

New York/Virginia/Puerto Rico District Wellness Policy

The concern for our nation's children with regard to obesity and overall wellness has been in the news and many schools are responding to the urgent need to improve school services to address this concern. The School Nutrition Association (SNA), the only association devoted exclusively to protecting and enhancing children's health and well being through school meals and sound nutrition education, cites in a growing body of research that school meals that follow prescribed nutrition guidelines contribute to a healthy childhood weight. Putting wellness policies that encompass nutrition guidelines and nutrition education as well as physical activities and other school activities to work in accordance with requirements outlined by DoDEA guidance (Regulation 4200.1 - August 22, 2007) has received increased attention in the NY/VA/PR district. This approach along with a concerted focus on improving the environment our students and staff are provided has been established to promote wellness for all.

Administrators, faculty and staff are committed to encouraging change in a healthy direction. The NY/VA/PR district wellness policy focuses on positive healthy choices and on moderation. It is important for parents and students as well as administrators, faculty and staff to understand the meaning of moderation in making healthy choices within the school environment. It is also important for them to have opportunities to make good choices as often as possible with regard to nutrition and participation in physical activities.

There are four components encompassed in the NY/VA/PR district wellness policy which align to the requirements of DoDEA Regulation 4200.1. These components are:

- nutrition standards;
- nutrition/health education;
- physical education/activity; and
- other school based activities.

In accordance with additional requirements outlined by DoDEA Regulation 4200.1, the district wellness committee made up of representatives from all parties affected by the policy has determined the following standards, goals, and activities will be followed in the NY/VA/PR schools to facilitate implementation of the four components of this requirement. The district has embraced the philosophy embedded in this guidance as we believe that students who begin each day as healthy individuals can learn and achieve more readily. The district also maintains that healthy staff can more effectively perform their assigned duties and model appropriate wellness behaviors for students.

Nutrition Standards

- All school offerings for breakfast and lunch menus meet USDA guidelines. In addition to the availability of a range of offerings, foods are served in appropriate portion sizes consistent with USDA guidelines.

- The Child Nutrition Offices will implement best practices such as but not limited to:
 1. The number of carbohydrates will be reduced on all breakfast and lunch menus whenever possible.
 2. Wheat and/or whole grain breads will be served for breakfast and lunch menus.
 3. Skim milk and 1% white milk will be served in place of whole milk at breakfast and lunch.
 4. Vegetarian items and salads will be offered on student lunch menus and to staff.
 5. The use of poly unsaturated fats in baking procedures will be decreased for all food items.
 6. Cafeteria managers will consider collaborating with community resources (ex., dietician from installation) for consultative services.

- All food and beverage items offered in vending machines and a la carte also meet USDA guidelines.
- Nutritional information is displayed so students can make informed decisions regarding food selections. 'Healthy Choice' reminders throughout schools encourage students and staff to make positive choices each day. Teachers may also bring this theme into their classrooms to reinforce the concept.
- School and classroom celebrations are offering healthy alternatives to traditional items such as cupcakes, candy, etc. Teachers and school nurses are encouraging parents to provide a healthy alternative (ex., fruit trays) instead of or in addition to traditional items for classroom celebrations to include birthday celebrations.
- Non-food alternatives (ex., stickers, pencils, earned points for use at school store,) are being implemented as positive reinforcements and/or rewards in an effort to reduce food rewards whenever possible.
- Alternatives are considered by school committees for foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities as well as for meetings during the school day.
- Students are encouraged to bring healthy snack foods items to eat during breaks in the school day.

Establishing Nutrition/Health Education Goals

- Students in grades pre-K-12 will receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors as part of a healthy lifestyle including physical exercise.
- Nutrition education will be coordinated by school staff including the cafeteria manager, school nurse, and PE/Health teachers to be made available in classrooms, cafeterias, and appropriate school-wide activities.
- Students will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, cafeterias, and appropriate media venues.

- District health education curriculum standards and guidelines will include both nutrition and physical education for students in grades pre-K-12.
- Nutrition will be integrated into the health education or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts), whenever possible. In Health Education classes, students will receive nutrition education skills to include direct instruction in the Food Pyramid Guide and the reasons they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors.
- Schools will link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
- School staff who provide nutrition education will receive training as needed.
- School staff will conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve parents, students, and the community.

