

Mercer County School District #404



Local Wellness Policy 2021

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Preface

In accordance with 7 CFR 210.31(c), a Local Education Agency that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) must establish a Local School Wellness Policy for all schools under its jurisdiction. As of June 30, 2017, Local Wellness Policies must meet the minimum requirements set forth in the Final Rule: Local School Wellness Policy Implementation Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

Local Wellness Policies are a valuable tool in the promotion of student health and wellness through the NSLP and SBP. Schools play an essential role in preparing students for successful futures, and proper nutrition and physical activity are key to creating constructive learning environments. Local Wellness Policies provide guidance to further support schools efforts to provide students with a successful and healthy future.

Wellness Policy Committee

Wellness Policy Leadership

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Wellness Policy Committee Responsibilities

Public Involvement

The Local Education Agency permits and encourages public involvement in Local Wellness Policy development, implementation, updates, and reviews. Therefore, the LEA shall invite a variety of stakeholders within the general public to participate in Local Wellness Policy processes. The following methods of communication will be utilized to notify the general public of the opportunity to participate in these processes:

- School Website
- The Eagle Eye Monthly Newsletter

Assessments

Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, assessments of the Local Wellness Policy must occur no less than every three years. Mercer County School District #404 shall conduct assessments of the Local Wellness Policy every year, beginning in 2010 and occurring every year thereafter. These assessments will:

- Ensure the wellness policy is in compliance with USDA, State, and Local rules and regulations
- Compare the LEA's wellness policy to model wellness policies
- Measure the progress made in achieving the goals as outlined in the LEA's wellness policy

Updates

The Wellness Policy Committee must update the Local Wellness Policy as appropriate in order to fit the needs and goals of the Local Education Agency. The LEA shall make the following available to the public:

- The Local Wellness Policy, including any updates to the policy, on a yearly basis
- The triennial assessment, including progress toward meeting the goals outlined in the wellness policy

Through the following channels:

- School website

Records

The Local Education Agency shall maintain record of the Local Wellness Policy. This includes keeping a copy of the current wellness policy on file and maintaining documentation of the following actions:

- The most recent assessment of the policy
- Availability of the wellness policy and assessments to the public
- Reviews and revisions of the policy, including the individuals involved and the efforts made to notify stakeholders of their ability to participate in the process

In Addition

- School meals shall be served in clean, safe and pleasant settings with adequate time provided for students to eat, at a minimum, in accordance with state and federal standards and guidelines. The National Association of State Boards of Education recommends that students have adequate time to eat, relax and socialize: at least 10 minutes after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.
- District #404 will maintain a Wellness Committee made up of parents, students and other school personnel to provide input into the decision-making process.
- Food providers shall work with suppliers to obtain foods and beverages that meet the nutrition requirements of school meals and nutrition standards for those sold individually.
- The wellness committee shall work closely with school instructional staff to reinforce nutrition instruction and foster an environment where students can learn about and practice healthy eating.
- School officials shall take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages on school campuses meets federal, state and local laws and guidelines.
- Students, parents, school staff and community members bringing foods and beverages to school for class parties and celebrations must provide pre-packed items. A list of recommended food and beverage options will be provided upon request.
- To reduce competition with nutritionally balanced school meals and enhance student safety, it is recommended that, to the extent practicable, students are not permitted to leave school grounds to purchase foods or beverages.
- Schools shall take efforts to promote nutritious food and beverage choices consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Food Guidance System (Choose My Plate) such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods and whole grain products.
- Nutrition education shall be provided by trained and well-supported staff.
- All foods and beverages made available on campus shall comply with the federal, state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.
- For the safety and security of food, access to any area involved in storage, preparation or service of food on the school campus shall be limited to persons approved by the school administration, including but not limited to school employees.

- Under Public Act 96-0349 Mercer County School District #404 will adopt policies which promote both prevention and management of life-threatening allergic reactions, also known as anaphylaxis.
- Students identified to be at risk may have a 504 plan, an action plan, food allergy alert form detailing their allergy history, or an individual health care plan (IHCP).

Nutrition

The Local Education Agency recognizes the important role nutrition plays in academic performance as well as overall quality of life. The National Education Association references numerous articles supporting the effects of nutrition on the classroom, for example, hunger often has a negative impact on students' success, attendance, and behavior.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 18.5 percent of the nation's youth was considered obese in 2015-16. This percentage increased 1.3 percent when compared to the previous year. Conversely, 15.7 percent of American families experienced food hardship in 2017. Through participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's School Nutrition Programs, the LEA commits to serving nutritious meals to students in order to prevent both overconsumption of nutrient-poor foods and food insecurity to give students the best chance to succeed inside and outside the classroom.

