

Board Policy

No. 5470

5000 Students

5470 Wellness Policy

Regional School District 8 Board of Education believes and promotes children's health is essential to their success at School. Therefore, the District Wellness Policy (Local School Wellness Policy or LSWP) will support practices that support a healthy environment and lifestyle. Regional School District 8 (RSD 8) will promote healthy schools by supporting physical, social, and emotional wellness, including good nutrition and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. Children learn and participate in positive and dietary lifestyle practices. By doing so, all schools will contribute to the basic health status of children. Improved health optimizes student performance potential.

The Superintendent will establish and maintain a Wellness Committee consisting of representatives from RSD 8, community organizations, parents, and students. This Committee shall recommend, review and provide oversight of the Wellness Policy, its implementation, and wellness related issues that affect student health. All members shall participate in the ongoing assessment and revision of the policy to actively promote the health and wellbeing of all students, and the school community.

1. District Health and Wellness Committee

The committee will convene at least quarterly each school year and will follow federal and state guidelines/regulations for School Wellness Advisory Committees. The Committee's responsibility are to include the following:

- Conduct an annual review of district wide policies promoting student and school wellness, and recommending policies and /or revisions as needed;
- Create and implement a Health and Wellness Action plan each year, including timelines, processes, goals and school based activities designed to promote students and staff wellness based on the results of the District's annual assessments;
- Provide guidance for the implementation of District level policies related to wellness;
- Assist district officials in the evaluations of the district's Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) and school initiatives, including development and delivery of assessment tools;
- Collect and share information about wellness programs and services;

- Report on progress towards committee goals, objectives, policies, monitoring and evaluation of Health and Wellness policies at least once every three years (Triennially).
- Work closely with district officials to ensure that appropriate communication of the LSWP revisions and progress reports are provided to the public.

2. Membership

The Superintendent shall appoint representative membership from the following:

- A member of the Superintendent's administrative team.
- Department Coordinator representing the following areas:
 - o Curriculum
 - o Health Services/Nursing
 - o School Counseling
 - o School Food Services
 - o Physical Education
 - o Health Education

In addition:

- o Parents
- o Students
- o Community Partners

A liaison from each school will be designated as a point of contact for the Wellness Committee. This person can be designated by the Principal of each school who would have knowledge about the implementation of the Wellness policy at that school. In addition, a representative from the Board of Education will be designated to serve as a liaison to the Committee.

3. Goals for Monitoring and Evaluation

The Superintendent/Designee shall ensure compliance with the established district wide school wellness policy. In each school the Principal/Designee shall insure compliance of the policy within each school.

School Food Service staff members shall ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and shall report so to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent/Designee shall provide annual implementation data and or reports to the Wellness Committee and Board of Education concerning this policy's implementation, for the BOE to monitor and adjust policy as needed.

4. Policy Review

RSD 8 shall identify a strategy and schedule to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas needing improvement. The strategy delineates roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines specific to each school. Included will be specific information on person(s) responsibility, goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus including school stores, food

and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and education, and other school based activities to promote student wellness.

RSD 8 and individual schools within RSD 8 shall as necessary, offer input to revise the LSWP and offer work plans to facilitate its implementation.

RSD 8 shall share the LSWP with the public at least annually, along with triennial progress reports. The Wellness policy will be posted on the School District website, along with other Wellness-related materials.

5. Nutrition Education

A. Goals for 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.

The nutrition education program shall focus on students' eating behaviors, be based on theories and methods proven effective by published research, and be consistent with the state's/district's comprehensive school health education standards/guidelines/curriculum framework. Nutrition themes include but are not limited to:

- My Plate and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (Healthy Eating Plan)
- Identify and limit foods of low nutrient density
- Healthy heart choices
- Food labels
- Sources and functions of major nutrients
- Multicultural influences
- Guide to a healthy diet
- Serving sizes
- Diet and disease
- Proper food safety and sanitation
- Understanding calories
- Body size acceptances, healthy weight and dangers of unhealthy weight control practices
- Healthy snacks

The district nutrition policy reinforces nutrition education to help students practice these themes in a supportive school environment. Nutrition education shall also be included in other classroom content areas such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, family and consumer sciences and elective

subjects. Instructional staff is encouraged to integrate nutritional themes into daily lessons when appropriate, to reinforce and support health messages.

