

Instruction

WELLNESS

6142.101(a)

Philosophy

The Fairfield Board of Education believes that all students who begin each day as healthy individuals have the potential to become better learners. The Board also believes that staff should model appropriate wellness behaviors for students. This policy encourages a comprehensive approach to staff and student wellness that is sensitive to individual and community needs.

Nutrition Education

Nutrition education shall be offered as part of a planned, ongoing, systematic, sequential, standards-based, comprehensive school health education program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health. Nutrition education shall use national or state-developed standards, such as the Connecticut State Department of Education's Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework. The District shall develop and implement a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, curriculum approach to nutrition in all grades. Students shall be able to demonstrate competency through application of knowledge, skill development and practice. Nutrition education will be taught as part of the Health Education Program and will include the following:

- participation in the Health/Nutrition Education Program shall be required for all students in grades Pre-K-5. The district will strive to meet the Connecticut State Department of Education recommendation that Pre-K thru grade 4 receive 50 hours a year of Comprehensive Health Education and grade 5 – 12 receives 80 hours;
- health/Nutrition Education is required each year for all students in grades 6-8;
- high school students shall be required to take and pass Health Education each year for a total of 5 marking periods for graduation;
- school officials shall disseminate information to parents, students and staff members about community programs that offer nutrition assistance to families;
- school instructional staff members are encouraged to collaborate with agencies and groups (such as: local businesses, libraries, local health departments, local colleges and their students and local health care providers) conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families;
- the District shall require appropriate training for teachers and other staff members;
- instructional staff are encouraged to integrate nutritional themes into daily lessons when appropriate, to reinforce and support health messages. Nutrition education is encouraged to be included in other classroom content areas such as math, science, physical education, language arts, social sciences, family and consumer sciences and elective subjects;

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6142.101(b)

Nutrition Education (continued)

- healthy living skills is recommended to be taught as part of the regular instructional program and provides the opportunity for all students to understand and practice concepts and skills related to health promotion and disease prevention;
- the District shall assess nutrition education lessons and materials for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the state's/district's educational goals and curriculum standards.

School Meals/Other School Food and Beverages

The Board supports nutrition programs and nutrition education as an integral part of a high-quality education. (Policy #3712)

The Board shall operate and maintain a school meal program, which shall function in accordance with state and federal program requirements. The program, insofar as possible, shall be self-supporting. The Manager of Food and Nutrition Services shall be responsible for the immediate operation and supervision of the school meal program and shall report to the Director of Operations. (Policy #3710)

The Board of Education supports nutrition programs and nutrition education as an integral part of a high-quality education. The Board believes that all students who begin each day as healthy individuals have the potential to become better learners. To achieve this belief:

- the Board of Education will strive to establish a breakfast program at schools, as appropriate, and operate and maintain a school meal program which shall function in accordance with state and federal program requirements;
- foods beyond the school meals (a la carte) that are offered for sale to students in the cafeteria shall comply with federal guidelines, and state statutes, and district policy;
- when possible, foods offered for sale to students in the cafeteria are low in fat, sugar, sodium, calories and trans fat free;
- the preferred methods for on-site food preparation are baked, boiled and steamed, never fried;
- efforts to increase participation in school meal programs may include the use of
 - the District website,
 - posting menus,
 - newsletters/flyers,
 - printed menus sent home,
 - language translations,
 - multiple meal selections,

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School Meals/Other School Food and Beverages (continued)

- theme menus,
 - specialty food bars,
 - seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables,
 - more whole grain and low fat products,
 - vegetarian items;
- the District shall offer a minimum of a twenty minute lunch period scheduled between 10am and 2pm;
 - students should wash or sanitize their hands before snack, lunch and after using the restroom;
 - all staff and volunteers will not use food as a form of reward or punishment, except as part of a planned scientifically based intervention, e.g. ABA (Applied Behavioral Analysis) with administrative and parental approval;
 - the Manager of Food and Nutrition Services have a Bachelor Degree in Nutrition, Food Management, Institutional Food Service Administration, and Professional certifications such as those from the American Dietetic Association and School Nutrition Association are recommended;
 - cafeteria managers or their designee hold certification in sanitation;
 - the District shall provide the opportunity for foodservice staff to engage in professional development;
 - the District shall provide a clean, pleasant meal environment to ensure an enjoyable dining experience;
 - the District shall provide access to detailed information regarding the nutritional information of school meals and a la carte food;
 - the District will limit the use of questionable ingredients (e.g. trans fats and artificial sweeteners) based on scientific evidence;
 - non cafeteria/competitive foods and beverages accessible to students throughout the school day including school stores will be sold in compliance with federal guidelines, state statutes and District policy;
 - the District will permit vending machines in the middle and high schools in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes;

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School Meals/Other School Food and Beverages (continued)

- all beverages offered for sale during the school day will comply with the nutrition and portion requirements as set forth in Connecticut General Statutes 10-221q; s ;
- the District will offer milk selections for sale in the cafeterias according to state and federal regulations;
- the District will provide school groups with a list of suggestions for food/non-food fundraising and class parties, school celebrations and food from home for the whole class;
- snack foods available for purchase from the District before, during and after school shall follow but not be limited to the Connecticut Healthy Snack Guidelines.

