

Lee County School System's Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Philosophy

The Lee County School System 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 Lee County School District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, school nutrition professionals, health professionals, and other interested community partners in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students 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 Federal nutrition requirements of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act and the Smart Snack regulations.
- 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: will accommodate the cultural diversity of the student body in the meal planning; and will provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the extent practicable, all schools in our system will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, snack Program and Seamless Summer Feeding Program).
- Schools 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 the School Nutrition Program.
- The school system is committed to implementing a Farm to School initiative focused on serving locally grown foods as defined by the School Nutrition Program. This effort will be supported with nutrition education in the schools.

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

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- follow the USDA Healthy Hunger Free Kids (HHFKA) regulations;
- be appealing and attractive to children while being served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- encourage the consumption of foods as recommended by the HHFKA which encourages increasing consumption of a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grain and low fat/free dairy products;

- The sale price of meals will be controlled to encourage student purchases, but should be adequate to provide healthy foods such as fresh produce.

Meal Times and Scheduling

- schools will provide students with adequate time to eat lunch;
- schools will schedule meal periods at appropriate times depending on class schedules, number of students and other influencing factors. Lunch should be scheduled between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
- schools will not schedule tutoring, club, organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat school meals during such activities;
- schools will provide students access to hand washing before they eat meals or snacks.

Qualifications of School Nutrition Staff

Qualified nutrition professional will manage and administer the School Nutrition Program. Continuing professional development should be provided for all nutrition professionals. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for District School Nutrition Director, managers, and school nutrition assistants according to their level of responsibility.

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

Elementary School

The School Nutrition Program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in the elementary grades. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in the elementary school should be sold as balanced meals. Snack foods must meet the Federal Smart Snack regulations.

Middle/Junior High and High School

In middle/junior high and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meals programs (including those sold through vending machines, student stores, and/or fundraising activities) during the school day will meet the Federal Smart Snack regulations

Classroom and School Parties and Celebrations

School administrators shall determine ways to highlight seasonal events and birthdays in a way that is age appropriate and provides equal opportunity for each student to be involved. When food and beverages are provided during such activities, the provision of healthy food and beverage choices are recommended.

Fundraising Activities

School fundraising shall be encouraged to offer healthy food choices or non-food sale items. Lee County Schools require that all food fundraising sold during the school day (Midnight to 30 minutes after school dismissal), must meet the fundraising requirements of the Smart Snack regulation set forth by the Healthy Hunger Free Act of 2010. However, fundraising food sales are not allowed during meal service. Concessions after school hours which provide food and beverages during optional school events, talent shows, PTO events are exempt from the guidelines contained herein, but are encouraged to also offer healthy choices.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs must meet the Smart Snack regulation. 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.

Drinking Water Availability

All school meal periods must offer access to drinking water for students during meal times. Students are allowed to go to the drinking fountain either in or near the cafeteria during meal times.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Lee County Schools aim to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each level as part of sequential, comprehensive, standards – based 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 also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects (only in instances where health education is part of the state content standards).
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens.
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and healthy-enhancing nutrition practices;
- Promotes Farm to School initiatives and supporting nutrition education;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);

- Links with school nutrition program and related community services;
- Includes training for teachers and administrators;
- Integrates physical activity into the classroom to support student achievement.

Staff Wellness

Lee County School System highly values the health and wellbeing of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Such activities may include employee wellness promotion activities and employee health fairs.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Compliance with State Requirements

The Lee County School System shall meet or exceed the requirements for physical education as determined by the Georgia Department of Education. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Opportunities for physical activity should not be withheld as punishment.

Recess

The elementary schools housing grades PK-5 should work diligently to provide supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage all students to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity with the provision of time, space, and equipment.

Schools should encourage extended periods of student inactivity. When school day structures make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks which they are encouraged to be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

To the extent that staffing and other resources permit, schools shall offer extracurricular physical activity programs such as sports, clubs, and intramural programs.

After school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage-verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

V. Policy Compliance

Implementation and Monitoring

The superintendent or designee will ensure the compliance and implementation with this wellness policy throughout the district. School principals shall be responsible for communicating the contents of this policy as well as implementing this policy in their respective schools. Principals shall report on their compliance as directed by the superintendent.

The School Nutrition Director for Lee County Schools shall be responsible for the nutritional component of this policy and shall be the functional expert in school nutrition matters, ensure compliance with nutrition staff and oversee the daily operation of the District's School Nutrition program.

Policy Review

Assessments will be repeated every three years in order to review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As a part of the review, the district will review our nutrition and physical activity polices; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district and individual schools within the district will; as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate the implementation.