



WEST PLAINS R-VII SCHOOL DISTRICT

**DISTRICT WELLNESS
PROGRAM**

Updated September, 2023

LOCAL WELLNESS POLICY

On June 30, 2004, Congress passed Section 204 of Public Law 108-265, of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. This law requires local education agencies to develop a policy that addresses the growing problem of childhood obesity.

The National Center for Health Statistics estimates that of children ages 2-19, roughly 16% are overweight, 19% have obesity, and 6% have severe obesity. The percentage of young people who are overweight has more than doubled since 1970. