School Wellness Policy
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BRIDGES
**Background information**
The purpose of the Cumberland County Schools Wellness Policy is to enable all students to possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious and enjoyable food choices for a lifetime. In addition, all school staff are encouraged to model healthy eating behavior as a valuable part of daily life.

- Approximately 13% of school-age children are obese, and 15% are overweight. (2001 Surgeon General’s Report)

- Between 56-85% of school age children consume soda everyday. (J Am Diet Assoc. 2003)

- 51% of school-age children consume less than one serving of fruits and vegetables a day. (J Am Diet Assoc. 2003)

- 84% of school-age children consume too much fat. (J Am Diet Assoc. 2003)

- Among children of varying ages, 8 to 45% (depending on geographic region) of newly diagnosed cases of childhood diabetes are Type 2, non-insulin dependent associated with obesity. (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2000)

- Most high school students take only one year of physical education between grades 9 and 12 and less than a third of high school students attend physical education classes daily (NASPE 2001). One out of four children do not attend any school physical education classes (CDC 1999-2000).

- “Children’s health and well-being play a critical role in their ability to come to school ready to learn and in their overall academic achievement,” says the National Governors Association’s Center for Best Practices. “Schools have a unique opportunity to provide children and adolescents the skills and support they need to adopt healthy behaviors…Teachers and other school personnel can educate, support, and reinforce students’ health behaviors, including promoting healthy eating and regular physical activity. States can take several steps to encourage healthy lifestyles through school-based efforts…” (“Preventing Obesity” 2003).
• Schools play an important role both in educating students and in protecting their health. “One of the most significant concerns from a public health perspective is that we know a lot of children who are overweight grow up to be overweight or obese adults, and thus at greater risk for some major health problems such as heart disease and diabetes,” asserts Dr. Julie Gerberding, director of the CDC. “One critical answer to this problem is that we all must work together to help our children make physical activity a life-long habit” (“Obesity Still on the Rise” 2002).

• “Overweight and obese children place significant health, social, and economic costs on states,” says the National Governors Association’s Center for Best Practices. “Youth who are obese are at an increased risk for obesity-related illnesses including heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, gallbladder disease, and osteoarthritis…Costs due to obesity-related illnesses in children have more than tripled since the 1970s, from $35 million in 1979 to $127 million in 1999” (“Preventing Obesity” 2003).
Policy Terms and Definitions

**Center for Disease Control and Prevention** – (CDC) is recognized as the lead federal agency for protecting the health and safety of people – at home and abroad, providing credible information to enhance health decisions, and promoting health through strong partnerships. [http://www.cdc.gov/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/default.htm)

**Overweight** - a state in which weight exceeds a standard based on height; having a body mass index of 25-29.9 or greater.

**Obesity** – The CDC uses growth charts BMI-for-age to assess overweight in children (2-20 years old). 85th percentile to < 95th percentile is considered at risk for overweight and a BMI-for-age of 95th percentile or greater is considered overweight.

**Dietary Guidelines for Americans** – Dietary recommendations for healthy Americans age 2 years and over about food choices that promote health specifically with respect to prevention or delay of chronic diseases.

**Physical Activity** – CDC defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in an expenditure of energy.

**National School Lunch Program** – (NSLP) is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946.

**School Meal Initiative** – (SMI) is an ongoing process that provides nutritious school meals to children and motivates children to make healthy choices (please refer to page 5).

**Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points** – (HACCP) involves seven principles in order to identify, analyze, prevent and/or control any biological, chemical, or physical hazard. HACCP was developed and is maintained as part of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). [http://www.cfsan.fds.gov/~comm/haccpov.html](http://www.cfsan.fds.gov/~comm/haccpov.html)

**Normal School Day** – Time period spanning from the first bell of the day that begins the first class period to the last bell of the day ending the final class period. For schools who have multiple schedules in place, the school day for each schedule ends 7 hours after the first bell indicating the start of the initial class of the first session.

