

# **WABASH COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #348**

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

### **BELIEF STATEMENT**

The Board of Education of Wabash Community Unit School District #348 is committed to providing a learning environment that supports and promotes wellness, good nutrition, and an active lifestyle and recognizes the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity and the capacity of students to develop and learn. The entire school environment shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence students' beliefs and habits and promote health and wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity. In addition, school staff and parents shall be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

### **INTENT**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a total school environment that promotes and supports student health and wellness, helps to reduce childhood obesity and meets the requirements of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and the Illinois School Code, including, without limitation, goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness; nutrition guidelines for all foods available during the school day; a plan for measuring implementation including designating one or more persons charged with operational responsibility; and involving parents, students, school food service providers, the school board, school administrators, and the public in developing this policy.

### **RATIONALE**

A disturbing number of children are inactive and do not eat well. The result is an alarming 16 percent of children and adolescents are overweight – a three-fold increase since 1980. Congress passed the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 on June 30, 2004. Recognizing the role schools can play in health promotion; this law requires local education agencies participating in a program authorized by the National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to develop a local wellness policy. The objectives of the wellness policy are to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health and reduce childhood obesity. In addition, Public Act 094-0199 amends the Illinois School Code, requiring the Illinois State Board of Education to establish a state goal that all districts have a wellness policy.

The link between nutrition and learning is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating and regular physical activity is demonstrably linked to reduced risk for mortality and development of many chronic diseases. Schools and school communities have a responsibility to help students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to establish and maintain lifelong healthy eating patterns. Well-planned and well-implemented wellness programs have been shown to positively influence children's health.

Schools also have a responsibility to help students establish and maintain lifelong habits of being physically active. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, regular physical activity is one of the most important things people can do to maintain and improve their physical health, mental health, and overall well-being. Regular physical activity reduces the risk of premature death in general and of heart disease, high blood pressure, colon cancer, and diabetes. Exercise and movement improve brain efficiency for learning and memory. It improved concentration, focus and test scores as well.

## **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

### **I. Coordinated School Health Team**

Wabash Community Unit School District #348 has created a Coordinated School Health Team to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. This Health Team will consist of individuals who represent the school and the community, and will include parents, students, and school food authority representatives, members of the school board, school administrators and teachers.

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

Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. Schools must establish standards to address all foods and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside of school meal programs. These standards should focus on increasing nutrient density, decreasing fat and added sugars, and moderating portion size. (Attachment A shows healthful food and beverage options for school functions).

**School Meals** – Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be served in clean, safe and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations; and
- shall take efforts to promote nutritious food and beverage choices consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Food Guidance System (My Pyramid) such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods and whole grain products.

**Breakfast** – Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn. Breakfast meals will be designed to provide ¼ of the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) for the following nutrients: calories, protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A, and vitamin D.

Students will be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast. Schools will, at the discretion of the Wabash Community Unit School District #348 School Board, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program. Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through communication efforts.

**Lunch** – School meals will feature a variety of age-appropriate healthy choices that are tasty, attractive, and of high quality. Lunch meals will be designed to provide 1/3 of the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) appropriate for age or grade level for the following nutrients: calories, protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A, and vitamin D.

The District strives to provide meals that are designed to incorporate the following recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines:

- no greater than 35% calories from fat;
- no greater than 10% calories from saturated fat;
- minimize trans-fats, sodium, and cholesterol;
- maximize dietary fiber;
- promote whole grains, fruits and vegetables, and low fat dairy choices;

### **Meal Times and Scheduling**

The district will schedule meal periods at appropriate times and provide students with ample time to eat after sitting down for breakfast and lunch.

### **Free and Reduced-priced Meals**

The district 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. Towards this end, Wabash Community Unit School District #348 will utilize a Point of Sales system which personalizes the payment between only the student and the cashier. Schools must ensure that reimbursable school meals meet the program requirements and nutrition standards set forth and the promotion of availability of school meals to all students.

### **Qualifications of School Food Service Staff**

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. Development programs will 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 with one another during meal times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

### **III. Food Safety**

All food service equipment and facilities will meet applicable local and state standards for safe food preparation and handling, sanitation, and workplace safety.

### **IV. Nutrition Education and Physical Activity**

Wabash Community Unit School District #348 aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and integrate physical activity into the classroom setting.

#### **GOALS FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION**

- The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students' eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education is offered to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to adopt healthy eating behaviors and is 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.
- It is recommended that nutrition education 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. This may include a combination of classroom instruction, nutrition education provided in the cafeteria and assemblies providing nutrition education.

