

Wellness Policy and Guidance

Georgia-Alabama Schools DDESS

School Year 2010-11



The Georgia-Alabama School District 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.

DODEA Local Wellness Policy and Guidance

Georgia/Alabama School District's Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition

The Georgia/Alabama School District 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 Georgia/Alabama School District that these goals be met:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing, and reporting effectiveness of district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 and school staff 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; and accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning. Schools shall provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in the district will participate in available DoD Student Meal Programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks], Summer Food Service Program, and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program where applicable).
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education and other physical activity opportunities to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and the Student Meal Program, and with related community services.
- Schools in the district will be encouraged to join the USDA HealthierUS School Challenge (<http://vw.v.ms.usda.gov/tn/healthierus/index.htm>) and participate in the Team Nutrition Program (<http://mvw.ms.usda.gov/tnO>).

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Health Councils

The school district and/or individual schools within the district will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The councils also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. Our district health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, including parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators,

teacher association representative, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public. The council is chaired by a representative designated by the District Superintendent. The council chair is encouraged to coordinate participation in the HealthierUS School Challenge.

The council shall meet annually to set goals and assess district policy. There shall be subsequent meetings to address monitoring, reviews, and any specific district issues that may have arisen.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals. Meals served through the DoD Student Meal Program will meet the following goals:

- 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.¹
- Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk² and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (as defined by USDA).
- Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.^{2,3}

Schools should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the Student Meal Program in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents, students, and staff. Such information could be made available on menus, Web sites, cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

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, the following goals will be met:

- 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, including serving breakfast in the classroom, "grab-and-go" breakfast, or breakfast during morning break or recess.
- 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.

¹ To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetables and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.

² As recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005.

A whole grain is one labeled as a whole grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include whole wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal.

Free and Reduced-Priced 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 meals⁴. Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as "grab-and-go" or classroom breakfast.

Summer Food Service Program. Schools in which more than 50% of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for at least six weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year, and preferably throughout the entire summer vacation.

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, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- Should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
- Should schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (if recess is scheduled in the elementary school).
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
- Should 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 Student Meal Program. DoDEA will provide resources for key staff to attend training and development programs. These individuals will then work with all nutrition professionals in their corresponding schools to provide onsite training. Staff development programs could include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.⁵

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.

It is against the law for those limited persons to whom disclosure or use of application information is granted, to make others aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or "paid" meals. See Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, 42 U.S.C. §1758 (b)(6)(C).

School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.*, foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

Elementary Schools. The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

Middle/Junior High and High Schools. In middle/junior high and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) 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 or seltzer water⁶ without added 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 (as defined by USDA);
- **Not allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports 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 minimal amounts of caffeine).

Foods

- A food item sold individually:
 - o 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 and trans fat combined.
 - o Will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars.⁷
 - o 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.

Seltzer water may not be sold during meal times in areas of the school where food is sold or eaten because it is considered a "Food of Minimal "Nutritional Value" (Appendix B of 7 CFR Part 210).

⁷ If a food manufacturer fails to provide the *added sugars* content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from total sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from *added sugars*), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods from this total sugars limit.

- 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).⁸

Portion Sizes

- Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:
 - One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky.
 - One ounce for cookies.
 - Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items.
 - Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream.
 - Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt.
 - Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water.
 - The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

Fund raising Activities. To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities should not involve food or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size 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 or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The district will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

- If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the DoD Student Meal Program.

Rewards. Schools are encouraged not to use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic

Schools that have vending machines are encouraged to include refrigerated snack vending machines, which can accommodate fruits, vegetables, yogurts, and other perishable items.

performance or good behavior,⁹ and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations. Schools 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). The district will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

School-sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances). Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day are encouraged to meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

Meal Charges/Lost Meal Tickets/Unpaid accounts. The Wellness Committee will establish standards for meals provided to students who cannot or do not pay their account balances, as well as for those students who lose their meal tickets (where applicable). The Committee may wish to address issue by age level, situation, and/or recurrence factor.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. The Georgia/Alabama School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should include nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that meets the following goals:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based health education 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 is also integrated into classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, physical education, and elective subjects if possible.
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens if possible.
- 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.
- Teaches health literacy with an emphasis on accessing valid nutrition information, analyzing influences such as food marketing, as well as, setting goals and making responsible decisions related to food choices.
- Includes informational dissemination for students, teachers, other staff, and parents.