**Physical Activity** – Movement activity, play, dance, raking leaves, and energizers.

**Physical Education** – Curriculum (skills, knowledge, concepts) and assessment.

**School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** - SHAC is an advisory group of individuals who represent segments of the community and provide advice to the school system on aspects of the school health program. It shall perform such functions as are prescribed by regulations, but shall not have any of the powers and duties reserved by law to the school board.
**School Food Authority** - the governing body which is responsible for the administration of one or more schools; and has the legal authority to operate the Program therein or be otherwise approved by FNS to operate the Program.

**Team Nutrition School** - a school that helps focus attention on the important role nutritious school meals, nutrition education and a health-promoting school environment play in helping students learn to enjoy healthy eating and physical activity. It will provide the framework for team efforts by school nutrition staff, teachers, parents, the media and other community members.
Child Nutrition Services

A. Financial Management

1. It is acknowledged that the feeding of children is primarily a family responsibility. To supplement their efforts, Child Nutrition Services will operate a cafeteria in every school to ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn well.

2. The Child Nutrition program shall aim to be financially self-supporting. However, the program is an essential educational and support activity and budget neutrality or profit generation must not take precedence over the nutritional needs of the students. If subsidy of the Child Nutrition fund is needed, it should not be from the sale of foods that have minimal nutritional value and/or compete nutritionally with program meals.

B. Program Requirements

1. During each school day, the Child Nutrition program shall offer breakfast and lunch under the nutritional guidelines of the USDA’s National School Lunch and Breakfast Program. Additionally, the Child Nutrition program shall offer snacks based on the nutrient guidelines in the USDA’s After School At-Risk Snack Program to those students in after-school education or enrichment programs. Schools are strongly encouraged to implement breakfast in the classroom at appropriate sites. Each school shall encourage all students to participate in these meal opportunities. In particular, the school shall make efforts to ensure that families are aware of need-based programs for free or reduced-price meals and that eligible families are encouraged to apply. The program shall maintain the confidentiality of students and families applying for or receiving free or reduced-price meals.

2. The Child Nutrition program shall operate in accordance with the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1996 as amended and applicable laws and regulations of the state of North Carolina. Schools shall offer varied and nutritious food choices that are consistent with the federal government’s Dietary Guidelines for Americans. For the purpose of this policy, “Dietary Guidelines for Americans” refers to the current set of recommendations of the federal government that are designed to help people choose diets that will meet nutrient requirements, promote health, support active lives, and reduce chronic disease risks. Menus should be planned with input from students, family members, and other school personnel and should take into account students’ cultural norms and preferences. Food pricing strategies shall be designed to encourage students to purchase nutritious items. Procedures shall be in place for providing to families, on request, information about the ingredients and nutritional value of the foods served.
3. **The Child Nutrition program shall monitor the nutrient breakdown of their menus.** Regardless of menu planning format of nutrient or food based, Child Nutrition Services shall analyze the menus offered to students using nutrient analysis software to ensure that USDA guidelines are being met.

4. **School Meal Initiative (SMI) is an ongoing process to provide nutritious school meals to children and motivate children to make healthy choices.** The School Meals Initiative, SMI, includes all of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) regulations and policies that address the nutrition standards for school meals. These SMI regulations augment the statutory nutrition requirements for the NSLP and the SBP and provide School Food Authorities (SFAs)/schools with a variety of alternatives for planning menus. In addition, SMI encompasses actions to support State agencies and school food authorities in improving school meals and encouraging children to improve their overall diets. These actions include training school foodservice personnel to serve healthy meals and teaching children to make healthy dietary choices.

USDA issued the final *School Meals Initiative (SMI) for Healthy Children* regulations in 1995 after the passage of the *Healthy Meals for Healthy Americans Act of 1994*, which requires that meals under the NSLP and SBP meet the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The SMI regulations define how the *Dietary Guidelines* are applied to school meals.

