

NDSD/RCDHH Wellness Policy

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NDSD/RCDHH Wellness Policy

Preamble

NDSD/RCDHH (hereto referred to as the District) is committed to the optimal development of every student. The District believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social success, we need to create positive, safe and health-conscious learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year. The District will follow USDA Food and Nutrition Service Guidelines under the **Healthy Hungry-Free Kids Act of 2010: Summary of the Final Rule.**

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity, before, during and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism and better performance on cognitive tasks.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.^{8,9,10} In addition, students who are physically active during recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education and extracurricular activities perform better academically.^{11,12,13,14} Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.¹⁵

This policy outlines the District’s approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the District have access to healthy foods throughout the school day, both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus, in accordance with federal and state nutrition standards.
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors.
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school.

- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that encourage student wellness.
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school.
- The community is invited to support the work of the District in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits.
- The District establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students and staff in the District. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

- *The District will coordinate the Wellness Policy with other aspects of school management, including the District’s School Improvement Plan, when appropriate.*

I. School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

The District will convene a representative District Wellness Committee (hereto referred to as the DWC) that meets at least four times per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, periodic review, and update of this district-level wellness policy (heretofore referred as “Wellness Policy”).

The DWC membership will represent all school levels (preschool through middle school) , including but not be limited to: students, parents and caregivers; educational staff; director of the school nutrition program (Director of Food Service); school administrators; Director of Health Services; Director of Student Life, and the general public.

Leadership

The Superintendent or designee(s) will convene the DWC and facilitate development of and updates to the Wellness Policy, and will ensure compliance with the policy.

The designated official for oversight is the Director of Health Services, 701- 665-4406.

Current DWC members include:

Name	Title / Relationship to the District	Email address	Role on Committee
Donna Sorensen	Superintendent	Donna.e.sorensen@k12.nd.us	Facilitator
Tracy Vilandre	Director of Health Services	tracy.vilandre@k12.nd.us	Designated Official
Chris Eckes	Director of Food Service	chris.eckes@k12.nd.us	Food Service Representative
Wendy Palmer	Lead Teacher	wendy.palmer@k12.nd.us	Education Representative

Sabrina Schmitz	Director of Student Life	sabrina.schmitz@k12.nd.us	Dorm Representative
Beth MichelEvenson	Community member	bethme@gondtc.com	Community Representative
Tate Chicos	Kitchen Supervisor	tate.chicos@k12.nd.us	Food Service Representative

II. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

The District will develop and maintain a plan to implement, manage and coordinate this Wellness Policy. The plan defines specific roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines. It will include specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. The District will complete a school level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s School Health Index and review results with the DWC.

This Wellness Policy and the progress reports can be found at: www.nd.gov/ndsd .

Recordkeeping

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the Wellness Policy in the Health Services Office and/or on the District’s central computer network. Documentation maintained will include but will not be limited to:

- the written Wellness Policy;
- documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- documentation of efforts to review and update the District Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the District uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the DWC;
- documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- the most recent assessment on the implementation of the District Wellness Policy;
- documentation that the most recent assessment on the implementation of the District Wellness Policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

The District will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, information about the school nutrition environment, any activities related to the Wellness Policy, and any updates to the policy. The District will make this information available via the district website and/or district-wide communications. Annually, the District will also publicize the name and contact information of the District officials leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the DWC.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the District will evaluate compliance with and execution of the Wellness Policy, including:

- the extent to which the District is in compliance with the Wellness Policy;
- the extent to which the District’s Wellness Policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s model wellness policy;
- a description of the progress made toward goals of the District’s Wellness Policy.

The position/persons responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information are the **Superintendent** and the **Director of Health Services, 701-665-4400**.

The District will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The DWC will update or modify the Wellness Policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as:

- District priorities change;
- community needs change;
- wellness goals are met;
- new health science, information, and technology emerges; □ new federal or state guidance or standards are issued.

The Wellness Policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

The District is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the Wellness Policy. Through a variety of appropriate channels, The District will actively communicate ways in which representatives of DWC and others can participate in the development, implementation, periodic review, and update of the Wellness Policy.

