

# policy

**BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
MT. VERNON COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION**

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## WELLNESS

As required by law, the School Board establishes the following wellness policy for the School Corporation as a part of a comprehensive wellness initiative.

The Board recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the health and well-being of the Corporation's students. Furthermore, research suggests that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her ability to learn. Moreover, schools can play an important role in the developmental process by which students establish their health and nutrition habits by providing nutritious meals and snacks through the schools' meal programs, by supporting the development of good eating habits, and by promoting increased physical activity both in and out of school.

Empowering students to develop healthy behaviors and habits regarding diet and exercise requires collaboration. It will be necessary for not only the staff but also parents and the public at large to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support, and model such healthy behaviors and habits.

The Board sets the following goals in an effort to enable students to establish good health and nutrition habits:

**A. With regard to nutrition education:**

- Nutrition education shall be included in the health curriculum so that instruction is sequential and standards-based and provides students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to lead healthy lives.
- Nutrition education shall be integrated into other subject areas of the curriculum, when appropriate, to complement, but not replace, the standards and benchmarks for health education.
- Nutrition education shall include opportunities for appropriate student projects related to nutrition, involving, when possible, community agencies and organizations.
- Nutrition education shall extend beyond the classroom by engaging and involving the school's food service staff.
- Nutrition education posters, such as the MyPlate guide, will be displayed in the cafeteria.

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- Nutrition education standards and benchmarks promote the benefits of a balanced diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, and low-fat and fat-free dairy products.
- Staff responsible for providing instruction in nutrition education shall regularly participate in professional development activities designed to better enable them to teach the benchmarks and standards.
- The Corporation shall provide information to parents designed to encourage them to reinforce at home the standards and benchmarks being taught in the classroom.

**B. With regard to nutrition promotion:**

- Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- All school cafeterias shall display daily fruit and vegetable options prominently and within reach to encourage students to increase their consumption of healthful foods during the school day.
- To promote and encourage students to try new, diverse foods, the food service staff shall coordinate occasional healthy food samplings for students, which shall include nutrition information and benefits.
- School administrators shall coordinate with teachers, health professionals, and/or community members/organizations to promote National Health Observances throughout the school year (such as American Heart Month, National Nutrition Month, etc.).

**C. With regard to physical activity:**

**1. Physical Education**

- A sequential, comprehensive physical education program shall be provided for students in K-12 in accordance with the physical education academic content standards and benchmarks adopted by the State.
- The physical education curriculum shall provide sequential instruction related to the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to participate in lifelong, health-enhancing physical activity.

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- Teachers properly certificated/licensed in the subject area of physical education shall provide all instruction in physical education.

## 2. Physical Activity

- Physical activity shall not be employed as a form of discipline or punishment.
- Physical activity and movement shall be integrated, when possible, across the curricula and throughout the school day.
- Schools shall encourage families to provide physical activity outside the regular school day, such as outdoor play at home, participation in sports sponsored by community agencies or organizations, and in lifelong physical activities like bowling, swimming, or tennis.
- All students in grades K- 5/6 shall be provided with a daily recess period at least twenty (20) minutes in duration. Recess shall not be used as a reward or punishment.
- The school shall provide information to families to encourage and assist them in their efforts to incorporate physical activity into their children's daily lives.
- Schools shall discourage extended periods of student inactivity without some physical activity.
- Teachers and students shall be encouraged to incorporate physical activities into the classroom (such as brain breaks, yoga, short interactive exercise videos, etc.). A list of ideas and/or resources shall be made available on the district website.

### **D. With regard to other school-based activities:**

- The schools shall schedule mealtimes so there is minimum disruption by bus schedules, recess, and other special programs or events.
- The school shall provide attractive, clean environments in which the students eat.

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- Students, parents, and other community members shall have access to, and be encouraged to use, the school's outdoor physical activity facilities outside the normal school day.
- Schools in our system utilize electronic identification and payment systems, therefore, eliminating any stigma or identification of students eligible to receive free and/or reduced meals.
- Students are discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some students' diets.
- Schools are strongly discouraged from rewarding children in the classroom with candy and other foods that can undermine children's diets and health and reinforce unhealthy eating habits. A wide variety of alternative rewards can be used to provide positive reinforcement for children's behavior and academic performance.
- Schools shall encourage and promote family and community events relating to wellness (such as Family Fun & Fitness day; Family Fitness Challenges; Field Day; etc.).

Additionally, the Corporation shall ensure school meals meet USDA requirements by:

- Creating an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits, including offering the following nutritious foods:
  - a variety of produce to include those prepared without added fats, sugars, refined sugars, and sodium
  - a variety of vegetables daily to include specific subgroups as defined by dark green, red/orange, legumes, and starchy
  - whole grain products
  - fluid milk that is fat-free (unflavored and flavored) and low-fat (unflavored)
  - meals designed to meet specific calorie ranges and sodium limits for age/grade groups
- Eliminating trans-fat from school meals

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- Requiring students to select a fruit or vegetable as part of a complete reimbursable meal

Furthermore, with the objectives of enhancing student health and well being, and reducing childhood obesity, the following guidelines are established:

- In accordance with Policy 8500, entitled Food Service, the food service program shall comply with Federal and State regulations pertaining to the selection, preparation, consumption, and disposal of food and beverages as well as to the fiscal management of the program.
- The sale of foods of minimal nutritional value in the food service area during the lunch period is prohibited.
- As set forth in Policy 8531, entitled Free and Reduced Price Meals, the guidelines for reimbursable school meals are not less restrictive than the guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- All food items and beverages available for sale to students for consumption on campus, between midnight the night before the start of the school day and thirty (30) minutes after the close of the regular school day, shall comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. This includes, but is not limited to, competitive foods that are sold to students à la carte in the dining area, as well as food items and beverages from vending machines, school stores, or fundraisers by student clubs and organizations, parent groups, or boosters clubs.
  - IDOE provides a special exemption for infrequent fundraisers that do not meet the nutrition standards. Only to two (2) fundraiser exemptions will be allowed per school building, per school year. The maximum duration of an exempted fundraiser is one (1) day.
- All foods that are provided, not sold, on the school campus during the school day, including foods and beverages provided for classroom parties or holiday celebrations shall comply with the following food and beverage standards:
  - Schools shall strongly discourage providing outside food or beverages to students. This applies to events such as classroom parties, holiday celebrations, and birthdays. Classroom celebrations shall instead focus on activities and non-food rewards (e.g. crafts, games, dance parties, toys, stickers, pencils, etc.)

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- Special consideration may be given for food and beverage items designated for educational purposes for a curriculum-based instructional lesson or unit, such as cultural exploration, historical significance, or social training (etiquette dinner). In these special cases, it is the responsibility of the teacher to inform parents/guardians of classroom activity and to communicate with parents/guardians to make appropriate accommodations for any students with medical needs, food allergies or intolerances.

In addition, the Corporation shall adhere to the following:

- The food service program will strive to be financially self-supporting; however, if it is necessary to subsidize the operation, it will not be through the sale of foods with minimal nutritious value.
- The food service program will provide all students affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to be healthy and to learn well.
- All foods available to students in Corporation programs, other than the food service program, shall be served with consideration for promoting student health and well-being.
- The food service program shall be administered by a director who is properly qualified, certificated, licensed, or credentialed, according to current professional standards.
- All menus shall be created and/or reviewed by a Registered Dietitian. This includes specialized diet plans.
- All food service personnel shall receive pre-service training in food service operations.
- Continuing professional development shall be provided for all staff of the food service program.
- Students and staff shall have free, potable water for consumption available in water fountains throughout the school building. Free drinking water will also be made readily available in the food service area during meal times.
- Before field trips, if food is to be provided by the school, teachers are responsible for communicating with parents/guardians to provide appropriate

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meal choices for each student, including making accommodations for students with food allergies/disabilities.

The Board designates the building principals as the individual(s) charged with operational responsibility for measuring and evaluating the Corporation's implementation and progress under this policy.

The Superintendent shall appoint a Corporation Wellness Committee that may include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, registered dietitians, educational staff (including health and physical education teachers), mental health and social services staff, school health professionals, the School Board, school administrators, and members of the public to oversee the development, implementation, evaluation, and periodic update, if necessary, of the wellness policy.

The Superintendent shall be an ex officio member of the committee.

The wellness committee shall be an ad hoc committee of the Board with members recruited and appointed annually.

The wellness committee shall:

- A. assess the current environment in each of the Corporation's schools;
- B. measure the implementation of the Corporation's wellness policy in each of the Corporation's schools;
- C. review the Corporation's current wellness policy;
- D. recommend revision of the policy, as appropriate; and
- E. present the wellness policy, with any recommended revisions, to the Board for approval or re-adoption if revisions are recommended.

Before the end of each school year the wellness committee shall submit to the Superintendent and Board their report in which they describe the environment in each of the Corporation's schools and the implementation of the wellness policy in each school, and identify any revisions to the policy the committee deems necessary. In its review, the Wellness Committee shall consider evidence-based strategies in determining its recommendations.

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The Superintendent shall report annually to the Board on the work of the wellness committee, including their assessment of the environment in the Corporation, their evaluation of wellness policy implementation Corporation-wide, and the areas for improvement, if any, that the committee identified. The committee also shall report on the status of compliance by individual schools and progress made in attaining goals established in the policy.

The Superintendent also shall be responsible for informing the public, including parents, students and community members, on the content and implementation of this policy. In order to inform the public, the Superintendent shall:

- distribute information at the beginning of the school year to families of school children;
- include information in the student handbook;
- and post the wellness policy on the Corporation's website, including the assessment of the implementation of the policy prepared by the Corporation.

The Corporation shall assess the Wellness Policy at least once every three (3) years on the extent to which schools in the Corporation are in compliance with the Corporation policy, the extent to which the Corporation policy compares to model wellness policies, and the progress made in attaining the goals of the Corporation Wellness Policy. To ensure continuing progress, the Corporation will evaluate implementation efforts and their impact on students and staff using the following tools:

- <https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/>
- [http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/nutrition/evaluation-checklist\\_0.pdf](http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/nutrition/evaluation-checklist_0.pdf)

The assessment shall be made available to the public on the School Corporation's website.

I.C. 20-26-9-18  
42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.  
42 U.S.C. 1758b  
42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.  
7 C.F.R. Parts 210 and 220