#### **GOALS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

- The primary goal for a school's physical activity component is to provide opportunities for every student 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.
- A comprehensive physical activity program encompasses a variety of opportunities for students to be physically active, including: physical education, recess, walk-to-school programs, after-school physical activity programs, health education that includes physical activity as a main component, and physical activity breaks within regular classrooms.
- All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily

physical education. Elementary school students will receive 150 minutes/week (or its equivalent) of physical activities including physical education, supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity. All middle and high school students will receive 225 minutes/week (or its equivalent) for the entire school year. Middle and high school students should spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

## **V. Goals for Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness**

Policies established under this category create a school environment that provides consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and being physically active.

### **Communications with Parents**

Schools shall support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will send home school menus.

Parents should be encouraged 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 school should provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day.

### **Staff Wellness**

Wabash Community Unit School District #348 and food service staff and faculty are encouraged to become full partners in the district's wellness goals. In support of this goal, nutrition and physical activity educational opportunities will be provided to all district and food service staff. These opportunities will address diverse topics related to healthy lifestyles, nutrition and physical activity, and will be provided in the form of educational and informational materials, presentations and workshops.

Wabash Community Unit School District #348 and food service staff are encouraged to model healthy eating behaviors. In conjunction with our local hospital, Wabash Community Unit School District #348 will continue to offer health screenings to all employees.

## **VI. Policy Implementation**

### **Monitoring**

On each school campus, one individual will be assigned to ensure compliance with standards of the Local Wellness Policy in his/her school. This individual will report on the school's compliance to the Chairperson of the Local Wellness Policy.

The District Lunch Supervisor will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within the school food service areas and will report on this matter to the chairperson of the Local Wellness Policy.

### **Reporting**

The Chairperson of the Local Wellness Policy Committee will report on the district's compliance with the wellness policy to the school board.

### **Policy Review**

The Coordinating School Health Team will meet at least annually to review policy, compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of the policy review, the school district will:

- review nutrition and physical activity policies and program elements as a provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and
- review nutrition and physical activity.

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

## **Attachment A**

### **Healthful Food and Beverage Options for School Functions\***

At any school function (parties, celebrations, meetings, etc.) healthful food options should be made available to promote student, staff and community wellness. Examples of nutritious food and beverages that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are listed below.

- Raw vegetable sticks/slices with low-fat dressing or yogurt dip
- Fresh fruit wedges – cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon, pineapple, oranges, tangelos, etc.
- Sliced fruit – nectarines, peaches, kiwi, star fruit, plums, pears, mangos, apples, etc.
- Fruit salad
- Cereal and low-fat milk
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- Frozen fruit pops with fruit juice or fruit as the first ingredient
- Dried fruits – raisins, cranberries, apples, apricots
- Single serving applesauce or canned fruit in juice
- Peanut butter with apple wedges or celery sticks
- Fruit smoothies made with fat-free or low-fat milk
- Trail mix (dried fruits and nuts)
- Dry roasted peanuts, tree nuts and soy nuts (not coconut or palm nuts)
- Lean meats and reduced fat cheese sandwiches (use light or reduced fat mayonnaise in chicken/tuna salads)
- Party mix (variety of cereals, nuts, pretzels, etc.)
- Pretzels or reduced fat crackers
- Baked chips with salsa or low-fat dip (Ranch, onion, bean, etc.)
- Low-fat muffins (small or mini), granola bars and cookies (graham crackers, fig bars)
- Mini bagels with whipped light or fat-free cream cheese
- Pasta salad
- Bread sticks with marinara
- Fat-free or low-fat flavored yogurt & fruit parfaits
- Fat-free or low-fat pudding cups
- Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products (string cheese, single-serving cottage cheese, cheese cubes)
- Flavored soy milk fortified with calcium
- Pure ice cold water

*\*This list is not all inclusive and is meant only to provide parents and school staff with guidance for healthier food and beverage choices. Not all food and beverage items on this list will necessarily meet district nutrient standards (Attachment A) as items vary in sugar, fat and calorie content from brand to brand. However, all of the items in the list are believed to be consistent with the intent of the wellness policy to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.*

*Approved by the Board of Education on June 20, 2022*

## **Attachment B**

### **Fundraising Ideas**

- Raffle
- Candles
- Book sale
- Cookbook
- \*Car wash
- \*Walk-a-thons
- 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.



## **Attachment C**

### **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.)