

**SUBJECT: DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY****Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to the school system for promoting staff and student wellness through nutrition education, physical activity and the selection of nourishing foods and beverages and to fulfill the requirements of Public Law 108-265, Section 204, June 30, 2004, Child Nutrition and WIC reauthorization Act of 2004.

**Rationale**

- a) Children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.
- b) Good health fosters student attendance and education.
- c) Obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two (2) decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity.
- d) Heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of the deaths in the United States, and major risk factors of those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity and obesity are often established in childhood.
- e) Thirty-three percent (33%) of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes.
- f) Only two percent (2%) of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five (5) main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid.
- g) Nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies and snack cakes.
- h) School districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and
- i) Community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies.

**Policy Statement**

Thus, the Waterford-Halfmoon Union Free School District 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 Waterford-Halfmoon Union Free School District that:

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- a) The School District 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.
- b) All students in grade K through 12 will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- c) Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U. S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- d) 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; and 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.
- e) To the maximum extent practicable, our District will participate in available federal school meal programs including the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program.
- f) Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

**To Achieve These Policy Goals**School Health and Wellness Committee

The School District will create, strengthen or work with existing school health and wellness committees to develop, implement, monitor, review and as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The committee also will serve as a resource for implementing those policies. (The wellness committee consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community and should include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the School Board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals and members of the public.)

Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus**a) School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

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1. Be appealing and attractive to children;
2. Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
3. Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal statutes and regulations;
4. Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
5. Serve low-fat and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives;
6. Ensure that whole grains are available on a regular basis.

The District may engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order 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 could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards or other point-of-purchase materials.

**b) 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:

1. School will, to the extent possible, operate the school breakfast program;
2. Schools will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, "grab-and-go" breakfast during morning break or recess;
3. Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the school breakfast program;
4. Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials or other means.

**c) Free and Reduced-priced Meals**

Schools 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.

**d) Meal Times and Scheduling. Schools:**

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1. Will provide students with at least ten (10) minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and twenty (20) minutes after sitting down for lunch;
2. Should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
3. Should not schedule tutoring, club or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
4. Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
5. 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.)

**e) Qualifications of School Food Service Staff**

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the School District's responsibility to operate a food service program, we 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.

**f) 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.

**g) Elementary Schools**

The school food service program will approve and provide all foods and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

**h) Middle/Junior High and High Schools**

In middle/junior high and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte (snack) lines, vending machines, student stores or fund-raising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

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## 1. Beverages

- (a) Allowed: water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least fifty percent (50%) fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy beverages (be defined by USDA);
- (b) Not allowed: soft drinks
- (c) Limited Availability: sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than fifty percent (50%) real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk which contain trivial amounts of caffeine.

## 2. Foods

A food item sold individually:

- (a) Will strive to have no more than thirty-five percent (35%) of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and ten percent (10%) of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
- (b) Will strive to have no more than thirty-five (35%) of its weight from added sugars;
- (c) Will strive to contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches and main dishes.

A choice of at least two (2) fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; one hundred percent (100%) fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least fifty percent (50%) fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup;) and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines.)

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## i) Fund-Raising Activities

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fund-raising activities will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will encourage fund-raising activities that promote physical activity. The School District will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fund-raising activities.

## j) Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages and other considerations. The District will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel and parents.

If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

## k) Rewards

Schools will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above) as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

## l) Celebrations

School should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one (1) party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one (1) food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above.) The District will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

## a) Nutrition Education and Promotion

Waterford-Halfmoon Union Free School District aims to teach, encourage and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

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- 1) 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;
- 2) Is not only part of health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- 3) Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- 4) Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- 5) Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- 6) Links with school meal programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services;
- 7) Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- 8) Includes training for teachers and other staff.

**Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting**

For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least sixty (60) minutes, twice a week) 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:

- a) 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
- b) Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- c) Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

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The District/school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The District/school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The District/school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the District's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards and fund raising activities. In addition, the District/school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The District/school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter or other take-home materials, special events or physical education homework.

Staff Wellness

Waterford-Halfmoon Union Free School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Each District/school should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one (1) 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.

**Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**Daily Physical Education (PE) K through 12

All students in grades K through 12, including students with disabilities, special healthcare needs and in alternative educational setting, will receive daily physical education or its equivalent of one hundred-eighty (180) minutes every two (2) weeks for elementary school students and two hundred (200) minutes every two (2) weeks for middle and high school students, 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

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substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at a least fifty (50%) percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

All elementary school students will have at least ten (10) minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Schools should discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two (2) 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 be encouraged to give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

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, students with disabilities and students with special healthcare needs.

Physical Activity and Punishment

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) as punishment.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

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. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

**Monitoring and Policy Review**Monitoring

The Superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established District-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 School District Superintendent or designee.

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School food service staff, at the school or District level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Superintendent (or if one at the school level, to the School Principal.) In addition, the School District will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the District has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five (5) years, the District 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 (3) years on District-wide compliance with the District's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the District. 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 service personnel in the District.

Policy Review

To help with the initial development of the District's wellness policies, each school in the District will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the District level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every three (3) years to help review policy compliance, assess progress and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the School District will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The District, and individual schools within the District, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

The Wellness Committee will meet several times a year to review current practice and create new initiatives to enhance these practices.