

Instruction

Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (Student Wellness Policy)

The District promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. The District supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of children. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that all children are healthy and hunger free.

National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

Reimbursable meals served in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) will follow the USDA meal pattern requirements and nutrient standards in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, as amended. 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. In addition, school meals shall:

- Be appealing and appetizing to children;
- Meet at a minimum, the nutrition requirements established by the USDA for federally-funded programs;
- Include only unflavored low-fat (1%) and fat-free (nonfat) milk flavored or unflavored, which contain no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce and no artificial sweeteners, that meets the requirements of the state beverage statute and federal regulation.
- Ensure that at least half of the weekly served grains are whole grains and that the remaining grain items offered must be enriched.
Note: Schools already offering all grains or whole-grain rich do not have to change their menus as a result of the amended final rule.
- Reduce the levels of sodium, saturated fats and trans fats in meals; (per Department of Agriculture Nutrition Standards and Connecticut Nutrition Standards, which are the same);
Note: Sodium Target 1 is retained through the end of the 2023 school year. Districts are required to comply with sodium Target 2 beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, commencing July 1, 2024.
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables; (Meet specific requirements about different types required)
- Meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements (per Department of Agriculture Nutrition Standards and Connecticut Nutrition Standards which are the same);
- Contain 0 percent trans fats;
- Bake or steam all cooked foods; and
- Purchase or obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers, when practical.

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, ethnic favorites and preferences. Schools shall engage

6142.101 (b) REG

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. Meal patterns and nutrition standards of federal regulations will be fulfilled as required. Proper procurement procedures and preparation methods will be used to decrease excess fat, calorie and sodium levels in food.

The District will share and publicize information regarding the nutrition content of school meals with students, families and school staff. The information will be available in a variety of forms that can include handouts, the school website, articles, school newsletters, presentations and through any other appropriate means available to reach families. Nutrition information for a la carte foods and beverages sold in schools will also be available.

Special dietary needs of students will be accommodated according to the USDA document "Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs in School Nutrition Programs." With parental permission and appropriate medical documentation, modified meals shall be prepared for students with food allergies or other special dietary needs. The medical statement must identify the student's disability, state why the disability restricts the student's diet, identify the major life activity affected by the disability, and state the foods to be omitted and the food or choices of foods that must be substituted.

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 extent possible, and within state law, operate and promote the USDA School Breakfast Program;
- Use methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, "grab-and-go" breakfast, or breakfast during morning break or recess;
- notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program (if the school serves breakfast to students); and
- encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.
- Inform families of the availability and location of Summer Food Service Program meals in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Schools in which more than 50 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program when feasible.
- No student will be denied access to nutritious school meals based on ability to pay. Balance notices are communicated directly to families by mail and are not shared directly with students.

Cafeteria A La Carte Sales

The school food service program must follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards when determining the items for a la carte sales. All 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. All snacks and a la carte foods must meet USDA Smart Snacks Standards.

In accordance with Connecticut State Statute, the sale of beverages, as part of school meals and as a la carte sales, shall be limited to the following five categories:

1. 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 non-fat or 1% low fat milk)*.
2. nondairy milks, such as soy or rice 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;*
3. 100% fruit or vegetable juice or combination of such juices, containing no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners;*
4. beverages that contain only water and fruit or vegetable juice and have no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners; and*
5. water, which may be flavored but must contain no added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners, or caffeine.* (Note: The Federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 requires schools to make free portable water available where meals are served for schools participating in the federal and school lunch program.)

**(Consult CSDE's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages for allowable products.)*

Note: The beverage requirements of CGS Section 10-221q apply to all public schools, regardless of whether the district certifies for the healthy food option under CGS 10-215f.

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.

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 meal times unless students may eat during such activities.

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. Such training shall involve all individuals working in the cafeteria, including monitors, so that all are aware of the requirements of the school wellness policy. Staff development programs shall include

appropriate certification and/or training programs for school food service directors, managers and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility. (See USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals website.)

Training for Food Service Staff

All food service personnel, including volunteers and monitors, 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.

Summer Food Service Program

Schools in which more than 50 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals may sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for at least six weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year, and preferably throughout the entire summer vacation.

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 statute and federal regulations, whichever are stricter, 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:

- If a snack machine with food items is available for use by students during the school day, the school must also have non-fat or low-fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruit available for purchase. When the snack machine is operating outside of cafeteria hours, schools must make alternate provisions to offer non-fat or low-fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruit for sale at the same time.
- School stores that sell food to students must ensure that non-fat or low-fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruit are available for purchase either in the store itself or elsewhere in the school, while the school store is selling food.

