

**ELLSWORTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
STUDENT WELLNESS, NUTRITION, AND FOOD SALES ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The Ellsworth School Department (ESD) recognizes that student wellness and good nutrition are related to student’s physical and psychological well being and their readiness and/or willingness to learn. The ESD is committed to providing school environments that support student wellness, healthy food choices, nutrition education, and regular physical activity. The ESD further believes that students who learn and practice healthy lifestyles in their formative years are more likely to be conscious of the importance of good nutrition and exercise as adults, practice healthy habits, and consequently reduce their risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and other chronic diseases.

The ESD is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children’s health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

Therefore, it is the policy of the ESD that:

- All ESD schools will participate in available federal and state school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks] and will follow all State and Federal regulations).
- 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 cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will offer a pleasant setting with adequate time for all students to eat.
- All students in grades PreK-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- ESD schools will provide comprehensive 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, school gardens, Farm to School and with related community services. Learning the rules of the cafeteria (hand washing, sitting, not sharing foods etc.)
- The ESD 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.

DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions shall apply:

- Competitive foods: Any foods or drinks sold or made available to students on ESD Property during the school day other than meals that are part of the National School Breakfast/Lunch Program. This includes vending machine sales.
- Nutrition education: A planned sequential instructional program that provides knowledge and teaches skills to help students adopt and maintain lifelong healthy eating patterns.
- Smart Snacks in School (SSIS): mandated by Healthy Hunger – Free Kids Act of 2010: The rule outlines standards for all foods and beverages sold in school outside of the school meals program.
- School day: Is considered 12:00am till 30 min after school is dismissed.

- Recess: The active free play with peers.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

The ESD Food Services Director (FSD) will ensure that all food products provided to students through the School Breakfast, National School Lunch, After School Snack, Summer School and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Programs, meet the nutrition standards established by state, and federal regulations. In addition all foods and beverages served through these programs will be free of artificial food dyes, contain zero partially hydrogenated oils (naturally occurring trans-fats excluded) and will be caffeine-free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances (i.e. chocolate and coffee milk).

Healthy Food Promotion

To the extent possible, meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will be appealing and attractive by utilizing smarter lunchroom techniques including the following:

- Whole fruit options displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans);
- Sliced or cut fruit available daily;
- Daily fruit options displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students;
- All available vegetable options given creative or descriptive names;
- All staff members, especially those serving, trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal;
- White milk placed in front of other beverages in coolers;
- Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas;
- Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development and promote ideas;
- Attractive, pleasant dining rooms;
- Student artwork displayed in the service and/or dining areas;
- Daily announcements used to promote and market menu options;
- Menus posted on the District website or individual school websites, and will include nutrient content and ingredients; and
- The District child nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs with MD notice;

Breakfast Program

To encourage that all children have the opportunity to receive breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn, the ESD will:

- Operate a School Breakfast Program;
- To the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, “grab-and-go” breakfast or breakfast during morning break or recess;
- Notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program; and
- Encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials or other means.

Summer Food Service Program

When possible, schools in which more than 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for at least two weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year.

Meal Times and Scheduling

To the extent possible, schools will:

- Provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- Schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- Not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- Schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary schools);
- Provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- 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 district's responsibility to operate a food service program, continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools will be provided. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for food service directors, kitchen managers, and cooks, according to their levels of responsibility.

Cafeteria Norms Concerning Foods and Beverages

K-8 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.

Competitive Food Sales on ESD Property

Competitive foods may only be offered at the middle and high school level. Competitive foods are prohibited at the elementary level. The District is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus during the school day support healthy eating. Brand specific advertising of food or beverages is prohibited in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses except for food and beverages meeting standards for sale or distribution on school grounds in accordance with Department of Education rules. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs during the school day will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Foods and beverages available will not contain artificial food dyes, with one exception : Ellsworth High School may have artificial dye in no more than 25% of the products sold in Ala Carte and Vending. Notice of which products contain artificial dye will be posted near the point of sale.

A summary of the standards and information are available at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks available at www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnacks.

Snacks

Snacks provided by the school during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children’s diets and health. ESD schools providing snacks to students will follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. These foods should include fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy foods, whole grains, and not include foods containing partially hydrogenated oils or artificial food dyes.

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

Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

- Foods brought in for school parties and celebrations will meet the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The district will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
- Foods brought into the classroom to share with other students will meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards. The District will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
- ESD schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a behavioral punishment, (except when stated in a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP)).

Food Sold at School-sponsored Student Events

Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day that are not open to the public will meet the nutrition standards for competitive foods/Smart Snacks in Schools.

Food Sold at School-sponsored Community Events

ESD recognizes that proceeds from the sale of foods and beverages outside of the School Meal Program are a significant source of funds for student activities and/or authorized community/ESD organizations. Therefore, as allowed by Maine Department of Education Rule Chapter 51, the ESD permits the sale of food and beverages outside the total food program to:

- a. Student Council;
- b. Attendees at ESD-sponsored events held on ESD property; and
- c. The public at community events held on ESD property in accordance with the ESD facility use policy.

