

STUDENT WELLNESS

A healthy school is one that integrates community, family, and schools to provide for students' positive continuum of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development on which to base lifelong decisions." (Source: National School Boards Association, Healthy Schools Vision Statement.)

Community participation is essential in the development and implementation of a successful school wellness policy. Families are the primary teachers and caregivers for their children. As a unified community, the East Ramapo Central School District is committed to educating the whole child, by providing a healthy, safe, supportive, engaging and challenging learning environment.

Pursuant to Section 204 of the Child Nutrition and Women, Infants and Children Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Federal Public Law 108-265), and in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2010 (HHFKA Federal Public Law 111-296), the East Ramapo Central School District wellness policy and its associated regulations will continue to be strengthened and updated to enhance learning, development and lifelong wellness practices.

Therefore, it is the policy of the East Ramapo Central School District that:

- It will engage students, parents, administrators, teachers, food-service professionals, physical education professionals, athletics professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 will have the opportunity, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold and/or served during the school day will meet the nutrition recommendations of the 2010 *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, the *National School Lunch Program*, *National Breakfast Program* and *Smart Snack Guidelines* as outlined in the *Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010*
- Qualified Food Service professionals, in partnership with school administration, will provide students with access to a variety of affordable nutritious, appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students, and provide a clean, safe and pleasant setting and adequate time for the students to eat.
- To the maximum extent possible all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs, including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, After School Snacks Program, and Summer Food Service Program.
- Schools will continue to provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity to align with health education, school meal programs and related community services.
- The District's Wellness Advisory Committee (which shall include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the Board of Education, school administrators, physical education teachers, school health professionals and members of the public) will ensure this policy is monitored, evaluated, appropriately updated, and communicated to the school community.

District Wellness Advisory Committee (DWAC)

The district will maintain a District Wellness Advisory Committee (DWAC) and each individual school within the district will establish a School Wellness Advisory Committee.

The DWAC will create, strengthen, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity regulations. Any new or revised school nutrition and physical activity regulations must be approved by the Board of Education. The DWAC may recommend policy changes in the Student Wellness Policy to the Board's Policy Committee. The DWAC consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the Board of Education, school administrators, physical education teachers, school health professionals and members of the public.

School Wellness Advisory Committee (SWAC)

Each individual school within the district will establish a School Wellness Advisory Committee (SWAC). It will be the responsibility of the SWAC to oversee the implementation, evaluation, and progress of the District Wellness Policy & Regulations within each school on an annual basis. The SWAC will consist of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the Board of Education, school administrators, physical education teachers, school health professionals and members of the public.

Goals to Promote Student Wellness

The district seeks to ensure all of its students obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food selections and enjoy life-long physical activity. To this end, the District sets forth the following goals relating to nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities.

1. Nutrition Promotion and Education :

Nutrition Education is defined as "any set of learning practices designed to make possible the voluntary embracing of nutrition related behaviors beneficial to health and well-being".

- Nutrition education will be integrated into various subjects for students in grades K-12. Nutrition education will teach the skills and knowledge needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors that promote and protect their health.
- Staff who provide nutrition education shall have appropriate training and shall participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver an accurate nutrition education program.
- Students shall receive USDA supported nutrition messages throughout the schools, classrooms, cafeterias, and district website that will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. This includes, but is not limited to, messages that reinforce fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat dairy products, as well as physical activity.
- The district will develop and teach a health and physical education curriculum that meets New York State Health and Physical Education Standards.

- The school district shall provide information to families that encourage them to teach their children about health, nutrition, and the benefits of providing nutritious meals.
- Nutrition, health education, and physical activity resources should be provided to parents in the form of handouts, posting on the district website, newsletters, or presentations that focus on healthy lifestyles.
- As appropriate, the district will promote nutrition education activities that involve parents, the students, and the community.

2. Physical Activity

The primary goal for East Ramapo Central School District's physical activity component is to provide opportunities for students 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 healthy lifestyle.

Our physical activity program encompasses a variety of opportunities for students to be physically active, including physical education as the foundation followed by recess, after school physical activity programs, physical activity breaks within regular classrooms and health education that includes learning about the importance of physical activity.

A. Physical Activity

- Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP):
Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programming provides opportunities at the district and school levels to coordinate and implement a variety of school-based physical activities to enable students to participate in 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each day.
 - Schools are required to develop and implement a comprehensive school physical activity program that provides physical activity for students and which allows staff to participate in or lead physical activity opportunities throughout the school day.
 - Schools should encourage students' participation in the nationally recommended guideline of at least 60 minutes a day, between school and home of moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Each school is strongly encouraged to provide least one physical activity break for every class period/block. Moving between classes shall not be counted as a physical activity break.

B. Recess

- Whenever possible, elementary schools will provide daily outdoor recess for at least 30 minutes that encourages physical activity. It is recommended that children be outdoors if the temperature is 32 degrees, or above including the wind chill factor.
- Schools shall not use participation or nonparticipation in recess as a way to punish or discipline students.
- Recess may be used as a reward or celebration option in addition to the regularly scheduled recess.
- Elementary school principals will strongly recommend scheduling recess before lunch.

C. Physical Education

- A quality physical education program is an essential component for students to learn and participate in physical activity. Physical education is an academic subject and serves as the foundation for other physical activities offered in school. Physical education provides students with a planned sequential K-12 standards-based program of curricula and instruction designed to develop motor skills, knowledge, and behaviors for healthy active living, physical fitness, sportsmanship, self-efficacy, and emotional intelligence.
- Schools will ensure that every student from K-12 receives age-appropriate quality physical education.
- Students are required to meet the NYS Physical Education Standards at the elementary, middle school and high school levels. The PE curriculum is built around helping students meet these standards.
- Schools will strive to adhere to the NYS requirements concerning the amount of time students receive physical education on a weekly basis.
 - all pupils in grades K-3 shall attend and participate in physical education on a daily basis.
 - all pupils in grades 4-6 shall attend and participate in physical education not less than three times per week.
- Physical education should provide safe and satisfying physical activity for all students, including students with special needs.
- Physical Education teachers must be certified in Physical Education. Teachers receive staff development throughout the year during Superintendent's Conference Days. Opportunities to attend conferences and meetings are provided.
- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge/self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities.