Access to Drinking Water

The Federal Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 requires schools to make free potable water available where meals are served for schools participating in the Federal School Lunch Program.

Outside of the cafeteria and meal times, 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 and staff.

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 District's nutrition standards. Classroom snacks, if provided to all children, must only include healthy choices that meet the state requirements for allowable beverages and the District's nutrition standards.

District policy is that the foods will also meet the Smart Snacks standards and the Connecticut Healthy Food Certification standards. If food is brought from home to be shared with other students, the District shall develop procedures to ensure that all food is safe.

Building administrators seeking to approve or deny requests for food items to be brought into the school building should consult the document developed through the Stafford Public Schools Wellness Committee titled, "[Procedures for Food Brought Into School](#)." The document also provides reference to suggested healthy snack ideas for families and staff.

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.

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 that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not meeting the requirements of state statute 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. Schools shall encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

While students can bring home brochures regarding fundraising that might involve food items of low nutritional value and return the money and orders to the school, students cannot deliver the products.

Competition with nutritious meals served by the school food services operations must be minimized. Income from any competitive foods or beverages sold from 30 minutes prior to

the start of any state or federally subsidized milk or meal program until 30 minutes after the end of the program must accrue to the food service account.

Concessions

Organizations operating concessions at school functions after school or on weekends should include at least 50 percent healthy beverages and foods, according to the approved nutrition standards in their offerings. It is recommended that groups market these healthy options at a lower profit margin to encourage selection by students. Beverages sold at concessions on school premises must meet the requirements of state statute.

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.

Teacher-to-Student Incentives and Punishments

Teachers and staff 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). The use of sugar-sweetened beverages or candy as a classroom reward at any school is not appropriate. Alternative rewards shall be developed and promoted.

Schools shall not withhold foods or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Student Nutrition Education and Promotion

Nutrition education and promotion 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)
- Healthy heart choices
- Sources and functions of major nutrients
- Guide to a healthy diet
- Diet and disease

- Understanding calories
- Healthy snacks
- Identify and limit foods of low nutrient density
- Food labels
- Multicultural influences
- Serving sizes
- Proper food safety and sanitation
- Body-size acceptances, healthy weight and dangers of unhealthy weight-control practices

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 District will routinely 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 that contain any commercial or branded messages shall not be used.

Educational Reinforcement

School instructional staff members shall collaborate with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families. Guest speakers and performers invited to address students shall receive appropriate orientation to relevant district policies. School staff members shall be encouraged to coordinate with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for student volunteer work related to nutrition, such as assisting with food recovery efforts and preparing nutritious meals for home-bound people. Information will be made available to parents, students and staff members about community programs that offer nutrition assistance to families.

Nutrition Promotion

The District shall conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve parents, students and the community. The District shall participate in programs that promote and reinforce student health, such as Team Nutrition and the Healthier US School Challenge. The school team responsible for planning nutrition activities shall ensure interdisciplinary collaboration by including school food service, school nurses, health and physical education teachers, family and consumer sciences teachers, and other appropriate school staff members.

Consistent Health Messages

Students shall receive positive, motivating messages, both verbal and nonverbal, about healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school environment. All school personnel shall help reinforce these positive messages. Foods and beverages sold or served at school shall not contradict healthy eating messages. The District shall not use practices that contradict messages to promote and enjoy physical activity; for example, withholding recess

or using physical activity as punishment (e.g., running laps, doing pushups).

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The District is committed to providing a school that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. The District strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on district property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the District is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. Any foods and/or 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.

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often include an oral, written, or graphic statement made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Displays such as on vending machine exteriors.
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards or backboards.
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered or sold by the District.
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

As the District Nutrition Services/Athletics Department/PTA/PTO review existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment and product purchasing and/or replacement, decisions should reflect the applicable marketing guidelines established by the District wellness policy.

Staff as Role Models

The school district shall build awareness among teachers, food service staff, coaches, nurses and other school staff members about the importance of nutrition, physical activity and body-size acceptance to academic success and lifelong wellness. School staff members shall be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors.

Education Links with School

The nutrition education program links 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 after-school programs. Nutrition education shall 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.

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.

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.