When foods and beverages are sold to raise funds for schools, student, and/or other approved activities, a minimum of one food will be offered from each of the following categories: fruits and vegetables (not fried); low fat/fat free dairy products; whole grains, nuts, and/or seeds. Funds from all food and beverage sales on ESD property shall accrue to the benefit of the ESD's nonprofit school food service program. The ESD, as authorized by Chapter 51, hereby authorizes funds raised through authorized sales outside the total food service programs to accrue to the sponsoring school, approved student organization, or other ESD-approved community organization and uses in accordance with applicable cash-management and administrative procedures, as applicable.

Fund Raising

To support children's health and school nutrition education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the nutrition standards for competitive foods/Smart Snacks in Schools. Schools will encourage fund raising activities that promote physical activity. Teachers will be provided a list of acceptable fund raising activities.

Nutrition Education

- Nutrition education will be taught as part of the comprehensive health education program based upon Maine's System of Learning Results. Teachers are encouraged to integrate school gardens, when they exist, into their curriculum.
- Health education at the secondary level will be taught by a certified health education teacher.
- Whenever possible, health education in grades PreK through 8 will be taught by a certified health education teacher. In the absence of a certified health teacher, health education will be the responsibility of classroom teachers.
- Students in grades PreK-8 will receive health education for the entire school year.
- Course grades shall be awarded in the same way grades are awarded in other subject areas and shall be included in calculations of grade point average, class rank and academic recognition programs such as honor roll.

Physical Education

- All ESD elementary students in each grade will receive physical education for at least 60 minutes per week throughout the school year. All ESD secondary students must complete 1 credit in physical education.
- The ESD physical education program will be taught by teachers certified to teach physical education and whom will participate in relevant professional development a minimum of once per year.
- All physical education students in grades 4-HS will participate in an annual fitness assessment using Fitnessgram or other district approved assessment tool. Results from the fitness assessment will be sent home to parents a minimum of once per year.
- The physical education curriculum will focus on life-long activities that are inclusive for all students, and requires students to be moderately to vigorously active for at least 50% of class time during most or all physical education class sessions.
- Waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education classes will not be granted.

Physical Activity / Daily Recess.

Elementary and middle 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 and Punishment

Teachers and other ESD 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, unless participation would cause a student to be a danger to himself/herself or others or is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP). Specifically, recess is not to be taken away to have students complete work that they owe. Recess is not to be taken away for misbehavior. The one exception to this is when a student is serving an in-school suspension.

Physical Activity Before and After School

In addition to interscholastic sports programs, all ESD schools should attempt to offer co-curricular physical activities, such as clubs or intramural programs. These programs will strive to include all interested students regardless of athletic ability.

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 and to the extent possible:

- 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;
- when possible, opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Safe Routes to School

The ESD 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 district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

Use of ESD Facilities Outside of School Hours

ESD 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. ESD policies concerning safety and use of school kitchen will apply at all times.

Staff Wellness

The ESD 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. The ESD should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee. 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 ESD staff.

Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement Implementation Plan

The Superintendent of the ESD will be the designated individual to ensure the development of an action plan for implementation of the wellness policy, and to manage, coordinate, monitor the implementation of said policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines specific to each school, and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where, and when. This plan will outline the specific goals and objectives outlined in this policy for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. Progress on the implementation will be reported to the ESD Board quarterly. This wellness policy and the progress reports can be found on the ESD website.

Recordkeeping

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at ESD Central Office. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including (1) Efforts to actively solicit Wellness Policy Team membership from the required stakeholder groups; and (2) These groups’ participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy;
- Documentation of annual policy progress reports for each school under its jurisdiction; and
- Documentation of the triennial assessment of the policy for each school under its jurisdiction;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with public notification requirements, including: (1) Methods by which the wellness policy, annual progress reports, and triennial assessments are made available to the public; and (2) Efforts to actively notify families about the availability of the wellness policy.

Annual Progress Reports

The District will compile and publish an annual report to share basic information about the wellness policy and report on the progress of the schools within the district in meeting wellness goals. This annual report will be included in the ESD annual report and will include information from each school within the District. This report will include, but is not limited to:

- The website address for the wellness policy and/or how the public can receive/access a copy of the wellness policy;
- A description of each school’s progress in meeting the wellness policy goals;
- A summary of each school's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation;
- The name, position title, and contact information of the designated District policy leader(s) identified in Section I; and
- Information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the Wellness Policy Team.

The District will track, analyze, and report on any correlations between improvements in health-promoting environments with education outcomes, such as absenteeism, disciplinary referrals,

test scores, average grades, or health measures such as consumption of whole grains, fruits, or vegetables through the school meal programs or BMI, or psycho-social measures such as self-reported “connectedness,” or other school climate measures.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the District will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the District are in compliance with the wellness policy;
- The extent to which the District’s wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s model wellness policy; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the District’s wellness policy.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee is responsible for managing the triennial assessment.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The Wellness Policy Team will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or as District priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. **The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.**

Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications

The District is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The District will actively communicate ways in which representatives of Wellness Policy Team and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for that district. The District will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. The District will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the district’s website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy. The District will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the district and individual schools are communicating other important school information with parents.

The District will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. The District will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

References: Maine DOE Rules Chapter 51; 42 U.S.C. § 1751

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