

## WELLNESS POLICY

### **PREAMBLE**

- Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;
- Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;
- Whereas, obesity rates have multiplied in children and adolescents as a result of reduced physical activity and excessive calorie intake;
- Whereas, chronic diseases are responsible for two thirds of deaths in the United States and the major risk factors are directly related to unhealthy habits established in childhood;
- Whereas, a large percentage of students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity;
- Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;
- Therefore, the Yonkers Public Schools is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to enhance opportunities to thrive by supporting healthy eating, fundraising, school celebrations and increased physical activity throughout the school day.

### **DISTRICT WELLNESS COMMITTEE**

The Yonkers Public Schools (The District) has established a District-wide committee to develop, implements, monitor, review, and as necessary, make recommendations to the Board of Education to revise the District Wellness Policy. A comprehensive list of the 2015-2016 committee members is attached to this policy. The Wellness Committee shall meet a minimum of three times during each school year.

### **COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES**

The District will provide information related to the Wellness Policy through various forms of communications. Parents/guardians will be educated on helping to prepare students for optimal learning possibilities through ideal nutrition and physical activity. Additionally, families will be provided the opportunity to give feedback on wellness initiatives.

The District will provide, to the extent possible, appropriate computer access to all Physical Education offices and gymnasiums to allow for comprehensive and timely communications as well as 21st century learning opportunities to take place.

## **NUTRITION EDUCATION**

The District will provide comprehensive, skills-based, integrated nutrition education that is aligned with NYS standards to elementary and secondary students. This includes concepts on health enhancing behaviors and risk factor reduction for life-style disease prevention.

The District will share health-related information with families to positively impact community health. The District will support initiatives to increase participation in school meal programs.

The District will provide opportunities for staff to participate in professional development and new initiatives related to the principles of nutrition, health crises, media implications and other competencies that are necessary for making health-enhancing choices.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- Physical Education is required for all students. The school district will make every effort to follow national and state recommendations by grade level and per staffing allotment. Each school will work with their school's physical education department as they strive to meet the state recommendations for Physical Education at all grade levels.
- Physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher and be an essential part of every school's instructional program, subject to differing student abilities. The physical education program will stress the importance of physical fitness and encourage physical activity beyond the school day.
- In addition, all teachers are required to follow the Yonkers Public School's Physical Education Curriculum which meets the NYS Standards (See attachment 1).
- Daily recess for students in grades PK-5 is required as part of student's lunchtime activity and for at least 20 minutes in each grade. Recess is defined as unstructured playtime that is supervised by adults, but not directed by adults.

The District will provide administrative leadership to the Physical Education staff to coordinate professional development, initiatives aligned to standards based instructional strategies, and current trends related to physical fitness (Physical Activity-attachment 2).

## **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

Physical activity improves a child's physical, mental and cognitive health. There is growing research to support that 60 minutes of activity per day has a positive connection to health, decreased chronic illness, and improved concentration, classroom behaviors and academic achievement. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Heart Association have recommended that children should be physically active at school for a minimum of 30 minutes per day.

Results from studies regarding school-based physical activity, which includes physical education, recess, physical activity breaks, conclude:

- Physical activity can help improve academic achievement, including grades and standardized test scores.

- Physical activity positively impacts cognitive skills, attention, and on-task classroom behavior.<sup>1</sup>
- Students who are physically fit are likely to have stronger academic performance, better school attendance and fewer disciplinary problems.<sup>2</sup>
- In students with attention deficit disorder, moderate to vigorous physical activity is associated with improved attention, memory, information processing and decreased impulsivity.
- Daily recess of 15 minutes or more is associated with better teacher's rating of classroom behavior.<sup>3</sup>
- Physical activity improves cerebral blood flow, capillary growth, nerve cell growth, nerve connections and neurotrophins.<sup>4</sup>

***Outdoor recess time will be permitted as long as weather conditions are appropriate.***

<sup>1</sup> US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; *The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education and Academic Performance*, July 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Active Education; *Physical Education, Physical Activity and Academic Performance*, Active Living Research, 2009. [http://www.activelivingresearch.org/files/Active\\_Ed\\_Summer2009.pdf](http://www.activelivingresearch.org/files/Active_Ed_Summer2009.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Gapin, *The Effects of Physical Activity on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Symptoms*; Preventive Medicine, 52, 2011, s70-74.

