

WELLNESS POLICY

The NMRSD School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, North Middlesex will provide developmentally appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence based.

Wellness Committee

North Middlesex will establish a wellness committee that consists of at least one (1): parent/guardian, student, nurse, school food service representative, NMRSD School Committee member, school administrator, member of the public, and other community members as appropriate. If available, a qualified, credentialed nutrition professional will be a member of the wellness committee. The NMRSD School Committee designates the following individuals as wellness program coordinators: District Nurse Co-coordinator and Director of Special Education. Only employees of the district who are members of the wellness committee may serve as wellness program coordinators. Wellness coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will be in charge of implementation and evaluation of this policy.

Nutrition Guidelines

It is the policy of North Middlesex that all foods and beverages made available during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. All foods sold will meet or exceed the Massachusetts and USDA competitive foods and beverage nutritional standards. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will meet or exceed the Federal Lunch Program guidelines issued by the Secretary of Agriculture. The district will create procedures that address all foods available to students throughout the school day in the following areas:

- Guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment.
- All food offerings will emphasize wholesome, natural ingredients, whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, lean proteins and healthy snacks in alliance with the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act.
- The District will offer a variety of allergy friendly foods to accommodate students needs.

- Food and beverages sold as a la carte items will meet nutritional standards consistent with the Massachusetts and USDA national standards.
- All food and beverages sold in vending machines after school hours will meet the Massachusetts and USDA national standards.
- The district will continue to promote non-food celebrations.
- Food items brought from home for personal consumption are exempt from this policy.

Nutrition and Physical Education

North Middlesex will provide nutrition and physical education instruction aligned with the standards established by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Nutrition Education

- Students receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education is offered in the school cafeteria coordinated by the cafeteria staff.
- Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Nutrition is integrated into the health education or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- The District links nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.

Physical Education Activities

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- The District works with the community to create safe ways for students to walk, bike, rollerblade or skateboard safely to and from school.
- The District encourages parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

- The District provides training to enable staff to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among students.

Other School-Based Activities

The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with District leadership team, are charged with developing procedures addressing other school-based activities to promote wellness.

- An adequate amount of time is allowed for students to eat meals in adequate lunchroom facilities.
- All children who participate in subsidized food programs are able to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
- Environmentally-friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, and non-disposable tableware have been considered and implemented where appropriate.
- Physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs designed to benefit staff health have been considered and, to the extent practical, implemented.

Fundraising Activities

- Fundraising Coordinators are encouraged to seek non-food items for fundraising. In the event that food sold as a school sponsored fundraiser does not meet the USDA and state guidelines it shall be restricted to delivery and consumptions after school hours.
- After Hours School Sponsored Events: Every attempt should be made to assure that foods and beverages sold at school sponsored events outside of the school day will meet USDA nutritional standards.

Evaluation

Wellness program coordinators shall be responsible for devising a plan for implementation and evaluation of the district wellness policy and are charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the district wellness policy. Wellness program coordinators will report to the NMRSD School Committee annually.

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