




March 19, 2024

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Approval of Revisions to the Cambridge Public Schools Wellness Policy

- Recommendation: That the School Committee approve the revisions to the Wellness Policy as detailed in the attached document.
- Description: These revisions to the Wellness Policy are being recommended after a review of the current policy was conducted by the Cambridge Public Schools Wellness Council. This is a second reading of revisions to the Wellness Policy.
- Supporting Data: Redline of revisions to the Cambridge Public Schools Wellness Policy

Respectfully submitted,

  
Victoria L. Greer, PhD  
Superintendent of Schools

## Cambridge Public Schools Wellness Policy

The Cambridge School Committee prioritizes the importance of a comprehensive Wellness Policy for the Cambridge Public Schools that provides students with rigorous, joyful and culturally responsive learning, as well as social and emotional supports to achieve wellness as it relates to the whole child. The Wellness Policy adheres to relevant state and federal regulations and laws. The School Committee actively protects the health, wellbeing and ability of students to learn through designing a school environment that promotes healthy choices.

The Wellness Policy is required by federal and state law to address the provision of:

- goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness,
- policies for other foods and beverages available on the school campus during the school day (e.g., in classroom parties, classroom snacks brought by parents, or other foods given as incentives)
- health education,
- nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages available or for sale on the school grounds during the school day that are consistent with federal and state laws and regulations, and,
- policies for food and beverage marketing that allow marketing and advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

~~—The Cambridge School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being, health and wellness and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness policy. The School Committee is committed to protecting children's health, well-being and ability to learn to their fullest potential by supporting a school environment that promotes healthy choices and fosters lifelong habits with respect to eating and physical activity. Therefore, the district has created this Wellness Policy including goals for nutrition education and promotion, physical activity and physical education, health education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. The Wellness Policy adheres to relevant state and federal regulation and is evidence based.—~~

## Wellness Council

The School Committee designates the Superintendent of Schools as the Wellness Policy Coordinator who will be responsible for establishing a Wellness Council and assigning appropriate staff to implement the policy. The Superintendent of Schools will appoint a designee to serve as a liaison between the Wellness Council and the Superintendent of Schools. The ~~5-2-1 work group of the Healthy Children Task Force will meet regularly and serve as the school department's~~ Wellness Council will be coordinated and facilitated jointly by representatives designated by the Cambridge Public Schools and the Cambridge Public Health Department. The Wellness Council's role is advisory to the Superintendent of Schools and shall permit and encourage representatives from a wide range of school and health-related disciplines, including school health professionals, school administrators, school nutrition, health and physical education educators, community agencies serving youth, parents/guardians, students, school committee, local board of health, local health care providers, other City of Cambridge departments and members of the general public and, to the extent possible, reflect the cultural, linguistic and ethnic composition of the community. The Wellness Council will meet at least four times each school year. The Wellness Council may also serve as a resource to schools in connection with the implementation of this Wellness Policy.

## Development of Guidelines

The Superintendent of Schools in consultation with the Wellness Council will develop Implementation Procedures consistent with this Wellness Policy. Principals ~~and Heads of Upper Schools~~ will review the Wellness Policy and related implementation procedures and share Wellness Policy requirements ~~expectations~~ with staff on an annual basis to ensure implementation and adherence.

## Nutrition

The school ~~department's~~ ~~district's~~ expectation goal is that all students in grades K-12 kindergarten through grade twelve will have opportunities, access, support and encouragement to make healthy nutrition al choices throughout the school day, ~~through meals, snacks and beverages provided in all settings.~~ All schools will adhere to the school department's ~~district's~~ Administrative Wellness Policy Guidelines and Implementation Procedures, as applicable,

This includes: ~~as part of~~

- ~~the school meal program, at other times~~ ~~during the school day such as~~ through Occasions that integrate food, such as ~~food and nutrition education integrated in the health education curriculum, school gardens, special occasions~~ celebrations, and ~~in school-sanctioned events.~~ ~~taking place outside~~

of school hours.

