

DISTRICT WELLNESS

The Easton School Committee recognizes that wellness and good nutrition are related to physical and psychological well-being and readiness to learn. The School Committee is committed to providing a school environment that supports wellness, healthy food choices, nutrition education, and regular physical activity. The School Committee believes that those who learn and practice healthy lifestyles may be more likely to be conscious of the importance of good nutrition and exercise as adults, practice healthy habits, and reduce their risk of obesity, diabetes and other chronic diseases.

Nutrition Standards

The school unit will ensure that meals provided by its Food Services Program meet the nutrition standards established by federal regulations. Sales of foods and beverages that compete with the school lunch program (and/or school breakfast program) must follow the USDA Smart Snack Standards and be in compliance with the School Committee's policy EFE, Competitive Food Sales/Sales in Competition with the School Food Services Program. Easton School Department does not supply any foods or beverages containing non-nutritive sweeteners. Information on the nutritional content and ingredients of meals is available upon request. School menus are sent home monthly with students, are posted in both buildings and on the district website.

Assurance

This policy serves as assurance¹ that school unit guidelines for reimbursable meals are not less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act.

Nutrition Education

Nutrition education will be integrated into the instructional program through the health education program and/or the curriculum as aligned with the content standards of Maine's system of Learning Results. Nutrition education should focus on skills needed to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors. Students and staff should receive consistent nutrition messages throughout the schools, including classrooms, cafeteria, and school-home communications.

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums and cafeteria. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and staff and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multichannel approach by school staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

The district will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students and staff throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in the school meal programs. The promotion will occur through ensuring the school meal programs are using Smarter Lunchroom techniques: and in school nutrition standards. Additional promotion techniques that the district and individual schools may use are available at <http://www.foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org>

Food and Beverage Marketing

Food and beverage advertising. Brand-specific advertising of food and beverages is prohibited in school buildings or on school grounds except for food and beverages meeting standards for sale or distribution on school Smart Snacks and USDA School Lunch and Breakfast programs.

For the purposes of this subsection, “advertising” does not include advertising on broadcast media or in print such as newspapers and magazines, clothing with brand images worn on school grounds or advertising on product packaging.

Physical Activity

The school unit will strive to provide all students developmentally appropriate opportunities for physical activity through physical education classes, recess periods for elementary school students, and extracurricular activities (clubs, intramural and interscholastic athletics). School programs are intended to build and maintain physical fitness and to promote healthy lifestyles. The schools should encourage parents to support their children’s participation in physical activities, including available before- and after-school programs.

Easton School Department provides physical education instruction for all elementary students one to three times a week. Physical education instruction for middle school students will be at least 90 minutes a week. High school students in grades 9 and 10 will receive physical education instruction 2-3 times per week. Students in grades 11 and 12 may participate in the Lifetime Sport elective of 1.5 hours per week.

The district physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments (via the Presidential Youth Fitness Program or other appropriate assessment tool) and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

Waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education classes are respected and accommodated accordingly.

Other School-Based Wellness Activities

The schools, with prior approval of the Superintendent/designee, may implement other appropriate programs that support consistent wellness messages and promote healthy eating and physical activity.

The School Committee may approve policy regulations or guidelines for refreshments served at parties or celebrations during the school day or for food as rewards, or may delegate the responsibility for such regulations or guidelines to administrators at the district or school level.

The school unit may develop programs that encourage staff to learn and engage in healthy lifestyle practices.

Implementation and Monitoring

The Superintendent/designee shall be responsible for the oversight of implementation of the wellness policy in the schools, for monitoring efforts in the schools to meet the intent of this policy and achieve wellness goals, and for reporting to the School Committee on an annual basis.

Monitoring may include surveys or solicitation of input from students, parents, staff, and school administrators.

Reports may include, but are not limited to:

- A. The status of the school environment in regard to student wellness issues

- B. Evaluation of the school food services program and compliance with nutrition guidelines
- C. Summary of wellness programs and activities in the schools
- D. Feedback from students, parents, staff, school administrators and wellness committee
- E. Recommendations for policy and/or program revisions

The school unit will publicly disseminate information about school wellness activities, healthy eating and school nutrition, and the results of wellness program evaluations/monitoring on the school unit's wellness policy implementation efforts on the school unit's website or by other means, as appropriate.

The School Committee will review the wellness policy periodically to set or revise goals.