Partnering with Community Organizations

Schools are encouraged to develop partnerships with community organizations (e.g., local businesses, faith-based organizations, libraries, local health departments, local colleges and their students, and local health care providers) to provide consistent health messages and support school-based activities that promote healthy eating and physical activity.

Engaging Students

Schools shall consider student needs in planning for a healthy school environment. Students shall be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys and other means, and attention shall be given to their comments. Key health messages shall be promoted by coordinating classroom and cafeteria, and through planned promotions such as health fairs, nutrition initiatives, programs and contests.

Parent Nutrition Education

The District shall encourage family involvement to support and promote healthy eating and physical activity habits. The District shall support families' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children through effective two-way communication strategies that allow sharing of information from school to home and from home to school.

Nutrition education will be provided to parents beginning at the elementary or pre-k level. The goal will be to continue to educate parents throughout the elementary, middle and high school levels. Nutrition education may be provided in the form of handouts, postings on the District website or presentations that focus on nutritional value and healthy lifestyles. Additional strategies are suggested in the Connecticut State Department of

Education's "Action Guide for School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies" (page 139) at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754#Action>.

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

Family and Community Involvement

In order to promote family and community involvement in supporting and reinforcing nutrition education in the schools, the building Principal is responsible for ensuring:

1. Nutrition education materials and cafeteria menus are sent home with students;
2. Parents are encouraged to send healthy snacks/meals to school;
3. Parents and other family members are invited to periodically eat with their student in the cafeteria;
4. Families are invited to attend exhibitions of student nutrition projects or health fairs;
5. Nutrition education workshops and screening services are offered;
6. Nutrition education homework that students can do with their families is assigned (e.g., reading and interpreting food labels, reading nutrition-related newsletters, preparing healthy recipes, etc.);
7. School staff collaborate with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families; and
8. School staff are encouraged to cooperate with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for student volunteer or paid work related to nutrition, as appropriate.

Many additional strategies are found in the "Action Guide for School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies." (page 141)

School District Wellness Committee (District Health Advisory Council)

With the purposes of monitoring the implementation of the District's policy, evaluating policy progress, serving as a resource to school sites, and revising the policy as necessary, a District-wide representative wellness committee shall be established and maintained or the District shall work within an existing school health committee. *(Required by federal law only for districts that participate in the USDA child nutrition programs.)* The committee will meet a minimum of two times annually to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of the District level wellness policy. Committee membership will represent all school levels and include to the extent possible, but not be limited to:

- District Food Service Coordinator
- Parent representative from each school level
- Student representative from each school level
- Staff member representative from each school level
- Administrative Representatives, (Superintendent, principal, vice-principal)
- Physical Education and Health Program Leader
- School health professionals (nurses, physicians, dentists)

- Health Education Coordinator/Teacher
- Physical Education Coordinator/Teacher
- Other individuals appropriate to the evaluation process
- Board of Education Members
- Any interested member of the public
- Mental health and social services staff (school counselors, psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists)

The Superintendent, or his/her designee, will convene the District Wellness Committee and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy. Each school will designate a school wellness policy coordinator, who will ensure compliance with the policy.

School Climate Committees at each school will discuss implementation of strategies to support student and staff wellness in each school building. Information from the local school committees will be communicated to the Stafford Public Schools Wellness Committee annually.

Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability & Community Engagement Implementation

The District will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines specific to each school; as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. It is recommended that the school use the Healthy Schools Program online tools to complete a school-level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation and generate an annual progress report.

Recordkeeping

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the District's Administrative Offices. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Local Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the District uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the District Wellness Committee;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

The District will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. The District will make this information available via the District website and/or district-wide communications. The District will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of the District's (or schools') events or activities related to wellness policy implementation. Annually, the District will also publicize the name and contact information of the District/school officials leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the school wellness committee.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the District will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include;

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the District are in compliance with the wellness policy; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the District's wellness policy.
- The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is

Director of Curriculum & Instruction
DCI@stafford.k12.ct.us
(860) 684-4213

The District Wellness Committee, in collaboration with individual schools, will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness policy. The District will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress.

Revisions and Updating of the Policy

The District Wellness Committee will modify the wellness policy based on the results of the triennial assessments and/or as District priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. **The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.**

Community Involvement

The District will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the District Wellness Committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means. The district will inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. The District will use electronic mechanisms, such as the District's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information

home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy. The District will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the District and individual schools are communicating important school information with parents.

The District will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually at a minimum. The District will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure compliance with the established district-wide school wellness policy. In each school, the Principal or designee shall ensure compliance with those policies in his or her school and shall report on the school's compliance to the school district Superintendent or designee. School food service staff members, at the school or district level, shall ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and shall report on this matter to the Superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school Principal). The Superintendent or designee shall provide periodic implementation data and/or reports to the Board concerning this policy's implementation sufficient to allow the Board to monitor and adjust the policy.

Policy Review

The District shall identify a strategy and schedule to help review policy compliance, assess progress and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that process, the District shall review nutrition and physical activity policies; new research and evidence on health trends and effective programs; 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 shall, as necessary, revise the school wellness policy and develop work plans to facilitate its implementation.

(Note: USDA regulations require the board of education to conduct an assessment every three years to determine compliance with the wellness policy and the progress made in attaining the policy goals)

District Nutrition Standards

The District strongly encourages the sale or distribution of nutrient-dense foods for all school functions and activities. Nutrient-dense foods are those foods that provide substantial amounts of vitamins and minerals with relatively few calories, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats and legumes. In an effort to support the consumption of nutrient-dense foods in the school setting the District will follow the beverage requirements of state statute and federal regulations, whichever are stricter, and has adopted the Connecticut Nutrition Standards governing the sale of food on school grounds. Sites are encouraged to study these standards and must develop building policy using the following Connecticut Nutrition Standards and state beverage requirements as minimal guidelines.

Food:

6142.101 (n) REG

1. Any given food item offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals will:
 - meet the portion size requirements of the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and the USDA Nutrition Standards.
 - not contain any chemically altered fat substitutes and will meet the fat requirements of the Connecticut Nutrition Standards.
 - meet the saturated fat requirements of the Connecticut Nutrition Standards.
 - meet the trans-fat requirements of the Connecticut Nutrition Standards.
 - not contain any artificial sweeteners or sugar alcohols and will meet the sugar requirements of the Connecticut Nutrition Standards.
 - meet the sodium requirements of the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and the USDA Nutrition Standards.
2. Foods and beverages will not contain caffeine, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring substances.
3. Limit condiment use and provide low-fat, low-sugar and low-sodium varieties.
4. Increase choices of whole grains and foods containing fiber.
5. Encourage the consumption of nutrient-dense foods, e.g., whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, lean meats, legumes and low-fat dairy products.

Note: Public Law 108-265, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, requires that the district school wellness policy must include "nutrition guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day, with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity." If the district does not adopt the preceding standards, it must develop specific nutrition standards that address what foods can be sold or served to students during the school day.

Candy:

Candy and gum (including sugarless candy and sugarless gum) can only be sold to students on school premises if they are sold 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. (**Note:** Board vote is required to allow this exemption)

Beverages:

1. Pursuant to state statute, the sale of beverages to students on school premises shall be limited to the following five categories:
 - milk, effective 7/1/19, which may be flavored but contains no artificial sweeteners and no more than 4 grams of sugar per fluid ounce; (federal regulation requires milk to be non-fat or low-fat (1%) flavored or unflavored)*
 - nondairy milk substitutes, such as soy or rice milk, which may be flavored but contains no artificial sweeteners, nonnutritive sweetening agents, sugar alcohols, added sodium, and 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 or sodium and that meet the healthy

6142.101 (o) REG

Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, P.L. 11-296, as may be amended from time to time;* and;

- water, which may be flavored but must contain no added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners, sodium or caffeine.*
- 2. Portion sizes of the beverages specified above are limited to no more than 8 fluid ounces for students in grades K-5 inclusive and 12 fluid ounces for students in grades 6-12 inclusive, except water, which is unlimited.
- 3. Vending sales of any beverages other than those listed as approved in state statute are not permitted on school grounds at any time.
- 4. School store sales of any beverages other than those listed as approved in state statute are not permitted on school grounds at any time.
- 5. The sale of any beverages that do not meet the requirements of state statute and federal regulations is allowed 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. (**Note: Board vote is required to allow this exemption.**)

Guidelines for Food and Beverages Offered to Students at School

CSDE's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages for allowable products should be consulted. Foods that meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards or exceed the USDA's competitive food standards are listed. Listed beverages will meet both federal and state requirements.

The District encourages the use of nutrient-dense foods for all school functions and activities. Nutrient-dense foods are those foods that provide substantial amounts of vitamins and minerals and relatively few calories, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats and legumes. At any school function (parties, celebrations, feasts, sporting events, etc.) where foods and beverages are sold or served to students, healthy choices meeting the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverage requirements of state statute must be available. Some suggested foods and beverages are listed below. The list should be checked against the Connecticut Nutrition Standards developed by the State Department of Education and published annually, the state beverage statute, and the Department's online list of acceptable foods and beverages, which is updated quarterly.