Nutrition Standards

Meals

All reimbursable meals served for the purposes of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must meet or exceed USDA nutrition standards and regulations. This includes meeting standards for each of the meal pattern components (i.e. Grains, Meat/Meat Alternates, Fruits, Vegetables, and Milk) as well as meeting or exceeding the limitations set for calories, sodium, saturated fat, and trans fat.

Competitive Foods

All competitive foods and beverages sold must comply with the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards (7 CFR 210.31(c)(3)(iii)). Competitive foods and beverages refer to those that are sold to students outside the reimbursable meal on the school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day). This includes, but is not limited to, vending machine and à la carte items.

Other Foods and Beverages

School personnel are not to use food as an incentive or reward for students except on an individual basis when all other options have been exhausted. These food incentives should be used for a short period of time and infrequently.

Classroom Rewards

- A smile
- Going first
- Verbal praise
- Sit by friends
- Teaching the class
- Helping the teacher
- Enjoy class outdoors
- A field trip for the class
- Choosing a class activity
- Walk with a teacher during lunch
- Eat lunch outdoors with the class
- Eat lunch with a teacher or principal
- Extra credit or class participation points
- Taking care of the class animal for a day
- Have lunch or breakfast in the classroom
- A photo recognition board in a prominent location in the school
- A note from the teacher to the student commending his or her achievement
- A phone call, email, or letter sent home to parents or guardians commending a child's accomplishment
- Recognition of a child's achievement on the school-wide morning announcements or school website
- Ribbon, certificate in recognition of achievement or a sticker with an affirming message (e.g. "Great job")
- Take a trip to the treasure box (filled with: stickers, temporary tattoos, pencils, pens, highlighters, sidewalk chalk, notepads, erasers, bookmarks, etc.)

Fundraisers

- School-based organizations shall be encouraged to raise funds through the sale of items other than food. If school-based organizations choose to raise funds through the sale of food items, it is encouraged they use healthy choices.
- The school will implement the following non-food fundraising ideas:

Fundraising Ideas

- Raffle
- Candles
- Book sale
- Cookbook
- Carwash
- Walkathons
- Student artwork
- Stuffed animals
- Stadium pillows
- School photo ID
- Educational games
- Holiday decorations
- Shopping donation programs
- School mascot temporary tattoos
- Faculty and/or student talent show
- Teacher/student sports competition
- Auction of donated goods and services
- Balloon bouquets for special occasions
- Bottled water with the schools own label
- Refillable water bottle with the school logo
- Glow in the dark novelties (popular at dances)
- Greeting cards, especially designed by students
- School calendars with all the important school dates on them
- Party bags for kids' birthday parties filled with non-food novelties
- Sale of flowers and balloons for the family to purchase for student graduates
- School spirit items- tee-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, lanyards, pennants, bracelets and caps
- Growing and/or selling flowers and plants for holidays such as Valentine's Day and Mother's Day

*These fundraisers have the added benefit of promoting physical activity for students.

Mercer County High School Food Fundraising Approval Form

Each fundraising group shall complete this form and get prior approval by a principal before proceeding with a fundraising activity.

Group Name/Organization: _____

Name of Advisor: _____ Date of Fundraiser: _____

Fundraising Activity Description (What are you selling?): _____

Describe where and when the fundraising would be conducted: _____

Why do you want to raise the money (purpose/goal/for what activity)? _____

Have you held this fundraiser before? (Please circle) yes no
If so, when? _____

The following number of food fundraiser exemptions is allowed:
1 per week (2014 – 2015, 2015 – 2016)
2 per month (2016 – 2017, 2017 – 2018)
1 per month (2018 – 2019 and later)

Date Submitted: _____

Approved:

Denied:

Reason: 1) Date Already Reserved
2) Organization has had too many food fundraisers
3) Other (Explain):

Principal Signature

Date

A list of exempted fundraisers must be kept in each principal's office for a minimum of 3 school years.

