

Chester Area School District

Wellness Policy

The Chester Area School District (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-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

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.^{i,ii,iii,iv,v,vi,vii} Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.^{viii,ix,x} In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education and extracurricular activities – do better academically.^{xi,xii,xiii,xiv} Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.^{15,16,17}

Thus, the 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 District that:

- The District will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school should meet the nutrition recommendations of the U. S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- To the maximum extent practicable, Chester Area will participate in available federal school meal programs such as the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program.
- The District will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

I. School Wellness Committee

The District will strengthen the existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The committee also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. A school health wellness committee consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and includes but not limited to: parents, the high school student council president, the district food service director, school administrators, teachers, and a school board member.

The Superintendent or designee(s) will annually convene the local wellness committee and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy.

The designated official for oversight is Heath Larson, Superintendent.

The members of the District Wellness Committee are:

Heath Larson, Superintendent	heath.larson@k12.sd.us
Kristi Lewis, Business Manager/Food Service Director	kristi.lewis@k12.sd.us
Deann Schoeberl, Kitchen Manager	deann.schoeberl@k12.sd.us
Julie Eppard, Middle/High School Principal	julie.eppard@k12.sd.us
Amy Johnson, Elementary Principal	amy.r.johnson@k12.sd.us
Mark Moeller, Health/Physical Education Teacher	mark.moeller@k12.sd.us
Taya Schmidt, Speech Language Pathologist	taya.schmidt@k12.sd.us
Deanna Reiff, School Board Member, Nurse	deanna.reiff@k12.sd.us
Susan Alverson, SD Nutrition & Physical Activity Program Director	susan.alverson@state.sd.us
Nancy Roberts, Parent/Community Member	mlrnar@itctel.com
Aden Baumberger, Student Council President	
Makenna Larson, Student Council Vice President	

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

School Meals: Meals served through the National School Lunch, Breakfast Program should:

- Be appealing and attractive to children;
- Be accessible to all students;
- 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;²
- Serve only low-fat 1%, and fat-free flavored milk;³

Free and Reduced-priced Meals: The District will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduce-price school meals.⁵ Toward this end, the District may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals.

Meal Times and Scheduling: The District:

- Will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- Will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 10:45 a.m. and 1 p.m. if possible.
- Should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- Will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs.
- Will provide unlimited access to water, through water bottle filling fountains.
- Will encourage parents sending meals from home to make healthy food and beverage choices, when preparing the meal.

Qualification of School Food Service Staff: Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.⁶

Sharing of Foods and Beverages: The District will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times. Students are encouraged to take items from the Share Table. The share table will include an area where students can place unopened, pre-packaged items from the school lunch program that other students may take. Use of the share table is limited to each student sharing one item and the shared item must be eaten during the scheduled meal period.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion:

The District will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools 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;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, and school gardens;
- 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).

A Fresh Fruit and Vegetable (Tasty Tidbits) program will be implemented in the at the elementary level to introduce new fruits and vegetables to students and reinforce good snack choices. Educational materials will be given to each teacher to read to the class about the fruit or vegetable of the day. In addition, a unit of nutrition will be taught to each class grades K-5 through the physical education program. Educational resources are available through numerous sources including but not limited to SD Department of Education, Harvest of the Month South Dakota, and other health, and wellness websites.

A health component will be taught during Physical Education at the Middle School level teaching students how to identify why people need to eat different kinds of foods, feeling hungry vs. feeling full/satisfied, and match food groups to their primary contribution for a healthy body.

Nutrition education will be reinforced in the health class at the High School level by combining menu planning using the four food groups and meal preparation. Students will also learn how to read the nutrition facts on food labels and how to use this information to make better eating choices.

Goals and Assessments:

The district has three health goals for our school:

1. Lower the percentage of overweight and underweight students to be below the state average. This can be measured by the heights and weights taken each spring and fall for grades PK-9. Information for the Chester Area School District will be compared to the data on the comprehensive report compiled by the South Dakota Department of Health each year.
2. Improve the physical fitness levels of all students. Physical fitness testing is done in PE classes both in the fall and again in the spring for grades K-9. Test results will be analyzed each year to assess rate of improvement and to plan programming for the next year school year.
3. Increase student consumption of fresh vegetables. A veggie bar will be offered at lunch filled with a wide variety of vegetables that students participating in the food program may take as part of their meal. Access to the veggie bar will not be used as a reward for "cleaning your plate" or withheld for any reason. Production records from the beginning of the school year will be compared to data at the

end of the year measuring fresh vegetable consumption. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program will be monitored in the elementary.

Communications with Parents: The District will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The District encourages 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 school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. The school will provide educational resources through HealthySD.gov and other health and wellness websites.

Food Marketing in Schools: School based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, school will attempt to limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). School-based marketing of brands promoting predominately low-nutrition foods and beverages should be discouraged. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Staff Wellness: The District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will try to plan/implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The district should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee. The district will encourage staff participation in the health insurance program "A+ Better You". 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 the school's staff.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) K-12.

- All students in grades K-5 will receive physical education of 60 minutes per week for elementary school students and 125 minutes per week for middle school students. Students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and those in alternative education settings will be included.
- Students will spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- The physical education curriculum should demonstrate progression and sequence and be consistent with South Dakota and/or National Physical Education standards for Pre-K through grade 12.
- All physical education will be taught by highly qualified physical education teachers.
- Class teacher to student ratios should be similar to those of other subject area classes in school.

Daily Recess: All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which teachers should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment. The District should discourage extended periods of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, teachers should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity and Punishment: Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

Safe Routes to School: When appropriate, the District will work with local public works, public safety, and/or police department to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring: The designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The principal of each school is the designee and will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the District superintendent annually.

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

Record Retention: The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the District business office and/or saved digitally on the school network for three years past the current year. Documentation maintained in this location 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 Local Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the district uses to make stakeholders aware annually of their ability to participate on the local wellness committee;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School 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, any updates to the policy and implementation status. The District will make this information available via the district website and/or district-wide communications.

Triennial Progress Assessments: At least once every three years, the District will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy for all sites under district jurisdiction and include:

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the District are in compliance with the local wellness policy;
- The extent to which the District's wellness policy compares to a model policy provided by the South Dakota Department of Education;
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the District's wellness policy.
 - Assessment will identify how the policy will be updated to add areas as needed, improve progress toward goals, etc.
 - Documentation of when and how the policy was evaluated will be maintained.

The person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is Superintendent, Heath Larson.

The local wellness committee, in collaboration with individual schools, will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness policy.

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

Revisions and Updating the Policy: The local wellness committee 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; and 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. Documentation of update will be maintained, such as attendance sheet, meeting minutes, etc.

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^v Pollitt E, Mathews R. Breakfast and cognition: an integrative summary. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 1998; 67(4), 804S–813S.

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^{viii} MacLellan D, Taylor J, Wood K. Food intake and academic performance among adolescents. *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*. 2008;69(3):141–144.

^{ix} Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Dixon LB, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate consumption of dairy products among adolescents. *Journal of Nutrition Education*. 1997;29(1):12–20.

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¹⁵ Change Lab Solutions. (2014). *District Policy Restricting the Advertising of Food and Beverages Not Permitted to be Sold on School Grounds*. Retrieved from <http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/district-policy-school-food-ads>