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

⁹ Unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP).

embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity in and out of school. Toward that end the following goals will be met:

- 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.
- If possible, opportunities for physical activity will be integrated into other subject lessons.
- Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communications with Parents. The district/individual schools will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/individual schools will offer healthy-eating information for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school Web sites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. 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/individual schools will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the district/individual schools will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The district/individual schools will provide information about the importance of physical education and student involvement in 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 a Web site, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework. The school can include families in fun and fitness nights, field days, and use of the school facilities for family physical activity after school and on weekends.

Food Marketing in Schools. School-based marketing of food brands is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged. Examples of food brand marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; in-school television; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Other marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; and sales of fruit for fundraisers.

Staff Wellness. The Georgia/Alabama School District 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. Each district/individual schools should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, local hospital representative, dietitian or other health professional, recreation

program representative, union representative, and employee benefits specialist, (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the school health council.) 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. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the school health council annually.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) K-12. The following goals will be met:

- All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities and those with special health-care needs, are required to receive physical education instruction, as prescribed by the DoDEA Physical Education Content Standards and course descriptions.
- All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher.
- Other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports, cheerleading, JROTC, marching band) will not be substituted for meeting the DoDEA physical education requirements.
- Students will spend at least 60% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School. The following goals will be met:

- All elementary, middle, and high schools will work collaboratively with the local community to ensure after-school physical activity programs are provided for students.
- All middle and high school students will be encouraged to take part in the school intramural program.
- All high schools will offer interscholastic athletic programs.
- Schools will offer a range of physical activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.
- Recess: All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.
- Schools will 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 will 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 (PE class) as punishment. Withholding recess is strongly discouraged.

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 Commands in those efforts.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours. School spaces and facilities will be available to students, staff, parent groups, and community members before, during, and after the school day; on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also will be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times and activities must be coordinated through the school principal and Base Commander.

Use of Community Facilities During School Hours. Districts/Schools will work closely with Commands, Morale Welfare and Recreation, Army Community Services, etc., to provide available community recreation and sport spaces and facilities for physical activity use by students and staff during the school day.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. The District Superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide Local Wellness Policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report annually on the school's compliance to the school District Superintendent or designee using the checklist provided.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report annually on this matter to the District Superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal) using the checklist provided.

The District Superintendent or designee will develop an annual summary report on district-wide compliance with the district's established Local Wellness Policy, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the Area Director and the Headquarters Chief, Logistics Division within two weeks after the end of each school year.

Policy Review. To help with the initial development of the district's wellness policies, each school in the district will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every year to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review the Local Wellness Policy; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary and at a minimum annually, revise the Local Wellness Policy and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

Wellness Policy Monitoring Checklist for Food Service

Please complete the checklist quarterly and submit to the Wellness point of contact at the district office.

Georgia/Alabama DDESS School District

Guideline/Procedure to be examined	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
School meals meet guidelines set forth in wellness policy.				
Menus are made available to families.				
Breakfast is provided at schools to the extent possible.				
Procedures are in place so that no social stigma is attached to students receiving free and reduced priced meals.				
A la carte items are offered according to USDA guidelines.				
Portion sizes are limited to those outlined in the wellness policy.				
Schools participate in available DoD Student Meal Programs.				
Qualified nutrition professionals administer the Student Meal Program and receive professional development as needed/required.				

Wellness Policy Monitoring Checklist for Schools

Please complete the checklist quarterly and submit to the Wellness point of contact at the district office.

School Name _____

Guideline/Procedure to be examined	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Students receive adequate time to eat. (20 min "seat time" for lunch and 10 min for breakfast)				
Lunch is scheduled between 11 am and 1 pm.				
Students are provided means to sanitize hands before eating.				
Activities are not scheduled during mealtime.				
List of alternative non-food rewards are made available to teachers.				
List of alternative healthy food items for celebrations are made available for parents.				
Class celebrations are limited to no more than one per class per month and healthy food items are encouraged.				
Students are encouraged to receive at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day (including their PE and recess periods).				
There are opportunities for staff wellness like health assessments, education or fitness activities.				

Wellness Policy Monitoring Checklist for Schools

Please complete the checklist quarterly and submit to the Wellness point of contact at the district office.

