

ALEXANDER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS

POLICY SUBJECT: Wellness

The District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children’s health, well-being, and the ability to learn by fostering healthy eating and physical activity. Staff will be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. The District has established a wellness committee to develop the District’s proposed local wellness policy, making such policy recommendations for the review and the adoption by the Board of Education and monitor and evaluate the implementation of the policy. The District’s wellness committee may include representatives from each of the following groups:

- a. Members of the public
- b. Student
- c. The District food service program
- d. The School Board
- e. School administrators
- f. PE Teacher
- g. Health Teacher
- h. Mental health and Social Service Staff
- i. Community Partner

The District Wellness Committee will assess current activities, programs and policies available in the district; identify specific areas of need within the district; develop the policy; and provide mechanisms for implementation, evaluation, revision and updating the policy. The Wellness Committee is established to represent the local community’s perspective in developing the wellness policy for the district.

Goals to promote student wellness

Taking into account the parameters of the School District (academic programs, annual budget, staffing issues, and available facilities) as well as the community in which the District is located (the general economy, socioeconomic status, local tax bases, social cultural and religious influences, geography, and legal political and social institutions) the Wellness Committee recommends the following District goals relating to nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities:

Nutrition Education

The District will provide nutrition education to facilitate the voluntary adoption of healthy eating habits

and other nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well being adopting the following standards for:

- a. Classroom teaching:
 - Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
 - Is part of not only health education classes, Family and Consumer Science (FACS) classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects
 - 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).
 - Students are also required to take FACS in 6th, 7th and 8th grades.
 - Follows National Health Standards, NYS Teaching Standards, as well as the NYS Guidance Document for Health Education (See Appendix A, B, C).
 - Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff

- b. Education, marketing and promotion links outside of the classroom:
 - Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens
 - Links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services
 - Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing.
 - Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, such that only those foods that comply with or exceed those nutrition standards are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students.

- c. Fundraising activities:

The district encourages clubs and organizations to participate in fundraising activities that market healthy foods (i.e. fruit sale by band).

 - Fundraising will be made available to organizations throughout the school year but will be in accordance with section 915 of the New York State Education Law that says:
 - “Prohibiting the sale of certain sweetened foods. From the beginning of the school day until the end of the last scheduled meal period, no sweetened soda water, no chewing gum, no candy including hard candy, jellies, gums, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, spun candy and candy coated popcorn, and no water ices except

those which contain fruit or fruit juices, shall be sold in any public school within the state.”

- As District/school nutrition services/Athletics Department/PTA reviews existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment and product purchasing (and replacement) decisions should reflect the applicable marketing guidelines established by the District wellness policy.

Physical Education

The District will provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, to maintain physical fitness, to regularly participate in physical activity, and to understand the short-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle. Staff members shall not deny participation in recess or other physical activity opportunities as a form of discipline or punishment unless the safety of students is in question.

- a. Physical education graduation requirements:
 - All students must complete two units of Physical Education at the High School level to meet graduation requirements.
- b. Physical education class requirements:
 - Physical Education classes will have on average, the same student/teacher ratios used in other classes.
 - All students in grades K – 12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education that meets New York State educational requirements for the entire school year. A certified physical education teacher will teach all Physical Education. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the Physical Education requirement.
 - Physical Education classes in grades K-5 will meet at least 60-89 minutes per week. Students in Grades 6-8 will meet for 40 minutes every other day. minutes.
 - Adapted Physical Education is made available to all students in grades k-12 when necessary.
 - Physical Education curriculum will follow NYS Standards as well as use the curriculum guides available through New York State Association for Health Physical Education and Dance.
 - The Physical Education program shall be provided adequate space and equipment and conform to all applicable safety standards.
- c. Staff training / certification for physical education:
 - A certified physical education teacher will teach all physical education classes.

- Physical Education teachers will be given the opportunity to attend professional development each year at the state and local level.
 - All coaches will be certified through NYS and will have first aid and CPR certification in accordance with NYS rules and regulations.
- d. Physical activity outside physical education classes:
- **Daily Recess.** All teachers are encouraged to provide supervised recess on a regular basis.
 - **Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School.** All elementary, middle and high schools will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. 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, and students with disabilities and students with special health-care needs.

The District wishes to establish a school environment that presents consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity for all. In order to present a coordinated school approach where District decision-making related to nutrition and physical activity encompasses all aspect of the school, the Wellness Committee has determined that the following standards are necessary to achieve this goal.

A. Federal school meal programs:

The District will participate to the maximum extent practicable in available federal school meal programs [School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program (including after-school snacks), Summer Food Service Program, Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program.

B. Access to school nutrition programs:

ACS 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. The Food Service Director, Superintendent, and those designated by the Superintendent are the only school personnel who will have knowledge of a student's free or reduced meal status and shall keep that information confidential. ACS will make the school meal program available to every student in the district through information provided by the district with regards to free and reduced-meal eligibility.

The school district will make every effort to meet dietary requirements for students with dietary needs and students with culturally diverse backgrounds.

