



Policy Number:109

Adopted:

Revised: 10/20/2023

## Wellness Policy

### **I. Nutrition Education**

Goal: Nutrition education will be integrated into the Health Curriculum. Nutrition education incorporates national and state-developed standards designed to promote and protect student health. Students can demonstrate their knowledge of nutrition concepts by applying the skills in a variety of settings.

#### A. Program components:

##### 1. Classroom teaching

Health classes will focus on the benefits of nutrition on overall health and disease prevention as part of health. Activities will include reading and writing about food and nutrition, calculations of nutritional values of food, knowing the components of food, presentation of food, etc.

##### 2. Activities will stress the appealing aspects of healthy eating in a non-threatening way. Every effort will be made to involve families as partners in this education.

#### B. Professional development

##### 1. Staff responsible for nutrition education will be adequately prepared and regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned.

Preparation and professional development activities shall provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with skill practice in program-specific activities and instructional techniques and strategies designed to promote healthy eating habits.

##### 2. School instructional staff shall collaborate with Registered Dietitians, agencies, and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families.

Guest speakers invited to address students shall receive appropriate orientation to the relevant policies of the school/district.

#### C. Coordination of Programs

##### 1. The food service program shall be closely coordinated with nutrition instruction. The school cafeteria shall serve as a learning environment to allow students to apply critical thinking skills taught in the classroom. Food service staff shall also work closely with those responsible for other components of the school health program to achieve common goals.

#### D. Nutrition-Related Health Problems and Modified Diets

##### 1. School support services and health services staff shall consistently promote healthy eating to students and other staff. These professionals shall be prepared to recognize conditions such as obesity, eating disorders, food allergies, and other nutrition-related health problems among students and staff and be able to refer them to appropriate services.

##### 2. The school food service program will comply with USDA's disability requirements for modified diets. The school food service program is strongly encouraged to meet ethnic dietary requests as recommended by USDA.

### **II. A Healthy School Environment**

#### A. Nutritious Food Choices

1. Nutritious and low-fat foods will be made available to students, including low-fat dairy products and fresh, canned or dried fruits.
2. Food provided as part of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs must meet USDA requirements and any Minnesota regulations for those programs. All other food and beverage sales to students, during the regular school day or as part of a school-sponsored event will meet the State Department of Education (SDE) guidelines (as defined below).

#### B. Beverages

1. Only the following beverages can be sold to students from any source, including school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fund-raising activities on school premises, whether or not school-sponsored:
  - a. Milk, which may be flavored but contain no artificial sweeteners and no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce;
  - b. Nondairy milk, which may be flavored but contain no artificial sweeteners, no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce, no more than 35% of calories from fat per serving, and no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat per serving;
  - c. 100% fruit or vegetable juice or combination of such juices, containing no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners;
  - d. Beverages that contain only water and fruit or vegetable juice and have no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners; and
  - e. Water, which may be flavored but must contain no added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners, or caffeine.
2. Portion sizes of beverages, other than water, offered for sale cannot exceed 12 ounces. Other beverages may be sold if (1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, (2) the sale is at the event location, and (3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store.

#### C. State Department of Education nutrition standards:

1. Food items offered for sale (by the food service provider) in the cafeteria will meet the nutrition standards for schools published by the MN State Dept. of Education
  - a. A list of Healthy Snack Foods and Beverages will be available

### **III. Physical Activity and a Healthy School Environment**

The need for physical activity for children of all ages is acknowledged. The Centers for Disease Control defines physical activity as, “any bodily movements produced by skeletal muscles that result in an expenditure of energy.”

#### A. Comprehensive Health Education Standards specifically detail and address Physical Activity Standards. For children in school for a full day, the following is recommended:

1. Provide physical education courses where students learn, practice, and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills, and knowledge.
2. Ensure that state-certified physical education teachers teach all physical education classes.
3. Provide an adequate amount of time for physical education classes.
4. Ensure that physical education classes have a teacher/student ratio comparable with those of other classes
5. Implement a sequential physical education course of study consistent with national standards for physical education and with a focus on students’ development of motor skills, movement forms, and health-related fitness.
6. Ensure that students are moderate to vigorous active at least 50% of the time while participating in physical education classes.
7. Provide a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted.
8. Ensure students must be allowed to attend all physical education classes offered.