- Raw/fresh vegetable sticks (e.g., carrots)/slices with low-fat dressing* or yogurt dip*
- Fresh fruit
- 100% fruit juices or 100% vegetable juices or combination of such juices*
- Frozen 100% fruit juice pops*
- Bottled water, without added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners or caffeine*
- Dried fruits (raisins, banana chips, etc.) without added sugar, fat or salt*
- Trail mix (dried fruits and nuts)*
- Dry roasted peanuts, tree nuts and soy nuts (not coconut or palm nuts) without added fat, sugar or sodium*
- Low-fat meat and cheese sandwiches (use low-fat mayonnaise in chicken/tuna salads)*
- Party mix* (variety of cereals, nuts, pretzels, etc.), depending on added fat, sugar and salt
- Low-sodium crackers*
- Baked corn chips & fat-free potato chips with salsa and low-fat dips* (Ranch, French Onion, Bean, etc.)
- Low-fat muffins, granola bars, crackers and cookies such as fig bars and ginger

- snaps*
- Angel food and sponge cakes*
- Flavored yogurt & fruit parfaits (low-fat/nonfat yogurt)*
- Gelatin and low-fat pudding cups*
- Low-fat ice creams, frozen yogurts, sherbets*
- Low-fat and nonfat dairy products*
- Pure ice cold water without sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners or caffeine*
- Pretzels*
- Bread products as such as bread sticks, rolls, bagels and pita bread*
- Ready-to-eat low sugar cereals (with no more than 15 grams added sugars per serving and no more than 35% sugar by weight)*
- Low-fat (1 percent) and skim milk*

*Compliance with the state beverage statute and the Connecticut Nutrition Standards varies depending on the brand and type of item. Check online listings at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754#Healthy>.

Food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not meeting the requirements of state statute and federal regulations can be 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.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

Note: As of July 1, 2014, the USDA interim final rule nutrition standards apply to all competitive foods sold in schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. School districts that follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards under the Healthy Food Certification must meet stricter requirements. The Connecticut Nutrition Standards meet or exceed the USDA's competitive foods standard.

"Competitive foods" include all foods and beverages sold in schools except for meals provided through the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. The USDA interim final rule groups competitive foods into three categories: (1) Entrée Items (sold only a-la-carte), (2) Side Dishes; and (3) Beverages. Pursuant to federal regulations and state statutes and regulations, the sale of competitive foods is restricted as follows:

1. Foods that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards cannot be sold to students on school premises, including, but not limited to:
 - Water ices (any frozen, sweetened water such as "popsicles" and flavored ice with the exception of products that contain fruit, fruit juice, milk, milk ingredients or egg ingredients other than egg whites)
 - Candy/sugarless candy
 - Chewing gum/sugarless chewing gum
2. Beverages that do not meet the requirements of state statute and federal regulations (including, but not limited to, coffee/decaffeinated coffee/iced coffee, tea/herbal tea/iced tea, soda/diet soda, sports drinks, hot chocolate, fruit drinks that are not 100 percent juice) can only be sold to students on school premises 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. (**Note: Board vote is required to allow this exemption.**)

3. During the period of 30 minutes before any meal program up until 30 minutes after the end of the program, competitive foods and beverages may only be sold anywhere on school premises if they meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards or state beverage statute and the income they generate accrues to the nonprofit school food service account. Outside of this timeframe, competitive foods and beverages may only be sold if they meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and state beverage statute and federal regulations, whichever are stricter.
4. No competitive foods may be sold without the prior approval of the Superintendent. Such sales must comply with state law, Section 10-215b-23 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.
5. Schools shall use the Connecticut State Department of Education's "List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages" to determine whether commercial food and beverage products meet the USDA's competitive foods standards. Listed beverages will meet both federal and state requirements.

