

Wellness Policy 5071

The Torrington Public School District (TPS) recognizes the importance of establishing a healthy learning environment that provides all students with the ability to participate fully in the educational process and to develop lifelong healthy habits. This policy is designed to improve students' health and their capacity to learn through the support of families, communities and school staff working together. The intention of this policy is to help build a culture of safe and responsible behavior. Program priorities and activity plans shall acknowledge the strong link between academic performance and a healthy school environment, including healthy eating, school-based physical activity and health education.

Administrative Guidelines

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible to monitor TPS programs and curricula to ensure compliance with this policy and established administrative guidelines and regulations. A Wellness Committee shall be appointed by the Superintendent, which will work with staff, students and community members to implement, evaluate, and update this policy.

The district shall inform and update the public about the implementation of the Wellness Policy via the TPS website and Board of Education sub-committee and board meetings.

Nutrition Guidelines

It is the policy of TPS that all foods and beverages made available are consistent with minimum United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutrition guidelines established by the State of Connecticut. School meals will offer a variety of fruits and vegetables; serve only low-fat (1%) unflavored, fat free flavored milks and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives as defined by USDA. Schools will ensure that at least half of the servings of grains served per week are whole grain. The district will adhere to Sec 203 of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 by making potable water available for students at no charge at meals and throughout the day.

Schools will meet the requirements of the state beverage statute for allowable beverage offerings:

- Milk (flavored or plain) with no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce and no artificial sweeteners;
- Nondairy milks such as soy or rice milk, which may be flavored but contain no artificial sweeteners, no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce, no more than 35 percent of calories from fat per portion and no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat per portion;
- 100% fruit juice, vegetable juice or combination of such juices, containing no added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners;
- Beverages that contain only water and fruit or vegetable juice, and have no added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners (these beverages must also meet the requirements specified in Requirements for Beverages Containing Water and Juice); and

- Water, which may be flavored but contains no added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners or caffeine.
- Portions sizes of allowable beverages are limited to no more than 12 ounces with the exception of water.

The Board of Education allows exemptions, provided the following criteria are met: (1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; (2) the sale is at the location of the event; and (3) the foods are not sold from a vending machine or school store. The school day is defined as the period from midnight to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

Families are encouraged to support the TPS nutrition education efforts by considering healthy snacks in appropriate portion sizes. School staff will consider alternate rewards, other than food.

TPS shall create procedures that address all foods available to students throughout the school day in the following areas:

- A. Guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing processed foods, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment;
- B. Integration of fruits and vegetables from local farms
- C. Guidelines for foods and beverages, based on nutrition goals in the following categories:
 - 1) Foods and beverages included in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses;
 - 2) Foods and beverages sold in vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and concession stands;
 - 3) Foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities;
 - 4) Refreshments served at parties, celebrations, and meetings;
 - 5) Guidelines are based on nutrition goals not profit motives.
 - 6) Foods supplied by the school for field trips.

Nutrition Education

TPS shall provide nutrition education aligned with current standards established by federal, state and local guidelines in all grades. All faculty and staff, including nurses, physical education instructors, and foodservice staff are encouraged to embed nutrition education, to the extent possible, within the natural normal process of learning. Students shall receive nutrition education that teaches the skills and strategies needed to make healthy choices and maintain healthy habits.

Physical Education

- Students shall regularly be provided opportunities for physical activity through: physical education classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students.
- Elementary students shall regularly be provided a daily minimum of 20 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity supplementing the physical education academic curriculum standards.
- TPS encourages families, staff and community to support students' participation in physical activity, and to include physical activity in family, school and community events.

- Students shall be required to actively engage in the district's physical activity and education program unless otherwise exempt.
- While school is in session, TPS staff and community volunteers shall not apply or withhold physical activity as punishment.
- A certified physical education instructor shall teach all physical education classes.

Mental Health

The goal of mental health in TPS is to enhance the safety of all students, reduce their risks and promote emotional well-being. Our schools shall foster staff and student resilience. An atmosphere shall be created that encourages mutual support, caring and a sense of community wellness. TPS staff shall collaborate with families to provide information on local mental health agencies.

Wellness Committee

The Wellness Committee will be established by the Superintendent (or designee) to review nutrition education, physical activity, and school-based activities that promote student wellness. Food service staff and community service organizations will be invited to the Wellness Committee meetings as appropriate.

The Wellness Committee consisting of a nurse, social worker, and PE teacher from each site will meet three times a year with the assistant superintendent on health and wellness initiatives occurring throughout the district. The Superintendent or designee will provide the School Improvement Committee with informational updates after each meeting.

Program Evaluation

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that each school meets the requirements of the Wellness Policy. In addition, the Wellness Committee and the each principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of the Wellness Policy.

Legal references:

Connecticut General Statutes:

- § 10-215f Certification that food meets nutrition standards.
- § 10-221o Lunch periods. Recess.
- § 10-221p Boards to make available for purchase nutritious and low-fat foods.
- § 10-221q Sale of beverages.

Federal Law:

42 U.S.C. § 1751

Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act § 9(f) (1) and § 17(a), codified at 42 U.S.C. § 1758(f) (1), 42 U.S.C. § 1758b and 42 U.S.C. § 1766, as amended by Pub. L. 111-296, § 204, *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010*.

20 U.S.C. § 7118, as amended by Pub. L. 114-95, *Every Student Succeeds Act*.
7 C.F.R. § 210.10 Meal requirements for lunches and requirements for afterschool snacks.

- 7 C.F.R. § 210.11 Competitive food service and standards.
- 7 C.F.R. § 210.31. Local school wellness policy.
- 7 C.F.R. § 220.8 Meal requirements for breakfasts.

1. The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section 204, P.L.108-265
2. The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. §§1751-1769h
3. The Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §§1771-1789

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