<sup>4</sup> Barros, *School Recess and Group Classroom Behavior*; Pediatrics, Vol 123, No 2, Feb 2009 431-436.

## **NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR ALL FOODS ON CAMPUS**

School meals will include a variety of healthy choices while accommodating special dietary needs and ethnic and cultural food preferences. All schools will provide breakfast and lunch through the USDA National School Lunch, School Breakfast, and After School Programs. The District will support all measures to increase student participation in these meal programs.

All school meals, snacks, a la carte food items and beverages will meet the NUTRITIONAL standards and regulations put forth by the USDA, Federal and State Government agencies.

All foods made available on all school campuses will meet nutritional requirements set by the USDA, Federal and State government agencies for the National School Breakfast Program (NSBP) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Strategies to increase participation in school meals throughout the District will include ensuring both the satellite and full-service facilities offer a variety of nutritious and appealing selections. To the extent possible, students will also be included in planning food service menu offerings. All a la carte food and beverage items available in areas accessible to children will meet nutritional guidelines and be within the allowable standards for sugar, fat, sodium and calorie content.

To the extent possible, only whole foods (i.e. whole grains, unprocessed foods, fruits and vegetables) will be sold/served. The sale of such food and beverage items will be allowed through the school meal program only and will be regulated, monitored and enforced by the Food Service Director.

The sale and distribution of soda and foods of minimal nutritional value to students is prohibited during the instructional day (7:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.). Food and beverages with the exception of water may be used in the classroom for curriculum related activities only. Any food served to students to meet curriculum goals will include only those of high nutritional value. (See competitive foods).

Vending machines in student areas will be controlled by the Food Service Department. All food and beverage items available in vending machines in student areas will meet all USDA standards for meals and/or snacks. Faculty vending machines will be inaccessible to students. Food and beverage sales in school stores are prohibited and all food sales outside of the NSBP/NSLP are prohibited during the school day. Organizations are encouraged to use non-food items for promotions or fundraising activities. If food fundraising is utilized, sale during the school day is prohibited.

Marketing of any food items within the District will clearly label, promote and/or identify only healthy food choices. Advertising and logos featuring foods with minimal nutritional value is not allowed on school materials or school property. The District will not accept donations, advertising or funding from companies or organizations promoting foods of minimal nutritional value. (See attached)

### **CHILD NUTRITION OPERATIONS, ENVIRONMENT, FOOD SAFETY**

The District will employ a Food Service Director and Managers that are properly qualified according to current professional standards. All food service personnel will have adequate training in food service operations. The District will ensure that professional development in the areas of food, nutrition, and food safety will be provided for all food service personnel in compliance with current professional standards. All foods made available throughout the District will comply with state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.

For the safety and security of the food and facilities, access to the food service operational areas will be secured and limited to food service staff and authorized personnel only. Use of kitchen facilities by anyone other than food service personnel is by permission of the Food Service Director only and is not guaranteed.

The District will, to the extent possible, operate a summer food service program (SFSP) open to all children in the community.

The District will provide a clean, safe and pleasant environment with adequate seating and supervision by trained personnel that promotes healthy eating. Withholding meals and a la carte items will not be used as a form of punishment.

The District will provide students with adequate time in which to consume meals, a minimum of ten (10) minutes for breakfast and twenty (20) minutes for lunch.

Students and staff will have access to free, safe and fresh drinking water throughout the school day.

### **OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES**

The District will provide a program of health services that enhances the educational process through the promotion, protection, maintenance and improvement of the health status of students and staff.

The District will, to the extent possible, provide after school programs that encourage physical activity and healthy habit formation. This will include a program of intramurals and interscholastic sports. Participation in such extracurricular programs shall be an option for all students.