Physical Education/Physical Activity

It is the Board's position that all students have equal and equitable opportunities for physical activity and physical education in District schools. The Superintendent is encouraged to review and consider implementing physical activity and physical education program improvements. The goals of the District are:

- A. All children, from pre-kindergarten through grade 12, will be taught a standards-based, developmentally planned and sequential curriculum that fosters the development of movement skills, enhances health-related fitness, increases students' knowledge, offers, directs opportunities to learn how to work cooperatively in a group setting, and encourages healthy habits and attitudes for a healthy lifestyle. Time per week for physical education activity averages approximately 60-minutes per week at the elementary level. For students at the secondary level, physical education activity is approximately 4-hours per week, when enrolled in the class.
- B. All schools will have certified physical education teachers providing physical education instruction and will receive regular professional learning experiences pertaining to pedagogy and curriculum development
- C. All schools will have appropriate class sizes, facilities, equipment, and supplies needed to deliver quality physical education consistent with state and/or national standards.
- D. Should a student be unable to participate in traditional physical education instruction for medical reasons, appropriate accommodations or substitutions will be provided to support meaningful participation.

Incorporating Physical Activity Into the Classroom

Students in all grade levels can be provided opportunities for physical activity throughout the course of the school day and in addition to physical education. Classroom health education shall 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. Opportunities for physical activity can be incorporated into other subjects and can be used as reinforcement, reward and celebration for achievement, positive behavior and completion of assignments. Classroom teachers are encouraged to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Districts shall not permit extended periods (i.e., periods of two 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 shall give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to get up from their chairs and be moderately active.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

Access to school sites will be provided through permitting use of facilities to community youth sports groups consistent with the District's facilities use policy so additional opportunities are available for youth to participate in quality physical activity, fitness, sports and recreation programs. School spaces and facilities shall be available to students, staff members, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends and during school vacations, in alignment with Board Policy #3515 – Use of School Buildings and Grounds. The spaces and facilities shall also be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety shall apply at all times.

Prohibiting Physical Activity as Punishment

Schools shall prohibit the use of physical activity (such as required running or push-ups as punishment) and withholding of physical education class and other forms of physical activity as punishment. Recess or other opportunities for physical activity shall not be withheld as a measure to enforce the completion of academic work. (See Policy #5144.4, "Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students.")

Daily Recess

All elementary school students shall have at least 20 consecutive minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity and provide space, equipment and an environment that is conducive to safe and enjoyable activity. Districts shall ensure that students with special physical and cognitive needs have equal physical activity opportunities, with appropriate assistance and services.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

All elementary, middle and high schools shall offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. All high schools, and middle schools as appropriate, shall offer interscholastic sports programs. Districts shall offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with physical and cognitive disabilities, and students with special health care needs. After-school, childcare and enrichment programs shall provide and encourage - verbally and through the provision of space, equipment and activities - daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

Safe Routes to School

When appropriate, the District shall work together with local public works, public safety and/or police departments to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school.

Family and Community Involvement

In order to promote family and community involvement in supporting and reinforcing physical education in the schools, the school Principal is responsible for ensuring:

- A. Physical education activity ideas are sent home with students;
- B. Parents are encouraged to promote their child's participation in the school's physical education programs and after school activities;
- C. Families are invited to attend and participate in physical education activity programs and health fairs;
- D. Physical education curriculum includes homework that students can do with their families;
- E. School staff consider the various cultural preferences in development of physical education programs; and
- F. School staff is encouraged to cooperate with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for students to participate in physical activity programs.

Regulation approved:	January 2, 2007	STAFFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Regulation revised:	December 8, 2008	Stafford Springs, Connecticut
Regulation revised:	July 9, 2012	
Regulation revised:	October 5, 2015	
Regulation revised:	November 23, 2020 (Complete Replacement)	
Regulation revised:	May 16, 2022	

Appendix A

Procedures for Food Brought into School

To support and encourage the physical well-being of all students enrolled in the Stafford Public Schools, faculty and staff **will encourage** the distribution of food items that meet Connecticut Nutrition and Smart Snack standards.

Celebrations and Special Events

- The district will provide a list from the Connecticut State Department of Education of suggested healthy snack ideas ([CSDE Link](#)) to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
- Food items must be pre-packaged. Items prepared for world language classes at Stafford High School and Stafford Middle School must have recipes pre-approved and appropriate signage depicting ingredients.
- All food items brought into the classroom prior to distribution should be cleared by the classroom teacher and school nurse, ensuring dietary restrictions and allergies are considered.
- The school principal ultimately has the discretion to approve or disallow the incorporation of food items into the classroom during celebrations.
- If students are charged a fee to cover the cost of food items, then the food item **MUST** comply with ALL pertinent Connecticut Nutrition Standards and Regulations.

Items offered as fundraisers are covered by a separate category and must adhere to the guidelines and regulations established in BOE Policy #6142.