3. Other School-Based Activities

The district is committed to establishing a school environment that is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity for all. The district will, therefore, adopt the following standards.

- A. School Meals: School meals will, at a minimum, meet the program requirements and nutrition standards described in this policy.
- B. Free and Reduced-Priced Meals: The district will provide free and reduced price meals to students according to the terms of the National School Lunch Program, federal law and rules of the state. The district will inform parents of the eligibility standards for free and reduced priced meals. Reasonable efforts will be made to protect the identity of students receiving such meals. A parent has the right to appeal any decision with respect to his application for free or reduced priced meals to the Superintendent of Schools or his designee.
- C. Water: Students will be made aware of the availability of free water during meals. It will be available in the cafeteria and supervisory staff will allow students to access water throughout the meal period.

D. Eating Environment:

- Meals will be scheduled at appropriate times, with adequate time and space to eat and socialize in a pleasant environment, which has attractive serving and eating areas.
- It is strongly encouraged that buildings exceed an allotment time of 10 minutes for breakfast and 15 minutes for lunch from the time the student is seated.
- Lunch periods are to be scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible.
- Elementary school principals will strongly recommend scheduling recess before lunch.
- Convenient access to hand-washing facilities before meals should be available. Students should wash their hands before eating.
- Students should be discouraged from sharing their foods and beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about sanitation, allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

E. Qualifications of School Food Service Staff:

USDA has established minimum professional standards requirements for school nutrition professionals who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The standards, another key provision of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), aim to institute minimum education standards for new State and local school nutrition directors as well as annual training standards for all school nutrition professionals. These new standards will ensure school nutrition personnel have the knowledge, training, and tools they need to plan, prepare, and purchase healthy products to create nutritious, safe, and enjoyable school meals. Professional Standards for All School Nutrition Program Employees Summary of the Final Rule Effective July 1, 2015

http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/profstandards_flyer.pdf

Nutrition Guidelines for School Meals

Food Services and Summer Food Service Program:

All schools within the district participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). At this time, the District also operates additional nutrition-related programs and activities relative to the school gardens.

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:

- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations as indicated by the USDA Nutritional Standards (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals>) and the American Dietary Guidelines.
- The district will also provide meals to students via the Summer Food Service Program which will meet all federal and state guidance. The district will inform the community of the program, location of the sites, and dates.

- Encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e. whole grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables.
- Are served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste and safety to ensure high quality meals.
- Use food commodities made available under the Federal Commodity Program for school meals.
- Ensure the safety and security of the food and facility, by limiting access to the food service operations to the food service staff and authorized personnel, and comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.

Nutrition Guidelines for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages

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* [**defined as midnight the night before until 30 minutes after the last bell, however, if a specific structured educational program(s) held by a school those shall be included. **] will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. 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. Smart Snacks nutrition standards can be found at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

In addition, where food or snacks are sold or provided to students as part of a fundraiser, party/celebration or teacher-to-student incentive, the district strongly encourages and will promote healthy options in accordance with the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. The district strongly encourages the consideration and incorporation of non-food offerings and physical activity into any and all fundraisers, party/celebration and teacher-to-student incentive.

Where foods and beverages are sold or served at events outside of the school day, it is recommended that 50% of the offerings meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

Implementation, Evaluation and Communication of Policy

It is important to monitor how well the District's Wellness Policy is being put into practice in each school. The district will use the following strategies to ensure the policy is monitored, evaluated and communicated to the school community and followed in each school.

1. Implementation & Monitoring

- The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- The District Wellness Advisory Committee will be responsible for overseeing, monitoring, and evaluating the District's Wellness Policy & Regulations. A report will be prepared and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools on an annual basis during the month of June.
- The principal or other designated individual in each school will be responsible for ensuring that the wellness policy is followed and for reporting progress to the district wellness committee.
- A PTA representative will also be identified for ensuring compliance within PTA programs.

- Every two or three years, the wellness committee will review the latest national recommendations pertaining to school health and will update the wellness policy accordingly.

2. Progress & Evaluation

- Progress reports will be shared with the public using the following channels of communication *district website, school websites and board meetings*.
- The annual progress report will be posted on the district and individual schools websites every September. The report will include a link to the District's Wellness Policy, a progress report for each school in the district that includes a summary of wellness activities and contact information for wellness committee members. The report will include how to join the committee.

3. Communication

- The District's Wellness Policy, Regulations and annual progress reports will be shared with the public via any or all of the following: the district website, direct mailings to families, presentations to the PTA, press release to local news media. These documents will be available in English, Spanish and Creole Education on nutrition and physical activity, particularly as it relates to new standards, will be provided to parents in the form of handouts, the school website, articles and information provided in district or school newsletters, presentations that focus on nutrition, physical activity and healthy lifestyles, and through any other appropriate means available to reach parents.
- When possible, the food service director and/or a representative will be available to speak with parents during open house.

Ref: P.L. 108-265 (Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004)
42 USC §§1758(f)(1); 1766(a) (Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act)
42 USC §1779 (Child Nutrition Act)
7 CFR §210.10; 210.11 (National School Lunch Program participation requirements – standards for lunches, snacks, and competitive foods)
7 CFR §220.8 (School Breakfast Program participation requirements – nutrition standards)

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