

Philosophy

The Board believes the District shall develop a culture to inspire and equip students with skills to make healthy life choices about nutrition, mental health, wellness, and physical activity to ensure overall whole child wellness. The District shall provide a school climate that promotes students' learning, leadership, Profile of a Graduate attributes, and physical and mental well-being to enable students to reach their full potential academically, physically, socially and emotionally.

Wellness Plan

The District shall continually seek to develop and provide a wellness plan in collaboration with the local School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and with involvement from representatives of the diverse student body, school food service, school administration, the Board, parents and the public. The wellness plan shall address wellness goals as described herein regarding nutrition education, nutrition promotion, marketing food and beverages to students, physical activity and school-based activities [See BDF and EHAA(LEGAL)].

The Superintendent shall establish administrative procedures that support this policy and the District's wellness plan.

Guidelines

The District's wellness plan shall promote the general physical, mental/emotional, and social wellness and safety of all students through nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities. School-based activities shall include, but are not limited to, programs intended to prevent bullying, improve students' social-emotional competency, reduce risky behaviors and teach effective interpersonal communication skills [See FFBA(LOCAL), FFB(LOCAL) AND FFAE(LOCAL)].

In addition to legal requirements, the District shall develop student, staff and community opportunities to discuss mental health with the purpose to improve community understanding, raise awareness and remove the stigma of mental health conditions.

The District shall ensure that nutrition guidelines for reimbursable school meals meet or exceed the minimum guidelines for the federal regulations and guidance, and that all foods sold on each campus during the school day are in accordance with District, state and federal standards [See CO(LEGAL)].

Wellness Goals

In addition to legal requirements, the District shall:

- Enforce District, state and federal guidelines for food and/or beverages sold to students throughout the school day to include fundraisers and vending machines. The District shall not allow any "exemption days". [See USDA recommendations at USDA.gov.](#)

- Establish age-appropriate guidelines for food and/or beverages provided, but not sold to, students during classroom parties, classroom snacks, school celebrations or events [See CO(LEGAL)].
- Prohibit the use of food as a punishment. This shall include, but not be limited to:
 - Reduced time for meal consumption as a consequence, punishment or for any other reason.
 - Reduced time for meal consumption to complete classroom assignments, unless approved by campus administration in collaboration with a parent.
 - Meal service options shall not be removed or replaced as punishment, such as, providing a cold meal to a student when hot meals are available to all students.
- Silent lunch is prohibited as a form of punishment and should only be allowed in order to ensure student and/or staff safety, and/or as a requirement for local/state testing.
- Encourage the use of non-food based incentives and rewards in the classroom, [including physical activity opportunities](#).
- Allow the use of food as a student's preferred reinforcer when tied to the positive behavior interventions and supports, or as part of an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), and/or Specialized Support Program as part of a tiered intervention plan, and in special circumstances as long as considerations have been made related to possible connections to mental health and healthy eating behaviors.

Nutrition Education

The District establishes the following goals for nutrition education:

- Students shall receive evidence-based [and interactive](#) nutrition education that fosters the adoption and maintenance of healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education shall be age-appropriate and reflect the diversity within the school environment.
- Nutrition education shall be a District-wide priority, [shall address agriculture and food systems](#), and shall be integrated into other areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.
- Educational nutrition information shall be shared with families and the public to positively influence the health of students

and community members and to inform them of state and federal nutrition standards.

- The Child Nutrition Department's Registered Dietitians shall work collaboratively with other District departments on all nutrition-related curriculum and initiatives.

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage participation in school meal programs, such as allowing adequate seat time and space for students to fully participate in the meal programs.

The District shall promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion shall occur through at least:

- Implementing evidence-based, healthy food promotion techniques;
- Ensuring that foods sold to students during the school day meet all District, state and federal standards. [See USDA recommendations at USDA.gov](#);
- Providing education opportunities to food service staff, all instructional staff and other school personnel that encourages the coordination and promotion of nutrition messages in the cafeteria, classroom and other appropriate settings; and
- Nutrition promotion messages will be made available in both English and Spanish at minimum.
- The District will provide students adequate time to eat meals at school. Mealtime schedules will be based on enrollment, cafeteria serving, and seating capacity to minimize wait time and allow sufficient time to eat. Students shall have the opportunity to eat breakfast for at least ten minutes and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, from the time in which they receive their meal.
 - In the case of alternative feeding options that increase breakfast participation, such as breakfast in the classroom, grab and go breakfast or second chance breakfast, every effort should be made, though not guaranteed, for the opportunity to eat for ten minutes for breakfast.

- Additional time allowances shall be established based on campus enrollment, the campus master schedule and shall be influenced by evidence-based best practices set forth by national organizations such as, but not limited to, the Alliance for Healthier Generation, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and US Department of Agriculture.

Marketing Food and Beverages to Students

The District shall be committed to providing an inclusive and compassionate environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy mindful eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Marketing and advertising of food and/or beverages on-campus shall meet state and federal nutrition standards [see CO(LEGAL)].

Physical Activity

The District shall implement, in accordance with law, a coordinated health program with physical education and physical activity components and shall offer at least the required amount of physical activity for all grades [see EHAB and EHAC].

The District shall provide opportunities and support for all students to be physically active on a regular basis and to develop the skills, behaviors and confidence needed to ~~lead a physically active life~~increase physical activity and decrease sedentary behaviors. The District shall make appropriate before-school and after-school physical activity programs available and shall encourage students to participate.

