

## **Hardy County Schools Student and Staff Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition**

The Hardy County Board of Education believes that children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive. We also believe that good health fosters student attendance and education. The Board 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. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board that:

- All schools in Hardy County 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 PK-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 shall 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 shall provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and shall establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and related community services.

### **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

#### **I. School Health Councils**

Hardy County Schools, and individual schools, within the county will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The councils also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, and

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**

The objective of meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat varieties of milk
- ensure that 5 out of 12 served grains are whole grains.

Schools should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information should be made available on menus, websites, cafeteria menu boards, place cards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

Schools will not withhold food/beverages, or deny the student the right to choose, during the school meal program.

**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 utilize newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means to encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals.** Schools will continue to make every effort to prevent any social stigma attached to the overt identification of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

**Summer Food Service Program:** Where possible, schools in which more than 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals may sponsor the Summer Food Service

Program for a least six weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year, and preferable through out the entire summer vacation.

**Meal Times and Scheduling** Schools:

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and 20 minutes to eat lunch; after being served.
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.* lunch should be scheduled between 11 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;
- whenever possible, schools will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary schools);
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens 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. The Board will be responsible for the food service program operation will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should 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 **should** 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.

**Other Foods and Beverages Sold:**

The Board believes they can make a positive impact on promoting healthy lifestyles among students and staff through the development and implementation of proactive local wellness policies. IN addition, the Board believes that all schools should provide a consistent environment that is conducive to healthful eating behaviors. The Board also believes that all educators should be advocates for promoting healthy lifestyle choices that are proven to have a positive influence on student achievement and preparation for becoming a productive citizen in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

To this end, the Board will strive to exceed the minimum standards set forth in current West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 4320, Child Nutrition Program and 4321.1, Standards for School Nutrition. The Board supports healthful choices for all foods and beverages offered or

sold on the school premises whether in vending machines, school stores, fundraisers, school parties and celebrations, booster sales or as rewards.

The Board requires that healthy food and beverage choices be made available whenever and wherever food and beverages are served or sold on school premises, or at school sponsored events.

The Board believes that schools should be adequately funded, and that the West Virginia Board of Education, with its ability to address the State Legislature, advocate for all sources of tax revenue in raising needed funding for education of our school children. Such adequate funding would thus eliminate any incentive schools might have to raise funds by advertising products and selling foods and beverages that compromise children's health. The Board encourages club and booster organizations to develop creative means of fundraising that do not include selling foods of minimal nutritional value.

### **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

Hardy County Schools aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools will provide nutrition education and promotion for all students.

**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 include in lessons or provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

#### **Communications with Parents.**

Through the use of the website, newsletters, or other take home materials, the Board will provide information to parents/care-givers on means of improving nutrition and increasing physical activity.

**Staff Wellness.** As an example of its commitment to the health and wellness of every staff member, the Board assists schools in the planning and implementation of activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The county/school should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, local hospital representative, dietitian or other health professional, recreation program representative, union representative, and employee benefits specialist. (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the school health council). The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to

encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the school health council annually.

#### **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Daily 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 receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 150 minutes/week for elementary school students and 225 minutes/week for middle and high school students, when available) for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (*e.g.*, 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.

Schools should 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 high schools, and middle schools as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. 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. In addition, schools will support the use of school facilities by community organizations that promote physical activity opportunities.

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 county may assess and improve travel routes, if necessary, and to the extent possible, to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the county will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The county will explore the availability of federal “safe routes to school” funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

**Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours.** Specified school spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations, when appropriate. These spaces and facilities also should be supervised and available to community agencies and organizations

offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety and security will apply at all times. Specific spaces and facilities will be identified by the principal at each school.

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

**Monitoring**. The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established county-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the county superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or county level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal). In addition, the county will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any results changes. If the county has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the county will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every three years on county-wide compliance with the county's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the county. 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 county.

**Policy Review**. To help the initial development of the county's wellness policies, each school will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies.<sup>2</sup> The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the county level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. The review will include an examination of our nutrition and physical activity policies and the utilization of environments that support healthy eating and physical activity. The county, and individual schools within the county, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

### **Severability:**

If any portion of this policy or application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this policy.

Authority: WV State Board Policy 4320, 4321.1, 2510, 2520.6 (Content Standards for PE), 2520.5 (Content Standards for Health Education), 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Source: Board of Education Minutes

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