The school district shall assess all nutrition education lessons and materials for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the state's/district's educational goals and curriculum standards. Materials developed by food marketing boards or food corporations shall be examined for appropriateness of commercial messages.

B. Educational Reinforcement

School instructional staff members are encouraged to collaborate with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families.

C. Nutrition Promotion

The school district is encouraged to conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve parents, students and the community, including but not limited to programs such as Team Nutrition and the HealthierUS School Challenge.

D. Professional Development for Teachers

The District shall include appropriate training for teachers and other staff members. Staff members responsible for nutrition education shall be adequately prepared and shall regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned. Preparation and professional development activities shall provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with the development of skills and adequate time to practice skills in program specific activities. Training shall include instructional techniques and strategies designed to promote healthy eating behaviors. Staff members providing nutrition education shall not advocate dieting behaviors or any specific eating regimen to students, other staff members or parents.

E. Food Marketing in Schools

School based marketing shall be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. Thus, schools shall limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrient standards for meals or the District's nutrition standards for foods and beverages. Schools shall promote healthy food choices. The promotion of nutrient dense foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low fat dairy products, shall be encouraged. Vending machine logos as well as Educational materials are included in this section and logos must be compliant. All advertising in school publications must meet the same criteria.

Marketing allows for the encouragement of increasing participation of students in the meals served. This is also accomplished by scheduling 10 minutes for breakfast and lunch periods at or greater than 25 minutes, chef table tastings as well as surveys.

F. Education Links with School

Nutrition education may be offered in the school cafeteria and classroom, with coordination between school food service and teachers. The district shall link nutrition education with other coordinated school health initiatives. The nutrition education program may link with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition related community services that occur outside the classroom or that link classroom nutrition education to the larger school community, such as school gardens, cafeteria based

nutrition education and afterschool programs. For example, schools are encouraged to utilize instructional gardens to provide students with experiences in planting, harvesting, preparation, serving, and tasting foods, including ceremonies and celebrations that observe food traditions, integrated with nutrition education and core curriculum, and articulated with state standards.

6. Physical Education and Physical Activity

RSD 8 is committed to a district wide, strategic effort to increase all students' physical activity and fitness. The district strives to incorporate physical education and physical activity in schools, by aligning curriculum standards with periodic reviews, improving the quality of physical education, as well as increasing the equity of physical activity programs and resources across schools. All PE and PA teachers are certified by the State of Connecticut.

A. Policy Regarding Physical Activity

RSD 8 shall provide physical activity and physical education opportunities aligned with the Connecticut Physical Education Framework that provides students with the knowledge and skills to lead a physically active life.

B. Physical Activity Opportunities

Physical Education classes and physical activity opportunities will be available for all students including students with disabilities and special health care needs and in alternative educational settings. Students should not be pulled out of physical education for any other content area instruction or as punishment when at all avoidable. Physical activity opportunities shall be offered daily before, during, or after school. The Board of Education is committed to expanding intramural and other competitive sports opportunities and to providing a wide range of physical activity opportunities that appeal to a wide range of students at all levels of education. In addition movement breaks are encouraged during classroom time and passing time between classes.

C. Physical Education Guidelines

At all levels of physical education the District of RSD 8 shall meet or exceed State and Federal guidelines for physical education. Furthermore, the physical education curriculum of RSD 8 shall strive to meet or exceed the standards and guidelines set by the National Association of Sports and Physical Education (NASPE). These standards include the following:

- Expose students to a wide variety of physical activities
- Teach physical skills to help maintain a lifetime of health and fitness
- Encourage self-monitoring so students see how active they are and set their own goals
- Individualize intensity of activities to the needs of students
- Focus feedback on process rather than product
- Providing active role models for students
- Introduce developmentally appropriate components of a health-related fitness assessment

RSD 8 follows or encourages Safe Routes to School for students who would like to

walk or ride their bikes. RSD 8 offers bike racks for storage of bikes, crosswalk signage and sidewalks enable safe walking zones.

