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Wellness Policy – Nutrition and Physical Activity Components

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Overview

The Dover School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, wellbeing, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Dover School District to:

- Engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district wide nutrition and physical activity policies;
- Provide all students in grades K-12 opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis;
- Ensure that foods and beverages sold or served to students by Dover School District will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*;
- Ensure that qualified child nutrition professionals provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students. Further, Dover School District will accommodate the health, 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;
- Participate in the available federal school meal programs, to the maximum extent possible, including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program and other related programs; and
- Provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity; and to establish linkages between health education, school meal programs, and related community services.

The Dover School District has taken into consideration our unique circumstances, challenges, and opportunities. Among the factors considered in the policy are socioeconomic status of the student body, school size, location, and presence of dual-language or limited-English students. The District is fortunate to have a well-educated public that supports the healthy development of its children. The District has been proactive with physical education and health education components that have met or exceeded the state guidelines. The District continues with a conscious effort to support and maintain a healthy environment for our students.

Component #1: Goals for Nutrition Education

The Dover School District shall teach, encourage, support and model healthy eating habits for students.

Nutrition Education and Promotion

It is the policy of the Dover School District that the nutrition promotion and education provided to K-12 students:

- Is based on state and district health education curriculum standards. This education is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors;
- Is not only part of health education classes but also included across the curriculum when possible;
- Provides information to students, staff, families and the community that will allow for students to receive a consistent nutrition message throughout the school in media, the classroom, the cafeteria, home and the community;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health enhancing nutrition practices;
- Discourages students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal

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- or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other individual dietary restrictions;
- Links with school meal programs in coordination between teachers and foodservice staff and nutrition- related community services as appropriate; and
- Includes training for teachers and other staff.

Staff Wellness and Education

The Dover School District highly values the health and wellbeing of every staff member. The District's insurance carrier offers many incentives that promote staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Component #2: Goals for Physical Activity

The Dover School District shall teach, encourage, support, and model age appropriate physical activity.

It is the policy of the Dover School District to provide many opportunities for physical activity and give students the opportunity to maintain physical fitness. The recommended amount of physical activity for children is at least 60 minutes per day. We support programs and individual efforts that emphasize fitness and lifelong physical activity.

Physical Education

Physical education classes will provide physical activity opportunities to develop knowledge and a variety of skills that promote physical activity and fitness. All Dover School District students in grades K-10 will regularly participate in physical education taught by a certified physical education teacher. Students in grades 11- 12 have physical activity available through electives. One credit of physical education and ½ credit of Health Education is required at the high school level. These credits will be earned in a physical education class with a certified physical education teacher. A half credit of Physical Education may be earned through the completion of at least 2 NHIAA sanctioned sports between a student's 10th grade year and through the first semester of their 12th grade year. Students are encouraged to spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

Students will be given opportunities to regularly participate in developmentally appropriate physical activity and exercise. The District is committed to fostering an environment conducive to physical activity and exercise through recess, intramurals, clubs, and organized sports. Toward that end:

- 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 on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Daily Recess

All grade K-4 students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess. Recess will preferably be outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity. If possible, recess will be scheduled before lunch for the elementary grades to encourage adequate time for meal consumption and to create a smoother transition back to the classroom. Middle school students (grades 5-8) will be offered daily recess.

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Schools should discourage extended periods (*i.e.*, periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

The Dover School District will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. The high school, and middle school as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. The Dover School District will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

Component #3: Nutrition Guidelines for Students

To facilitate the adoption of healthier eating habits, the Dover School District shall comply with the nutrition guidelines outlined in this policy.

The Dover School District Nutritional Guidelines are based upon standards established by the USDA and New Hampshire Healthy Schools Coalition. These nutrition guidelines, apply to all foods made available by the Dover School District Nutrition Services or school staff to students on school grounds during the school day as defined by each school's handbook, including but not limited to, the school breakfast and lunch program, foods and beverages sold in vending machines/school stores and as part of classroom lessons/activities, celebration or fundraising efforts.