- Nutrition promotion will support and enhance classroom nutrition education through eating experiences in the school cafeteria. This is provided by the Director of Food Services in partnership with the Cambridge Public Health Department and through opportunities to grow, harvest and taste organically grown fruits and vegetables in school gardens.
- The school department district does not allow the marketing or advertising of any food or beverage that does not meet the federal Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- The School Food Service program will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods and beverages that:
  - Meet the health and nutrition needs of CPS students and adhere to or exceed the National School Lunch and/or Breakfast standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for the ages/grade levels served, as specified in 7 CFR 210.10 or 220.8, as applicable USDA School Meal regulations;
  - Meet the Massachusetts School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages, as applicable, which exceed the USDA Smart Snack Standards
  - Make water available and accessible without restriction to students at no charge when meals are served;
  - Represent and celebrate Accommodate the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body through accommodations in meal planning;
  - Provide clean, safe and pleasant settings for student mealtimes, and adequate time for students to eat; and a minimum of 20 minutes for lunch and a minimum of 10 minutes for breakfast after sitting down.
  - Ensure that every K-12 student shares the same welcoming meal experience regardless of their family's ability to pay. ~~no student go hungry while in school.~~
- ~~—All schools will participate in available federal school meal programs including the school breakfast program, national school meal program; and, to the maximum extent practicable, summer food service program, fruit and vegetable snack program and child and adult care food program.~~
- School administration will ensure:
  - All schools will participate in available federal school meal programs including the school breakfast program, national school meal program; and, to the maximum extent practicable, summer food service program,

fruit and vegetable snack program and child and adult care food program.

- ~~ensure that~~ Schools adhere to the nutritional standards set by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for competitive foods and beverages including vending machines, a la carte items offered in school cafeterias, school stores and school-sponsored or school-related events.
- ~~T~~In addition, ~~T~~he schools will maintain the same Massachusetts Food and Beverage Standards for Extended Day programs, concession stands, booster sales, fundraising activities and school-sponsored or school-related events.
- Students have adequate time to eat; and a minimum of 20 minutes for lunch and a minimum of 10 minutes for breakfast after sitting down.
- ~~Where practicable, school gardens will be maintained~~ maintain school gardens as a health and nutrition resource and all gardens will include edible fruits and vegetables and use organic practices.
- Students will not be restricted from having access to free, safe, unflavored drinking water throughout the school day.
- The schools will support the provision of additional food to students and families in need through participation in community programs such as the weekend backpack program and the free markets organized by Food for Free.

- ~~All schools and will adhere to the school district's Administrative Wellness Policy Guidelines and Implementation Procedures, as applicable,~~
- ~~The school district does not allow the marketing or advertising of any food or beverage that does not meet the federal Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.~~

## Physical Education and Physical Activities

The ~~departmen~~ istrict's goal is that all students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis throughout the school day through physical education (PE) classes, and before and after school. Such opportunities include, for example, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, active transportation (walking ~~and~~, biking, taking public transportation, and using other non-motorized personal mobility devices to travel to and from school) and physical activity integrated into the academic curriculum where appropriate. ~~Additionally,~~ there will be daily recess periods with active play for K-8 students. Schools will collaborate with the City of Cambridge Community Development Department on the Safe Routes to School program ~~for all 2nd and 6th grade students.~~

- The Health, Physical Education and Athletics departments will provide all students, including students with disabilities, special health care needs and those in alternative educational settings, with access to a variety of opportunities for physical activity. These activities will:
  - Adhere **to** or exceed the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, ~~and~~ the National Association for Sport and Physical Education Standards, and the MassDOT Safe Routes to School Curriculum.
  - Ensure **that** students learn skills for lifelong activities
  - Provide students with the opportunity **to** participate in physical activity through a range of programs including but not limited to, commuting options that promote active transportation, intramurals and competitive interscholastic athletics, and activities that are available to all students, regardless of skill level, such as intramurals and physical activity clubs.
  - Include in-school training for all 2nd and 6th grade students on active transportation to ensure that students have the tools necessary to walk or ride bike to school safely and comfortably.
  
- The school ~~departmen~~ istrict will ensure that physical education is taught by qualified educators who are certified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to teach physical education. In addition, as part of a quality physical education program, all physical education teachers will be expected to participate regularly in professional development activities. ~~Lead Educators for pedestrian and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade on bike trainings through Safe Routes to School program will be provided by the Community Development Department.~~
- The school ~~departmen~~ istrict will ensure that equipment and facilities specifically used for Physical Education are adequate and conform to safety standards.
- ~~Students will not be kept from recess or excluded from a Physical Education class — except if the removal is necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of the student, other students and staff and/or is related to the students engaging in conduct, during recess or Physical Education class, that is in violation of the codes of conduct set forth in the Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook and/or in school-based rules or other Cambridge Public School policies (e.g., anti-bullying policy, anti-hazing policy, non-discrimination policy), or the permission of the student's parent/guardian has been given for the student's removal or exclusion.~~
- ~~Physical activity or recess will neither be denied nor required as a form of punishment.~~ All CPS students in grades K-8 will have at least 20 minutes of recess actively supervised by trained staff, preferably outdoors, during which the schools will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

