

MULBERRY/PLEASANT VIEW BI-COUNTY SCHOOLS WELLNESS POLICY

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Introduction

The health and physical well-being of our students directly affects their ability to learn. Childhood obesity increases the incidence of adult diseases occurring in children and adolescents such as heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes. The increase risk carries forward into their adulthood. Research indicates that a healthy diet and regular physical activity can help prevent obesity and the diseases resulting from it. It is understood that the eating habits and exercise patterns of students cannot be magically changed overnight, but at the same time, the Board of Directors believes it is necessary to strive to create a culture in our schools that consistently promotes good nutrition and physical activity.

The problem of obesity and inactivity is a public health issue. The Board of Directors is keenly aware that it has taken years for this problem to reach its present level and will similarly take years to correct. The responsibility for addressing the problem lies not only with the school and the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), but with the community and its residents, organizations and agencies. Therefore, the District shall enlist the support of the larger community to find solutions which improve the health and physical activity of our students.

Goals

In its effort to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health, and reduce childhood obesity, the District has established the following goals. These goals are further discussed on the following pages.

- Appoint a district school health coordinator (designated district official) who shall be responsible for ensuring that each school fulfills the requirement of this policy;
- Implement a grade appropriate nutrition education program that will develop an awareness of and appreciation for nutrition and physical activity throughout the curriculum;
- Enforce existing physical education requirements and engage students in health levels of vigorous physical activity;
- Strive to improve the quality of physical education curricula and increase the training of physical education teachers;
- Follow the Arkansas Physical Education and Health Education Frameworks in grades K-12;
- Not use food or beverages as rewards for academic, classroom, or sports performance;
- Ensure that drinking water is available without charge to all students;
- Establish class schedules, and bus routes that don't directly or indirectly restrict meal access;

- Provide students with ample time to eat their meals in pleasant cafeteria and dining areas;
- Establish no more than nine (9) school wide events that permit exceptions to food and beverage limitations established Rule. The schedule of the events shall be by school, approved by the principal, and shall be part of the annual school calendar;
- Each campus will designate a safe and private room for breastfeeding;
- Abide by the current allowable food and beverage portion standards;
- Meet or exceed the more stringent of Arkansas' or the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Nutrition Standards for reimbursable meals and a la' carte foods served in the cafeteria;
- Restrict access to competitive foods as required by law and Rule;
- Conform new and/or renewed vending contracts to the content restrictions contained in the Rules and reduce district dependence on profits from the sale of competitive foods.
- Provide professional development to all district staff on the topics of nutrition and/or physical activity;
- Utilize the School Health Index available from the Center of Disease Control(CDC) , BMI, and School Surveys to assess how well the district is doing at implementing this policy and at promoting a healthy environment for its students. This assessment will be done annually and a more extensive one will be done triennially.

School Wellness Committee

To enhance the district's efforts to improve the health our students, a School Wellness Committee will be formed. This committee will meet four (4) times per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of this district wellness policy.

The Wellness Committee will represent all school levels and include, but not limited to: parents and caregivers, students; representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (e.g., nurses), and mental health and social services staff (e.g., school counselors, social workers, or psychiatrists); school administrators (e.g., superintendent and principals); school board members; community persons; and the general public.

Leadership

The Superintendent and School Wellness Committee chairperson will convene the School Wellness Committee and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy. The list of current School Wellness Committee members will be updated each year and filed with Wellness documentation and Child Nutrition (Lunch) files and will be attached to this policy with distributed to parents.

Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring and Accountability

Plan Implementation

The School Wellness Committee shall have the powers and responsibilities delegated to it by ADE rules and are incorporated into this policy by reference. The committee shall provide recommendations on how our goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. The committee will use the School Health Index, BMI and School Surveys to create an action plan that fosters implementation and generate an annual progress report.

This Wellness Policy and the Assessment Reports can be found on our website: www.mpvschools.com.

Recordkeeping

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at District Administration Building and/or on ACSIP software. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the district uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the committee;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

The District will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. The District will make this information available via the district website and/or district-wide communications. Annually, the district will post the list of Wellness Policy Committee members on our school website (www.mpvschools.com). The District will annually included in our

Annual Report to the Public the amount of funds we receive and expenditures made from competitive food and beverage contracts.

Annual Progress Assessment/Evaluation

The district will annually assess and evaluate our wellness policy/plan to insure that all our wellness goals are being met. The district will use the School Health Index, BMI and School Surveys as tools for this assessment and evaluation. The district will also update and revise our Wellness Policy based on these assessment tools as District priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued.

Triennial Progress Assessment

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

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the District are in compliance with wellness policy;
- The extent to which the District's wellness policy compares to model wellness policies;
- The extent to which the District's progress is being made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy.

The Triennial Assessment will be posted on the District's website (www.mpvschools.com) and households/families will be notified of the availability through news section of the District's website. The Assessment will also be included with the Wellness Policy information distributed at Open House at the beginning of the school year.

Community Engagement

The District is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The District will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the Wellness Committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for that district. The District will use electronic mechanisms, such as displaying notices on the district's website, use district wide phone notification system, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families/community are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy.

The District will continue relationships with community partners in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with wellness policy and its goals.

The District will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general public the benefits of approaches for healthy eating and physical activity through the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information on health promotion efforts. The same communication mechanisms as stated above will be used to ensure that all families' area actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

Schools in the District will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Some of the strategies include an after school staff walking program and a annual staff 5K race.

Nutrition

School Meals

Our school district is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams trans fat per serving; and to meeting the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All schools within the District participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). The District currently is participating in the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) where all children eat lunch and breakfast for free. The District also participates in Farm to School. All schools within the District are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs when participating, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statues and regulations. (The District offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards).)
- Menus posted on the District Website

Lunchroom Techniques Used:

- At our High School campus breakfast is served later in the morning to encourage all students to eat a breakfast.
- Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students
- Salad Bar at the High School Campus
- Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space décor and promotional ideas.
- Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. Also, all staff will receive Professional Development annually on nutrition and physical activity. Physical Education teachers will be encouraged to attend conferences and trainings.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students through the school day and throughout every school campus. The District will make available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

The District is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside the school meal programs will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day and create an environment that reinforces the development of health eating habits. This Smart Snacks list that has been approved by the Wellness Committee and a copy may be obtained from the District office. A written list of vending machine items were approved by our wellness committee and are included in our vending contract. This list will be reviewed and updated by committee as needed.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus during the school day. The fundraiser must be approved by the District Lunchroom Supervisor, Principal and Superintendent.

Food as Awards/Class Parties

Food or beverages will not be used as rewards for academic, classroom, or sports performances.

Teachers are encouraged to promote healthy eating at all times. Special Event days are allowed for class parties, etc that permit exceptions to the food and beverage limitations established by Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). The schedule of the events shall be by school, approved by the principal, and shall be part of the annual school calendar.

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

Nutrition Education

The District will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classrooms;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally –relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Links school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, and other school foods and nutrition-related community services;
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food beverage marketing; and

- Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The District is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. The District strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on District property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the District is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of the District to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with the District's wellness policy.

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 such that only those foods that comply with or exceed those nutrition standards are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students and must be approved by District Lunchroom Supervisor.

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes an oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. Some examples are: brand names, trade markers, logos placed on school equipment, marquees, message board, scoreboards, displays on vending machines, advertisements in school publications or school mailings and free product samples, etc.

Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through required physical education, but the District is committed to providing a strong coordination and synergy across all of the components: quality physical education as the foundation; physical activity before, during and after school; staff involvement and family and community engagement and the district is committed to providing these opportunities. Schools will ensure that these varied physical activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason.