School Meals

It is the policy of the Dover School District that the school meals offered to K-12 students will:

- Meet or exceed the nutrition requirements established by the USDA laws and regulations;
- Be provided by qualified school food service staff;
- Be served in a safe, appealing and clean setting with adequate adult supervision;
- Be offered with consideration of space distribution and scheduling to assure that students have adequate space and serving areas to minimize wait time;
- Offer a variety of foods and choices for students. Efforts will be made to:
 - Provide a variety of fruits and vegetables with an emphasis on local, fresh and seasonal produce;
 - Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally equivalent nondairy alternatives (to be defined by the Dover School District Food Service Director); and
 - Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

As a district, Dover Schools feels it is also important to:

- Use local products when available and feasible;
- Use unprocessed foods and ingredients when available;
- Utilize less disposable paper and plastic and try to use reusable & recyclable items;
- Encourage teaching, modeling and valuing any efforts made by staff, students and the community toward sustainability;
- Recognize the connection between health and the environment; and
- Encourage and foster environmental sensitivity.

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Breakfast

- The consumption of breakfast, either at home or at school, enhances children’s ability to meet their nutritional needs, focus on learning, and perform. To ensure that all children have breakfast, the schools of Dover School District will, to the extent possible:
- Operate the School Breakfast Program;
- Arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation (e.g. “grab-and-go” breakfast or scheduling breakfast during morning break or recess);
- Notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program; and
- Encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

Meal Times and Scheduling

The Dover School District schools will:

- Provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch and take into consideration transition time;
- Schedule meal periods at appropriate times, with lunches being offered between 10:30am and 1:30pm;
- Not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- Provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- Take reasonable steps to accommodate the personal regimens of children with special health needs.
- Develop school norms for lunchroom routines.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

Schools should discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times given concerns related to food safety and health (e.g. food allergies, diet restrictions, etc.).

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually

Foods and beverages sold individually include foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals and include, but are not limited to, foods available from vending machines, cafeteria a la carte (snack) lines, fundraisers, and school stores.

Food Sales: All food items made available through schools including vending machines should meet or exceed nutritional standards established by the NH Dept of Education School Food and Nutrition Services Standards (2011) and based upon the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA).

Elementary Schools: The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales that are available to elementary students on a regular basis.

Middle and High Schools: In the middle and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) between 7am – 4pm will meet or exceed the NH Dept of Education School Food and Nutrition Services Standards (2011).

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Beverages: The following beverages are allowed: water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners, 100% fruit and vegetable juices that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners, unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy milk (e.g. soy milk). These beverages (diet or caloric) are not allowed: soft drinks/soda/pop/tonic, sports drinks, energy drinks, sweetened-iced tea, fruit-based drinks that contain less than 100% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners.

Foods: A food item sold individually will meet the NH Dept of Education School Food and Nutrition Services Standards (2011) and will:

- have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated fat;
- have no trans-fat;
- have no more than 35% of its *weight* from added sugars; and
- contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.

Fruits & Vegetables: A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

Portion Sizes: Portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually are recommended as a single serving as listed in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) with the recognition that many foods are usually consumed in a two-serving portion (i.e., bagel, sandwich with bun or bread). Some examples are listed below for single serving packaging:

- One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
- One ounce for cookies;
- Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and
- The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits but must meet minimum requirements.

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet

the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged. School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is

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prohibited.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low nutrition food products; in-school television, such as Channel One; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; sales of fruit for fundraisers; and coupons for discount gym memberships.

Celebrations

All school personnel must be mindful of individuals with allergies, food intolerances, religious or health-related dietary restrictions. Any classroom activities or school-wide events occurring during the school day involving food must be planned in a timely fashion with attention to all possible food allergies. Individual birthday celebrations involving food shall not be permitted.

Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day. Each party should limit food or beverages that do not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above). The district will make a list of healthy party ideas available to parents and teachers. Subject area lessons involving food preparation should consider nutritional guidelines as part of the instruction of the lesson.

School staff involved in homeroom, field trips and advisory food-related events will communicate with school food service managers and/or director to assist with cafeteria planning and reducing food waste. When possible, staff will order foods through food services managers.

Classroom Activities

School staff shall discourage the use of low-nutritionally value dense food items for instructional purposes. This is especially the case for those food items that do not meet the nutritional standards for foods as outlined in this policy.

School personnel will also avoid the use of highly allergenic foods (for example: peanuts, fish, shellfish, eggs, dairy, wheat, tree-nuts) or other foods that present a health risk.

School Store

Any food and beverage items sold in the school store will meet guidelines of this policy. Food items in the school store will not be sold when the school food service program is open for sale.

School-Sponsored Events

School-sponsored events include, but are not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances. Foods and beverages offered before, during, and after school (7am to 4pm) will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). Other organizations (e.g. PTO, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts) who may be supplying food at school sponsored events will do so

under the advisement of a school official and be made mindful of the nutritional guidelines for competitive foods.

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Meals for Extracurricular Events

The Dover School District Food Services Program offers a variety of affordable, tasty, and nutritionally balanced meals to meet the needs of field trips, athletic events, banquets, after-school activities, special events, and meetings.

The Dover School District is encouraged to make use of this service by planning through the Food Service Director.

Nutrition Guidelines for Reimbursable School Meals

Reimbursable meals will be served in the same manner as stated under *Component#2: Nutrition Guidelines for Meals*. Foods should be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety, and packaging to ensure that students will participate in consuming high-quality meals. In no circumstances will the guidelines for reimbursable school meals be less restrictive than the regulations and guidance issued by the USDA as applicable to schools.

Free-and-Reduced-Priced Meals: Eligibility and distribution of free-and- reduced-priced meals will be handled by the Food Service Provider and designated food service personnel. The availability of free and reduced lunch will be made known to all families using school newsletters, beginning of the year packets and the website. Help will be offered for completing the application should it be needed. Application materials are available on the Dover School District website, at each school main office, and can be mailed upon request. Confidentiality and the sensitivity of these matters will always be taken into consideration. Forms will be processed in a timely manner and schools will assure that all students have access to food at school in accordance with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 & 2010.

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff: Nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs under the direction of a Food Service Director. This director will oversee the operation of school meals, maintain proper resources that meet state and federal regulations and maintain state health requirements for each school in the district.

As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, the food service provider will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs will include appropriate sanitation courses and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, cafeteria workers, and volunteers according to their levels of responsibility.

Component #4: School Environment

The Dover School District shall educate students, employees to the important benefits of a healthy lifestyle. The district shall offer nutrition education to the community.

Communications with Parents

The Dover School District will provide information to parents about healthy foods and snacks, as well as other school-based nutrition-related activities. The Dover School District should solicit input and feedback from students and parents when selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, Dover School

District will share nutrition content information of foods sold through the school meal programs (i.e. newsletters, menus, a website, cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.)

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The Dover School District will provide information to parents about physical education and other school based physical activity opportunities (i.e. via a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework).

Component #5: Implementation & Review of the Wellness Policy

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.

The Dover School District Wellness Committee, with input from nutrition and physical education staff and the Food Service Director, will periodically assess the nutrition and physical activity environment throughout the district. They will provide input to each building principal and the superintendent regarding progress on the current targets, recommend any new targets and identify strategies in support of the goals stated in this policy. The superintendent and building principals will decide upon the targets and strategies in support of the goals stated in this Policy. Periodic progress reports will be provided to the School Board.

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 Child Nutrition Director will report to the superintendent on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) report, review findings, and any resulting changes. If the district has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

Policy Review

To keep the Dover School District Wellness Policy up to date with the changing developments in nutrition and exercise information, the district will conduct assessments of the school’s existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results will be used to identify and prioritize needs.

Periodic assessments will be repeated to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement (e.g. The NH Department of Education’s School Wellness Policy Assessment). As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies to assure an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity and nutrition and physical education. The Dover School District Wellness Committee will revise the Wellness Policy and develop work plans to facilitate its implementation as necessary. The superintendent, or his/her designee, will make available to the public the Dover School District Wellness Policy evaluation progress and results.

As needed, the Wellness Committee will request that the Superintendent notify those involved with the nutrition and education of students, staff and the community regarding any changes that have occurred in federal and state nutrition guidelines that need to be reflected in this policy and in the district teachings.

The Wellness Committee charged with the updating of this policy will be overseen and chosen by the district’s superintendent or superintendent designee. The committee will consist of persons from varying disciplines. There will be staff (general education, physical education and wellness-related),

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students, health professionals, nutritional staff, and community members involved in the writing and reviewing of the policy.

The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district wide nutrition and physical activity policies.

The chair of the Wellness Committee will review the policy annually and any necessary changes will be discussed with committee members. The committee is open to input from anyone within the school or community whose goal is to broaden or improve the health of the Dover School District students.

Policy History:

Adopted on August 13, 2013

Revised on June 8, 2020