

Mason City School District's Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition

PREAMBLE

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, nationally 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;

Whereas, nationally only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the MyPlate;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, the Mason City School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect health and well-being of the children and the adults by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Mason City School District that:

- The school district will develop a Wellness Committee to engage students, parents, teachers, food service 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 opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. Wellness Committee

Mason City Schools will create and maintain a Wellness Committee to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The Wellness Committee also will serve as a resource to school sites for implementing those policies and will be comprised of individuals representing the school and community, including parents, students, representatives of the school's food service department, administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.

- The Wellness Committee functions with the Team Nutrition Committee, meetings set by the Child Nutrition Supervisor at a minimum of twice per year, which include a designated administrator from each building, as well as at least one representative from Health Services, Physical Education Department, Student Services, teachers, local community physicians and dietitians, parents, students, and two board members who oversee policy review.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals

Menus will be posted on the District website and will include nutrient content and ingredients. District guidelines for all food and beverages sold during the school day are, at a minimum, equal to the guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Nutrition Standards, as defined in the district's Administrative Guidelines are to be followed.

Elementary Schools - Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. Foods and beverages sold individually shall include, but not be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

Middle and High Schools - In middle and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte lines, during the school day) will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

- **Beverages**
 - Not allowed: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners
- **Foods**
 - Foods and beverages offered over the course of a school week should be nutrient-dense, including whole grain products and fiber-rich fruits and vegetables to provide students a variety of choices to maintain a balanced diet. A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold.
Foods and beverages available during the school day should include a variety of healthy choices that are of excellent quality, appealing to the students, and served at the proper temperatures.
 - Foods and beverages available during the school day should include selections that are zero transfat and minimize saturated fats, sodium and sugar, as are defined by the Dietary guidelines for Americans.
 - If ala carte foods are available, they should include a variety of choices of nutritious foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat or non-fat dairy foods.
 - Nutrition information for products offered in snack bars, ala carte, vending, and school stores should be readily available at the product display.
- **Portion Sizes**
 - Foods and beverages available during the school day should offer modest portion sizes age-appropriate for elementary, middle, and high school students, respectively.

III. Nutritional and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutritional Education and Promotion

Mason City School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of physical education and health education classes and linked to standards in other content areas, such as science.
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- includes training, as appropriate, for teachers and other staff members.

Communication with Parents

The district/school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged. Marketing efforts are to include minimizing corporate advertising and promoting food and beverages that meet USDA Smart Snacks in Schools

IV. Student Wellness

Physical Education (P.E.) K-12

All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will have access to physical education **taught by a certified physical education teacher**. We will educate all students on the characteristics of a healthy lifestyle, teaching each child how to be responsible for their own fitness and why this is important. Physical educators will provide opportunity for fitness testing and means for maintaining a minimal level of fitness. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Schools should discourage 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 should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

All elementary, middle, and high schools will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. All high schools, and middle schools as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs.

After-school child care 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.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

V. Staff Wellness

Mason City School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Mason City Schools will establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, local hospital representative, dietitian or other health professional, recreation program representative, union representative, and employee benefits specialist.

The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the school health council annually.

VI. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. Monitoring includes criteria outlined in board policy Student Wellness Program EFG to include assessment once every 3 years.

As part of that review, the school district, through the Wellness Committee, will:

- set goals
- review our nutrition and physical activity policies;
- provide/enhance of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and
- provide/enhance nutrition and physical education policies and program elements.

The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.