To the extent practicable, the District will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The District will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Physical Education

The District will follow all Physical Education Frameworks as outlined from the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). The District will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits. The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. The District will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

Health education will be promoted through all grades and required as pertains to the Physical Education Frameworks mentioned above. The following is a list of some of the topics that included in these Frameworks:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
- Differences between physical activity, exercise and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during physical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity
- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids

- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity.

Recess (Elementary)

All elementary schools will offer at **recess** on all days during the school year . If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play

In the event that the school or district must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as

After School Activities

The District offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity after the school day through a variety of methods. The District will encourage students to be physically active after school by: physical activity in after school tutoring and intramurals or interscholastic sports.

Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The District will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. The District will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

Schools in the District are encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or the District's curriculum experts.

Tobacco and Tobacco Products

As part of our Wellness Policy the District has adopted a Tobacco and Tobacco Products policy as follows: This policy is also located in the Student Policies under 4.23.

Smoking or use of tobacco or products containing tobacco in any form (including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, and snuff) in or on any real property owned or leased by a District school, including school buses owned or leased by the District, is prohibited.

Students who violate this policy may be subject to legal proceedings in addition to student disciplinary measures.

This policy prohibits the use of any and all nicotine products, including ENDS (Electronic Nicotine Delivery System), at all campus and off campus, school sponsored events.

The Mulberry/Pleasant View Bi-County School District prohibits the wearing or use of gear that advertises tobacco or tobacco paraphernalia, including all nicotine and ENDS products, by students, faculty, and staff. The Mulberry/Pleasant View Bi-County School District also prohibits tobacco company sponsorship, marketing, and giveaways.

Tobacco education classes may be offered for all K-12 classes during the school year. The Mulberry/Pleasant View School District informs students/staff about tobacco cessation programs available within the community or Arkansas Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW). School counselors and community are encouraged to establish voluntary tobacco cessation programs at their schools.

With the exception of recognized tobacco cessation products, this policy's prohibition includes any tobacco or nicotine delivery system or product. Specifically, the prohibition includes any product that is manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pips, or under any other name or descriptor.

Resources for mental health, tobacco cessation, drug abuse.

Tobacco

- Be Well Arkansas (offers support to quit smoking) <https://www.bewellarkansas.org/>
- 1-800-Quit-Now (national portal to state quitlines) Center from Disease Control
- Arkansas Nicotine-Free Schools Tool Kit
- Arkansas Department of Health: Tobacco Prevention and Cessation
<https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/tobacco-prevention-and-cessation>

Mental Health

- AR Connect Now <https://uamshealth.com/ar-connectnow/> 501-526-3563 or 800-482-9921 UAMS Health **AR ConnectNow** is a comprehensive behavioral health treatment program created to provide care to all Arkansans dealing with a variety of mental health issues, from substance abuse disorders to mental illnesses ranging from anxiety and depression to bipolar disorder and schizophrenia
- Arkansas Crisis Center **Suicide Hotline - Call 988 for hotline services**

Drug Abuse

- AR Connect Now <https://uamshealth.com/ar-connectnow/> 501-526-3563 or 800-482-9921 UAMS Health **AR ConnectNow** is a comprehensive behavioral health treatment program created to provide care to all Arkansans dealing with a variety of mental health issues, from substance abuse disorders to mental illnesses ranging from anxiety and depression to bipolar disorder and schizophrenia

Legal References: Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq. as amended by PL 111-296 (Section 204) of 2010. (Section 204 is codified at 42 U.S.C. § 1758(b))
Child Nutrition Act of 1966 42 U.S.C. § 1771 et seq.
A.C.A. § 6-20-709
A.C.A. §§ 20-7-133, 134, and 135
ADE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index for Age Assessment Protocols
High School
Allowable Competitive Foods/Beverages - Maximum Portion Size List for Middle, Junior High, and Nutrition Standards for Arkansas Public Schools

Date Adopted: 7-19-12

Last Revised: 6-9-16

Last Revised: 5-11-17