BASELINE DATA FOR SY 2010-11

(Percentage of schools answering “yes” to criteria)

Guideline/Procedure to be examined	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Students receive adequate time to eat. (20 min “seat time” for lunch and 10 min for breakfast)		100%		
Lunch is scheduled between 11 am and 1 pm.		78%		
Students are provided means to sanitize hands before eating.		67%		
Activities are not scheduled during mealtime.		78%		
List of alternative non-food rewards are made available to teachers.		11%		
List of alternative healthy food items for celebrations are made available for parents.		11%		
Class celebrations are limited to no more than one per class per month and healthy food items are encouraged.		56%		
Students are encouraged to receive at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day (including their PE and recess periods).		67%		
There are opportunities for staff wellness like health assessments, education or fitness activities.		22%		

Wellness Policy Committee

NAME	SCHOOL OR ORGANIZATION	EMAIL ADDRESS
CHERYL LUSANE	FAITH MS Administrator	Cheryl.lusane@am.dodea.edu
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GINA RICHARDSON	MAXWELL Parent	
LTC RUST	MAXWELL Parent	
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Staff Wellness Committee

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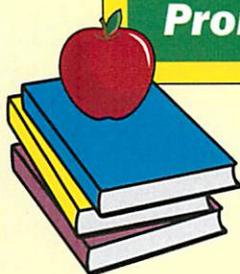
Committee
Suggestions and
other Resources
Georgia-Alabama Schools
DDESS

School Year 2010-11



Healthy Celebrations

Promoting a Healthy School Environment



Birthday parties and holiday celebrations at school provide a unique opportunity to help make healthful eating fun and exciting for children. Schools can take advantage of classroom celebrations to serve food that tastes good, is nutritious, and provides students with an opportunity for nutrition education experiences.

But It's Just a Cupcake...



Typically, foods for school celebrations include cupcakes, candy, cookies and soda. So what's the harm? There is nothing wrong with an occasional treat, but unhealthy choices have become the norm rather than the exception. Parties, treats used as classroom rewards, food fundraisers, vending machines, snacks and school stores constantly expose children to high-fat, high-sugar, low-nutrient choices.

Overall, our children's eating habits are poor. Only two percent of children meet all Food Pyramid recommendations. Most children do not eat enough fruits, vegetables or whole grains. Obesity rates among children are on the rise, with serious health consequences. Constant exposure to low-nutrient foods makes it difficult for children to learn how to make healthy food choices. By providing students with nutritious choices wherever food is available (including the classroom), schools can positively influence children's eating habits.

Benefits of Healthy Celebrations

Healthy Kids Learn Better: Research clearly demonstrates that good nutrition is linked to better behavior and academic performance. To provide the best possible learning environment for children, schools must also provide an environment that supports healthy behaviors.

Provides Consistent Messages: Providing healthy classroom celebrations demonstrates a school commitment to promoting healthy behaviors. It supports the classroom lessons students are learning about health, instead of contradicting them. Healthy celebrations promote positive lifestyle choices to reduce student health risks and improve learning.

Promotes a Healthy School Environment: In order to positively change eating behaviors, students need to receive consistent, reliable health information and ample opportunity to use it. Healthy celebrations are an important part of providing a healthy school environment.

Creates Excitement About Nutrition: Children are excited about new and different things, including fun party activities and healthy snacks (see back for ideas). School staff and parents need not worry that children will be disappointed if typical party foods aren't served in the classroom. Holiday treats and traditional birthday parties with cake will still be available at home.

Protects Children with Food Allergies: When parents send in food, it is difficult to ensure the safety of children with food allergies. Schools can protect food allergic children by providing nonfood celebrations or, if food is served, obtaining it from known sources such as the school food service program.



How-To's for Happy Healthy Parties¹

- Variety is the "spice of life" and the "life of the party." Plan several contrasting activities – active and quiet, indoor and outdoor, individual and group.
- Try something new. Children like adventure. In addition to familiar games and foods, offer something different.
- Plan creative experiences such as art, music and cooking.
- Involve children in planning and preparing the party. Let them make decorations and favors.
- Put food in its proper place. Refreshments should compliment the fun, not become the "main event."
- Be sure that each child receives a prize or favor, if such awards are given.
- Don't use food as rewards or prizes.
- Choose foods for fun, good taste and health. Parties that feature healthful foods provide opportunities for children to practice making wise food choices.



¹ Printed with permission from *Let's Party: Party Ideas for School and Home*. West Virginia Department of Education, 1994. Ordering information at: <http://wvde.state.wv.us/ctrc/materials.html>.

What Schools Can Do

Ideas for Healthy Celebrations

Schools can help promote a positive learning environment by providing healthy celebrations that shift the focus from the food to the child. Choose a variety of activities, games and crafts that children enjoy. When food is served, make it count with healthy choices! Parties can even incorporate a fun nutrition lesson by involving children in the planning and preparation of healthy snacks. Try these ideas for fun activities and healthy foods at school parties and other celebrations.

