

# **Mt. Pulaski CUSD #23 Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition**

## **Preamble**

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for the majority of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood.

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines and concession stands include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies:

Thus, the Mt. Pulaski CUSD #23 is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Mt. Pulaski CUSD #23 that:

The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.

All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

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 religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs (including School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program).

Schools will provide 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, and with related community services.

## **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS**

### **Wellness Policy Committee**

The school district Wellness Policy committee will consist of administrators, teachers, head cooks, school nurse and parents.

### **Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served**

#### **School Meals**

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

be appealing and attractive to children;

be served in clean and pleasant settings;

meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;

offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;

serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and

ensure that all of the served grains are whole grain.

Schools should engage students through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, school websites.

## **Breakfast**

To 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:

Schools will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.

Schools will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation.

Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.

Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

## **Free and Reduced-price Meals**

Schools 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. Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems.

## **Meal Times and Scheduling**

Schools:

will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;

should schedule meal periods at appropriate times;

should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;

will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks;  
and

schools should 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, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should 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 or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

## **Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (outside of reimbursable school meals, *excluding concession stands*)**

### **Grade School (PK - 8)/ High School**

All foods and beverage sales sold individually outside of reimbursable school meal programs (including a la carte lines and vending machines) during the school day or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

### **Beverages**

Allowed: water without caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);

Not allowed: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sport drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

### **Foods**

A food item sold individually:

will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated trans fat combined;

will have no more than 35% of its *weight* from added sugars;

will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.

A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

## **Fundraising Activities**

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 above nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

## **Snacks**

Snacks served during the school day will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations.

## **Rewards**

Schools will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

## **Celebrations**

School should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

## **Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

### **Nutrition Education and Promotion**

Mt. Pulaski CUSD #23 aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;

is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social studies, and elective subjects;

promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;

emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);

links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;

includes training for teachers and other staff.

### **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:

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;

opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and

classrooms teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

## **Communication with Parents**

The district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school website, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus when requested. Schools should encourage parents 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 district will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

## **Staff Wellness**

Mt. Pulaski CUSD #23 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 district will 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 school staff.

## **Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

### **Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-12**

All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 150 minutes/week for elementary school students and 225 minutes/week for Junior High and High School students) for the entire school year. This excludes Juniors and Seniors who are participating in a sport (they are excused while in a sport). All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

### **Daily Recess**

All elementary school students (K-5) will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate physical activity 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 school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g. physical education) as punishment.

## **Safe Routes to School**

The school district 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 the police department in those efforts.

## **Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours**

School 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. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times. Those who want to utilize the facilities should contact the school administrator.

## **Monitoring and Policy Review**

### **Monitoring**

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school compliance to the superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the building principal. In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.



## **Policy Review**

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district will revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

This policy was developed with the sample found at [www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org](http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org)

## **Committee Members**

Terry Morgan	MPHS Principal
Gene Newton	MPGS Principal
Dianne Birge	MPGS Head Cook
Sue Reeter	MPHS Head Cook
Mindy Switzer	MPGS P.E./Language Arts Teacher
Ryan Deibert	MPHS P.E. Teacher
Pat Walsh	District Health Teacher
Sarah Farris	Parent

