

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MODEL WELLNESS POLICY

Introduction and Rationale

Introduction

In the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, PL 105-268, the U.S. Congress established a new requirement for all local agencies (including public and nonpublic, as well as, Residential Child Care Institutions) with a federally funded National School Lunch program. The local agencies are required to develop and implement wellness policies that address nutrition and physical activity by the start of the 2006-07 school year. In response to this requirement the South Dakota Department of Education (SDDOE) convened a work group consisting of health, physical activity, nutrition, and education professionals representing a variety of organizations, plus students and parents, to develop a wellness policy for local agencies.

The model wellness policy developed by SDDOE meets the new federal requirement. It is based on science, research, and existing practices from exemplary states and local school districts around the country. The first priority of the work group was to promote children’s health and well-being; however, feasibility of policy implementation was also considered.

Some aspects of a broader conception of “wellness” are not addressed in the model policies that follow. School districts are encouraged to establish and maintain a coordinated school health program that addresses all components of school health, including mental health services and school health services, which are not addressed in these model policies. These model policies also do not address certain important related areas, such as counseling services for those with eating disorders, food safety policies, and policies to reduce weight-related bullying. Schools may also choose to expand their wellness policy to address other risk behaviors. Additionally, schools will support the health of all students by hosting health clinics, health screenings, and encouraging the enrollment of eligible children in the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Rationale

The increasing rates of overweight and obesity among youth threaten to jeopardize the future health and productivity of our children. Will academic success become more and more difficult for students to attain as lifestyle choices diminish a child’s ability to learn? Will the students of today be the first generation to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents? Do over nourished and malnourished children face similar adversities?

A healthy school environment goes beyond school meals in the cafeteria. Living a healthy lifestyle and maintaining a healthy weight requires a combination of healthy food choices, knowledge of nutrition, and appropriate amounts of physical activity. All foods made available on school campuses should offer children nutritious choices. Nutrition education and physical activity should be incorporated into the school day as often as possible. The healthy, nutritionally astute, and physically active child is more likely to be academically successful.

The federal government recognizes that a coordinated effort by the entire community including child nutrition professionals, school board members, parents, students, school administrators, teachers and business community is warranted. These efforts involve adults serving as role models and community members being informed of the policies that improve the long- term health and well-being of students. The local agency has a strategic role to play in improving the health and well-being of children.

Using the Model Policies

Local agencies may choose to use the following model policies as written or revise them to meet local needs and reflect community priorities. When developing wellness policies school districts will need to take into account their unique circumstances, challenges, and opportunities. Among the factors to consider are socioeconomic status of the student body; school size; rural or urban location; and presence of immigrant, dual-language, or limited-English students.

The local agency must convene a committee to develop its wellness policy. The most effective wellness policy is one that has input from stakeholders in the community. The committee must include the following:

- Food service representative
- Administrator
- Classroom teacher (for example health and physical education, nutrition, and general subject matter)
- Student
- School board member
- Community member/Parent

The committee may also include:

- School nurse
- Dietitian and/or dietary manager
- Medical professional
- Local business representative

Steps in Developing Policy

Assess Needs and Resources

It often helps to begin by conducting a baseline assessment of schools' existing nutrition and physical activity environments. The results of school-by-school assessments can be compiled at the district level to prioritize needs. Useful self-assessment and planning tools include the School Health Index from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Changing the Scene from the Team Nutrition Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary, Middle, and High School Physical Education from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.

Develop and Adopt Policy

The committee shall draft a policy using input from the committee members. It may be helpful to attain input from the general public after the policy is drafted. Compromises from the ideal might be required as district decision makers consider challenges such as limited class time, curriculum requirements, and funding and space constraints. The governing board shall adopt the policy.

Implement Policy

Educate students and the community on the existing needs, the policy, and desired effects. A local agency may find it more practical to phase in its wellness policies than to implement a comprehensive set of nutrition and physical activity policies all at once. Implementation must include addressing the following four components: Nutrition Education, Physical Activity, Nutrition Standards, and Other School Based Activities. The setting of goals, objectives, and timelines will assist in effective implementation of the policies.

Measure Success

As outlined in law, the local agency shall designate one or more persons with operational responsibility for ensuring that the local agency meets the requirements of the local wellness policy.

PARKER SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Dr. Donovan G. DeBoer / Superintendent

Jason Chester / School Board Member

Teresa Larson / Food Service

Scott Hybertson / Elementary Teacher

Rachel Knutson / Elementary Teacher

Lance Friesen / Junior High Health Teacher

Derrek Sattler / High School Health Teacher

Bill Leberman / JH/HS Principal

Marci Leberman / Technology Director

Nutrition Education Component

At each grade level nutrition education will be offered as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote their health. Nutrition education will be incorporated into the school day as often as possible. The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students' eating behaviors.

Nutrition Education:

- scientifically-based nutrition messages throughout the school, classroom, cafeteria, home, and community will be published in the school newsletter and local newspaper
- is part of health education classes
- is integrated in the scope and sequence of the curriculum in core subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- uses the SD Health Education Standards and addresses nutrition concepts progressively in grades K through 12;
- provides enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and participatory activities (e.g. contests, taste testing, and farm visits
- offers information to families that encourages them to teach their children about health and nutrition, and assists them in planning nutritious meals for their families;
- will be taught by staff who are adequately prepared and who participate in professional development activities in order to deliver an effective program;
- will include a school nutrition/health team, such as Team Nutrition, to conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve parents, students, and the community.

Physical Activity Component

The primary goal for the school's physical activity component is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthful lifestyle.