Activities to Celebrate the Child

- Plan special party games and activities. Ask parents to provide game supplies, pencils, erasers, stickers and other small school supplies instead of food.
- Create a healthy party idea book. Ask school staff and parents to send in healthy recipes and ideas for activities, games and crafts. Compile these ideas into a book that staff and parents can use.
- Give children extra recess time instead of a class party. For birthdays, let the birthday child choose and lead an active game for everyone.
- Instead of food, ask parents to purchase a book for the classroom or school library in the birthday child's name. Read it to the class or invite the child's parents to come in and read it to the class.
- Instead of a party, organize a special community service project, e.g., invite Senior Citizens in for lunch, make "curechiefs" for chemotherapy patients, and blankets for rescue dogs. Involve parents in planning the project and providing needed materials.
- Create a "Celebrate Me" book. Have classmates write stories or poems and draw pictures to describe what is special about the birthday child.
- Provide special time with the principal or another adult, such as taking a walk around the school at recess.
- Create a special birthday package. The birthday child wears a sash and crown, sits in a special chair and visits the principal's office for a special birthday surprise (pencil, sticker, birthday card, etc.)
- The birthday child is the teacher's assistant for the day, and gets to do special tasks like make deliveries to office, lead the line, start an activity, and choose a game or story.



Additional Resources

Alternatives to Food Rewards. Connecticut State Department of Education, 2004.
<http://www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/Student/NutritionEd/index.htm>

Classroom Party Ideas. University of California Cooperative Extension Ventura County.
<http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/files/filelibrary/2372/15801.pdf>

Healthy Fundraising. Connecticut State Department of Education, 2005.
<http://www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/Student/NutritionEd/index.htm>

Let's Party: Party Ideas for School and Home. West Virginia Department of Education, 1994.
<http://wvde.state.wv.us/ctrc/materials.html>

Let's Play: Innovative Games and Activities for Kids. West Virginia Department of Education, 2002. <http://wvde.state.wv.us/ctrc/materials.html>

For more healthy snack resources, see the Connecticut Nutrition Resource Library catalog ("Cooking for Kids" section) at: <http://www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/Student/NutritionEd/index.htm>

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Healthy Food Ideas*

- Low-fat or nonfat plain or flavored milk, 100% juice, water, flavored/sparkling water (without added sugars or sweeteners), sparkling punch (seltzer and 100% fruit juice)
- Fruit smoothies (blend berries, bananas and pineapple)
- Fresh fruit assortment, fruit and cheese kabobs, fruit salad, fruit with low-fat whipped topping
- Dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, apricots, banana chips), 100% fruit snacks
- Vegetable trays with low-fat dip, celery and carrots with peanut butter and raisins
- Whole-grain crackers with cheese cubes, string cheese or hummus
- Waffles or pancakes topped with fruit
- Pretzels, low-fat popcorn, rice cakes, bread sticks, graham crackers and animal crackers
- Angel food cake, plain or topped with fruit
- Bagel slices with peanut butter or jam, fruit or grain muffin (low-fat), whole wheat English muffin, hot pretzels
- Pizza with low-fat toppings (vegetables, lean ham, Canadian bacon), pizza dippers with marinara sauce
- Ham, cheese or turkey sandwiches or wraps (with low-fat condiments)
- Low-fat pudding, low-fat yogurt, squeezable yogurt, yogurt smoothies, yogurt parfaits or banana splits (yogurt and fruit topped with cereal, granola or crushed graham crackers)
- Quesadillas or bean burrito with salsa
- Low-fat breakfast or granola bars
- Low-fat tortilla chips with salsa or bean dip
- Trail/cereal mix (whole-grain, low-sugar cereals mixed with dried fruit, pretzels, etc.)
- Nuts and seeds

*Check for food allergies before serving.

For more information on a healthy school environment, contact Susan Fiore, MS, RD, Nutrition Education Coordinator at susan.fiore@po.state.ct.us or (860) 807-2075.



Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and Child/Family/School Partnerships



May 2005

Classroom Rewards

Federal law requires every school district to have a local wellness policy. These policies address nutrition education, physical activity, school meals and all other foods and drinks available at school. Since foods and drinks are a part of every school day, local wellness policies can build healthy school environments that support successful students eating smart and moving more. Research shows that children and teens who eat smart and move more focus better and have fewer behavior problems. They also have better math, reading and writing test scores. As families, educators and administrators, you have the chance to put the policy into practice. You can make a difference by encouraging healthy options for fundraising, concessions, school stores, vending, classroom rewards and school celebrations.

