

School Committee Policy

Policy # 69

Medway Wellness Policy

Preamble

Medway Public Schools recognizes that research shows a strong positive correlation between nutrition, physical activity, social-emotional wellbeing and academic success, school attendance and cognitive performance. Medway Public Schools is committed to providing a healthy environment and promoting healthy lifestyle choices for its students, faculty and staff. This policy outlines the District's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students and staff to practice healthy habits throughout the school day and beyond.

Wellness Advisory Committee

Committee Role and Membership

The role of the Medway Public School's Wellness Advisory Committee is to establish and measure the implementation of the Wellness Policy. This committee will review the policy on an annual basis and recommend changes as needed to enhance healthy behaviors and choices for the students, faculty, and staff. The committee will also serve as a resource to the schools, parents and community by keeping abreast of wellness issues within the school district and will recommend programming, health education curriculum changes and parental education as needed.

The Wellness Committee will meet at least four times a year. Committee representation will include all school levels and will include (to the extent possible) parents and caregivers, students, representatives for the school nutrition program, health/physical education teachers, school health nurses, mental health and social services staff, school administrators, school committee members, community organizations and the general public.

Leadership

The Director of Wellness will convene the School Wellness Committee and facilitate updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy.

Nutrition

School Meals

Foods and beverages sold or served at school during the school day will meet the federal nutritional regulations for the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and the *Smart Snacks in School* nutrition standards. Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students. There will be consideration for religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning. Meals will be provided to the students in a clean, safe, and pleasant setting and students will have adequate time to eat.

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- Be appealing and attractive.
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations.
- Be comprised of only the John Stalker Institute “A-List” of food items by manufacturer and will be acceptable food items for students’ consumption.

Encourage students through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices.

Policies for Food and Beverage Marketing

Marketing and advertising of foods will only be permitted for those foods and beverages that meet the *Smart Snacks in School* nutrition standards.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored 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 meal times.

Free and Reduced-price meals

The 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 meals. The district will use an electronic identification and payment system.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

Students will be discouraged from sharing their food and beverages with other students during meal or snack times because of the many children with restricted diets and food allergies.

Fundraising Activities

In order to support student health, school fundraising activities must involve foods that meet the *Smart Snacks in School* nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Fundraising activities that promote physical activity will be encouraged. Sales of competitive food or beverages (including bake sales), not sold/provided via School Breakfast or Lunch Programs, are not permitted during the school day nor beyond school hours in pre-K through grade four.

Sales of competitive food or beverages (including bake sales), not sold/provided via School Breakfast or Lunch Programs, are not permitted during the school day, but are permitted beyond school hours, in grades five-twelve.

Celebrations and Rewards

The use of food as a reward or incentive during the school day is prohibited, except as indicated in a child's Individualized Education Program.

Celebrations in the classroom that involve food during the school day are limited to curriculum based activities. Parents are prohibited from sending to school snacks/treats to be shared by the entire classroom. The school principal, in collaboration with the school nurse, may make an exception to this in order to approve curriculum based food activities. Alternate activities are strongly encouraged for celebrations.

Vending Machines

Vending machines will not operate during the school day except for the purchase of water.

Information Sharing

Information about the nutritional content of meals and snacks will be shared with parents and students. This information will be made available on menus, the school website.

Health Education and Life Skills

Health Education will be taught by a certified health education teacher using an age-appropriate, sequential health education curriculum consistent with the *National Health Education Standards*. Health education will be assessed using skill based rubrics to determine if students have gained the skills necessary to lead a healthy lifestyle. Health education curriculum will take a comprehensive approach to wellness by equipping students with the skills necessary to become and stay physically and mentally well.

Physical Education

Physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher as a required subject in all grades using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with the *National Standards for Physical Education*.

- The program will stress fitness and encourage healthy lifestyles.
- Physical education is required for all students and adapted for students with physical limitations.
- Students participating in other activities involving physical activity cannot substitute this for physical education classes.
- The physical education classes should be of moderate intensity to provide a health benefit to students, recognizing that this will vary depending on the ability of the student.

Opportunities for Physical Activity Throughout the Day

Children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A percentage of this physical activity will be provided during school hours through physical education and recess (where offered). Students are encouraged to participate in physical activity before and after school at home, and during school sponsored and community based programs.

Recess is highly encouraged as an important component of a student's day for social/emotional benefits. Recess will not be withheld from students as a response to behavioral dysregulation or academic performance, except in significant circumstances.

The District will support walking or biking to school. The District will encourage this behavior by:

- Designating safe or preferred routes to school
- Promoting participation in activities such as the National Walk to School Day
- Providing secure storage for bicycles and helmets

- Providing instruction on pedestrian and bicycle safety for students
- The use of crossing guards

Other Activities to Promote Student Wellness

Health and Safe Environment

The District will provide a safe environment during school hours, as well as, school sponsored events:

- All school property will meet health and safety standards and codes.
- The schools will be free of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
- The schools will have zero tolerance for violence and harassment.
- The District encourages students to develop skills to express thoughts and feelings responsibly to promote a school culture where everyone is respected and accepted.

Social and Emotional Health

The District recognizes the importance of developing social and emotional competencies in its students based on the understanding that social and emotional skills are critical to being a good student, citizen and worker. Social and emotional learning is addressed K-12 with a focus on the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning's (CASEL) five interrelated sets of competencies:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Responsible Decision Making

Health Services

The school health program is based on a collaborative partnership between the faculty, staff, school administration, external health care providers, parents, and government agencies.

The goal of the school health program is to complement and support the school's academic mission while promoting and improving students' health. Each school is staffed by a Registered Nurse licensed through the Massachusetts Board of Registration for Nursing (BORN) and certified by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

- All students have access to Health Services.
- Requirements for physical examinations and immunizations are enforced according to the Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines.

- Health screenings (vision, hearing, scoliosis, height, weight, substance use, etc.) are conducted according to the guidelines established by the Department of Public Health. In accordance with the guidelines established by the Department of Public Health and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, parents have the right to opt their child(ren) out of any or all screenings.
- A school physician is available to consult with the school nurses and the Superintendent as needed.

Staff Wellness

The Medway Public Schools values the health and wellbeing of every staff member. Personal efforts to maintain a healthy lifestyle are supported and encouraged through the District's staff wellness program: Just For the Health of It! The Staff Wellness Committee consists of representatives from all four schools, human resources and district administration. This committee is responsible for ensuring the staff has access to programming and services that support their desire to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

Collaboration between schools, families and the community is essential for the promotion and enhancement of students' health and wellness. The District elicits this collaboration by following the Whole School, Whole Child, Whole Community model, as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The District will actively communicate ways in which parents and community members can participate in the development, implementation and review of wellness policies and programs.

Annual Notification of Policy

The Wellness Advisory Committee shall provide to the Superintendent and the School Committee a summary of wellness-related activities and events, including the goals and objectives for the coming year, on an annual basis. This summary, along with information on how community members can get involved in wellness-related initiatives, will be made available to the public.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the District will evaluate compliance with this policy to assess the implementation of the policy and will include:

- Compliance to the wellness policy;
- How the wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s model wellness policy and progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The Wellness Advisory Committee will update or modify this policy based on the results of the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey, triennial assessments and/or as District priorities change; community needs change; new health science information emerges; wellness goals are met and/or new federal or state guidelines or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.

Medway Public Schools Policies
Harassment, Anti-Bullying, Life Threatening Allergies

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