C. Meal environment:

- ACS will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and 20 minutes to eat lunch
- ACS will not schedule tutoring, club, organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities
- ACS will provide students access to handwashing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks
- Will be appealing and attractive to children by appealing to their taste preferences
- Students will have the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural, and ethnic favorites
- Will be served in a clean and pleasant setting
- Parents and staff are welcome to join students at lunch at anytime.

D. After-school programs for students:

- Any district sponsored after school activity will provide the opportunity for healthy snacks and/or physical activity.
- Food available after school will meet guidelines established under Nutritional Value of Food and Beverages section (b)

E. Community access to District Facilities for physical activities:

- ACS will provide facility access to students, families, staff and the community for physical activity.
- The MS/HS is open in the winter time for community members to utilize the facilities for walking. During the spring and summer months the track is available for community use.
- The fitness and weight rooms are open at night for the community to use at minimal cost throughout the school year.

F. Community involvement:

- ACS encourages community involvement in wellness planning and wellness related activities through various means such as newsletters, mailings, and the school , News N' Notes and website.
- School Wellness Policy is posted on ACS District website.

G. Sustainable food practices:

- ACS encourages the use of locally grown foods.
- Rather than using disposable products, the cafeteria uses plates and utensils that can be washed, sanitized and reused on a daily basis.

Nutrition Guidelines

The District Wellness Committee will follow the USDA standards for **all** food available on school campus during the school day based upon the unique needs of the student body and the community. The goal is to encourage healthy lifelong eating habits.

Nutritional Values of Foods and Beverages

- a. Organizations operating concessions at school functions are encouraged to market healthy food choices at a lower profit margin to encourage student selection. Schools shall label/mark healthy food items available so students know which are healthy items.
- b. Display and advertising of foods with minimal nutritional value is strongly discouraged on school grounds. Soft drink logos are not allowed on school material or on school property.
- c. Students and staff will have access to free, safe, and fresh drinking water throughout the school day.
- d. Reimbursable school meals served at school will meet the USDA requirements and nutrition standards of the National School Lunch Program.
- e. Nutrition content for products sold on campus will be made available to students or parents upon request.

Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including:

- a. Celebrations and parties. The District will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
- b. Classroom snacks brought by parents. The District will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
- c. Rewards and incentives. The District will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Vending machines, snack bars, school stores, concession stands and other food outlets.

Access to vending machines, snack bars, school stores, concession stands and other food outlets on school property will be limited to the following times – 12:01 AM - 4:15 PM; and items will meet guidelines set forth in Section B of Nutritional Values of Foods and Beverages.

Assurance

Guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than applicable federal regulations and guidance issues pursuant to the Child Nutrition Act and the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as those regulations and guidance apply to schools.

Implementation and Evaluation of the Wellness Policy

In accordance with law, the District's wellness policy must comply with the USDA final rule revisions by June 30, 2017 ; and the District will ensure school and community awareness of this policy through various means such as publication in District newsletters and/or the District calendar. Further, professional development activities for staff and student awareness training will be provided, as appropriate, on the goals of the District's wellness program, including activities/programs for the development of healthy eating habits and the incorporation of physical activity as part of a comprehensive healthy lifestyle.

The District shall establish an implementation and evaluation plan for the wellness policy in order to monitor the effectiveness of the policy and the possible need for further modification over time. Accordingly, the Superintendent shall designate one or more staff members within the District or at each school as appropriate to have operational responsibility for ensuring that the District meets the goals and mandates of its local wellness policy. Designated staff members may include, but are not limited to, the following personnel:

- a) Administrators
- b) School health personnel including the school nurse and the health and/or physical education teacher
- c) School Food Service Director.

These designated staff members shall annually report to the Superintendent on the District's compliance with the wellness policy (or, if done at the building level, to the School Principal) and the Superintendent shall inform the Board of such findings. The Superintendent/designee shall prepare a summary report on District-wide compliance with the District's wellness policy based on input from schools within the District. That report will be provided to the School Board and also distributed to the wellness committee, parent-teacher organization, building Principals, and school health services personnel within the District. The report shall also be available to community residents upon request.

These designated school officials will also serve as a liaison with community agencies in providing outside resources to help in the development of nutrition education programs and physical activities.

Evaluation and feedback from interested parties, including an assessment of student, parent, teacher and administration satisfaction with the wellness policy is essential to the District's evaluation program.

District schools will provide nutrition education and physical education with an emphasis on

establishing lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services. Communication with and training for teachers, parents, students and food service personnel will be an integral part of the District's implementation plan.

To the extent practicable, students and parents shall be involved in the development of strategies designed to promote healthy food choices in the school environment; and the school cafeteria will provide a variety of nutritionally sound meal and beverage choices. The school will encourage student activity, age appropriate participation in decisions regarding healthy lifestyles and choices. The school will share information about nutritional content of meals with parents and students upon request. Assessment of the District's wellness policy will be updated every three years or as deemed necessary by changing laws, regulations, or standards.

Updated 6/28/17