- ~~Students will not be denied recess to conference with teaching staff, finish projects or make-up work unless under unusual circumstances.~~
- ~~Students and staff will be encouraged~~ School administration will work to make active transportation to and from school a safe, accessible, and appealing mode of transportation. School administration will encourage and support the use of active transportation modes by students and staff. ~~to engage in active transportation (walking, bike riding, etc.) to and from school and to support a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age by working to make bicycling and walking to school a safe and more appealing mode of transportation.~~

## Health and Nutrition Education and Promotion

The following are the school ~~departmen~~ istrict's goals for health education activities:

- Students will receive encouragement, support and education to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors through standards-based health education, including nutrition education and social emotional learning and within a coordinated school health program in line with the CDC's Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework.
- Students receive health education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors.
- Students receive consistent health messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
- Nutrition is integrated into the health education curriculum. Staff who provide health and nutrition education will have appropriate training.
- Health and nutrition education curriculum will be aligned to the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, National Health Education Standards and the National Sexuality Education Standards and will establish linkages between health education, school meal programs and related community services. Kindergarten through grade 5 staff will attend school department ~~district~~ health education training.
- The school ~~departmen~~ istrict will ensure that specialist staff who teach health education in middle and high school are qualified educators who are certified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to teach health education.
- Principals will provide training to enable school staff to value and promote physical health and nutrition education, healthy eating and opportunities for students to be physically active, and will ensure that school staff adheres to the Wellness Policy and related administrative guidelines and procedures.

- Nutrition promotion will support and enhance classroom nutrition education through eating experiences in the school cafeteria provided by the Director of Food Services in partnership with the Cambridge Public Health Department and through opportunities to grow, harvest and taste organically grown fruits and vegetables in school gardens. Where practicable, school gardens will be maintained as a health and nutrition resource and all gardens will include edible fruits and vegetables and use organic practices.
- Schools are encouraged to provide nutrition and physical activity information for families and to build community support for wellness practices.

#### Discipline: Rewards and Punishment

- Physical activity or recess will neither be denied nor required as a form of punishment.
- Students will not be denied recess to conference with teaching staff, finish projects or make up work.
- Food may not be used as reward or denied as a form of punishment.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible, including operational responsibility, for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the school ~~department~~district's Wellness Policy ~~and is charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the school district's Wellness Policy.~~ Compliance with the Wellness Policy and implementation procedures will be ensured by the principal/~~head of upper school or designee~~ at each school, and, at the school department ~~district~~ level, by leadership of the School Food Service and Health and Physical Education departments.

As required by the Child Nutrition Reauthorization of 2010, USDA Food and Nutrition Services Final Rule, 7 C.F.R. §210.18(1)(8), and the Massachusetts Standards for School Wellness Advisory Committees the Wellness Policy Council will be tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Wellness Policy and giving periodic updates.

The Mobility Education Coordinator, Cambridge Community Development Department, will work with schools to ensure compliance with the Safe Routes to School program.

The Superintendent of Schools also will be responsible for ensuring that students, parents/guardians/caregivers, educators ~~teachers~~, food service professionals, school health professionals, school administrators, and other interested community members are engaged in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing school department ~~district~~-wide nutrition and physical activities policies through the wellness council and for making information about the content, implementation and evaluation



of the Wellness Policy available to the public. The Wellness Policy will be reviewed every three years, and a report assessing the school ~~department~~ district's progress toward meeting the goals of this policy, compliance with this policy and to the extent which this policy compares to model wellness policies will be prepared and also will be made available to the public. Necessary updates will be made by the Wellness Council to the policy as a result of the triennial reviews.

The Wellness Council will create an annual action plan, including measurable goals and objectives and a process for monitoring and evaluating progress made towards reaching the school ~~departmen~~ district's annual goals and objectives of the Wellness Policy. The Wellness Council will include a review of membership and participation from the previous year and, as appropriate, a request to the Superintendent for replacements. School principals ~~and heads of upper schools~~ and designated staff from the school ~~department~~ district's food service, health, physical education and athletic departments, as determined by the Superintendent of Schools, will work with the Wellness Council so that it may develop an annual compliance report for submission to the Superintendent of Schools, and this report also will be made available to the public.:-

#### LEGAL REFS.:

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section 204, P.L. 108-265, as amended, and related regulations The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. §§1751-1769h, as amended, and related regulations The Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §§1771-1789, as amended, and related regulations, including without limitation, 7 C.F.R. § 210 et seq.; Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Public Law 111-296, 111th Cong. 2010, 124 Stat. 3183, Section 204; 105 C.M.R. 215.00: Standards for School Wellness Advisory Committees.

*Adopted: June 6, 2017*