#### B. Encouraging Lifetime Physical Activity

Goals for optimal daily physical activity in children include the following: Accumulating a daily total of at least 60 minutes of physical activity on all or most days of the week within and outside of school. This includes several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more. However, extended periods of inactivity of two or more hours are discouraged.

In addition, Midway Star Academy will:

1. Encourage physical activity as appropriate during the school day, including physical activity options for “indoor recess”.

2. Offer after-school physical activity clubs that meet the needs and interests of all students, including those who are not athletically gifted and those with special health care needs.
3. Encourage students and community members to use the school's physical activity facilities outside of the normal school day.
4. Encourage parents and community members to institute programs that support physical activity. **IV.**

### **Nutrition Standards for All Foods Available on School Campus during the School Day**

To support the philosophy and goals outlined in sections 1-3, it is recommended:

A. The food service provider will:

1. Make available the Nutritional value and ingredients of all food and beverages sold.
2. Provide standard portion sizes as appropriate for each population served.

B. Midway Star will:

1. Encourage after-school programs, field trips, or other school events to select food items and activities outlined in the School Wellness Policy.
2. Educate staff, parents, and students on alternatives to the current celebrations and assist with future planning of events of parties, celebrations, fundraisers, and meetings
3. Periodically review all food and beverage contracts to ensure they promote healthy choices 4. Food should not be offered as a reward. Staff will be educated on alternatives.

### **V. Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness**

Regular and consistent health, wellness, nutrition, and physical activity messages will be provided in all settings, including the classroom, cafeteria, after-school activities, fundraising events, newsletters, websites, bulletin boards, etc.

A. Midway Star, in coordination with the food service provider, will:

1. Provide a pleasant, comfortable cafeteria setting including adequate eating time.
2. Train Food service staff in the following areas:
  - a. Food safety
  - b. Presentation
  - c. Nutrition.
3. Utilize staff and student feedback for ongoing quality improvement of the food service.

B. Wellness promotion:

1. Staff members are encouraged and provided with support to model healthy lifestyles and eating behaviors.
2. The school may offer staff, parents, and students wellness programs and information related to physical activity and healthy eating. Topics may include healthy snacks and lunch box ideas.
3. Staff, parents, and students will be encouraged to offer suggestions for other topics of interest.

### **VI. Implementation, Measurement, and Evaluation of the School Wellness Policy**

A. Implementation:

1. Establish a permanent "School Wellness Committee (SWC)". Membership should include, but not be limited to representatives from the Board of Education, Central Services, administration, teacher, parent, student, school nurse, food service provider, and registered dietitian. The SWC will establish goals and timelines for implementation and evaluation
2. The Administration, in coordination with the School Wellness Committee, will assess all Wellness, nutrition, and physical education curricula and school events for consistency with Federal and State regulations and the Midway Star wellness policy, educational goals, and standards.
3. The Wellness policy and supporting documents will be available via the website, Student Handbooks, and direct communication with staff and parents.

### **VII. Measurement Tools**

The Wellness Committee will meet on a regular basis to facilitate implementation and develop measurement tools such as:

1. Repeat the "School Health Index" tool used to gather baseline data
2. Develop student and parent surveys on policy areas of nutrition and physical fitness

3. Assess participation in the School Lunch Program and establish a “quality improvement” tool 4. Survey teachers, staff, students, and parents on healthy food choices for celebrations and fundraisers 5. Select measurement tools to determine improvements in the health and wellness of staff and

### **VIII. Evaluation of success**

The School Wellness Committee will:

1. Establish a system for communicating data and further revision of the policy between team members, administration, school staff members, parents, and the community.
2. Continue to evaluate the need for expansion and funding of additional Wellness Programs.

