

GRADUATE ARKANSAS - WELLNESS POLICY

The health and physical well-being of our students directly affects their ability to learn. Childhood obesity increases the incidence of adult diseases occurring in children and adolescents such as heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes. The increased risk carries forward into their adulthood. Research indicates that a healthy diet and regular physical activity can help prevent obesity and the diseases resulting from it. It is understood that the eating habits and exercise patterns of students cannot be magically changed overnight, but at the same time, the Board of Directors believes it is necessary to strive to create a culture in our schools that consistently promotes good nutrition and physical activity.

The problem of obesity and inactivity is a public health issue. The Board of Directors is keenly aware that it has taken years for this problem to reach its present level and will similarly take years to correct. The responsibility for addressing the problem lies not only with the school and the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), but with the community and its residents, organizations and agencies. Therefore, the District shall enlist the support of the larger community to find solutions which improve the health and physical activity of our students.

Goals

In its efforts to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity, the District will adhere to the ADE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocol. To promote nutrition and physical activity that will improve student wellness, the District has established the following goals:

1. Appoint a district school health coordinator (designated district official) who shall be responsible for ensuring that the school fulfills the requirements of this policy;
2. Implement a grade appropriate nutrition education program that will develop an awareness of and appreciation for nutrition and physical activity throughout the curriculum;
3. Follow the Arkansas Physical Education and Health Education Frameworks.
4. Not use food or beverages as rewards for academic or classroom performances;
5. Ensure that drinking water is available without charge to all students;
6. Provide students with ample time to eat their meals in pleasant cafeteria and dining areas;

7. Establish no more than nine (9) school wide events that permit exceptions to the food beverage limitations established by Rule. The schedule of the events shall be by school, approved by the principal, and shall be part of the annual school calendar;
8. Abide by the current allowable food and beverage portion standards;
9. Meet or exceed the more stringent of Arkansas' or the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Nutrition Standards for reimbursable meals.
10. Restrict access to competitive foods as required by law and rule;
11. Provide professional development to all district staff on the topics of nutrition and/or physical activity;
12. Utilize the School Health Index available from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to assess how well the district is doing at implementing this wellness policy and at promoting a healthy environment for its students;

Advisory Committee

To enhance the district's efforts to improve the health of our students, a School Nutrition and Physical Activity Advisory Committee (SNPAAC) shall be formed. It shall be structured in a way that ensures age-appropriate recommendations are made that correlate to our district's grade configurations. The SNPAAC shall have the powers and responsibilities delegated to it by the statute and Rule and are incorporated into this policy by reference. The overarching goal of the committee shall be to promote student wellness by monitoring how well the district is doing at implementing this policy. The SNPAAC shall use modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 10 and 11 of the CDC's School Health Index as a basis for annually assessing each school's progress toward meeting the requirements of this policy. The results of the annual assessment shall be included in each school's ACSIP, provided to the superintendent and reported to the board. Goals and objectives on nutrition and physical activity shall also be included in the ACSIP if applicable. Members of the district's Board of Directors, school administrators, school nutrition personnel, teacher organizations, parents, students, professional groups (such as nurses), and community members shall be included in the development, implementation, and periodic review of the District's wellness policy to the extent interested persons from each group desire to be included.

The SNPAAC shall provide recommendations to the school district concerning menus. Such recommendations shall be based, at least in part, on the information the committee receives from the district on the requirements and standards of the National School Lunch Program and from menus for the National School Lunch Program on a quarterly basis. The district will work with the SNPAAC to:

- Encourage participation in extracurricular programs that support physical activity,

such as walk-to-school programs, biking clubs, after-school walking, etc.;

- Promote the reduction of time youth spend engaged in sedentary activities such as watching television and playing video games; and
- Encourage the development of and participation in family-oriented and community based physical activity programs.

The District shall periodically assess, with input from the SNPAAC, the District and individual school's status regarding implementing this policy. The assessment shall be based, at least in part, on:

- the extent to which the school is in compliance with this policy;
- the extent to which this policy compares to other model local school wellness policies;
- and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of this policy.

The assessment results along with the content of this policy shall be periodically reported to the public, including parents, students, and other members of the community.

Legal References: A.C.A. §§ 20-7-133, 134, and 135

A.C.A. §§ 6-20-709

Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act 42 U.S.C. §1751 et seq. as amended by PL 111-296 (section 204) of 2010. (Section 204 is codified at 42 U.S.C. § 1758(b))

Child Nutrition Act of 1966 42 U.S.C. § 1771 et seq.

ADE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body

Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols

Allowable Competitive Foods/Beverages – Maximum Portion Size List for Middle, Junior High, and High School

Nutrition Standards for Arkansas Public Schools