- Elementary-aged students shall have the opportunity to participate in a minimum of 135 minutes of structured physical activity weekly as required by Texas Education Code 28.002(l), unless indicated in student's 504 plan, special education plan or the like. Participation in physical activities conducted during the minimum time requirement shall not be withheld as punishment or for any other reason unless approved by campus administration. The 135 minutes of structured physical activity shall be listed on the master schedule.
- All elementary students shall have the opportunity to participate in at least 30 minutes of recess daily. No more than ten minutes of recess shall be structured physical activity and count towards the minimum time requirement. At least 20 minutes of daily recess shall be unstructured physical activity. In addition, elementary campuses shall provide unstructured recess on a daily basis. Unstructured recess time may not count toward the 135 minutes of required structured physical activity.

- Staff shall be educated on the Recess Guidelines and the Recess Guidelines shall be posted on the District and/or campus website for parents to view. Staff shall encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.
- Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event the weather is not feasible, staff and teachers will conduct indoor recess.
- The District shall not permit the denial of the required 135 minutes of physical activity, physical education class, and/or unstructured recess as punishment for inappropriate behavior and/or failure to complete or turn in assignments with the exception of severe discipline consequences assigned by the principal or assistant principal (i.e. In School Suspension (ISS), Out of School Suspension (OSS)).
- All elementary students will be provided equal opportunities to participate in the required 135 minutes of structured physical activity. The District will ensure appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students. [*Texas Education Code 28.002(l)*]
- Middle school students shall be provided with the opportunity to participate in at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily or 225 minutes every two weeks for at least five semesters as part of the District's physical education program unless indicated (i.e. a student's 504 plan, special education plan). [*Texas Education Code 28.002(l)*]
- The District shall require one full credit of physical education class or approved substitute be required for graduation.
- Physical education classes shall encourage students to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 50 percent of the physical education class time.
- The campus will offer opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after school through a variety of physical activities that encourage and support the development of the skills, behaviors and confidence needed to live a physically active life, including those students who do not excel athletically.
- All schools shall help students understand the evidence-based short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

- The District physical activity program shall promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and an activity assessment.
- The District shall provide an environment that fosters safe and enjoyable physical activity for all students, including those not enrolled in a physical education class or competitive sport, as outlined in administrative procedures.
- The District shall encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activities.
- The District shall ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available for students to be active.
- The District shall encourage students, parents, staff and community members to use the available recreational facilities at their neighborhood campus that are available outside of the school day. The District shall provide information regarding which indoor and outdoor facilities are available for public use on the District webpage.
- The District recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. The District shall encourage all instructional staff to integrate physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.

Other School-Based Activities

The District establishes the following goals to create an environment that promotes healthy food choices, physical activity, and social emotional wellness and to express a consistent wellness message through other school-based activities:

- Each principal shall create a campus-based school health advisory council (Wellness Committee) to coordinate physical, mental/emotional and social wellness initiatives in compliance with this policy. The council shall be responsible for reporting the implementation and accountability of the District wellness policy. The principal shall annually identify Wellness Committee members that may include parents, staff, administrators, students, school nurses, child nutrition services and community members.
- Physical, mental/emotional and social wellness for students, families and staff shall be promoted at suitable school events.
- The District shall make mental health services available to students and staff. [See FFEB.](#)

- The District shall make available substance abuse, dating violence and suicide prevention information and resources to students and staff.
- The District shall provide opportunities for ongoing professional training and development for all instructional staff in all areas of coordinated school health. Classroom teachers will be provided resources for integrating physical and mental wellness activities into the classroom.
- The District shall provide other coordinated school health services that support the overall physical, mental/emotional and social wellness of students, staff and community members.
- The District employee wellness program shall implement strategies to support staff in improving their overall health, well-being and quality of life by providing health and wellness education, a diverse selection of wellness programs, and an atmosphere that is conducive to health improvements.
- The District Employee Benefits and Wellness Department will maintain a staff committee focused on creating an employee benefits and wellness culture that will empower employees to lead healthier and well-balanced lives.
- [Employees are encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors.](#)
- Each campus shall include in the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) strategies, metrics and milestones related to coordinated school health implementation [See BQ and BQB].

Implementation and Annual Review

The Superintendent, in coordination with the District Department of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Comprehensive Health and the District Child Nutrition Department, shall oversee the implementation and evaluation of this policy and shall develop administrative procedures for periodically measuring, monitoring and reporting the successful implementation of the wellness policy. Results shall be reported to the SHAC and to the District Board of Trustees on an annual basis, along with an action plan for continued improvement. The SHAC shall review the action plan and make implementation recommendations to staff and the Superintendent.

The District shall actively inform families, the public, and the SHAC each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and its implementation status. The District shall make this information available via the District website and/or District-wide communications.

At least once every three years, the District shall evaluate the wellness policy, compliance with the wellness policy [see FFA (LEGAL)] and assess the implementation of the District wellness plan. The evaluation shall include:

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the District are in compliance with the wellness policy;
- How the wellness policy compares to other model wellness policies;
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the District's wellness policy and wellness plan; and
- A report to the SHAC and Board.

Following evaluation, the district shall revise the wellness policy and wellness plan (policy regulations and/or standard operating procedures) as needed.