Nutrition Education

In accordance with the Illinois Learning Standards, the Local Education Agency shall meet all Illinois requirements and standards for Health Education. The Local Education Agency shall include nutrition education within the health education curriculum and integrate nutrition education into other core subjects, as appropriate. Various grade levels and curriculums shall use nutrition education information, research, and materials from the following resources:

- Students in preschool through grade 12 shall receive nutrition education as part of a sequential program that is coordinated within a comprehensive health education curriculum. The program shall be designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to adopt healthy eating behaviors and aimed at influencing students' knowledge, attitudes and eating habits. Special emphasis should be placed on nutrition education in preschool through primary grades as eating habits are established at a young age. The curriculum shall be consistent with and incorporate relevant Illinois Learning Standards.
- To maximize classroom time and to achieve positive changes in students' eating behaviors, nutrition education shall be integrated into the standards-based lesson plans of other school subjects like math, science, language arts, physical education, health, family and consumer science and social sciences.
- To achieve positive changes in students' eating behaviors, it is recommended that nutrition education opportunities be provided to students each year. Contact hours may include a combination of classroom instruction; nutrition education provided in the cafeteria; or health fairs, field trips and assemblies providing nutrition education.
- The nutrition education program shall include enjoyable interactive activities such as contests, promotions; taste testing, field trips and school gardens.

Nutrition Promotion

The District shall implement nutrition promotion techniques through multiple channels, including the cafeteria, classroom, and home.

The District shall make cafeteria menus and nutrition information available through the following platforms:

- District Website
- Monthly News Bulletins
- Schools shall support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. This support shall begin in elementary school and continue through middle and high school.

- Parents shall be provided information to help them incorporate healthy eating and physical activity into their student's lives. This information may be provided in the form of handouts, postings on the school/district website, information provided in school/district newsletters, presentations that focus on nutrition and healthy lifestyles and any other appropriate means available for reaching parents.
- It is recommended that food providers share information about the nutritional content of school meals and/or individually sold foods with students, family and school staff.
- All food service personnel shall have adequate pre-service training and regularly participate in professional development activities that provide strategies for providing tasty, appealing and healthy school meals; nutrition education strategies including coordination of classroom and cafeteria activities; and effective promotional techniques to encourage healthy eating habits.

Food loss and waste continue to be an issue facing the nation's food supply. In order to prevent food waste, the District will make every effort to produce the precise number of meals needed on any given day by using production records and resources such as the USDA's Food Buying Guide. However, in the event excess food remains, the District will continue to provide food to students in need beyond the meals provided through the USDA School Nutrition Programs. Therefore, the District shall follow the established food sharing plan, in accordance with Public Act 102-0359, and federal and local regulations and sanitation codes:

- Implement Offer vs. Serve
- Implement Share Tables
- Donate Safe Food to Local Health Department at the end of the school year

Marketing

The Local Education Agency will prohibit the marketing and advertising of all foods and beverages that do not meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards on the school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day). The marketing standards described above apply, but are not limited to, oral, written, and graphic statements made for promotional purposes. Items subject to marketing requirements include, but are not limited to, posters, menu boards, vending machines, coolers, trash cans, scoreboards, and other equipment. This policy does not require schools to immediately replace equipment that does not meet this requirement, however, the District shall implement these standards as equipment needs replaced in the future.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is a key component of the health and well-being of all students. Physical activity lowers the risk for certain diseases, including obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Physical activity also helps improve brain function, allowing students to perform better in school.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends adolescents get at least 60 minutes of physical activity five days per week. Nearly 79 percent of school-age children fall short of meeting this requirement. The Local Education Agency recognizes this connection and commits to promoting and providing opportunities for physical activity during and outside the school day.

Physical Education

- Students in preschool through grade 12 shall participate in regular physical education that enables them to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness; emphasizes self-management skills including energy balance (calories in minus calories out); is consistent with state/district's standards/guidelines/framework; and is coordinated within a comprehensive health education curriculum. The curriculum shall be consistent with and incorporate relevant Illinois Learning Standards.
- Physical education shall be provided by trained and well-supported staff that is certified by the state to teach physical education. All physical education teachers shall regularly participate in continuing education activities that impart the knowledge and skills needed to effectively promote enjoyable lifelong healthy eating and physical activity among students.
- The physical education program shall be closely coordinated with the other components of the overall school health program. Physical education topics shall be integrated within other curricular areas. In particular, the benefits of being physically active shall be linked with instruction about human growth, development, and physiology in science classes and with instruction about personal health behaviors in health education class.
- It is recommended that students participate in physical education daily except on block scheduled days for those public schools engaged in block scheduling. Special emphasis should be placed on promoting an active lifestyle in preschool through primary grades as health habits are established at a young age. Accommodations shall be made for students with disabilities, 504 plans, and other limitations.
- Schools shall provide a daily supervised recess period to elementary students.
- Because students should engage in a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity a day, the physical education program shall actively engage families as partners in providing physical activity beyond the school day.

