

WEBSTER COUNTY SCHOOLS
WELLNESS POLICY



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Scott Cochran, Superintendent
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WELLNESS COUNCILS AT EACH SCHOOL:

Individual schools within the district will create or strengthen their existing wellness council for the purpose of encouraging and monitoring school nutrition, physical activity and wellness activities within the school. County Wellness Council members in the various schools will serve as resource people for the school wellness council, and report back the wellness activities that are occurring at their schools. The school wellness councils should include parents, students, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public, and should meet on a regular basis (At least quarterly).

Meal Appeal:

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

- 1) Be appealing and attractive to children;
- 2) Be served in a clean and pleasant settings;
- 3) Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- 4) Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- 5) Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- 6) Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

School Breakfast, Lunch, After-School Snack and Supper, and Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Programs:

79.52 percent of our students in Webster County are needy. All of our schools are part of the Community Eligible Option Program; therefore, all school children are 100% eligible for free school meals. Elementary schools serve free snacks when they have after school tutoring and homework help. Our junior high/high school offers the free supper program to students that stay late for tutoring, homework help, and other programs and activities. All elementary schools have a Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program, and they serve fresh fruits and vegetables three times per week to all the children.

It is our belief that meal time should be a pleasant experience, with a minimum of 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch after being seated . This is a time that students can socialize and enjoy a meal together. Whenever possible, we believe that lunch periods should follow recess periods, and that students need to be directed to wash their hands before eating. No food or beverages will be sold in the school until twenty minutes after the close of the school cafeteria.

Only 100% juice and plain water will be sold during the school day. Only snacks that meet the Child Nutrition Guidelines under policies 4320 and 4321.1 portion sizes of foods and beverages will be sold individually during the school day (Healthy snacks are addressed in this policy, as well as non-food fundraisers). It is not appropriate to reward students with food. Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment. Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. The food and beverages served during the celebrations needs to be the

healthy selections discussed in the policy. Foods and beverages sold outside the school day, at school-sponsored events such as athletic events, dances, and performances, will include healthy beverage and food selections.

Qualifications 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 the child nutrition directors, the director's secretary, school secretaries that work with the child nutrition program, cafeteria managers, and all cafeteria workers according to their levels of responsibility.

Nutrition Education in the Schools: The Webster County School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by our students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- 1) Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- 2) Is part of not only health education classes, but is integrated into subjects such as math, science, language arts, and social sciences;
- 3) Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant activities such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- 4) Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- 5) Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- 6) Includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting:

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity of 60 minutes per day and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- 1) Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent to sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- 2) Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- 3) Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.
- 4) 30 minutes per day five days per week of physical education (At least 50% of the time in vigorous physical activity) will be offered in all of our elementary schools and middle schools. In addition, 20 minutes of recess will be offered. This leaves a minimum of 10 minutes that will be provided in vigorous classroom physical activity such as "Jamin' a Minute" and "Let's Move WV" activities.

- 5) Physical Education student-teacher ratio will be based on a regular classroom student-teacher ratio of 25 or less students.
- 6) All physical education teachers will receive annual physical education training in areas of need, and physical education will be taught by fully certified teachers.
- 7) Physical education curriculum/program for each grade level will be based on the West Virginia Physical Education, Health and Wellness Education content standards and objectives.

Communications with Parents:

Both the school district and the schools will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. We will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites and provide nutrient analysis of school menus. When students choose to bring packed lunches, schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The school Wellness Council and the schools will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, and fundraising activities.

In addition, schools will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community. Parents often feel that the school system is taking away their traditional party celebration contributions such as cup cakes and candy. Encouraging parents to contribute healthy snacks will be beneficial to all.

Some of the school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day, are activities that parents can often support and be a part of. Our schools can encourage sharing information with parents about physical activities through the school websites, newsletters, and take-home flyers about these special events.

Importance of Staff Wellness:

An important part of this wellness policy is the health and well-being of every staff member. We highly value those that support and work with our students, and we want to implement activities that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The school wellness councils should establish and maintain a staff wellness program, which would 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 school staff. The school wellness council can report the results to the County Wellness Council annually.

Finally, school facilities should be available to students, staff and community members before and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

Monitoring and Policy Review:

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school district superintendent or designee.

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

The superintendent /food service director will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel in the district.

To assist with the initial development of the district's wellness policies, each school in the district will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The Food Service Director and the County Wellness Council, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policy and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

Implementation:

- 1) A School Wellness Advisory Board shall be formed with broad based representation including parents, students, food service staff, students, school administrators, teachers and the general public.
- 2) The Board will provide support to schools in the development and implementation of school action plans, and to assess/evaluate implementation of the policy.
- 3) The Wellness Advisory Board will designate one or more persons charged with the responsibility for ensuring that each school fulfills the School Wellness Policy.
- 4) The Wellness Advisory Board will review the West Virginia Board of Education's Position Statement of Local Wellness Policies, and may wish to initiate policy revisions based upon the review.
- 5) The Wellness Advisory Board will develop an annual action plan with strategies designed to meet the goals of this policy, and will provide an annual written progress report to the County Board of Education.

- 6) Each school wellness committee will develop a list of activities/action plan for their school, and the principal will complete an annual report to the County Wellness Coordinator based on the activities completed.