Rewards and incentives are one way to encourage good behavior and improve academic performance. Your local wellness policy can define how teachers reward students. There are many good ways to reward students **without** using food or treats. Food and treat rewards can act against healthy eating messages and interfere with natural hunger cues. The power of the simple words "you did a great job" works well because respect and words of appreciation go a long way for everyone. It is important to encourage self-confidence and self-motivation so that students value their own work.

Take Action Now

School Board Members

- Are classroom rewards covered in your district's local wellness policy? If not, include in your policy limits on food as a reward or incentive.
- Show your support for the local wellness policy

School Health Advisory Council/School Wellness Committee Members

- Find out what kind of rewards teachers give students in the classroom.
- Help school staff understand why food is not the best option for classroom rewards and discuss other ideas.

Principals

- Enforce the district wellness policy for classroom rewards that encourage non-food rewards and physical activity.
- Consider adopting a stricter classroom rewards policy for your school.

PTA Members and Families

- Encourage change in policy by talking about rewards with other parents, teachers and community members.
- Support the classroom rewards and incentives used by your child's teacher that follow the local wellness policy.

Reward and Incentive Ideas

Ways to reward students

- Extra music and reading time
- Time for music and dancing
- Music while doing school work
- Chat break at the end of class
- Extra computer time
- Free time at the end of class
- Day for watching a movie
- Group activity
- Games
- Homework coupon
- Coupon for prizes and privileges
- Certificate/trophy/ribbon/plaque
- Gift certificate to local non-food merchants
- Free pass to sporting event or play
- Walk break from class
- Fun walk with the principal or teacher
- Guest presenter in class
- Field trip

Elementary students

- Taking things to the office
- Taking care of the class pet
- Eating with the teacher
- Prizes from a treasure box
- Pencil toppers
- Stickers

- Pencils
- Stars or smiley faces
- Paperback books
- Extra recess
- Leading the class to lunch, recess, library or other adventure

Middle School Students

- Sitting with friends
- Music concert at school
- Pencils
- Paperback books
- Pep rally
- Magazine subscriptions
- T-shirt/hat/sunglasses
- Step counter

High School Students

- Sitting with friends
- Music concert at school
- Pep rally
- Paperback books
- Magazine subscription
- T-shirt/hat/sunglasses
- Prime parking spot
- Recognition with morning
- Announcements

Example Classroom Rewards Policy in North Carolina

Clay County Schools:

In a school environment that supports healthy behaviors, teachers are encouraged to use non-food rewards for individual students or classes. Schools shall be supplied with examples of effective non-food rewards. "Foods of minimum nutritional value" shall not be used as rewards. If food is used, only nutrient-rich foods in appropriate portion sizes shall be given to students.

For more information on local wellness policy...

www.nhealthyschools.org
www.nutritionnc.com
www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com



Suggestions for school wellness policy

LTC R. Jason Newsom, MD, MPH
Chief, Dept. of Preventive Medicine

1. Use cafeteria as a nutrition “laboratory”, link it to what is being taught in the classroom. Historically the cafeteria has been a source of hypocrisy, students learn all the right things in the classroom only to go to the cafeteria and experience the opposite of everything they just read in their books.
 - a. Have theme lunches that feature foods from other cultures. This could be tied to social studies class or world history. Indian food, Greek (gyro, Greek salad, hummus), Chinese, Japanese (sushi).
 - b. Serve vegetarian lunches 1-2 days per week. Have a vegetarian option every day.
2. Set standards for what foods teachers can have in class. Can a teacher drink a soda at her desk?
3. Set a goal to go beyond the minimum standard of 1% and skim milk. Have a goal of only offering white milk (no strawberry, no chocolate which both have more than double sugar content and artificial colors and flavors). Chocolate milk has 26g of sugar; Strawberry has 25g vs. 12g for white milk (see attachment). The policy already addresses offering non-dairy milks (soy milk) for those that are lactose intolerant or who desire a vegetarian/environmentally responsible alternative to cow’s milk.
4. Set a goal to beyond minimum standard of half of grains must be wholegrain. Our goal should be 100% of our grains to be whole grain. (brown rice, 100% whole wheat bread, 100% whole wheat pasta, 100% whole wheat waffles/pancakes)
5. Breakfast.
 - a. No “kids” cereals (fruit loops=41% sugar, Honey Nut Cheerios and Cinnamon Toast Crunch are both 32% sugar, etc). Cereals must be less than 30% sugar by weight.
 - b. No cereal bars. Cinnamon Toast Crunch bars are 36% sugar and have 10% of a day’s saturated fat; Honey Nut Cheerios Bars are 35% sugar with the same 10% sat fat.
 - c. No processed meats. Bacon and sausage are high in fat and contain nitrates which are a proven cause of colon cancer. Even low-fat processed meat (turkey sausage) are cured with nitrates.
6. Lunch after recess is good, but even better is, recess should be done en-route to lunch; “recess before lunch”. [http://www.eatsmart.org/client_images/recess before lunch wa final.pdf](http://www.eatsmart.org/client_images/recess%20before%20lunch%20wa%20final.pdf)
7. Lunch foods.
 - a. No fried foods. No French fries; offer backed seasoned potato wedges instead. No fried chicken; offer backed chicken or backed chicken strips/nuggets instead. No fried vegetables and no fried seafood (shrimp poppers, fried fish fillet). No hamburgers; offer salisbury steak as entre instead.

