth exploring include:

- Setting up cross generational activities with health related themes
- Consider setting up a local speaker's bureau
- Explore role of Channel 17 and student broadcasts to carry message
- Explore role of local papers to carry message
- Planned promotions such as health fairs and contests
- School based health committee to build support for wellness strategies

Measurement and Evaluation:

Physical education teachers: provide annual written summary of student's reaction to phys ed activities. Goal: Extend the age when students decide they no longer want to be active.

List activities that demonstrate incorporation of marketing strategies into the fabric of school life.

List wellness related activities that demonstrate outreach to students, parents, community

7. Measurement and Evaluation

- Each school will complete a self-assessment of school wellness in the first quarter of the 2006/07 school year to provide a baseline for improvements needed.

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- Measurement and evaluation:
 - Establish a baseline of school wellness in each school by conducting a self-assessment using a standard instrument.
 - Determine school-based leadership and responsibility in each site to monitor compliance to achieve policy goals.
 - Determine district-wide Administrator to ensure district-wide implementation of the policy.

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NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut