

WELLNESS POLICY ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION

Preface

Barring unreasonable funding constraints this policy is in effect with all existing Wellness Policies as of this date.

Approved by the Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Committee – 4/26/06

Approved by the Lakeville School Committee – 4/26/06

Approved by the Freetown School Committee – 5/10/06

***Freetown Public Schools/Lakeville Public Schools
Freetown-Lakeville Regional School District***

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, 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, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

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 Freetown, Lakeville and Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Districts are committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Freetown, Lakeville and Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Districts that:

- The school districts will 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.
- Students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- 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; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; 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 the National School Lunch Program.

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- 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. School Health Committees

Beginning in 2007-08, the Freetown, Lakeville, and Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Districts will require each school to form a nutrition and physical activity advisory committee to:

1. Help raise awareness of the importance of nutrition and physical activity
2. Assist in the development of local policies that address issues and goals, including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. Assisting with the implementation of nutrition and physical activity standards developed by the school Nutrition and Physical Activity Advisory Committee with the approval of the Department of Education and the State Board of Health.
 - b. Integrating nutrition and physical activity into the overall curriculum.
 - c. Ensuring that professional development for staff includes nutrition and physical activity issues.
 - d. Ensuring that students receive nutrition education and engage in healthful levels of vigorous physical activity.
 - e. Improving the quality of physical education curricula and increasing training physical education teachers.
 - f. Enforcing existing physical education requirements.
 - g. Pursuing contracts that both encourage healthy eating by students and reduce school dependence on profits from the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value.

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

A. Access to School Nutrition Programs

- Ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious food they need.
- During each school day, the food program *should offer breakfast* and lunch under the nutritional guidelines of the USDA E3.
- The school food service program is strongly encouraged to meet the ethnic dietary needs.

B. 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 (1%) and fat-free milk³ and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

Schools should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

Breakfast

- Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals

- Schools 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-price school meals.

Meal Times and Scheduling

Schools:

- will provide students with at least 15 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, lunch should NOT be scheduled before 11:00 a.m. or after 1:30 p.m.;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (elementary & middle schools);
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before and after they eat meals or snacks; and
- should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (*e.g.*, orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

- Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school districts' responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

- Schools should 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.

Foods and Beverages Sold individually (i.e., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

- **Elementary Schools.** The 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, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.
- **Middle/Junior High and High Schools.** *In middle/junior high and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:*

Beverages

- ***Allowed:*** water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);
- ***Not allowed:*** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, (with the exception of coffee to faculty and seniors at the high school) excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods

A food item sold individually:

- will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
- will have no more than 35% of its *weight* from added sugars;
- will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.

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. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

Portion Sizes:

Limit portion sizes of foods 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;
- 1.3 ounces for cookies;
- Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, and other bakery items (with the exception of muffins and bagels which are 4-5 oz.)
- 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 a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

Fundraising Activities. Only approved beverages may be sold in vending machines, cafeterias, student stores, or promoted at all sites accessible to students with this exception: Non-approved beverages may be sold for fundraising activities or at school events occurring at least ½ hour after the end of the school day provided that vending machines, student stores, and cafeterias are not utilized for such sales.

Snacks. Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The districts will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

- If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

Rewards. *Schools will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.*

Celebrations. Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day. The districts will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

School-sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances). Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will be encouraged to meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion

A. Nutrition Education and Promotion

The Freetown, Lakeville and Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Districts aim 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 not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, and taste testing.
- 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;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and

B. Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.

Toward that end:

- classroom health education will 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 may be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

C. Communications with Parents

- The districts/schools will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
- The districts/schools will post nutrition information on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages.
- The districts/schools will provide parents a list of foods that meet the districts' snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.
- The districts/schools will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.
- The districts/schools 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.

D. Community/Family Involvement

Beginning with the 2007-08 school year, every school should:

- Require an annual body mass index percentile by age for each student.
- Upon request from parents the student's body mass index with an explanation of the possible health effects of body mass index, nutrition, and physical activity will be provided.
- Include as part of their annual report to parents and the community the amounts and specific sources of funds received and expenditure made from competitive food and beverage contracts.

E. Staff Wellness

The Freetown, Lakeville and Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Districts highly value the health and wellbeing of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Each school building has a Health and Safety Committee that monitors issues affecting staff/employee health as well as student health.

School staffs are encouraged to model healthy eating behaviors. Schools should offer wellness programs that include personalized instruction about healthy eating and physical activity.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical/Health Education (Including Family/Consumer Science)

A. Physical Education (PE) classes:

The physical education requirements at each school will be no less than the following:

- Apponequet Regional High School: 1 semester course of PE per year for 4 years (150 minutes of PE per 7 day cycle)
- Freetown Lakeville Middle School: 3 terms of PE per year for 4 years (120 minutes of PE per 6 day cycle)
- George R. Austin Intermediate School (Lakeville grades 4-5; Freetown grade 5): One 40 minute PE class per 6 day cycle for the entire school year.
- Elementary schools: K – one 40 minute PE class per week for ½ of the school year. 1-3 (4 at FES) – one 40 minute PE class per week for the entire school year.

B. Daily Recess

All elementary and intermediate school students will have at least 25 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.

C. Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

The high school will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as varsity, junior-varsity and freshmen sports, and during the winter months access to the school's fitness facility. In addition the high school athletic trainer/certified strength and conditioning coach will help design and supervise fitness programs for students and staff who choose to utilize this opportunity.

The Freetown-Lakeville Regional School District has an active community recreation program which provides various sports/swimming programs for both adults and children and makes the district's swimming pool available for recreational community use.

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.

D. Physical Activity and Punishment.

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

E. Health/Family and Consumer Science Education

At the elementary and intermediate school levels health education is incorporated into the regular curriculum. At the middle school level student receive one term of health education per year for 4 years (120 min per 6 day cycle). At the high school level health is taught as a 1 semester course (6 days of a 7 day cycle) in the 10th grade and includes nutrition issues.

Family and Consumer Science is taught at the Middle School for one term per year.

Two weeks out of each term is spent on nutrition issues. The high school program offers an elective for one term called Sports Nutrition and covers nutrition for 5 weeks in the Food Technology II course. As of September 2007, Fitness for Life will be incorporated into the Consumer Science electives.

F. Safe Routes to School

The school districts 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 districts will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts.

G. 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. **Monitoring and Policy Review**

A. **Monitoring**

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with the district-wide nutrition, physical activity, and health education wellness policy. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or regional level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the school food services supervisor, who in turn will report to the individual building principal or designee. In addition, the districts' school food services supervisor will report to the wellness policy committee and the superintendent on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. The districts' review is scheduled to be in early 2006.

The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the districts' established nutrition, physical activity, and health education wellness policy, based on input from schools within the districts. That report will be provided to the school committees and also distributed to all school health and safety committees, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, the wellness policy committee, and school health services personnel in the districts.

B. **Policy Review**

To help with the initial development of the districts' wellness policies, the wellness policy committee has conducted a focus-group type of review of the districts' existing nutrition, physical activity, and health education environment and policies. The results of this review are being used to identify and prioritize wellness policy needs.

The wellness policy committee will continue to meet on a regular (quarterly) basis to assess the effects of the current policy and to review, refine, and continue to write wellness policy.

Assessments of the current school environment will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement.

As part of that review, the school districts will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The districts, and individual schools within the districts, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.