7. School Food

RSD 8 participates in the following USDA and State of CT sponsored Programs - School Breakfast Program (SBP) the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). RSD 8 will follow the current regulations and nutrient standards in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010. Menu planning, purchasing procedures and production techniques for school meals will be used to decrease fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and sugars, and to increase fiber.

Menus shall be planned to be appealing, and attractive to children and will incorporate the basic menu planning principles of balance, variety, contrast, color and eye appeal. Menus shall be planned with input from students, parents and other school personnel and shall take into account students' cultural norms and preferences. Schools shall engage students and parents, through surveys, taste tests and other activities, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new healthful and appealing food choices. The cafeteria shall regularly provide locally grown products.

Meal patterns and nutrition standards of federal regulations will be fulfilled as required. The district will share information regarding the nutrition content of school meals with students, families and school staff. Nutrition information for a la carte foods and beverages sold in schools will also be available.

With appropriate medical documentation, modified meals shall be prepared for students with food allergies or other special dietary needs. Upon written parental permission and a medical statement by a physician that identifies the student's disability, states why the disability restricts the student's diet, identifies the major life activity affected by the disability, and states the foods to be omitted and the food or choices of foods that must be substituted. Such food substitutions will be made for students without disabilities on a case by case basis when the parent/guardian submits a signed request that includes a medical statement signed by a physician, physician assistant, registered dietitian or nurse practitioner. The medical statement must state the medical condition or special dietary need that restricts the student's diet and provide a list of foods that may be substituted in place of the lunch or breakfast menu being served.

The district shall help 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 maximum extent possible, operate and promote the School Breakfast Program;
- To the maximum extent possible, arrange bus schedules and use methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, "grab and go" breakfast, or breakfast during morning break;
- Notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program
- Encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take home materials, or other means.

A. Cafeteria A La Carte Sales*

The school food service program must follow the Connecticut and USDA Nutrition Standards when determining the items for a la carte sales. All food and beverages sold to students in school meals and as a la carte sales must meet the requirements of state statute and USDA requirements for a la carte foods.

At all times when food is available for purchase by students during the school day, nutritious and low fat foods must also be available for sale at the same time. These foods may include, but shall not be limited to low fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruit. The sale of beverages, as part of school meals and as a la carte sales, shall be limited to the following five categories defined by state statute:

Milk- low fat (1%) unflavored or nonfat which may be flavored or unflavored but contains no artificial sweeteners and no more than 4 grams of sugar per fluid ounce; (federal regulation require nonfat or 1% low-fat milk)*

- Non Dairy milks, such as soy, rice, or lactose free milk, which may be flavored or unflavored but contains no artificial sweeteners, no more than 4 grams of sugar per fluid ounce, no more than 35% of calories from fat per serving, and no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat per serving;*
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice or combination of such juices, containing no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners;*
- Beverages that contain only water and fruit or vegetable juice and have no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners;
- Water, which may be flavored but must contain no added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners, or caffeine.*
- No caffeinated foods or beverages may be sold on premises to students.

For a complete list of allowable items, consult the State of CT List of Acceptable food items.

B. Lunchroom Climate

A lunchroom environment that provides students with a relaxed, enjoyable climate shall be developed. It is encouraged that the lunchroom environment be a place where students have: adequate space to eat and pleasant surroundings; appropriate supervision; and convenient access to hand washing facilities before meals.

C. Meal Schedules

Meal periods shall be scheduled at appropriate hours. In compliance with federal regulations, lunch must be scheduled between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. in all schools. Pursuant to state statute, schools are

required to provide all full day students a daily lunch period of not less than 20 minutes. Activities such as tutoring, clubs or organizational meetings or activities shall not be scheduled during mealtimes unless students are allowed to eat during these activities.

