



Nassau County School District Wellness Policy

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Nassau County School District Wellness Policy

Preamble

Nassau County School District (hereto referred to as the District) is committed to the optimal development of every student. The District believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during, and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism, and better performance on cognitive tasks.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.^{8,9,10} In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education, and extracurricular activities – do better academically.^{11,12,13,14}

This policy outlines the District's approach to encouraging environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to encourage the following:

- Students in the District have access to healthy foods—both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus—in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students are encouraged to be physically active before, during, and after school;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the District in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- The District establishes and maintains an infrastructure for education, communication and implementation of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students, staff, and schools in the District.



I. District School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

Committee Role and Membership

The District will convene a representative district wellness committee (hereto referred to as the SHAC or work within an existing school health committee) that meets at least four times per year to establish goals for school health and safety, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this district-level wellness policy (heretofore referred as “wellness policy”).

The SHAC membership will represent all school levels (elementary and secondary schools) and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (ex., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (ex., health education teachers, school health services staff [i.e., nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services], and mental health and social services staff [i.e., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]); school administrators (ex., superintendent, principal, vice principal), school board members; health professionals (ex., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. To the extent possible, the SHAC will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community. Each school within the District will establish an ongoing health leadership team that convenes to review school-level issues, in coordination with the SHAC.

Leadership

The Superintendent or designee(s) will convene the SHAC and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will encourage each school’s compliance with the policy. A subcommittee of SHAC will be established for this purpose. The names and titles of this/these individual(s) is:

Name	Title
Andreu Powell	Director of Intervention & Prevention & Safety Services
Lauren Jones	Director of Food & Nutrition Services
Teresa Rowe	Sr. CHN Supervisor, School Health Coordinator FLDOH Nassau

Each school will designate a school wellness contact, who will assist with compliance of the policy. Refer to Appendix A for information regarding school level wellness contacts.



II. Wellness Policy Implementation

Implementation Plan

The District will develop and maintain a wellness operating plan for implementation to support the implementation of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines, and includes information about 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 each school assess itself on wellness implementation through resources and tools identified by the district SHAC.

This wellness policy and SHAC information can be found on the district website.

Monitoring Progress

District and school level activities are monitored on an annual basis and are available upon request.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The SHAC will update or modify the wellness operating plan based on the results of the annual assessment data, 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.

Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications

The District is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The District will actively communicate ways in which representatives of SHAC and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for that district. The District will also 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 email or displaying notices on 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 aware of and have access to the district wellness policy as well as how to get involved with SHAC and to 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 other 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 reports.



III. Nutrition

School Meals

Our school district is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams *trans* fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All schools within the District participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The District also operates additional nutrition-related programs and activities including Farm to School, school gardens, Breakfast in the Classroom, mobile breakfast carts, and Grab 'n' Go Breakfast. All schools within the District are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations; (The District offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards](#).)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#):
 - Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans)
 - Sliced or cut fruit is available daily
 - Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students
 - All available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names
 - Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab and go meals available to students
 - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal
 - White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers
 - Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas
 - A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.)
 - Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor, and promotional ideas
 - Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas
 - Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options



- Menus will be posted on the District website or individual school websites, and will include nutrient content and allergens;
- Menus will be created/reviewed by a nutrition professional.
- School meals are administered by a team of child nutrition professionals.
- The District child nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs.
- Lunch will be encouraged to follow the recess period to better support learning and healthy eating.
- Participation in Federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.
- The District will implement at least four of the following five Farm to School activities:
 - Local and/or regional products are incorporated into the school meal program;
 - Messages about agriculture and nutrition are reinforced throughout the learning environment;
 - School hosts a school garden;
 - School hosts field trips to local farms; and
 - School utilizes promotions or special events, such as tastings, that highlight the local/regional products.

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the [USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals](#). These school nutrition personnel will refer to [USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website](#) to search for training that meets their learning needs.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day* and on every school campus* ("school campus" and "school day" are defined in the glossary). The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day. Water cups/jugs will be available in the cafeteria if a drinking fountain is not present.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

The District is committed to encouraging all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus* during the school day* support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (i.e., "competitive" foods and beverages) should meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day, and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits. A summary of the standards and information are available at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-schools>. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks available at <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/>.



To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day* should meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards and the Florida Competitive Food Rule FDACS 5P-1.003. Resources for students, staff and the community are provided by the [Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Food, Nutrition, and Wellness](#). These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, and snack or food carts.

Celebrations and Rewards

It is encouraged that all foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. The district will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas are available at the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#), and from the [healthy meals resource system](#).
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. The District will provide to parents [a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snack nutrition standards](#).
3. Rewards and incentives. The District will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a [list of alternative ways to reward children](#). Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus* during the school day*. All foods and beverages sold to students should comply with both the district administrative rule and the state Florida Competitive Food Rule 5P-1.003 that allows for a set number of exemption days for schools. The District will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas.

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 healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff and teachers, parents, students, and the community.

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



- Implementing evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#); and
- Promoting foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Nutrition/Health Education

The District aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools will provide nutrition/health education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- Include enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Link with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- Teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

The District encourages the following essential topics on healthy eating to be included in the health education curriculum:

- The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention;
- Food guidance from [MyPlate](#);
- Reading and using USDA's food labels;
- Eating a variety of foods every day;
- Balancing food intake and physical activity;
- Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products;
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain *trans-fat*;
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars;
- Eating more calcium-rich foods;
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks;
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices;
- Accepting body size differences;
- Food safety;
- Importance of water consumption;
- Importance of eating breakfast;



- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants;
- Eating disorders;
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans;
- Reducing sodium intake;
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture;
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior;
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully;
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior;
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior.