Establishing Physical Activity Goals

- Students will be given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through PE classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, opportunities for movement during long instructional periods, and the integration of physical activity throughout the school day.
- The Physical Education (PE) program will promote the development of a physically educated person understanding the importance of regular participation in physical activity and its contribution to physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle and ready to pursue a lifetime of healthful physical activity.
- Students will be given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before-and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- Schools will work with families to create ways to ensure physical activity is a part of their children's leisure-time pursuits. Daily activities including walking, bike, rollerblade or skateboard safely to and from school will be encouraged whenever possible.
- Schools encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- Schools will provide training to enable teachers, and other school staff to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among students.
- The school district will ensure facilities and grounds are kept clean, safe, and in good repair with all other applicable safety standards in place to promote safe movement in/around school buildings and campuses.

Establishing Goals for Other School-Based Wellness Activities

Dining Environment

- The school district will provide a clean, safe, enjoyable meal environment for students.
- The school district will provide sufficient space and serving areas to ensure all students have access to school meals with minimum wait time.
- Access to water will be available to students at meal times and throughout the day via water fountains and other resources (ex., water bottles) as needed by students (i.e., as required by students with documented health needs).
- The school district will encourage all students to participate in the school meals program and protect the identity of students who eat free and reduced price meals.

Time to Eat

- The school district will ensure an adequate time for students to enjoy eating healthy foods.
- The school district will schedule lunch time as near to the middle of the school day as possible.

Additional Activities throughout the School Environment

- School staff – including guidance counselors, school psychologists, and school nurses - will apply the personal/social development component of their school's annual counseling plans with regard to assisting students with making decisions, setting goals, and taking necessary actions to achieve goals.
- School staff - including guidance counselors, school psychologists, and school nurses - will apply the personal/social development component of their school's annual counseling plans with regard to assisting students with making healthy choices including awareness of healthy ways to handle stress and anger.
- School health services staff members will issue "Health Alerts" to teachers regarding specific student health profiles to teachers and administrators throughout the school year and assist with planning and implementation of health plans for students as needed.
- School health services staff members will coordinate with health care providers on the installation for students and staff. Referrals will be made to the local health clinic on the installation to access community resources, if needed.

- School health services staff members will disseminate information on a regular basis pertaining to wellness events on the installation as well as in the schools to promote wellness for staff members.
- Schools will share information regarding best practices that focus on wellness using a variety of media with the community as well as with other schools in the district (ex., The ‘Wiggle Worms’ program at West Point ES is posted on the “DoDEA Health and Wellness Program” page on the DoDEA website as a best practice for sharing with other schools).

Monitoring of the District Wellness Policy

- Each school will implement the district wellness policy under the guidance of the building administrator(s) with support from the District Superintendent’s Office (DSO) as determined by the principal.
- Each school will encourage collaboration among various staff members – including the cafeteria manager, school nurse, health/PE teacher(s), guidance counselor(s), and school psychologist(s) as building resources – to identify, implement, and monitor effective strategies to be put into practice consistently throughout the school year.
- Each school will review data with regard to aspects of the wellness policy to sustain a monitoring effort (ex., number of students purchasing school meals and a la carte healthy food offerings, participating in school-sponsored physical activities, and students’ knowledge of healthy food choices).

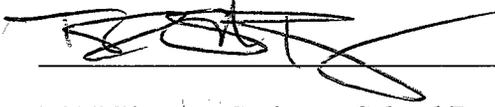
Evaluation of the District Wellness Policy

- The DSO will ensure the district wellness policy has been implemented at all schools under the leadership of the principal and will evaluate the implementation on an annual basis.
- The DSO will consider revisions of the policy with regard to the content of, support for, and implementation of based upon evaluation findings.

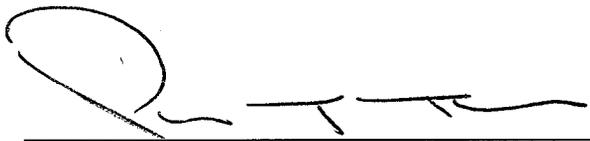
NY/VA/PR District Wellness Policy Adopted: January 26, 2011
(Date)



Mr. Michael A. Gould, District Superintendent – NY/VA/PR



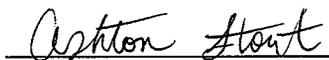
MAJ Tim Springer, School Board Member



Mr. Paul Tillema, Child Nutrition Director



Mrs. Amy Stout, Parent



Ms. Ashton Stout, Student



Mr. Michael Hollier, Principal – Quantico Middle/High School