

Wellness Policy
Manteno Community Unit School District No. 5

BELIEF STATEMENT

The Manteno CUSD No. 5 Board of Education is committed to a coordinated school health program aimed at ensuring that all students are fit, healthy and ready to learn. The Board recognizes its responsibility to promote healthy eating habits and fitness in students throughout their time at school, as well as educating them to develop lifelong awareness of all aspects of healthy living. The Board is concerned about the prevalence of childhood obesity and the consequent health implications during the remainder of their lives, and wants to reverse that trend in the District 5 learning community.

Therefore, the Manteno CUSD No. 5 schools will promote an environment supportive of healthy nutrition, physical fitness, and health education for our students. It is the intention of this policy to establish guidelines for implementation of a "Health and Wellness" policy that will be implemented during the 2010-2011 school year, and that will be evaluated and improved upon periodically.

INTENT

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a total school environment that promotes and supports student health and wellness, helps to reduce childhood obesity, and meets the requirements of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and the Illinois School Code, including, without limitation, goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness; nutrition guidelines for all foods available during the school day; a plan for measuring implementation including designating one or more persons charged with operational responsibility; and involving parents, students, school food service providers, the school board, school administrators, and the public in developing this policy.

RATIONALE

A disturbing number of children are inactive and do not eat well. The result is an alarming 16 percent of children and adolescents who are overweight - a threefold increase since 1980. Congress passed the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 on June 30, 2004. Recognizing the role school can play in health promotion, this law requires local education agencies participating in a program authorized by the National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to develop a local wellness policy. The objectives of the wellness policy are to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity. In addition, Public Act 094-0199 amends the Illinois School Code, requiring the Illinois State Board of Education to establish a state goal that all districts have a wellness policy.

The link between nutrition and learning is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating is demonstrably linked to reduced risk for mortality and development of many chronic diseases. Schools and school communities have a responsibility to help students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to establish and maintain lifelong healthy eating patterns. Well-planned and well-implemented wellness programs have been shown to positively influence children's health.

Schools also have a responsibility to help students establish and maintain lifelong habits of being physically active. According to the US Surgeon General, regular physical activity is one of the most important things people can do to maintain and improve their physical health, mental health, and overall well-being. Regular physical activity reduces the risk of premature death in general and of heart disease, high blood pressure, colon cancer, and diabetes.

GOALS FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION

Students in preschool through grade 12 shall receive nutrition education as part of a sequential program that is coordinated within a comprehensive health education curriculum. The program shall be designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to adopt healthy eating behaviors *and* aimed at influencing students' knowledge, attitudes, and eating habits. Special emphasis should be placed on nutrition education in preschool through primary grades as eating habits are established at a young age. The curriculum shall be consistent with and incorporate relevant Illinois Learning Standards.

To maximize classroom time and to achieve positive changes in students' eating behaviors, nutrition education may be integrated into the standards-based lesson plans of other school subjects like math, science, language arts, physical education, health, family and consumer science, and social sciences.

To achieve positive changes in students' eating behaviors, it is recommended that a minimum of 50 contact hours of nutrition education opportunities be provided to students each year. Contact hours may include a combination of classroom instruction, nutrition education provided in the cafeteria, or health fairs, field trips, and assemblies providing nutrition education.

The nutrition education program shall include enjoyable interactive activities such as contests, promotions, taste testing, field trips, and school gardens.

GOALS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Students in preschool through grade 12 shall participate in daily physical education as often as possible, enabling them to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness; emphasizing self-management skills including energy balance (calories in minus calories out); is consistent with state/district's standards; and is coordinated within a comprehensive health education curriculum. The curriculum shall be consistent with and incorporate relevant Illinois Learning Standards.

It is recommended that elementary students participate in physical education for a minimum of 150 minutes per week, and middle and high school students participate for 225 minutes per week (national Association for Sport & Physical Education recommendations). Special emphasis should be placed on promoting an active lifestyle in preschool through primary grades as health habits are established at a young age. Accommodations shall be made for students with disabilities, 504 plans, and other limitations. Schools shall provide a daily recess period to elementary students.

Whenever possible, students shall be provided opportunities for physical activity through a range of before and after school programs including intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.

Because students should engage in a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity a day, the physical education program shall actively engage families as partners in providing physical activity beyond the school day.

GOALS FOR OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO PROMOTE STUDENT WELLNESS

Parent Partnerships

Schools shall support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. This support shall begin in elementary school and continue through middle and high school.

Parents shall be provided information to help them incorporate healthy eating and physical activity into their student's lives. This information may be provided in the form of handouts, postings on the school/district website, information provided in school/district newsletters, presentations that focus on nutrition and healthy lifestyles, and any other means available for reaching parents.

Consistent School Activities and Environment – Healthy Eating

It is recommended that food providers share information about the nutritional content of school meals and/or individually sold foods with students, family, and school staff.