[USDA's Team Nutrition](#) provides free nutrition education and promotion materials, including standards-based nutrition education curricula and lesson plans, posters, interactive games, menu graphics, and more. The Florida Department of Agriculture Division of Food, Nutrition & Wellness also provide free [nutrition education resources](#) including the [Harvest of the Month](#) program that are standards-based. [Florida Agriculture in the Classroom](#) is another great resource for free nutrition education materials available to teachers and staff.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The District is committed to providing a school environment that encourages opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors while minimizing messages inconsistent with the health information the District is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts throughout the school day. The District strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity. It is the intent of the District to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with the District's wellness policy.

Any foods and 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 advertising and marketing is defined¹⁵ as an oral, written, or graphic statements 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.

IV. Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program (CSPAP) that includes these components: physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, walk and bicycle to school, and out-of-school time activities and the district is committed to providing these opportunities. Schools will encourage that these varied opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education.



Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks, or physical education) **will not be withheld nor required** as punishment for any reason. This does not include participation on sports teams that have specific academic requirements.

The district will provide teachers and other school staff with a [list of ideas](#) for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, the District will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The District will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Physical Education

The District will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. The District will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

All District **elementary students** in each grade will receive physical education for at least 90 minutes per week of moderate intensity throughout the school year.

All District **secondary students** (middle and high school) are required to take the equivalent of one academic year of physical education.

- All physical education teachers in the District will be required to participate in at least once a year professional development in education.
- All physical education classes in the District are planned by licensed teachers who are certified or endorsed to teach physical education.

Recess (Elementary)

All elementary schools will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all or most days during the school year.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.



Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)

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 recommends teachers provide short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

The District will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available such as [GoNoodle](#), [USDA ChooseMyPlate](#), [Fuel Up to Play 60](#) and [Action for Healthy Kids](#).

Before and After School Activities

The District offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods. The District will encourage students to be physically active before and after school by offering opportunities such as clubs, running groups, physical activity in aftercare, intramurals, and sports activities.

Active Transport

The District will support active transport to and from school, such as walking or biking. The District will encourage this behavior by engaging in some of the activities below, including but not limited to:

- Promotional activities such as participation in International Walk to School Week, National Walk and Bike to School Week;
- Secure storage facilities for bicycles and helmets (e.g., shed, cage, fenced area);
- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students;
- Crossing guards are used;
- Crosswalks exist on streets leading to schools.

V. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The District will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity facilities. The District will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state, or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments are encouraged to coordinate with the wellness policy, including but not limited to involvement of SHAC.



All school-sponsored events are encouraged to adhere to the wellness policy and include physical activity opportunities.

Community Partnerships

The District will continue relationships with community partners (i.e. hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation.

Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

Community Health Promotion and Engagement

The District will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

As described in the "Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications" subsection, the District will use electronic mechanisms (such as email or displaying notices on 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 opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

The SHAC will have a staff wellness subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources, and performs other functions that support staff wellness.

Schools in the District will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. The District promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Healthy and Safe Environment

A healthy and safe environment for all, before, during and after school supports academic success. Safer communities promote healthier students. Healthier students do better in school and make greater contributions to their community.

- School buildings and grounds, structures, buses and equipment shall meet all current health and safety standards, including environmental air quality, and be kept inviting, clean, safe and in good repair.
- Schools and district offices shall maintain an environment that is free of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.



- Safety procedures and appropriate training for students and staff shall support personal safety and a violence and harassment free environment.
- Each work site, school and classroom shall work to create an environment where students, parents/guardians and staff are respected, valued and accepted with high expectations for personal behavior and accomplishments.

Social and Emotional Well-Being

Programs and services that support and value the social and emotional well-being of students, families and staff build a healthy school environment.

- Each school shall provide a supportive environment that includes guidance, counseling, and school social work services that encourages students, families and staff to request assistance when needed and links them to school or community resources.
- Students shall be provided the skills to express thoughts and feelings in a responsible manner and give and receive support from others.
- Students shall be taught to understand and respect the differences in others and how to build positive interpersonal relations.
- Students and staff shall be encouraged to balance work and recreation and helped to become aware of stressors which may interfere with health development.

Health Services

An effective health care delivery system that promotes academic achievement by providing a broad scope of services from qualified health care providers will improve the mental and physical health of students and staff.

- Primary coordination of health services shall be through a trained school health care practitioner with the support and direction of the Nassau County School District and the Nassau County Health Department.
- Nassau County School District shall collaborate with community health liaisons and resources to promote health and wellness for students, families, staff and community.
- A coordinated program of accessible health services shall be provided to students and staff and shall include violence prevention, school safety, communicable disease prevention, health screening, including Body Mass Index (BMI), community health referrals, and immunizations, parenting skills, first aid and other priority health education topics.



Glossary:

Extended School Day - time during before and after school activities that includes clubs, intramural sports, band and choir practice, drama rehearsals, etc.

School Campus - areas that are owned or leased by the school and used at any time for school-related activities such as the school building or on the school campus, including on the outside of the school building, school buses or other vehicles used to transport students, athletic fields, and stadiums (e.g. on scoreboards, coolers, cups, and water bottles), or parking lots.

School Day - midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day.



Appendix A: School Wellness Contacts

School Wellness contacts will be updated as needed and made available on our website <https://www.nassau.k12.fl.us/intervention> under School Health Advisory Council (SHAC).

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¹⁰ Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption among adolescents. *Preventive Medicine*. 1996;25(5):497-505.

¹¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *The association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance*. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, 2010.

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¹⁵ Change Lab Solutions. (2014). *District Policy Restricting the Advertising of Food and Beverages Not Permitted to be Sold on School Grounds*. Retrieved from <http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/district-policy-school-food-ads>.