### USDA School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children Nutrition Goals

- **Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA)**
  - ¼ RDA for appropriate age/grade group for breakfast for protein, calcium, iron, vitamins A and C.
  - 1/3 RDA for appropriate age/grade group for lunch for protein, calcium, iron, vitamins A and C.
- **Recommended Energy Allowances (calories)**
  - Appropriate for age/grade group
- **Dietary Guidelines for Americans**
  - Eat a variety of foods
  - Limit total fat to ≤ 30% of calories
  - Limit saturated fat to ≤ 10% of calories
  - Choose a diet low in cholesterol
  - Choose a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruit, and grain products
  - Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium

*The Dietary Guidelines recommends that after two years of age, children should gradually adopt a diet that, by about five years of age, contains no more than 30% of calories from fat and less than 10% of calories from saturated fat.*
I. Nutrition

A. School Meals

Goal: To provide appealing choices of nutritious foods, as well as a pleasant eating environment for students and staff with adequate time for eating.

1. North Carolina State Nutrition Standards

   A. Elementary School Cafeterias will continue to implement the State Nutrition Standards at the superior level.

   B. Middle and High School Cafeterias will work towards implementing the State Nutrition Standards at the superior level.

2. Child Nutrition Services will ensure that a variety of fresh, canned, and frozen fruits and vegetables are available to students through programs such as North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Farm to School.

3. Child Nutrition Services will offer 1% and skim milk during meal services.

4. A la carte

   1. All Elementary School Cafeterias will comply with a la carte State Nutrition Standards at the superior level.

   2. All Middle and High School Cafeterias will work towards complying with State Nutrition Standards.

5. Vended food items offered/supplied by the Child Nutrition Program will not exceed more than 200 calories per serving and will comply with State Nutrition Standards.

6. Vended juice drinks offered/supplied by the Child Nutrition Program will be (but are not limited to) 50-100% juice (with 100% juice containing no added sweeteners) and water.

7. Foods of good nutritional content including fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, and low-fat grain products, shall be available wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at school during the normal school day.
8. **Foods of Minimal Nutritional Values** as defined by 7 CFR 210.11(2) are prohibited from being served or sold anywhere a reimbursable meal is served, sold, and/or eaten. Foods of minimal nutritional value are defined by USDA include carbonated beverages, water ices, chewing gum, hard candies, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, spun candy, and candy coated popcorn.

9. **Foods and beverages** that have as the first ingredient: sugar, corn syrup, shortening, lard, or similar, may not be sold to students on school grounds during the normal school day (including school stores and school fundraisers).

10. **Adequate Eating Space and Time and Appropriate Use of Food**

   A. Students and staff shall have adequate space to eat meals in pleasant surroundings and shall have adequate time to eat, relax, and socialize. Safe drinking water and convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene must be available during all meal periods.

   B. If food is included in recognition of academic performance, it should be used in the general celebration of the achievement, not as the reward.

      1. It is recommended that candy not be given as an academic reward due to possible individual student health conditions such as diabetes.

   C. Food (from the cafeteria) shall not be withheld from students as punishment.

11. **Food Safety**

   1. Schools should encourage classes to order foods for classroom parties from the school’s Child Nutrition program or sources providing food in compliance with food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines must be implemented to prevent food illness in schools.

   2. All food service equipment and facilities must meet applicable local and state standards concerning health; safe food preparation; handling, and storage; drinking water; sanitation; and workplace safety.
B. Nutrition Education

Goal: To develop an overall school environment that: 1) recommends students to make healthy food choices, 2) provides opportunities and encouragement for staff to develop healthy eating habits, and 3) develops strategies to involve family members in the development and implementation of the program.

1. Classroom Instruction

   A. Nutrition education materials shall be made available to teachers for students at all grade levels, upon request (i.e., information on menus, parent workshops, and newsletters), as well as through the Healthful Living Curriculum.

2. Staff As Role Models

   A. School staffs are recommended to model healthy eating behaviors. Schools are recommended to offer wellness programs that include personalized instruction about healthy eating and physical activity.

3. Coordination of Programs

   A. The Child Nutrition program will work with the Cumberland County School System and area agencies to help maintain a consistent message regarding nutrition.

4. Nutrition-Related Health Problems and Modified Diets

   A. School counselors and school health services staff shall consistently promote healthy eating to students and other staff. These professionals shall be prepared to recognize conditions such as obesity, eating disorders, and other nutrition-related health problems among students and staff and be able to refer them to appropriate services.

