

Gateway STEM Academy
12119 16th Ave S
Burnsville, MN

WELLNESS POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects student and staff safety, health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy habits and physical activity.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.
- B. All students in grades K-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement of healthy habits and physical activity on a regular basis.
- C. The school environment should promote and protect students and staff health, social/emotional well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy habits and physical activity.
- D. The school district encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, food service staff, and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school district nutrition and physical activity policies.
- E. The school board recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education.
- F. Students in the school 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.
- G. Qualified food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable and nutritious foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

III. Definitions

- A. School Day- the time between midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day.

- B. School Campus- areas that are owned or leased by the school and used at any time for school-related activities, including on the outside of the building, school buses or other vehicles used to transport students, athletic fields and stadiums, or parking lots.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Foods and Beverages

1. All foods and beverages made available for sale on campus during the school day (including concessions and a la carte cafeteria items) will be consistent with the current Federal regulations for school meal nutrition standards and Smart Snacks in School standards.
2. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.
3. The school 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 reduced-price school meals.
4. The school district will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
5. The school district will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day.
6. The school district will discourage tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during scheduled school lunch and breakfast times, unless students may eat during such activities.
7. To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. The district will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.
8. Farm to School: Farm to school programs provide students with the opportunity to eat healthy, locally grown foods and be exposed to a variety of fresh produce that reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the student population. The school district will support the development of Farm to School programs to help students eat more nutritious foods

and promote healthier lifelong eating patterns; support the local economy and local farmers; and teach students about the origins of their foods and how their food is grown.

10. The school district will support the use of school property to promote nutrition, physical activity, and curricular and co-curricular activities through school gardens. School gardens ensure students have the opportunity to experience planting, harvesting, preparing, serving, and tasting self-grown food that reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the student population. The school district supports the incorporation of school gardens into the standards-based curriculum as a hands-on, interdisciplinary teaching tool to influence student food choices and lifelong eating habits.

B. School Food Service Program/Personnel

1. The school district will provide healthy and safe school breakfast and lunch programs that strictly comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.
2. The school district shall designate an appropriate person(s) to be responsible for the school district's food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current Federal regulations for school meal nutrition standards and Smart Snacks in School standards.
3. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school district will provide continuing professional development for all food service personnel in schools.

C. Nutrition Education and Promotion

1. The school district will encourage and support healthy eating by students and staff and engage in nutrition promotion that is:
 - a. offered as part of a comprehensive, consistent program designed to provide students, K-8, with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;

- b. part of health education will be integrated into classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate; and
 - c. enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, and field trips.
 - d. viewed as a partnership between the food service department, student groups and parent groups to provide nutrition information to students at the secondary level.
 - e. supportive of food service staff at all levels to provide nutrition information to students by posting of age-appropriate posters in the cafeteria/kitchen areas.
2. The school district will encourage all students and staff to make age-appropriate, healthy food and beverage selections.
 3. Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan or behavior intervention plan) and will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.

D. Snacks and Celebrations

1. As part of a district-wide initiative to discourage the use of food as a reward, teachers and parents are encouraged to recognize and celebrate students by methods that do not involve food. A list of healthy party ideas will be distributed to parents and teachers.
2. Snacks offered during the school day or in after-school programs and treats used as classroom rewards should make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on fresh fruits and vegetables, water, low-fat milk, and other foods/beverages that are low in fat, sugar, salt and caffeine.
3. Celebrations that involve food during the school day should be limited to no more than one party per class per month. OR All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including through celebrations and parties, classroom snacks brought by parents, and rewards or incentives.

E. Healthy Concessions

1. Concessions sales at school-related events, outside of the school day, will be supportive of healthy eating and physical activity by emphasizing the sale of healthy foods or non-food items.
2. Healthier items should be priced lower than less healthy foods when possible.
3. The district will make external organizations using school property aware of Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards and the school district policy with food and beverage items and will encourage them to adopt the same policy.

F. Fundraising

1. School-sponsored fundraising will be supportive of healthy eating and physical activity by emphasizing the sale of healthy food or non-food items and by promoting active events.
2. Food and beverages offered or sold on campus during the school day must be consistent with healthy snack and food guidelines.

G. Physical Activity

1. Students need opportunities within and outside the defined school hours for physical activity daily at the elementary level and a minimum of every other day at the secondary level to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television;
2. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and
3. Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.
4. Opportunities for all students to be physically active at open gyms, weight rooms, and pool before and after school within responsible fiscal parameters of the district.

5. Schools will not withhold physical activity as a punishment.
6. The school district will make every effort to include all children in recess. Recess will not generally be used for instructional makeup time.

H. Physical Education

1. Every student will be physically educated; that is, will develop the knowledge and skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, understand the short- and long-term benefits of physical activity and value and enjoy physical activity as an ongoing part of a healthy lifestyle.
2. Schools will implement a sequential, developmentally appropriate physical education curriculum that helps students acquire the knowledge, motor skills, self-management skills, attitudes, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physical activity throughout their lives.
3. Teachers will aim to develop students' self-confidence and maintain a safe psychological environment free of embarrassment, humiliation, shaming, taunting, or harassment of any kind.

I. Communications with Parents

1. The school district recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being.
2. The school district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. The school district encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value.

4. The school district will provide information about physical education, nutrition education, and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be healthy and physically active outside of school.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- A. After approval by the school board, the wellness policy will be implemented throughout the school district.
- B. School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance within the school's food service areas and will report to the food service program administrator, the building principal, or the superintendent's designee, as appropriate.
- C. The school district's food service program administrator will provide an annual report to the superintendent setting forth the nutrition guidelines and procedures for selection of all foods made available on campus.
- D. The district will convene a representative district wellness committee that meets at least four times per year to establish goals for and oversee health and safety policies and programs.
 1. The wellness committee may include but not be limited to parents and caregivers, students, school food service, teachers, health and social service staff, school administrators, school board members, health professionals, and the general public.
 2. The wellness committee will conduct an assessment of the overall wellness program and its implementation as required by state or federal regulations.
 3. The wellness committee will provide an annual report of the school district's compliance with the policy to the school board through the executive director or designees.
- E. The executive director or designee(s) will convene the district wellness committee and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy. Updates on the wellness policy will be shared with the public on an annual basis at a minimum.
- F. The school district will post this wellness policy on its website to the extent that it maintains a website.