School meals shall be served in clean, safe, and pleasant settings with adequate time provided for students to eat, at a minimum, in accordance with state and federal standards

and guidelines. The National Association of State Boards of Education recommends that students have adequate time to eat, relax, and socialize – at least 10 minutes after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.

All food service personnel shall have adequate pre-service training and regularly participate in professional development activities that provide strategies for providing tasty, appealing, and healthy school meals; nutrition education strategies including coordination of classroom and cafeteria activities; and effective promotional techniques to encourage healthy eating habits.

Food providers shall involve families, students, and other school personnel in choosing nutritious food and beverage selections for their local schools through surveys, committees, taste-testing, and similar activities designed to provide input into the decision-making process.

Food providers shall work with suppliers to obtain foods and beverages that meet the nutrition requirements of school meals and nutrition standards for those sold individually.

Food providers shall work closely with school instructional staff to reinforce nutrition instruction and foster an environment where students can learn about and practice healthy eating.

Food providers shall take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages on school campuses meets federal, state, and local laws and guidelines.

Students, parents, school staff, and community members bringing foods and beverages to school for parties/celebrations/meetings shall be encouraged to provide healthful options and shall be provided with a list of recommended food and beverage options.

School-based organizations shall be encouraged to raise funds through the sale of items other than food.

To reduce competition with nutritionally balanced school meals and enhance student safety, it is recommended that, to the extent practicable, students are not permitted to leave school grounds to purchase foods or beverages.

Schools shall take efforts to promote nutritious food and beverage choices consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Food Guidance System (choosemyplate.gov) such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, and whole grain products.

All foods and beverages made available on campus shall comply with the federal, state, and local food safety and sanitation regulations.

For the safety and security of food, access to any area involved in storage, preparation, or service of food on the school campus shall be limited to authorized personnel.

Consistent School Activities and Environment – Physical Activity

Physical education shall be provided by well-supported certified staff.

The physical education program shall be closely coordinated with the other components of the overall school health program. Physical education topics shall be integrated within other curricular areas. In particular, the benefits of being physically active shall be lined with instruction about human growth, development, and physiology in science classes and with instruction about personal health behaviors in health education class.

Schools are encouraged to limit extended periods of inactivity. When activities such as mandatory testing make it necessary for students to be inactive for long periods of time, it is recommended that schools give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Schools are encouraged to develop community partnerships with other child-serving organizations such as park districts, etc. to provide students with opportunities to be active.

Schools are encouraged to provide student and community access to and promote use of the school's physical activity facilities outside of the normal school day.

Physical activity facilities and equipment on school grounds shall be safe.

Schools are encouraged to work with the community to create a community environment that is safe and supportive of students walking or biking to school.

Food or Physical Activity as a Reward or Punishment

School personnel shall be encouraged to use nonfood or healthy food incentives or rewards with students, and shall not withhold food from students as punishment.

School personnel shall not use physical activity as a punishment, and will limit withholding participation in recess or physical education class as a punishment as much as possible.

NUTRITION GUIDELINES FOR ALL FOODS AND BEVERAGES AVAILABLE ON SCHOOL CAMPUSES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Food providers shall offer a variety of age-appropriate, appealing foods and beverage choices and employ food preparation, purchasing, and meal planning practices consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans (e.g. provide a variety of fruits and vegetable choices; serve low-fat and fat-free dairy products; ensure that whole grain products are served).

All foods and beverages sold individually (apart from the reimbursable school meal) on school campuses during the school day should strive to meet nutrition standards, including:

- a la carte offerings in the food service program;
- food and beverage choices in vending machines, snack bars, school stores; and
- foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities.

Nutritious and appealing foods and beverages, such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, and whole grain products, shall be available wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at school.

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL MEALS

School meals served should strive to be consistent with the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and/or shall meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements and regulations for the National School Lunch Program and/or school Breakfast Program and all applicable state and local laws and regulations.

MEASURING IMPLEMENTATION & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The district superintendent shall be charged with the operational responsibility for ensuring that the district, and each school, meets the local wellness policy requirements.

The district superintendent shall appoint a district wellness committee that includes a representative from each school building, parents, a representative of the school food service, teachers (including at least one physical education/health teacher), health professionals (i.e. school nurse) and administrators. They shall oversee development, implementation, and evaluation of the wellness policy.

The appointed district wellness committee shall be responsible for:

1. assessment of the current school environment;
2. recommendations for changes, additions, or improvements to the district wellness policy; and
3. measuring the success of the implementation of the wellness policy.

The district wellness committee will meet periodically.

Each principal in Manteno CUSD No. 5 will establish a wellness committee for their school. One member of this school committee will serve on the district wellness committee.

Each school wellness committee will meet annually. They will be responsible for:

1. monitoring the nutritional value of food given to or purchased by the students at their school;

2. monitoring the physical activity and health education of students at their school;
3. exploring ways to educate and involve parents in the wellness of their children; and
4. make recommendations to the district wellness committee on improving District policy.