The District will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards. The District will use electronic means, such as email or District website notices, as well as non-electronic means, such as newsletters and presentations to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content, implementation, involvement opportunities, and updates to the Wellness Policy. The District will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community.

III. Nutrition

School Meals

Our school district is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk, that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams *trans*-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer’s specification), as well as meeting the nutritional needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs seek to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

The District participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the After School Snack Program.

The District is committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- are accessible to all students;
- are appealing and attractive to children;
- are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations; (The District offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards](#).)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following Smarter Lunchroom techniques:
 - Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets.
 - Sliced or cut fruit is available daily.
 - Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.
 - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal.
 - White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers.
 - Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
 - Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options.
 - Menus will be posted on the District menu board.
 - The District child nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs.
 - Students will be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated.
 - Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.
 - Participation in federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

- Water cups/jugs will be available in the cafeteria if a drinking fountain is not present.
- All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene and health safety standards. Such sources and containers may include drinking fountains, water jugs, hydration stations, water jets and other methods for delivering drinking water.
- Students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

The District is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus during the school day support healthy eating. At present, there are no competitive foods or beverages on campus. The DWC will review any future requests.

Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards unless otherwise approved by the DWC or superintendent.

- **Celebrations and parties** -- The district will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas are available from the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) and from the USDA. Birthday's are a time of special celebration. Due to the periodic nature of these events special food items may be considered.
- If food is used for classroom activities, staff shall consider healthy alternatives and portion control.
- The District will provide classroom snacks that follow smart snack nutrition standards.
- **Rewards and incentives** -- The District will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a [list of alternative ways to reward children](#). Using food and beverages as a reward is not advised. Food and beverages should never be withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Fundraising

With approval from the DWC or superintendent, foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus during the school day.

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors. NDSD can use evidence-based techniques such as positive nutrition messages, create welcoming food environments to encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- Implementing at least ten or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using Smarter Lunchroom techniques; and
- Ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Nutrition Education

The District will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. It will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and ▪ includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

Health Education will be offered every other year as required. Health education curriculum will also be integrated into another classroom instruction as appropriate.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The District is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. The District strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. Students will not be subjected to advertisements on District property.

IV. Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. The District promotes strong coordination and synergy across all of the components: quality physical education as the foundation; physical activity during and after school; staff involvement and family and community engagement and is committed to providing these opportunities. The District will ensure that these varied physical activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in “Physical Education” subsection).

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. The district will provide teachers and other school staff with a [list of ideas](#) for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, the District will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The District will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Physical Education

The District will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education, either on campus or through inclusion in the public schools. The physical education curriculum will

promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, following state standards.

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

The District physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments (via the [Presidential Youth Fitness Program](#) or other appropriate assessment tool) and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

All District students will receive Health Education. Elementary health education will be integrated into core classes; middle school students will participate in health education classes.

Recess (Elementary)

Our goal is to offer all elementary students at least **20 minutes of recess** on all days during the school year. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. Guidelines used to decide whether students go outside for recess will be guided by the Childcare cold weather guide offered by ChildCare Aware of North Dakota. The supervisor on outside duty will determine whether students come in early.

In the event that the school or district must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will utilize the gym and available equipment.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks

The District recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **periodic opportunities** to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. The District recommends teachers provide short (3-5-minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time at least three days per week. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

The District will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for classroom physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through USDA and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

Active Academics

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

The District will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Before and After School Activities

The District offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day through a variety of methods. The District will encourage students to be physically active before and/or after school by:

- promoting physical activities supervised by dorm staff;
- encouraging extra-curricular sports and park board involvement by providing interpreters and transportation;
- providing opportunities for physical leisure activities via field trips.

V. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The District will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. The District will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the DWC/SWC.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy guidelines. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

Community Partnerships

The District will foster relationships with community partners in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

Community Health Promotion and Family Engagement

The District will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be

informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

As described in the “Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications” subsection, the District will use electronic mechanisms (e.g., email or displaying notices on the district’s website), as well as non-electronic mechanisms, (e.g., newsletters, presentations to parents or sending information home to parents), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

The DWC will have a staff Wellness Subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff. This subcommittee will be headed by the Director of Health Services.

The District promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Professional Learning

When feasible, the District will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help District staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing district reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

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