Daily Physical Education Classes K-9

- All students in grades K-9 will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 80-120 minutes per week for elementary school students and 100-150 minutes per week for middle and high school students) for the entire school year. Students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and those in alternative educational settings will be included.
- Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- The physical education curriculum should demonstrate progression and sequence and be consistent with South Dakota and/or National Physical Education standards for Pre-K through grade 9.
- All physical education will be taught by highly qualified physical education teachers.
- Class teacher-to-student ratios should be equivalent to those of other subject area classes in the school.
- Student participation in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.

Daily Recess

- All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which students are encouraged (verbally and through the provision of space and equipment) to engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Extended periods of inactivity, two hours or more, are discouraged. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, students will be given periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

- All high schools and junior high schools as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs.
- Schools will offer activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.
- Schools will educate and encourage participation in community or club activities.
- After-school childcare and enrichment programs will 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

- The school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

- School spaces and facilities will be available to students, staff, and community members after the school day; on weekends; and during school vacations according to school policy.
- School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

Wellness Council/Committee

- Schools will develop a Wellness Council/Committee comprised of school personnel and school board members to plan, implement, and assess ongoing activities that promote healthy lifestyles, particularly physical activity for all age groups within the school community. Community members are welcome to participate.

Parent Involvement

- Encourage parents to promote physical activity and healthy foods at home.

Other School-Based Activities Component

Schools will create an environment that provides consistent wellness messages, is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity; and contributes to forming healthy life long habits.

Professional Development

- Schools will provide ongoing professional development and education for foodservice professionals, educators, administrators and other staff.

Eating Environment

- Students and staff will have adequate space to eat meals in clean, safe, pleasant surroundings and will have adequate time scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible to eat, relax, and socialize.
- Safe drinking water and convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene will be available during all meal periods.
- Consideration will be given for passing time, bathroom break, hand washing, and socializing so as to allow ten minutes for breakfast and twenty minutes for lunch once the student is seated.

Community Access to Facilities for Physical Activity

- Schools will provide community access to the school's physical activity facilities outside of the normal school day and/or form city-school partnerships to institute recreation programs utilizing school facilities when possible according to school policy.

Tobacco Free School Grounds

- The school will promote a tobacco free environment for students, staff, and community members.

Vending Machines

- Vending machines with offer healthy snacks and beverages that fit the national nutrition standards. The school will provide healthy snacks as a part of the after-school care activities.

Nutrition Standards Component

Students' life-long eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. Foods of good nutritional content including fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, and low-fat grain products will be available wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at school during the normal school day. Examples may include a la carte, snacks, vending machines, fund raising activities, parties, celebrations, and school sponsored events.

General Guidelines

- Procedures will be in place for providing information to families, upon request, about the ingredients and nutritional values of the foods served.

School Meal Program

- The school food service program will operate in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger – Free Kids Act of 2010 as amended and with applicable laws and regulations of the state of South Dakota. All schools will comply with USDA regulations and state policies.
- Schools will offer varied and nutritious food choices that are consistent with the federal government's Dietary Guidelines for Americans. For the purpose of this policy, "Dietary Guidelines for Americans" refers to the current set of recommendations of the federal government that are designed to help people choose diets that will meet nutrient requirements, promote health, support active lives, and reduce chronic disease risks.
- Students with special dietary needs (e.g. diabetes, celiac sprue, allergies,) will be accommodated as required by USDA regulation.

A La Carte Offerings in the Food Service Program

- A la Carte items available during the school day will meet the Standards for Food and Beverages and smart snacks set forth in this document.

Snacks

- Healthy snacks will include fresh, dried, or canned fruits (in 100% juice only); vegetables; 1% or skim milk; and whole grains meeting the Standards for Food and Beverages and smart snacks set forth in this document.

Parties and Celebrations

- Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day.
- Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet the Standards for Food and Beverages and smart snacks.
- The district will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

Vending Machines

- Plain water with or without carbonation.
- Unflavored low fat milk/fat free milk
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- No calorie and low calorie beverage options

School Meals

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

- Be appealing and attractive to children;
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- Serve only low-fat (2%) and fat free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non dairy alternatives; and
- Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

Parker Public School will engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting food sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, Parker Public School will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students, when requested.

Breakfast. To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional need and enhance their ability to learn:

- Parker Public School will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
- Parker Public School will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- Parker Public School will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home material, or other means.

Meal Times and Scheduling:

- Will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch;
- Will schedule meal periods at appropriate times;
- Will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meeting or activities during meal times, unless students may eat during such activities;
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snack; and
- Will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

Parker Public School will 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.

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. Parker Public School will operate a food service program; we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professional in our school. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs including all professional standards for the school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals

Parker Public School 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-priced school meals.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually

Elementary. The Parker Public School food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, foods in Parker Public Elementary School will be sold as a balanced meal.

When available, foods and beverages sold individually will be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruit, and non-fried vegetables and foods.

Middle/Junior High and High School. In middle/junior high and high school, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through ala carte lines, or vending machines) during school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards;

Portion Sizes

- Limit portion sizes of food and beverages sold individually to those listed below:
- One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
- Two ounce for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and
- The portion size of ala carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater that the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruit and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

Parker Public School staff, will ensure compliance with nutrition polices within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent.

Nutrition Education and Promotion. Parker Public School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. We will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standard-based program to provide students with the knowledge and skill necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contest, promotions, taste testing;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- links with school meal program, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

DEFINITIONS

A La Carte: additional and separately priced foods sold in the lunch line.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: dietary recommendations for healthy Americans age 2 years and over about food choices that promote health, specifically with respect to prevention or delay of chronic diseases.

Physical Activity: the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in an expenditure of energy.

Normal School Day: time period spanning from the first bell of the day that begins the first class period to the last bell of the day ending the final class period.

Vending Machine: a coin operated machine for the sale of merchandise operational only during non-school lunch time