- b. No processed meats. No hotdogs or corn dogs. No pepperoni, ham or sausage on pizza; all processed meats contain nitrates which have been proven to cause colon cancer.
 - c. Pizza should only be thin 100% whole wheat crust veggie pizza.
 - d. Vegetables should not be cooked with added oils (vegetable oil or butter). All veggies must be steamed or boiled and if additional "seasoning" is desired, use spices.
 - e. Salad dressing. Salad dressing, even low-fat, must be limited. Children must be taught to enjoy vegetables for their innate flavors and should not be encouraged to drown their food in salad dressing. <http://www.youthtoob.com/play.php?vid=588>
8. Middle school beverages. Do not serve flavored milk; the added sugar does not justify the perceived benefit from the protein and calcium. Children should learn to drink milk for its natural taste and nutritional benefits; we should not attempt to bribe our children with sugar.
9. Middle school foods. Lower the sugar content to 30% instead of the proposed 35%. (unfrosted pop tarts are 31% sugar, regular frosted pop tarts are 33% sugar)
10. Celebrations. Set a higher standard for what foods can be brought to school for parties. Not even a single food that does not meet nutritional guidelines should be allowed. No candy, cookies, cup cakes, donuts, in short no junk-food. Schools should strive to be the epitome of what can be done. Schools serve to demonstrate to students what is possible in life. We know all too well how the "real world" works; the greatest contribution to society our schools can make is to present students with an example that is the antithesis of the real world. Schools are one of the last institutions that can serve to counter-balance Corporate Junk-Food America's deceptive spin on our food environment.
11. Food is not a reward. Food cannot be used to reward or motivate students for good grades or good behavior. Not even "healthy" food can be used as a reward. Food is nutrition for our bodies; it is not entertainment or a teaching aid.
12. Note, the existing policy says even food sold at concession stands during after-school activities must meet all the same nutritional standards. This means the concession stands cannot sale soda, candy bars, regular potato chips, nachos, hamburgers, French fries, hot dogs, etc.
13. Staff wellness. The MEDDAC stands ready to offer staff wellness classes on-site to meet the needs and desires of the teachers and staff.
- a. Only offer "healthy" snacks in teacher vending machines; use same 35% fat calorie and 30% sugar by weight standard. Use same beverage guidelines also.
 - b. Complete ban on donuts, muffins and Danish in teacher's lounge. All these pastries, even "health" muffins, are more than 35% fat and more than 30% sugar.
14. The school nurses should conduct BMI measurements periodically (every other year, every 3-years) starting in kindergarten and send home BMI letters to parents informing them of their child's weight and the resources available to help their child. This also provides a means to measure our districts success over the coming years and compares us to other districts.

- **No Cost/easiest effort**
 - Regularly include a nutritional or health related announcement as part of regular morning announcements
 - To integrate physical activity into classroom; announce/describe/explain a stretch a day as part of morning announcements—and let them do it for 30 seconds?
 - Include link to DODEA health and wellness program on school website and maybe in newsletter, too; <http://www.dodea.edu/wellness/dodea.cfm?cid=BB>
 - Provide information in school newsletter about dietician availability at base health and wellness center; provide link and info about base health and wellness center events
 - Include links to the AF Fitfamily website on the school website as recommended resource: <http://www.usaffitfamily.com/>
 - Include information on nutrition and health as part of school newsletter: here's an easy document I found on line from the National Governor's Association; <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0607GOHEALTHY.PDF>
 - Include link's recommended by the National Governor's Assoc on nutrition and health on the school website (maybe linked to pages about the school menu, "student web links," and parent resources: Here are some I found on their Go Magazine back page:
 - For Kids:
 - Bam! Body and Mind**
 - www.bam.gov
 - Promotes healthy behavior and health education in a kid-friendly way. Subsections include Diseases; Food and Nutrition; Physical Activity; Your Safety; Your Life; and Your Body.
 - KidsHealth: For Kids**
 - www.kidshealth.org/kid/
 - Abundant kid-friendly information about physical activity, illness, and other health topics. Also features games, peer pressure information, and a glossary of medical terms.
 - Kid's Quest on Disability and Health**
 - www.cdc.gov/NCBDDD/kids/kidhome.htm
 - Exciting adventures designed to teach able children about their disabled peers.
 - For parents:
 - American Academy of Pediatricians: Parenting Corner**
 - www.aap.org/parents.html
 - Clearinghouse of information on general healthy behavior. Tip sheets for easy access to important and useful information.
 - American Heart Association:**
 - Children's Health: For Adults**
 - www.americanheart.org
 - Information about healthy dietary behaviors for youth and common childhood heart-related illnesses.
 - Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation**
 - www.idrf.org