The District will work to create partnerships and mentorships with community agencies to increase student physical activity and improve student and staff wellness. This ensures that school facilities will be made available to the community and organizations, specifically those promoting wellness and physical activity for students, parents and staff

### **WELLNESS POLICY AS IT RELATES TO DISCIPLINE**

Staff members shall not deny participation in District meal programs, recess, Physical Education classes or other physical activity opportunities as a form of discipline or punishment unless the safety of student(s) is in question. In addition, physical activity (ex. running laps, push-ups) will not be used as discipline or punishment.

### **WELLNESS POLICY AND STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The District recognizes that individual students, for varied reasons, may benefit from modifications of the Wellness Policy as it is written as it relates to food, physical education and activity. Exceptions may only be made to this policy as it applies to students for those with specific requirements based on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) / Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP) recommendation, or medical documentation.

### **MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW**

The Superintendent will ensure compliance with the established District-wide Wellness Policy. The Superintendent may designate a District level staff member and/or advisory team to monitor compliance; and such designee shall report semi-annually, and at such other times as the Superintendent specifies, regarding compliance with this policy and related procedures.

In each school, the Building Principal will ensure compliance with the District policy by accurately completing and submitting a report on the school's compliance to the Superintendent or designee annually.

School food service staff, at the school or District level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on compliance to the Superintendent as needed (or, if done at the school level, to the Food Service Director).

The Superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every three years on Districtwide compliance with the District's established Wellness Policy, based on input from schools and related staff within the District. That report will be provided to the Board of Education and also distributed to the Wellness Committee, parent/teacher organizations, Building Principals, and school health services personnel in the District.

Ref: Section 204 of Public Law 108-265

Adoption date: July 20, 2011

Revision date: September 21, 2016

## **Attachment 1**

### **National Standards for K-12 Physical Education**

The goal of physical education is to develop physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity.

To pursue a lifetime of healthful physical activity, a physically literate individual:

- Has learned the skills necessary to participate in a variety of physical activities.
- Knows the implications and the benefits of involvement in various types of physical activities.
- Participates regularly in physical activity.
- Is physically fit.
- Values physical activity and its contributions to a healthful lifestyle.

**Standard 1** - The physically literate individual demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.

**Standard 2** - The physically literate individual applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance.

**Standard 3** - The physically literate individual demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.

**Standard 4** - The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

**Standard 5** - The physically literate individual recognizes the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, and self-expression

## **Attachment 2**

**Physical Activity** -- As the district recognizes that regular physical activity is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle; all schools will promote daily physical activity in addition to the physical program. YPS discourages extended periods of inactivity (more than 90 min.) and encourages teachers to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or class as appropriate. The district will also support student participation in before and afterschool physical activity such as interscholastic sports, intramurals and clubs.

### **Nutritional Standards**

To review the Nutritional Standards/Guidelines for school meals you may visit:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals>

**Competitive Foods** -- Competitive food and beverage items sold or made available to students, for consumption, during the school day (7:00 am – 3:30 pm) that compete with the school's operation of the National School Lunch, Breakfast and or After School Snack program is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to sales by school stores, student groups, parent groups or any other person.

**Marketing** -- The district restricts the marketing of foods and beverages that cannot be sold to students during the school day on all school property including but not limited to building exteriors, coolers, display cases, and forms of advertising. The district nor any school will accept donations, advertising or funding from companies or organizations promoting foods of minimal nutritional value.

**Instructional Use of Food in the Classroom** -- With the exception of water, food and beverages to be used in the classroom for curriculum related activities must meet nutritional standards and guidelines and should be on an occasional basis. Additionally, parents must be notified in writing of items to be used to avoid reactions from food allergies.

**Celebrations** -- School and Classroom celebrations, including but not limited to birthdays, incentives and student recognition are an important part of developing appropriate social interactions and therefore will focus on activities rather than food. **The use of candy and soda is prohibited.**