D. Qualifications of Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals shall administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, continuing professional development shall be provided for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs will be scheduled in conjunction with contracted food service providers and shall include appropriate certification and/or training programs for school foodservice directors, managers and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility, and State of CT regulations.

E. Training for Food Service Staff

All food service personnel shall have adequate pre service training in food service operations and regularly participate in professional development activities that address requirements for Child Nutrition Programs, menu planning and preparation, food safety, strategies for promoting healthy eating behaviors and other appropriate topics. Per the USDA professional standards require food service directors 12 hours, management at 10 hours and hourly staff receive 6 hours of training.

F. Eligibility

All students can receive a reimbursable meal regardless of funds being on the students account. He or she will not be stigmatized for a low balance. Civil Rights Training ensures that students are not overtly identified all students have a personal identification number to assist with this.

All applications are available on the district's website and are actively sent home in the beginning of the school year.

G. Other Foods Offered or Sold

To create a school environment that supports the promotion of healthy food and beverage choices for children, it is important to consider all venues where food and beverages are consumed or sold. The Connecticut Nutrition Standards apply to all food sold or served to students on school premises, including but not limited to, cafeteria a la carte sales, vending machines, school stores, fundraisers, activities and classroom snacks. All beverages sold or served to students at school shall meet the requirements of state of Connecticut statute and federal regulations, whichever takes precedence, at all times.

However, beverages not meeting the requirements of state statute and foods not meeting the Connecticut Nutrition Standards may be sold or served at the location of an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend provided they are not sold from a vending machine or school store. The district strongly encourages the sale or distribution of nutrient dense foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, lean meats and legumes. Pursuant to state statute (CGS 10 221p), whenever any group makes foods available for purchase in a school during the school day, low fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruits must also be available in the school at the same time for purchase by students. "Foods available for purchase" include, but are not limited to, foods sold in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, fundraisers and any other food sales during the school day. This includes the following:

- School stores that sell food to students must ensure that all items sold are in compliance with the CSD List of Acceptable Food Items.

H. Access to Drinking Water

Students and staff will have access to safe, fresh drinking water throughout the school day. Fluoridated or bottled water that does not contain added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners, or caffeine, should be made available for purchase by students. Schools involved in the reimbursable National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program are required to make free potable water available where meals are served.

I. Foods Brought Into School

The district shall encourage families to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages that do not meet the requirements of state statute or foods that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards. Classroom snacks that are provided by the district shall feature healthy choices that meet the state requirements for allowable beverages and the Connecticut Nutrition Standards.

J. Sharing of Foods

Schools shall discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns with allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets. Food shall not be brought in from home to be shared with other students.

K. Fundraising

School fundraising activities shall not involve food or beverages or shall only use foods that meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages that meet the requirements of state statute and federal regulations. However, food items and beverage items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and federal regulations can be sold as fundraisers on school premises if they are sold at the location of an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, provided they are not sold from a vending machine or school store and cannot be sold to students. Schools shall encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The District shall work with the Wellness Committee to make available to students, parents, teachers and school groups a list of ideas for alternate fundraising activities, such as healthy foods and beverages or non-food fundraisers no other exemptions shall be allowed.

Competition with nutritious meals served by the school food services operations must be minimized. Income from any competitive foods or beverages sold from midnight to the start of any state or federally subsidized milk or meal program until 30 minutes after the end of the program (school day) must accrue to the food service account.

L. Concessions

Food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages that do not meet the requirements of state statute and federal regulations can be sold at concessions operated at the location of an event that occurs after the school day or on the weekend, provided they are not sold from a vending machine or school store. Organizations operating concessions at school functions after school or on weekends should include at least some healthy food choices in their offerings. It is recommended that groups market these healthy options at a lower profit margin to encourage selection by students.

