

# POLYTECH Wellness Policy

## Preamble

POLYTECH is committed to the optimal development of every student. The District believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during, and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism, and better performance on cognitive tasks. Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students. In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education, and extracurricular activities – do better academically.

This policy outlines the District's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the District have access to healthy foods throughout the school day—both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus—in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during, and after school;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the District in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- The District establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students, staff, and schools in the District.

## **I. School Wellness Committee**

### ***Committee Role and Membership***

The District will convene a representative district wellness committee (hereto referred to as the DWC or work within an existing school health committee) that meets at least four 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-level wellness policy (heretofore referred as “wellness policy”).

The DWC membership will include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (ex., school nutrition manager); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (ex., health education teachers, school health services staff [i.e., nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services], and mental health and social services staff [i.e., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators (ex., superintendent, principal, assistant principal), school board members; health professionals (ex., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public.

### ***Leadership***

The Superintendent or designee(s) will convene the DWC and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school’s compliance with the policy. The Child Nutrition Manager shall serve as the school leader for implementation of this policy.

## **II. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement**

### ***Implementation Plan***

The District will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines specific to each school, and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where, and when, as well as specific 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. It is recommended that the school use the [Healthy Schools Program online tools](#) to complete a school level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation, and generate an annual progress report.

This wellness policy and the progress reports can be found at: [www.polytechpanthers.com](http://www.polytechpanthers.com)

### ***Recordkeeping***

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy. Documentation maintained will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;

- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including (1) Efforts to actively solicit DWC membership from the required stakeholder groups; and (2) These groups' participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy;
- Documentation of annual policy progress reports for each school under its jurisdiction; and
- Documentation of the triennial assessment\* of the policy for each school under its jurisdiction;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with public notification requirements, including: (1) Methods by which the wellness policy, annual progress reports, and triennial assessments are made available to the public; and (2) Efforts to actively notify families about the availability of wellness policy.

### ***Annual Progress Reports***

The District will compile and publish an annual report to share basic information about the wellness policy and report on the progress of the schools within the district in meeting wellness goals. This report will include, but is not limited to:

- The website address for the wellness policy and/or how the public can receive/access a copy of the wellness policy;
- A description of each school's progress in meeting the wellness policy goals;
- A summary of each school's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation;
- The name, position title, and contact information of the designated District policy leader(s) identified in Section I; and
- Information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the DWC or SWC.

The DWC, will establish and monitor goals and objectives for the District's schools, specific and appropriate for each of the content-specific components listed in Sections III-V of this policy.

### ***Triennial Progress Assessments***

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 the wellness policy;
- The extent to which the District's wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the District's wellness policy.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is the Child Nutrition Manager.

The District will notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

### ***Revisions and Updating the Policy***

The DWC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or 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. **The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.**

### ***Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications***

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 DWC 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 also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. The District will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the district's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families 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 ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the district and individual schools are communicating other important school information with parents.

The District will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy and to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

## **III. 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; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams *trans*-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet 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), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and *[include here any additional Federal child nutrition programs in which the district participates, possibly including the Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP), Special Milk Program (SMP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Supper programs, or others]*. The District also operates additional nutrition related programs and activities including *[if applicable, insert here a list of other programs such as Farm to School programs, school gardens, Breakfast in the Classroom, Mobile Breakfast carts, Grab 'n' Go Breakfast, or others]*. The District is committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, 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 statutes and regulations. (The District offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards](#).)

- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#):
  - Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans)
  - Sliced or cut fruit is available daily
  - Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students
  - All available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names
  - Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab and go meals available to students
  - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal
  - White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers
  - Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas
  - A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.)
  - Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor, and promotional ideas
  - Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas
  - Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options

### ***Staff Qualifications and Professional Development***

All school nutrition managers, and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the [USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals](#). These school nutrition personnel will refer to [USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website](#) to search for training that meets their learning needs.

### ***Water***

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day\* and throughout every school campus\* (“school campus” and “school day” are defined in the glossary). The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

### ***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 of the school meal programs (i.e., “competitive” foods and beverages) 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 healthy eating habits. A summary of the standards and information are available at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks available at [www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnacks](http://www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnacks).

*[NOTE: In some cases, states have passed more stringent nutrition standards for competitive foods and beverages in addition to the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. In these states, districts and schools must also comply with their state standards.]*

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day\* will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, and snack or food carts.

### ***Celebrations and Rewards***

All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. The district will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas from the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) and from the [USDA](#).
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. The District will provide to parents a [list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks](#) nutrition standards; and
3. Rewards and incentives. The District will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a [list of alternative ways to reward children](#). Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior. *[Meets HSP Silver]*

### ***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 District will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas *[examples from the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) and the [USDA](#)]*.

### ***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. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. 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 and teachers, parents, students, and the community.

The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- Implementing evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#); and
- Promoting foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Additional possible promotion techniques that the District and individual schools may use are available at [www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnacks](http://www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnacks).

## ***Nutrition Education***

The District aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by 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 classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Link with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services; ▪ Teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and ▪ Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.
- ***Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education***

The District will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from [MyPlate](#)
- Reading and using USDA's food labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain *trans* fat
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
- Accepting body size differences
- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Eating disorders
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Reducing sodium intake
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

USDA's Team Nutrition provides free nutrition education and promotion materials, including standards-based nutrition education curricula and lesson plans, posters, interactive games, menu graphics, and more.

### ***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.

Food advertising and marketing is defined as an oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors.
- Corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards, or backboards (Note: immediate replacement of these items are not required; however, districts will consider replacing or updating scoreboards or other durable equipment over time so that decisions about the replacement include compliance with the marketing policy.)
- Corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans, and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books, or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered, or sold by the District.
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests, or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

## **IV. Physical Activity**

Children and adolescents should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program (CSPAP) that includes these components: physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, walk and bicycle to school, and out of



school time activities and the district is committed to providing these opportunities. Schools will ensure that these varied opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in “Physical Education” subsection). All schools in the district will be encouraged to participate in *Let’s Move! Active Schools* ([www.letsmoveschools.org](http://www.letsmoveschools.org)) in order to successfully address all CSPAP areas.

Physical activity during the school day **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 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, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the “*Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education*” subsection).

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.

All students are required to take the equivalent of one academic year of physical education.

The District physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments (via the [Presidential Youth Fitness Program](#) or other appropriate assessment tool) and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

### ***Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education***

The District will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on physical activity:

- 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

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state, or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the DWC/SWC.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity opportunities.

### ***Community Partnerships***

The District will develop relationships with community partners (i.e. hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, etc.) 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 the wellness policy and its goals.

### ***Community Health Promotion and Engagement***

The District will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

As described in the "Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications" subsection, the District will use electronic mechanisms (such as email or displaying notices on the district's website), as well as non-electronic mechanisms, (such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

### ***Staff Wellness and Health Promotion***

The DWC will have a staff wellness subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources, and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff

The District will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. The District promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

### ***Professional Learning***

When feasible, the District will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help District staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing district reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.