Appointment and Role of the Wellness Committee

The School Committee shall appoint a district-wide Wellness Committee comprised of at least one of each of the following:

- A. School Committee member;
- B. School administrator;
- C. Food Services Director/designee;
- D. Student representative;
- E. Parent representative; and/or
- F. Community representative.

The Wellness Committee may also include:

- A. School nurse
- B. Teachers
- C. Guidance counselor;

- D. Social worker;
- E. Community organization or agency representative;
- F. Other staff, as designated by the School Committee; and/or
- G. Other persons, as designated by the School Committee.

The Wellness Committee shall serve as an advisory committee in regard to student wellness issues and will be responsible for making recommendations related to the wellness policy, wellness goals, administrative or school regulations and practices, or raising awareness of student health issues.

With the prior approval of the Superintendent/designee, the Wellness Committee may survey parents, students and the community and/or conduct focus groups or community forums. Easton School Department will provide wellness activities that include nutrition and physical activity components.

The Wellness Committee shall provide periodic reports to the Superintendent/designee and, as requested, to the School Committee.

Wellness Goals

The School Committee has identified the following goals associated with wellness:

Goals for Nutrition Education

The schools will provide nutrition education that focuses on the skills students need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.

The schools' nutrition education will be provided in a sequential, comprehensive health education program aligned with the content standards of the Maine system of Learning Results.

Nutrition education will be integrated into other subjects as appropriate to complement, not replace, the health education program.

The school unit will provide foods that meet or exceed the federal nutrition standards, students will be provided at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and 20 minutes to eat lunch. Lunch will be scheduled at appropriate hours of the day, with adequate space to eat, and a clean and safe meal environment.

Water shall be accessible during the hours of school operation, and during meals through choices such as drinking fountains and vending machines.

Applications for free/reduced priced meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year. The application is also available on the district website.

Appropriate professional development will be provided for food services staff.

Goals for Nutrition Promotion

School unit staff will cooperate with agencies and community organizations to provide opportunities for nutrition-related student projects and learning experiences.

Consistent nutrition messages will be disseminated throughout the school unit in the classroom, the cafeteria, and school-home communications.

Administrators and staff will be encouraged to model nutritious food choices and eating habits.

Schools will encourage parents/guardians to provide healthy meals and snacks for their children through take-home materials or other means.

Students will have access to clean and safe drinking water throughout the school day and during school activities.

Schools will promote consumption of water as an essential element in maintaining overall health and wellness.

Goals for Physical Activity

The physical education program will provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to be physically fit and take part in healthful physical activity on a regular basis.

Students will develop motor skills and apply them to enhance their coordination and physical performance.

Students will demonstrate responsible personal and social behaviors in physical activity settings.

The physical education curriculum will be aligned with the content standards of the Maine system of Learning Results.

Physical education classes will keep all students involved in purposeful activity for a majority of the class period.

Physical education classes will provide opportunity to learn for students of all abilities.

The schools will provide a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable physical activity and fosters the development of a positive attitude toward health and fitness.

The schools will provide facilities adequate to implement the physical education curriculum for the number of students served.

Teachers are encouraged to provide regular daily physical activity breaks throughout the school day.

Schools will promote efforts to provide opportunities for students to engage in age-appropriate activities on most days of the week in both school and community settings.

The schools will provide opportunities for physical activity through a variety of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramural sports, interscholastic athletics and physical activity clubs.

Appropriate professional development will be provided for physical education staff and other staff involved in the delivery of such programs.

Goals for Other School-Based Activities

Goals of the wellness policy will be considered when planning school or classroom parties, celebrations or events.

Parents will be encouraged to provide nutritionally sound snacks from home and food for classroom parties or events.

Schools will encourage maximum participation in school meal programs.

Schools will encourage parents and students to take advantage of developmentally appropriate community-based after-school programs that emphasize physical activity.

The schools will encourage parents to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

As feasible, school physical activity facilities will be made available after school hours for student, parent and community use to encourage participation in physical activity.

School administrators, staff, parents, students and community members will be encouraged to serve as role models in practicing healthy eating and being physically active, both in the school environment and at home.

Student organizations will be encouraged to engage in fundraising projects that are supportive of healthy eating and student wellness.

School-based marketing of foods and beverages, such as through advertisements in school publications, school buildings, athletic fields, and other areas accessible to students should support the goals of the wellness policy.

The schools are encouraged to cooperate with agencies and community organizations to support programs that contribute to good nutrition and physical activity.

Legal Reference: 42 U.S.C. § 1751
Me. Dept. of Educ. Rule Ch. 51

Adopted: February 13, 2012

Revised: October 23, 2017