Other Opportunities for Physical Activity

The District shall include additional physical activity opportunities, outside of Physical Education class, during the school day through the following:

- Students shall be provided opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and afterschool programs including intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- Schools are encouraged to limit extended periods of inactivity. When activities such as mandatory testing make it necessary for students to be inactive for long periods of time, it is recommended that schools give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.
- Schools are encouraged to develop community partnerships with other child-serving organizations such as park districts and YMCA's to provide students with opportunities to be active.
- Schools are encouraged to provide student and community access to and promote use of the school's physical activity facilities outside of the normal school day.
- Physical activity facilities and equipment on school grounds shall be safe.
- Schools are encouraged to work with the community to create a community environment that is safe and supportive of students walking or biking to school.

The following opportunities for participation in school-based sports shall be offered to students each year:

- Football – 7th-12th
- Cross Country 7th-12th
- Volleyball 7th-12th
- Golf 9th-12th
- Basketball 7th-12th
- Wrestling 7th-12th
- Cheer 7th-12th
- Poms 9th-12th
- Softball 9th-12th
- Baseball 9th-12th
- Track 7th-12th

Measuring Implementation & Community Involvement

- The district superintendent shall be charged with the operational responsibility for ensuring that each school meets the local wellness policy requirements.
- The district superintendent shall appoint a district wellness team/council that includes parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public to oversee development,

implementation and evaluation of the wellness policy. In addition, it is recommended that the district superintendent also appoints teachers (including preschool- grade 12, family and consumer science, physical education and health educators) and health professionals (school nurse) as members of the team/council. Double check to see if we have all the key players involved.

- The terms of district wellness team/council members shall be staggered for continuity.
- The appointed district wellness team/council shall be responsible for:
 - creating and maintaining bylaws for operation;
 - assessment of the current school environment;
 - development of a wellness policy;
 - presenting the wellness policy to the school board for approval;
 - measuring the implementation of the wellness policy; and
 - recommending revision of the policy, as necessary.
- The principal of each campus shall be responsible for implementation of the local wellness policy and shall appoint a school-based evaluation team to develop and implement an annual evaluation plan.
- The school-based evaluation team shall evaluate policy implementation and identify areas for improvement. The evaluation team shall report their findings to the campus principal and develop with him/her a plan of action for improvement, as needed.
- The wellness team/council shall hear reports from each campus group annually.
- Before the end of each school year the wellness team/council shall recommend to the district superintendent any revisions to the policy it deems necessary.
- The wellness team/council shall report to the superintendent and school board annually on the progress of the wellness team/council and the status of compliance by the campuses.

References

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3. Public Act 094-0199. www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=094-0199
4. Illinois School Code. www.ilga.gov/legislation
 - a. Daily Physical Ed Requirements- Section 27-6 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/27-6]

- b. Rules for Comprehensive Health Education- (23 Ill. Adm. Code 253) issued pursuant to the Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act [105 ILCS 10].
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7. Executive Summary, Shape of the Nation 2001. National Association of Sports and Physical Education (NASPE), 2001. www.aahperd.org/naspe/pdf_files/shape_nation.pdf
8. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005, Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Agriculture, 2005. www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines
9. Fit, Healthy and Ready to Learn, National Association of State Boards of Education, 2000.
10. Choose My Plate, United States Department of Agriculture.
<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
11. Minimum School Meals Requirements- section 9(f)(I), 17(a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(f)(1), 1766(a)0
12. Minimum School Meals Requirements- subsections (a) and (b) of section 10 of the Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. 1779)
13. Illinois School Food Service- III. Adm. Code Section 305.
14. Alliance Product Calculator
https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/smart_snacks/alliance_product_calculator/

RESOURCES FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- Fit, Healthy and Ready to Learn, National Association of State Boards of Education. 2000. www.nasbe.org/HealthSchools/index.html
- HealthierUS School Challenge, United States Department of Agriculture. www.fns.usda.gov/tn/HealthierUS/criteria_instructions.pdf
- Mercedes Independent School District Student Nutrition/Wellness Plan. 2004. www.Mercedes.k12.tx.us/menus/Nutrition%20PolicyRJ0-8-04.pdf
- Model Local School Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition, National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity, 2005. www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/WellnessPolicies.html
- School Nutrition Association Local Wellness Policy Guidelines, School Nutrition Association. 2005. www.schoolnutrition.org/Index.aspx?id=1075

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