M. Teacher to Student Incentives and Punishments

Schools shall not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, unless this practice is allowed by a student's individualized education plan (IEP). Alternative rewards including physical activities shall be developed and promoted. Schools shall not withhold foods or beverages (including food served through school meals) or incorporate physical activities as a punishment

8. Health Services

School based health services are provided by school nurses (RNs) through the RSD 8 Board of Education. School nursing is a specialty nursing practice that advances the well-being, academic success and lifelong achievement and health of our students by enhancing the educational process through identifying, modifying and removing health related barriers to learning. School nurses serve as a liaison among parents, school and the community in health matters. Nurses also provide emergency care for injury and illness, dispense medications and treatments, identify communicable diseases, act as case manager for students with chronic disease conditions during school hours, promote positive behavioral health, and enact practices and systems to ensure that all students have access to key resources and services that are developmentally appropriate.

School nurses function within the standards and scope of professional nursing while adhering to evidence based practice. School nurses serve as a resource person to classroom teachers in matters pertaining to health, and actively collaborate with others PT, OT, Speech, Social workers, psychologists and SPED staff to build student and family capacity for adaptation in school and facilitate self-management and learning.

School Health Services ensures that all students comply with state and local public health regulations and screening mandates. Parents are notified of any problems that necessitate a medical follow up and may opt out of certain screenings. The goal of School Health Services is to provide every student the opportunity to access the curriculum in a safe, healthy-engaged, supported and challenged environment while making reasonable accommodations when appropriate.

A. Staff Wellness

The District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and shall plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff members to maintain a healthy lifestyle and that encourage staff members to serve as role models. The PDEC committee will incorporate ongoing wellness opportunities.

B. Safe and Supportive Schools/Social and Emotional Climate

RSD 8 shall create a safe and supportive school environment for all students that is culturally proficient, engaging and inclusive. District and school based support staff including guidance counselors and social workers shall work with school teams to provide support for students, families and staff including skill based education to promote social and emotional learning, healthy relationships and access to support services.

9. Family Engagement

RSD 8 values family partnerships and encourages parents to actively participate in all aspects of school wellness and their child's wellbeing. Schools are encouraged to use a variety of engagement strategies that may include:

Sending home nutrition education materials, cafeteria menus, and ideas for physical activity

Encouraging parents to send healthy snacks/meals to school and to promote their child's participation in physical education programs and after school activities

Providing nutrition education and physical education homework activities that students can do with their families (e.g., reading and interpreting food labels, reading nutrition)

Related newsletters, preparing healthy recipes, planning active family time, etc.

Considering cultural preferences in development of nutrition education and physical education programs

- Collaborating agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families; and
- Encouraging school staff to cooperate with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for student volunteer or paid work related to nutrition, as appropriate.

10. Community Involvement

RSD 8 values and promotes community partnerships to enhance the overall health and wellness opportunities provided for students, families and staff. To that end, the Health and Wellness Committee shall continue to grow community participation to expand both the committee's membership as well as the programs and services afforded all students, families and staff in RSD 8.

Legal References | Connecticut General Statutes

10 215b- 23 Income from the sale of food items.

National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program;
Competitive Food Services. (7 CFR Parts 210.11 and 220.12)
The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Public
Law 108 265

Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School
Breakfast Programs, 7 CFR Parts 210 & 220
Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, P.L. 111 296, 42 U.S.C. 1751
Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (as amended by P.L. 108 269, July 2,
2004)

School Breakfast Program, 7 C.F.R. Part 220 (2006)

National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program:
Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School
(Federal Register, Vol. 78, No. 125, June 28, 2013)

10 16b Prescribed courses of study.

10 215 Lunches, breakfasts and the feeding programs for public
school children and employees.

10 221 Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies and
procedures.

10 215a Duties of state board of education re: feeding programs.

10-216 Payment of expenses.

10 215e Nutrition standards for food that is not part of lunch or
breakfast program

10 215f Certification that food meets nutrition standards

10 221o Lunch periods, Recess.

10 221p Boards to make available for purchase nutritious, low fat foods.

10 221q Sale of beverages. Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies

10 215b-1 Competitive foods.

Smart-Snacks State of Connecticut:

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Smart-Snacks-Nutrition-Standards>

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