5. Team Nutrition

   A. All school cafeterias will be encouraged to become Team Nutrition Schools.
6. **Promotions**

   A. Nutrition education will be made available through the cafeteria by participation in various Child Nutrition promotions (i.e., Winner’s Circle, National School Lunch Week, National School Breakfast Week, National Nutrition Month).

C. **Nutritious Food Choices**

   1. Providing healthy food choices when foods are sold as concessions at school sports event and special school activities will be encouraged (i.e., frozen yogurt, fruit smoothies, fruits, popcorn (plain), low-fat and nonfat milk, cheese, wheat crackers, and raisins).

      A. Recommend the posting of the nutritional values of foods sold at the concessions (i.e., calories, fat, saturated fat).

      B. Recommend foods sold on school grounds not be of supersized portions.

   2. Provide parent organizations and teachers with a list of ideas for fundraisers that include the sale of nonfood items and healthy food alternatives such as fruits and vegetables.

   3. It is recommended that food not be the center or reward of school parties or celebrations. If however, food is part of the celebration, it should be healthful and nutritious.

II. **Physical Activity and a Healthy School Environment**

   A. **Recommendations for Physical Activity**

      1. Physical education courses should be the environment in which students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills, and knowledge.

      2. Physical activity should involve bodily movement that results in an expenditure of energy of at least a moderate intensity level and for duration sufficient to provide a significant health benefit for students.

      3. Children should accumulate at least 30 minutes of physical activity on all or most days of the week. This can be accomplished through several sessions of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day.
4. Extended periods of inactivity (periods of two or more hours) are discouraged.

B. Recommendations for Physical Education for Children During the Normal School Day

1. Provide an adequate amount of time for physical education classes. Schools should provide at least 150 minutes per week for elementary students and at least 225 minutes per week for middle school students for the entire school year.

2. Recommend that physical education classes have a teacher/student ratio comparable with those of other classes.

3. Implement a sequential physical education course of study consistent with national standards for physical education and with a focus on students’ development of motor skills, movement forms, and health-related fitness.

4. Ensure that students are moderately to vigorously active at least 50% of the time while participating in physical education classes.

5. Provide a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted.

6. Prohibit the use of: physical activity as punishment, the withholding of participation in physical education class as punishment, or the use of physical education class time to complete assignments from other classes.

C. Encouraging Lifetime Physical Activity

1. Schools should provide daily recess periods of at least 30 minutes for all elementary school and middle school students.

2. Schools should provide physical activity breaks during classroom hours, such as Take 10 or Energizers.

3. Schools shall offer after-school intramural programs and/or physical activity clubs that meet the needs and interests of all students, including those who are not athletically gifted and those with special health care needs.

4. Schools should encourage parents and community members to implement programs that support physical activity, such as a walk to school program.

5. Schools should encourage: after-school childcare programs to provide developmentally appropriate physical activity for participating children and reduce or eliminate the time spent in sedentary activities, such as watching television or videos.
Nutrition and Physical Activity
Resources on the Internet

Action for Healthy Kids organization
http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
http://www.aahperd.org/

American Cancer Society
http://www.cancer.org

American Council on Exercise
http://www.acefitness.org

American Heart Association
http://www.americanheart.org

School Nutrition Association
http://www.schoolnutrition.org

CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health
http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/

Center for Science in the Public Interest
http://scpinet.org

Community Learning Network’s Fitness Theme Page
http://www.cln.org/themes/fitness.html

Cooper Institute
http://www.cooperinst.org/default.asp

Dole “5 A Day”
http://www.dole5aday.com/

International Walk to School
http://www.walktoschool-usa.org/

Kentucky Department of Education site on physical activity and nutrition integration resources
http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Administrative+
Resources/School+Health/Phyiscal+Activity+and+Nutrition+Integration+Resources.htm

Marin County, California, Bicycle Coalition
http://www.marinbike.org/Index.htm

Marin County, California, Safe Routes to School
http://www.saferoutestoschools.org
National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity
http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/nana.html

National Association of State Boards of Education’s Healthy Schools page
http://www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/index.html

