

The School at McGuire Memorial

Wellness Policy

January 2024

Introduction

The School at McGuire Memorial is committed to promoting physical health in our school. As outlined in this policy, we strive to promote healthy eating and physical activity for all of our students. It should be noted that the School is not a participant in the National School Lunch program which requires a wellness policy. Rather, we have chosen to develop and implement a wellness plan because it is the right thing to do for our students.

This policy outlines the School's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students have access to healthy foods throughout the school day through free breakfast and lunch program provided by the school
- Students receive age and developmentally appropriate instruction in nutrition to support and encourage lifelong healthy eating habits
- Students have opportunities to be physically active during school
- School staff are encouraged and supported to teach practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors
- The School establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

School Wellness Committee

The Wellness Committee will be composed of administrators and faculty and will meet at least twice per year to establish goals, discuss challenges, review progress and update policies as needed. The principal will serve as chair of the group, will convene the committee and will ensure the school's compliance with the policy.

Recordkeeping

The principal will lead the wellness committee in implementing, monitoring and documenting progress with wellness goals. An electronic file will be established and include:

- The written wellness policy
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the School Wellness Policy
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy and the most recent assessment/review have been made available to the public via posting on the website

Stakeholder Notification of Policy

The Wellness policy and any updates will be posted to the school website at least annually. Parents will be made aware of any school events/activities related to wellness policy implementation as they occur. The principal will ensure that families are aware of the committee and will issue an invitation for family participation during each school year.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the principal or her designee will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which the school is in compliance with the wellness policy
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the School's wellness policy

Results of the triennial evaluation will be posted on the school website.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The Wellness Committee will update or modify the wellness policy at least every three years and/or based on any of the following:

- assessments
- change in school priorities
- wellness goals are met
- new health science, information, and technology emerges
- new federal or state guidance or standards are issued.

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

The School is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The School will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that families and the community are notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy.

School Meals

Our school is committed to serving healthy meals to children. Breakfast and lunch is provided daily at no cost to all students; however, the School does not participate in the National School Lunch Program. We make every effort to provide meals that are nutritious, varied and appealing to our students. Menus are posted monthly on the school websites. Students are allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated (meets Healthy Schools Program Gold-level criteria).

Water

To promote hydration, drinking fountain/water bottle filling stations are located throughout the building. Students are provided with free refillable water bottles and are encouraged to keep hydrated. A system for regular washing of the water bottles will be implemented.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

The School does not sell or serve food and beverages to students outside of the school meal program.

Celebrations and Rewards

1. The school will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas are available from the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) and from the USDA.
2. The School may provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
3. Rewards and incentives: The School will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Foods and beverages are never withheld as

punishment for any reason. Food may be utilized as a reinforcer in accordance with the student's Positive Behavior Support Plan and individual reinforcement surveys. Edible reinforcers will be divided into multiple fractions of the whole piece (i.e. a jelly bean will be cut into 4 pieces, a veggie straw will be broken into ½ inch pieces).

4. This is a nut-free facility.

Fundraising

The school does not participate in food/beverage fundraisers with families.

Nutrition Promotion

The School will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students through Health classes and will encourage participation in school meal programs.

Nutrition Education

The School will use developmentally appropriate methods to teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students by providing nutrition education as a part of Health classes.

Nutrition education will:

- Provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health
- Be integrated into other classroom instruction
- Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise).

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

The School will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 of the following essential topics on healthy eating utilizing developmentally appropriate methods to meet our students unique special needs:

- Relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from [MyPlate](#)
- Reading and using FDA's nutrition fact labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grain products
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain *trans* fat
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices

- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Reducing sodium intake
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The school does not engage in any food/beverage marketing or advertising.

Physical Activity

Physical activity and movement breaks will be encouraged in all classrooms. To the extent practicable, the School will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The School will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. The school will provide teachers and other school staff with a [list of ideas](#) for alternative ways to discipline students.

Physical Education

Each homeroom schedule will include at least one period of physical education per week. The class will be taught by a certified phys. ed. instruction and will use an age and developmentally appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. Appropriate accommodations and adapted activities will be implemented to allow for equitable participation for all students.

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

Health education will be required in all grades. The School will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 the following essential topics on physical activity through developmentally appropriate methods and adaptations:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
- Differences between physical activity, exercise and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community

- Preventing injury during physical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity
- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity

Recess (Elementary)

Elementary students will engage in at least 20 minutes of recess daily. If recess is offered before lunch, the school will ensure that students use proper hygiene prior to eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built into the recess transition period/time frame before students enter the cafeteria. Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event that the school must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)

The School recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered periodic opportunities to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. The School recommends teachers provide short (3-5-minute) movement breaks to students during and between classroom time at least three days per week. These movement breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

Active Academics

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into instruction when possible and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The School will integrate wellness activities across the school setting where appropriate. The classroom teachers will be encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health. In addition, classrooms will have access to resources such as the Mindful Music initiative in order to promote wellness practices.

Professional Learning

When feasible, The School will offer professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class).