Source of information and resources about
Juvenile Diabetes.

- Low cost/effort
 - Add more nutritional posters in the cafeteria to encourage kids to read about healthy foods and portions; posters about the food groups and calorie comparisons for eating large quantities of healthy snacks vs just a handful of junk food (serving of potato chips vs whole plate of carrots)

- Higher cost/effort
 - Requires money from base: set up par course with signs for exercises and stretches in the new school track area—an extension of the little fitness course already on the playground
 - Include more books about nutrition and fitness in the library...next time you can purchase them; perhaps biographies of health/fitness icons, too.
 - National Nutrition Month is March (American Dietetic Association); <http://www.eatright.org/nnm/> Plan events around this month...or maybe in January as part of New Year's resolutions to be healthy
 - USAF Fitness Month is May—could send out information that month to encourage folks to stay fit over the summer or do some type of competitive school fitness event/olympics?—integrate school activities into base events?

“Wellness in the School” Suggestions

Family Field Day

McBride has a field day at the end of the year for all the classes to exercise and play in a safe environment. Why not have a smaller version of field day and invite the families. Have three legged races, sprints, shuttle runs, or game night of volleyball, kickball, or ultimate Frisbee. These games are low impact, don't require much equipment, and parents/children of all ages and ability could perform.

Family “Biggest Loser®” Night

The school can log onto the The Biggest Loser® website and join as a team or the school can come up with a new name and have its own competition to lose weight. One evening a week students, teachers, and families can meet in the gym for weigh in and 30 or 40 mins of exercise. A twelve week challenge to get in shape!

Rewards: Get MWR to help with T-shirts or water bottles. To encourage families to return week after week, give a reward at different levels.

Level 1: Initial weigh in- Record Sheet and sign a pledge (keep copy in participant file and send copy with student, teacher, or family member)

Level 2: After three weigh-ins, participant receives a water bottle.

Level 3: After six weigh-ins, participant receives a t-shirt.

Level 4: After nine weigh-ins, participant receives new shoe laces.

Level 5: After twelve weigh-ins, participant receives sports towel.

- Goal: to get families involved for at least a month where exercise would become a routine.
- Each weigh-in and work out session, offer handouts with recipe ideas and/or family workouts for home use.
- Initial weigh-in will record participants' weight and goal weight for 12 week challenge. Participants will have a sheet to record at home fitness and sheet at the school. A “pledge” will be signed committing the participant to the 12 week challenge (send a copy home with participant as reminder of commitment).

“Feeling Good”

An after school or before school fitness program offered at the school. Schools have Spanish Club, Music Club, & Environmental Clubs but no fitness clubs. Open to all students who have parents' permission. Twenty minutes before school once a week or twenty minutes after school once or twice a week. Organized “play” on the playground doing sprints, monkey bars, pull ups, crab walks, hops, and different exercise with minimal equipment.

Classroom Feeling Good: Every two hours, of no physical activity, have teachers lead class in a 3 or 5 minute stretching routine. (running in place, reach up to sky, touch toes, trunk twist, flex arms-relax, flex legs- relax).

Walk/Bike to School Day

Business Corporations have a National Bike to Work day, why not encourage our children/teachers to bike/walk to school instead of riding in the car. Every Wednesday encourage students to walk/bike instead of taking ride in mom's car. Bikers/walkers could receive special recognition at beginning of class by standing and receiving applause from classmates for their efforts. Small poster in each room could record the children who participate weekly and awards could be given at end of month or year. Stickers, Certificates, or just a big "hurray" for those who participate! *extra sticker for each child who walked/biked with a parent!

Organized Play

Through PTA/PTO get parents who will volunteer to come to school at recess and get children involved in games and more active play during recess. Parent participation is usually lacking but start with a goal of once a week at recess with a list of "playground friendly" games. Goal: students will continue these games without needing an adult to lead them. *if no parents can help, have teacher suggest a few games prior to recess.