National Conference of State Legislatures, Physical Activity and Nutrition site
http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/phyact.htm

National Dairy Council, Nutrition and Product Information
http://www.nationaldairycouncil.org/nutrition/child/

National School Lunch Program, USDA Food and Nutrition Service
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/default.htm

Partnership for a Walkable America’s Walk and Bike to School Site
http://www.walktoschool.org/

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center
http://www.walkinginfo.org
http://www.bicyclinginfo.org

President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports
http://www.fitness.gov/

Prevention Research Center, Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina
http://prevention.sph.sc.edu/

Snack Light
www.snacklight.org

Society for Public Health Education
http://www.sophe.org

Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation
http://www.thesociety.org/

South Carolina Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
http://www.scalperd.org/about.html

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
http://www.scdhec.net/

South Carolina’s Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness
http://www.scdhec.gov/hs/comhlth/gcpf/links.htm

South Carolina Healthy Schools
https://www.myschools.com/offices/ace/healthyschools/
Surface Transportation Policy Project’s 2002 summary of safe routes to school programs in the United States
http://www.transact.org/report.asp?id=49

USDA, Healthy School Meals Resource System
http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/

North Carolina Prevention Partners
http://www.ncpreventionpartners.org/

Healthier Us
http://www.healthierus.gov/

Food Pyramid
http://www.mypyramid.gov/

Winner’s Circle
http://www.winnerscirclehealthydining.com/
Appendix

A. Guidelines in Identifying and Selecting Foods of Good Nutritional Value

Implementation Guidelines

The Implementation Guidelines Section offers suggestions and guidance in implementing the Cumberland County Schools Wellness Policy. Although many factors play a role in the thoughtful and purposeful implementation of rules governing foods and beverages available during the school day, it is suggested that the guiding principle be the normal school day is the environment wherein the demonstration model is consistent with what is taught in the classroom and the national health initiatives.

Section 1. Foods and Beverages Offered During the School Day
Section 2. Implementation Action Plan
Section 3. Establishing the Relationship Among the School Nutrition-Food Service Environment, Physical Activity and Nutrition Education

Section 1. Foods and Beverages Offered During the School Day

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Child Nutrition Program regulations should be used in deciding what foods and beverages will be available.

Foods and beverages offered other than the lunch or breakfast should offer replacement nutrient value to the consumer. The item should offer a good source of nutrients, be moderate in sodium, be moderate or low in fat, and be moderate in sugar that is not naturally occurring in the food and moderate in calories.

Offer a variety of beverages at a location so consumers may make a choice appropriate to their need.

Offer skim or 1% milk fat beverage selections and encourage the consumption of low fat options.

Offer a variety of foods that can be used as replacement for part of a traditional meal or additive to a meal when additional calories and nutrients are needed because of energy expenditure.

If the offering is with the intent of being additive to the nutrient content of lunch or breakfast, the reason for the need for additive nutrients needs to be identified and decisions made based on the need (s).

Involve students in the process (i.e., menu choices).
Section 2. Implementation Action Plan

Governing Board action is recommended to demonstrate the adoption is consistent standard for the school district.

Internal organization communications should identify responsibility and accountability aspects.

School community communications should include the rationale, references and outline changes.

A stakeholder advisory group should be created to assist district employees with the implementation.

A district position should be identified that will be responsible for inquiries and actions regarding the policy implementation.

Section 3. Establishing the Relationship Among the Child Nutrition Services Environment, Physical Activity and Nutrition Education

When each element of the relationship among food consumption, physical activity and nutrition education occurs, the reference to the other two elements needs to be obvious and consistently offered.

Determine incremental approaches to implementing both physical activity and physical education improvements.

B. Evaluation Process

The Cumberland County School’s Wellness Policy will be evaluated yearly by representatives from Child Nutrition Services, Healthful Living, and the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC). This evaluation process will enable the school system to measure the extent in which the Wellness Policy has been implemented, as well as monitor the Policy’s progress. Necessary changes in relation to all nutrition, physical activity, health, and school policies will also be made during this process.
Sources:

Arizona Healthy School Environment Model Policy


