

Wellness, Nutrition, and Physical Activities Plan Marion County Schools

Introduction

Children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and thrive. Good health fosters student attendance and education. Nationally, 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. 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. Thirty-three percent of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and seventy-two percent of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes. Only two percent of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid. 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. School districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints. Community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies.

The Marion County School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. It is the plan of the Marion County School District that:

The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.

- All students in grades K-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 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 and National School Lunch 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.

TO ACHIEVE THESE PLAN GOALS:

I. School Health **Advisory Council**

The School district will create, strengthen, develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. A school district health **advisory** council has been organized and the council will serve as a resource to school sites for implementing these policies. The school district health council consists of individuals representing the schools and community, and includes parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant setting;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- offer low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.
- engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices.

Breakfast

To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- schools will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
- schools will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation.

- schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals

Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Toward this end, schools will utilize electronic identification and payment systems. It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or “paid” meals regardless of income; and promotes the availability of school meals to all students.

Meal Times and Scheduling

Schools:

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g. lunch should be scheduled between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regiments of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district’s responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in the schools. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

Schools will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (i.e., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

Elementary Schools **and Middle Schools**

The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to those that meet State Department of Education guidelines.

High Schools

In high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines or vending machines) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards as recommended by the State Department of Education guidelines:

Beverages

Allowed: water or fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);

Our goal is to eliminate: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods

A food item sold individually:

- will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
- will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars;
- will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg.

A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at a location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

Portion Sizes

Limit portion sizes of food and beverages sold individually to those listed below:

- one and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
- one ounce for cookies
- two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
- four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
- eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water;
- and the portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day, after-school care, or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to

offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations.

Rewards/Celebrations

Schools will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day. All such celebrations/rewards must have prior approval from the school principal. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above). The school will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

School-sponsored Events (such as athletic events, dances, or performances)

Foods and beverages will be offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day which will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion

The Marion County School District will teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition/wellness education and engage in nutrition/wellness promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standard-based academic curriculum designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health and meet state academic credit requirements for high school graduation;
- offer staff development activities that promote wellness as part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing;
- includes training for teachers and other staff;
- and encourages parent/community input regarding school nutrition activities.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.

Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons;
- and classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communications with Parents

The district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The schools will send home nutrition information, and post nutrition tips on school websites.

Schools will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages.

The schools will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snacks standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/rewards.

In addition, the schools will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The schools will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually as listed above. School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Staff Wellness

The Marion County School District highly values the health and wellbeing of every staff member and will plan and implement in-service and staff development activities that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) K-12

All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will be offered physical education opportunities during the school year. All physical education will be taught by certified physical education teachers with a student/teacher ratio comparable to that found in academic classes. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity will be encouraged. Interscholastic or intramural sports will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment

Schools will discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

All elementary, middle, and high schools will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs, intramural programs, or open gym. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs. After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage—verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities—daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

Safe Routes to School

The school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

School spaces and facilities will be available to students, staff, and community members during scheduled times. These spaces and facilities also will be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

V. School Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services

The school district employs full-time school counselors at each school and school psychologists for each district. These professionals offer education, career, and personal counseling services. Outside agencies may offer specialized group and individual services to the schools.

VI. Tobacco, Alcohol, Illegal Use of Drugs and Weapons

All school facilities and buildings are maintained as free of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, and weapons. Notices of such are posted at all building entrances and by way of handbooks and planners. Communication of the system's tobacco use policy is made with students and parents each school year through student and parent orientation meetings. A copy of the policy is provided to parents. School dress codes prohibit the wearing of items of clothing that display or advertise brands, logos, etc of any items that when in the possession of minors is illegal. The school district abides by all local, state, and federal laws and regulations pertaining to such.

Tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drug-using students will be referred to appropriate services for cessation activities.

VII. School Safety

A safe and secure environment is a necessary part of student wellness. The school district has in place a **Crisis Management** Plan that is followed by all school personnel and students in case crisis response is warranted. The plan addresses natural and man-made disasters, fights, disruptions, firearms, lock downs, and serious accidents on field trips and school campus. All system personnel have a copy of the **Crisis Management** Plan in their location for quick reference.

Hallways, classrooms, and other areas accessible to students, faculty, and staff will be inspected and monitored continually through the day by the school faculty and staff. A sign-out/in sheet will be used in each classroom, library, gymnasium, etc. to monitor students leaving a classroom during class time. All students in the hallways will have a pass signed by the teacher who released them. School buildings will open each school day at **7:00** AM and close at **3:30** PM. Exception may be made for activities scheduled and approved by the school principal.

The school physical environment is properly maintained according to local, state, and federal laws and regulations to maximize student and staff safety. All facilities are inspected regularly in the areas of public health, school bus safety, fire and accident, and every effort will be made to provide a clean campus for students, staff, and visitors.

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated. On all grade levels students will receive classroom training promoting prevention of such behavior and encouraging pro-social behaviors. Students guilty of these offenses will be disciplined and receive counseling to prevent further occurrence.

All school district employees will receive periodic staff development activities related to unintentional injuries, violence and suicide.

VIII. Monitoring and Plan Review

Monitoring

The Director of Schools or designee will ensure compliance with the established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness plan. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with the plan in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the Director of Schools or designee.

School food service staff, at the school and district level, will ensure compliance with the nutrition plan within school food service areas, oversee participation rates in school meal programs, and will report on these matters to the Director of Schools (or if done at the school level, to the school principal). In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.

The Director of Schools or designee will receive reports from school nurse services listing frequencies and types of health problems as noted on school nurse logs and frequency and types of mental health and behavioral problems including incidences of student behavior infractions noted on school counselor/principal logs. Teacher input and student test scores will also be reviewed.

The Director of Schools or designee will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness plan, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel in the district.

Plan Review

To help with the initial development of the district's wellness plan, each school in the district will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs.

Using the School Health Index assessments will be repeated every three years to help review plan compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement, **with the assistance of the Coordinated School Health Coordinator**. As part of that review, the school district will review the nutrition and physical activity plan; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; correlated with nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district, in cooperation with individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

**Marion County Schools
School Health Advisory Council**

Name	Representing
Mark Griffith	Director of Marion Co. Schools
Carol Bailey	Coordinated School Health
Sheila Blevins	Director of RHMS
Dan Tierney	RHMS Coordinated School Health
Regina Smith	RHMS Nurse
Susan Layne	RHMS Coordinated School Health
Kim Hood	Coordinated School Health
Dr. Eleanor Woods	Family Dentistry II
Cathy Crouch	Grandview Medical Center
Vicki Lofty	Marion Co. Extension Office
Joyce Clem	TN Dept. of Health
Johnny Grimes	Marion Co. Board of Education
Lori Case	Director of Health Services
Audra Taylor	Dietician
Jamie Lawson	Grandview Medical Center
Abbie Walker	TN Dept. of Health So. East Region
Dee Harwell	Dynamic Dietetics
Danita Taylor	Marion County Nutrition Services
Judy Graham	Head Start Program
Karen Baxter	Parent
Vicki Carr	TENNderCare of Tennessee
Jeremy Scruggs	Volunteer Health
Stacy Myers	Parent
Tammy Rollins	JES Physical Education
Lynn Baxter	SPES Physical Education
June Moss	Lions Club
Sheila Beard	Mountain Valley Mental Health
Dennis Phillips	Johnson Mental Health
Sharon Carlton	Title Programs—Marion County
Teena Casseday	WES Assistant Principal

