

RSU 56 WELLNESS

The RSU 56 Board recognizes that student wellness and good nutrition are related to students' social, emotional, mental and physical well being and their readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that supports student wellness, healthy food choices, nutrition education, and regular physical activity. The Board believes that students who learn and practice healthy lifestyles in their formative years 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

RSU 56 will ensure that meals provided by its Food Services Program meet the nutrition standards established by federal regulations.¹ Sales of foods and beverages must meet the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools Beverage Guidelines for sale during the official school day (midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day). The Federal School Nutrition Program and the School Breakfast Program shall be the sole provider of food served during the school day. Vending machines that have student access are to be managed by the RSU nutrition program.

Assurance

This policy serves as assurance² 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 should focus on knowledge and skills students need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors. RSU 56 will provide students with nutrition education taught by MDOE certified teachers in consumer science and health classes and will follow curricular standards established by the American Association of Family Consumer Science and the American Association for Health Education.

Goals for Nutrition Education

- The schools will provide nutrition education that focuses on the skills and knowledge students need to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles.
- Nutrition education will be integrated into other subjects as appropriate to complement, not replace, the health education program.
- Appropriate professional development will be provided for food services staff.

Goals for Nutrition Promotion

- RSU 56 will offer and promote a universal School Breakfast Program and utilize methods to serve school breakfast that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, "grab-and-go" breakfast, or breakfast during morning break or recess.

¹ Title 7-U.S. Department of Agriculture, Chapter 11-Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, Part 210-National School Lunch Program (7 C.F.R. § 210).

² See 42 U.S.C. § 1751(a)(2).

- RSU 56 will prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.
- RSU 56 will provide foods that meet or exceed the federal nutrition standards, adequate time for students to obtain food and eat, schedule lunch at appropriate hours of the day, provide adequate space to eat in a clean and safe meal environment without the constraint of outdoor clothing.
- The RSU 56 Nutrition Director will develop a system in which students and parents in each school will have input on meal options on an annual basis.
- Schools will consistently disseminate educational nutrition messages throughout school, classroom, cafeteria, community, and media.
- Schools will encourage parents/guardians to provide healthy meals and snacks for their children through take-home materials, newsletters or other means.
- Schools may cooperate with agencies and community organizations to provide opportunities for appropriate student projects and learning experiences related to nutrition.

Physical Education

RSU 56 will provide students with physical education taught by MDOE certified physical education teachers trained in best practice physical education methods, using age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with state/national standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong wellness.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students. Physical education classes and equipment will be adapted as necessary.

Physical Activity

RSU 56 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 program are intended to build and maintain physical fitness and to promote healthy lifestyles. The schools will encourage parents to support their children's participation in physical activities, including available before- and after-school programs.

Goals for Physical Education

- Curriculum and instruction will meet the standards established by the Maine Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (MAHPERD).
- 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 and build habits to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Physical education classes will provide opportunity to learn for students of all abilities.
- The schools will provide facilities and equipment adequate to implement the physical education curriculum for the number of students served.
- Physical education classes will keep all students involved in purposeful activity for a majority of the class period.
- Appropriate professional development will be provided for physical education staff and other staff involved in the delivery of such programs.

Goals for Physical Activity

- The school 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.
- 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.
- Students will be provided the opportunity for daily physical activity through physical education classes, daily recess periods, opportunities for fresh air, and the integration of physical activity.

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.

RSU 56 will encourage staff to participate in programs to learn and engage in healthy lifestyle practices and to use healthy alternative choices to promote academic performance and good behavior.

Goals for Other School-Based Activities

- Goals of the wellness policy will be considered when planning school or classroom parties, celebrations or events.
- Schools will not use foods and beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior except in the case where research based interventions are being used.
- Parents will be encouraged to provide nutritionally sound snacks from home for classroom parties or events.
- School 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.
- 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 publication, school buildings, athletic fields, and other areas accessible to students should support the goals of the wellness policy.
- Schools are encouraged to cooperate with agencies and community organizations to support programs that contribute to good nutrition and physical activity.

Implementation and Monitoring

The Superintendent/designee shall be responsible for the implementation of the wellness policy.

With the prior approval of the Superintendent/designee, the Wellness Committee may survey or solicit input from parents, students and the community and/or conduct focus groups or community forums.

Reports may include, but are not limited to:

- The status of the school environment in regard to student wellness issues
- Evaluation of the school food services program and compliance with nutrition guidelines
- Summary of wellness programs and activities in the schools
- Feedback from students, parents, staff, school administrators and wellness committee
- Recommendations for policy, program or curriculum revisions

Appointment and Role of the Wellness Committee

The Superintendent shall appoint a RSU Wellness Committee. The committee will be comprised of a cross section of all school community constituencies.

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 school community health issues. The Wellness committee shall provide periodic reports that contain minutes of the meeting to the Superintendent/designee and, as requested, to the Board.

Wellness Goals

- RSU 56 will provide opportunities for ongoing professional development for staff in areas of nutrition and physical activity.
- RSU 56 will encourage teachers, school personnel, students, and parents to serve as role models in practicing healthy eating and physically active lifestyles.

The wellness committee will promote the health and wellness resources offered through the RSU health insurance plan.

Legal reference: 42 U.S.C. § 1751

Cross reference: EFE Competitive Food Sales - Sales of Food in Competition with the School Food Services Program

Adopted: July 11, 2017