

Oak Hill Montessori Community School

Wellness Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. The school board recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education.

B. The school environment should promote and protect students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.

C. The school encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, food service staff, and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school nutrition and physical activity policies.

D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.

E. All students in grades PK-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

F. Qualified food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Foods and Beverages

1. All foods and beverages made available on campus will be consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. Food service personnel will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meet or exceed all federal, state, and local laws and guidelines.
3. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.
4. The school 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 school meals.
5. The school will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

6. The school will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day.

7. The school will discourage tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.

B. School Food Service Program/Personnel

1. The school will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that strictly comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.

2. The school shall designate an appropriate person to be responsible for the school's food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

3. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school will provide continuing professional development for all food service personnel.

C. Nutrition Education and Promotion

1. The school will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:

a. offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;

b. part of health education classes as well as classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate;

c. enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, and field trips.

2. The school will encourage all students to make age appropriate, healthy selections of foods and beverages, including those sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs, such as through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, fundraising events, concession stands, and student stores.

3. The school will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan or behavior intervention plan) and will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.

4. Corporate sponsored meal certificates, such as Book It are allowed as an incentive for academic performance.

D. Physical Activity

1. Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television;

2. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and

3. Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

E. Communications with Parents

1. The school recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being.
2. The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. The school encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value.
4. The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- A. After approval by the school board or wellness committee, the wellness policy will be implemented.
- B. School food service staff, will ensure compliance within the school's food service areas and will report to the food service program administrator or school's executive director, as appropriate.
- C. The school's food service program administrator will provide an annual report to the school's executive director setting forth the nutrition guidelines and procedures for selection of all foods made available on campus.
- D. The executive director or designee will ensure compliance with the wellness policy and will provide an annual report of the school's compliance with the policy to the school board or wellness committee.

Legal References:

- 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq. (Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act)
- 42 U.S.C. § 1771 et seq. (Child Nutrition Act of 1966) P.L. 108-265 (2004) § 204 (Local Wellness Policy)
- 7 U.S.C. § 5341 (Establishment of Dietary Guidelines)
- 7 C.F.R. § 210.10 (School Lunch Program Regulations)
- 7 C.F.R. § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Regulations)

Local Resources:

- Minnesota Department of Education, www.education.state.mn.us
- Minnesota Department of Health, www.health.state.mn.us
- County Health Departments
- Action for Healthy Kids Minnesota