Playground Games:

- Ultimate Frisbee
- TV Tag (someone is "it" and has to tag others, to be "safe" the child yells out a TV show and sits down)
- 4 Square (painted on blacktop) one kid in each square, bounce ball and try to bounce ball in neighbor's square, if they miss ball they are out, keep going until one person is left. (played similar to ping-pong)
- Yelling Sprint (kids line up next to each other, one at a time each child will take a big breath and yell or make noise as they run as far as they can, when they run out of noise/breath they stop. Only ONE breath can be made and child must stop when they are out! Farthest child wins.)

Eat this, not that

Weight Watchers® website offers free tips on baking/cooking with less fat. In the newsletter have a section for parents with Eating Tips. For example, substitute apple sauce for oil in baking recipes or use fat free milk instead of heavy cream in sauces or puree veggies in spaghetti sauces or salsas. Ask parents to share their "secrets" too.

Quick Snack: mix cereal, raisins, pretzels, peanuts, and mini marshmallows for a low fat snack to take with you while running errands. Fits in purse or child can carry.

Commercial Challenge

Offer fitness tips in the newsletter as well, challenge kids to run their steps in their house during all commercials of their favorite TV shows. Kids can still enjoy TV but incorporate some exercise too. Mix it up: run stairs, push-ups, run in place, tuck jumps in place, hop in place, sit ups, sit on couch and do leg raises (bent or straight leg).

Family Incentives

For any classroom challenge or fitness competitions offer a child extra 5 points for each parent who attends.

Turning Traditions

Around the holidays offer a handout with tips to “turn” traditions into healthy traditions. For example:

Thanksgiving- while turkey is cooking go for family walk, do a fitness video, commercial challenge game while watching TV, make smaller portions so no left-overs, freeze leftovers right away to reduce over-eating or stuffing yourself, play a game of family football after the meal.

Winter Break- send fitness calendar home with student with ideas for fitness each day, have child record fitness or check it off to get a prize when they return to school (extra prizes if whole family participated in the fitness event). Prizes could be: jump ropes, chalk (for hop scotch), shoe laces, Frisbee, or whiffle ball.

Spring Break- Remind students to choose frozen ice treats instead of ice cream, low fat ice cream or yogurt instead of creamy ice creams. Recipes to keep cool- fill ice cube tray with favorite juice and a toothpick or cut down straws to make a quick frozen treat, freeze grapes for healthy cold treat, mix Kool-aid with half the suggested sugar to keep caloric intake lower.

Pack a Snack- Suggest parents pack an easy, non-perishable snack and bottled water when they go places. For example, use a child’s lunch tote to pack a few string cheeses, crackers, gold fish crackers, or raisins to take while running errands. This will tide the kids (and parents) over until they can get home and avoid high-fat foods at take out restaurants. Freeze Capri-suns to use as ice packs in the summer, keeps perishable foods cool and offers a cold drink when the snack is needed. Freeze Capri-suns to take on bike rides, rehydrate and quick sugar pick up during the workout. Fill sports bottles with water and keep in refrigerator, easy and quick to grab instead of canned soda or juices (also easy to take with you to avoid buying soda or juice while running errands).

Incentive: the money saved from not stopping at fast food restaurants or buying quick snacks at convenience stores could be collected for a family picnic at a park.

Suggestions for the Wellness Policy

While the school lunch offers a healthy lunch there is no control over the parent packed lunch. McBride has a policy in their handbook stating no fast foods can be brought to the lunch room. Suggest the Wellness Policy state similar restrictions in the lunch room (no fast foods or no soda in students’ lunches).

FT BENNING SCHOOLS WELLNESS POLICY

Food Service Changes for 2011

1. Beginning in January 2011 will serve 50% of grains being whole grain working toward 75% by spring break
2. Will serve fresh fruit at least 2x wk for breakfast
Will serve fresh fruit and/or vegetables at least 3x wk for lunch
3. Will serve ice cream 1x wk and move toward only sherbet and fruit bars by spring break
4. We do NOT fry any foods – only oven bake
5. Offer more sweet potato wedges and fries
6. Will use only fruit packed in light syrup or natural juices
7. Limit breakfast bars to emergencies only
8. Try to omit the highest sugar cereals – still need to offer “kid” cereals because that is what we are feeding
9. Sell 100% fruit juice and water daily as ala carte items, discontinue items of minimal nutritional value
10. Have a student planned menu that the class can volunteer to plan

Ginny Simms – Food Service Director