

# Prairie Central School District Wellness Policy

## **PREAMBLE**

The Board of Education of Prairie Central School District is committed to fostering the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity and the capacity of students to develop and learn.

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. Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.

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. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

## **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 to as “wellness policy”).

The DWC membership will represent all school levels (elementary and secondary schools) and include (to the extent possible), but not be 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., health education teachers, school health services staff [e.g., nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services], and mental health and social services staff [e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators (e.g., superintendent, principal, vice principal), school board members; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. When possible, membership will also include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education coordinators (SNAP-Ed). To the extent possible, the DWC will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community.

### ***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 designated official for oversight is Paula Crane, Superintendent. Contact information:  
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### **GOALS FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION AND PROMOTION**

Nutrition education and promotion 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, teachers, parents, students and the community.

- Nutrition curriculum for students in Kindergarten through grade 12 shall be consistent with and incorporate relevant Illinois Learning Standards. Resources that may be used include, but are not limited to, USDA Choose MyPlate.
- 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. Specifically, the District will implement at least three or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using Smarter Lunchroom techniques. Examples:
  - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select components to complete a reimbursable meal.
  - Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options.
  - Reimbursable meal options are highlighted on menu boards within all service and/or dining areas.
- The District will protect and promote students' health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus.
- Parents shall be provided information to help them incorporate healthy eating and/or physical activity into their families' lives in a variety of formats.

### **GOALS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

The Prairie Central School District will provide all students with physical education that meets all state standards. Our policy is that Physical Education provides opportunities to develop skills, knowledge, and attitudes for all students through fundamental movement, rhythmic, sport, and fitness activities. The overall aim is to help students develop lifelong skills that include regular vigorous exercise and sports. Our goal is to assist individuals in assuming responsibility for their own health and well-being through an active lifestyle.

- All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and appropriate accommodations will be available.

- Students will acquire skills and knowledge through a variety of developmentally appropriate classes in team sports, individual sports, lifetime activities, dance and games and fitness activities.
- Students will understand, experience and appreciate the health benefits that result from physical activity through functional fitness, body image and well-being.
- Students will assume personal responsibility to lead an active way of life through goal setting and personal challenges.
- Elementary students (K-6 grade levels) will participate in 60 minutes of physical education per week. Junior High students (7-8 grade levels) will participate in 196 minutes of physical education per week while meeting 49 minutes for health per week. High School students (9-12 grade levels) have physical education for two terms at 90 minutes a day.
- Health education is a requirement for all junior high and high school students. This required course will stress various areas of health principles and how exercise and nutrition affects the human body and their well-being in the future.

### **GOALS FOR OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO 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.

- Every year, the Prairie Central School District will host a wellness night at the Upper Elementary for the students, parents, teachers and community members. Several health fields and local businesses will provide knowledge and information to the community on the benefits of wellness. The District will keep the community informed through the District newsletter and on the District's website.
- Parents shall be provided information to help them incorporate healthy eating and/or physical activity into their families' lives in a variety of formats.

### **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 (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); 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), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Special Milk Program (SMP).

All schools within the District are 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 Smarter Lunchroom techniques.

### ***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. 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. The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

- Water cups/jugs will be available in the cafeteria if a drinking fountain is not present.
- All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene and health safety standards. Such sources and containers may include drinking fountains and water jugs.
- Students in grades 5-12 are permitted to possess water in school as long as it is held in a clear container with a secure lid. Water is not permitted in computer labs, science labs, AG/IT shops, or anywhere safety is a concern. Containers are subject to examination by school officials.

### ***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 (e.g., "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, as well as a Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools 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.foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org](http://www.foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org).

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, à la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and snack or food carts. The District ensures that vending machines are turned off each day from midnight until 30 minutes after the school session has ended.

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

For celebrations, parties and classroom snacks brought by parents, the district allows prepackaged commercial food, not homemade. For elementary and upper elementary parents, the district will provide a list of approved snacks. The District will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children, other than food. Foods and beverages will not be withheld as punishment for any reason, such as performance or behavior.

### ***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 standards do not apply during non-school hours, on weekends and at off-campus fundraising events.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The District may utilize relationships with community partners (e.g. hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, SNAP-ED providers and coordinators, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

The District encourages parents/caregivers, families and the general community to be aware of the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity. Families may be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities. The District may use electronic mechanisms such as the district website or non-electronic mechanisms (such as newsletters, presentations to parents or sending information home to parents) to participate in school-sponsored activities and to receive information about health promotion efforts.

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 important school information with parents.

The DWC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index 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. The District will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. The District will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.