Health Education and Life Skills

Healthy living skills shall be taught as part of the regular instructional program and provides the opportunity for all students to understand and practice concepts and skills related to health promotion and disease prevention. Participation in the Health Education Program shall be required for all students in grades PK-12 according to the curriculum as established by the Board of Education.

Physical Education and Physical Activity

A certified physical education specialist will teach physical education. Physical education shall be an essential element of each school's instructional program. The sequential program shall provide cognitive content and learning experiences in basic movement skills, physical fitness, games and sports skills. The physical education program shall foster physical, mental, emotional and social development in addition to promoting activities and sports that all students can enjoy and participate in for a lifetime of healthy physical activity. Students will be provided a variety of opportunities for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, social interaction and learning how to work cooperatively in a group setting that will lead to a physically active lifestyle. The curriculum's alignment will be maintained with state and national standards and include performance assessments for each content area. Physical educators are encouraged to promote student participation in moderate to vigorous physical activity during physical education class time. The physical education program shall be designed to encourage healthy active lifestyles.

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Physical Education and Physical Activity_(continued)

- Physical Education shall be required of all students in grades PreK-12. Currently, preschool students receive one class each week of 20 minutes, elementary students receive two classes each week of 30 minutes, middle school students receive two classes each week of 40 minutes and high school students receive two classes each week of 45 minutes during a marking period.
- The district will continue to implement the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment to all 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th grade students.

Physical Activity

Physical exercise is a necessary education support component for all students. No elementary student shall be denied involvement in the required period of physical exercise during the regular school day as a form of discipline. No student in grades kindergarten through grade 12 shall be required to engage in physical exercise as a form of discipline. Appropriate alternative strategies should be developed as consequences for negative or undesirable behaviors.

- Elementary schools are encouraged to develop schedules that provide time within every school day for students to enjoy supervised recess preferably outdoors.
- Students shall be encouraged to be physically active during recess to supplement the daily recommended activity time for children.
- It is recommended that elementary schools schedule recess before lunch.
- All staff, including certified and non-certified, including teachers and coaches, shall not order the performance of physical activity as a form of discipline or punishment.
- The classroom teachers shall not prohibit participation in physical education class as a form of punishment or as a measure to enforce the completion of academic work.
- Staff members are encouraged to integrate physical activity as part of the learning process.
- Middle and high schools are encouraged to provide intramural opportunities for all students and encourage their participation. The high schools shall maintain opportunities for students through their interscholastic athletic program.
- When appropriate, the District shall work together with local public works and the police department to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school.

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6142.101(f)

Physical Activity (continued)

- The District will maintain its relationship with the recreation department and other groups to continue to make available opportunities to students and the community for physical activity outside of the regular school day.
- The Board of Education values the health and well being of staff members and supports their efforts to maintain healthy lifestyles. Staff members are encouraged to serve as role models for a healthy lifestyle.

Communication and Promotion

A District-wide Wellness Coalition shall be established with the purposes of monitoring the implementation of the District's policy, evaluating policy progress, serving as a resource to school sites, developing and revising the policy as necessary and sharing positive strides being made to endorse a high level of wellness within buildings. The Coalition will meet regularly throughout the school year. Coalition membership shall consist of, but not limited to:

- District Food Service Coordinator,
- parent representatives,
- student representatives,
- staff member representatives,
- administrative representative,
- school nurse,
- Health Education Coordinator/Teacher,
- Physical Education Coordinator/Teacher.

It is recommended that this team use the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Coordinated School Health Program model to work as a cohesive group when evaluating the District Wellness Policy.

- It is recommended that students receive positive, motivating messages, both verbal and nonverbal, about healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school environment. All school personnel are encouraged to help reinforce these positive messages.
- The District is encouraged to develop long-term effective partnerships in order to communicate and receive feedback on the planning and implementation of health promotion projects and events throughout the school district and community.

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Communication and Promotion (continued)

- In order to promote family and community involvement in supporting and reinforcing nutrition education in the schools, it is recommended that the building Principal provides:
 - nutrition education materials and cafeteria menus are sent home with students;
 - requests to parents to send healthy snacks/meals to school;
 - families with invitations to attend exhibitions of student nutrition projects or health fairs;
 - nutrition education workshops and offers screening services.
- Schools are encouraged to promote healthy food choices and not allow advertising that promotes less nutritious food and beverage choices. The promotion of nutrient-dense foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products, shall be encouraged.

The following procedure is recommended in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Wellness Policy:

- the District-wide Wellness Coalition shall monitor the implementation of the Wellness Policy; evaluate progress in implementing policy; serve as a resource to school sites; and recommend revisions of the policy through the Superintendent or designee;
- the District will strive to support the district-wide wellness policy through local education budget, public and private grants, and local community contributions.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-215 Lunches, breakfasts and the feeding programs for public school children and employees.
10-215a Non-public school participation in feeding program.
10-215b Duties of state board of education re: feeding programs.
10-216 Payment of expenses.
10-215b-1 State board of education regulation.
10-221o Lunch periods. Recess (as amended by P.A. 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform, and P.A. 13-173, An Act Concerning Childhood Obesity and Physical Exercise in Schools)

Adopted 6/27/2006

Revised and Adopted 8/04/2009

Revised and Adopted 4/8/2014