



## Williamson County School District

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 doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;

Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

(Information from the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity - March 2005)

Williamson County School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating habits and physical activity. It is the policy of the Williamson County School District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and all Tennessee State Board of Education minimal nutritional standards.
- Child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutritional needs of students; accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning when requested; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings to eat.
- To the extent practical and when warranted, all schools in our district will participate in any and all available federal school meal programs.
- Schools will provide nutrition education, physical education/activities and health education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity. Schools will establish linkages between health education, school meal programs, and related community services.

## **Administrative Guidelines to achieve these policy goals:**

### **I. School Health Councils**

The Tennessee State Board of Education has determined that each Local Education Agency (LEA) shall establish a School Health Advisory Council. The advisory council will consist of a group of individuals representing the school and community, including parents, students, teachers, school administrators, school board members, health professionals, schools' nutritional program representatives, and members of the public. The council serves as a resource to school sites for implementing policies.

LEAs will consider the recommendations of the School Health Advisory Council in making policy changes that affect the healthy learning environment.

The individual school will create, strengthen, or work within an existing framework for a school health council to-serve as a resource to the school health, nutrition and wellness program. (A school health council may consist of a group of individuals representing the school, the community, parents, students, representatives of the school's nutrition program, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.)

### **II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus**

#### **School Meals:**

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;<sup>2</sup>
- offer low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk<sup>3</sup> and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA) as needed upon request and
- ensure that half of the offered grains are whole grain or enriched whole grain.<sup>3,4</sup>

Schools may engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

### **Breakfast**

- Schools will, to the extent possible and as warranted, operate the School Breakfast Program in an effort to meet nutritional needs and enhance the students' ability to learn.
- Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

### **Free and Reduced-priced Meals**

Schools 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<sup>5</sup>. Toward this end, schools are currently utilizing electronic identification and payment systems.

### **Meal Times and Scheduling**

Schools:

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.
- will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, based on school start time.
- will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

## **Qualifications of the Nutritional Services Staff**

Nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, the district will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school cafeteria managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.<sup>6</sup>

## **Elementary and Middle Schools**

**The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in Pre-K -8 schools. (Middle schools are allowed to vend items approved by state guidelines). Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in Pre-K - 8 schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, \*foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables. All beverages, foods, & portion sizes will be offered according to state mandated guidelines.**

**\*Foods and beverages sold individually are foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, and school stores.**

## **Sharing of Foods and Beverages**

Schools will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

## **School Day Fundraising Activities K-8**

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, it is encouraged that school fundraising activities not involve food or will use only foods that meet the nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

## **Snacks K-8**

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. The district will disseminate a list of healthy snacks items to teachers, after school program personnel and parents.

## **Rewards K-8**

Schools will not use foods or beverages that do not meet the USDA minimal nutritional value standards as rewards for academic performance or good behavior<sup>10</sup> and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment. The district will disseminate a list of USDA nutritional standards.

## **Celebrations K-8**

Schools will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day. Each event should attempt to offer food or beverage that meet nutrition standards. The district will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

# **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion**

## **Nutrition Education and Promotion.**

Williamson County School District will teach, encourage, and support healthy eating habits by students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- **is part of health education. Additionally, WCS will begin to investigate ways to implement and integrate health and nutrition education into other content areas of the curriculum.**
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);

- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and

### **Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting K-8**

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 30 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- students will be encouraged to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television, computers and video games.
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

### **Communications with Parents K-8**

The district/school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school may offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The district/school will make available to parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/events, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the district/school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community. The district/school will work to involve their parent/teacher organizations.

The district/school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework and cable access.

### **Staff Wellness**

Williamson County School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and supports the implementation of activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

## **IV. Physical Activity, Physical Education, and Health Education Opportunities**

### **Elementary Daily Physical Activity K-5**

All students in grades K- 5 shall receive daily physical activity for at least 150 minutes per week (this recommended time is inclusive of physical education and recess) for the entire school year. All physical education classes will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

### **Daily Recess K-5**

**All elementary school students shall have at least 20 minutes of supervised recess everyday, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment. Schools will discourage extended periods (*i.e.*, periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools will give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.**

### **Middle School Physical Activity, Physical Education and Health Education – grades 6-8**

All students in grades 6-8, will participate, during the school day, in physical activity for a combined total of 90 minutes of physical activity weekly. The Williamson County School District will investigate and seek to implement weekly physical education classes for all middle school students. All physical education classes will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

### **High School Physical Activity, Physical Education and Health Education – grades 9-12**

All students in grades 9-12, will participate, during the school day, in physical activity for a combined total of 90 minutes of physical activity weekly. The Williamson County School District will investigate and seek to implement additional physical education classes for all high school students.

All students are required to take one year of Lifetime Wellness for graduation credit. Student involvement in other physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the wellness graduation credit requirements. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

### **Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School**

All elementary, middle, and high schools will encourage and support the offering of extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs, before and/or after school. All high schools, and middle schools as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students.

After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

### **Physical Activity and Punishment**

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

## **V. Monitoring and Policy Review**

### **Monitoring**

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition, physical activity, health education and wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school district superintendent or designee. Williamson County Schools will use the Center for Disease Control's School Health Index Program.

School nutrition staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within the Nutritional Services program. The school district will review findings and any resulting changes on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative.

The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report annually on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition, physical activity, health education and wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel in the district.

### **Policy Review**

To help with the initial development of the district's wellness policies, each school in the district will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies.<sup>12</sup> The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated annually to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review the nutrition, physical activity, health education and wellness policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; nutrition, physical education, health education, and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, review the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

## Footnotes

<sup>2</sup> To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.

<sup>3</sup> As recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005*.

<sup>4</sup> A whole grain is one labeled as a "whole" grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include "whole" wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal.

<sup>5</sup> It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or "paid" meals.

<sup>6</sup> School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute.

<sup>7</sup> Surprisingly, seltzer water may not be sold during meal times in areas of the school where food is sold or eaten because it is considered a "Food of Minimal Nutritional Value" (Appendix B of 7 CFR Part 210).

<sup>8</sup> If a food manufacturer fails to provide the *added* sugars content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from total sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from *added* sugars), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods from this total sugars limit.

<sup>9</sup> Schools that have vending machines are encouraged to include refrigerated snack vending machines, which can accommodate fruits, vegetables, yogurts, and other perishable items.

<sup>10</sup> Unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP).

<sup>11</sup> Schools should not permit general brand marketing for food brands under which more than half of the foods or beverages do not meet the nutrition standards for foods sold individually or the meals are not consistent with school meal nutrition standards.

<sup>12</sup> Useful self-assessment and planning tools include the *School Health Index* from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), *Changing the Scene* from the Team Nutrition Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and *Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary, Middle, and High School Physical Education* from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.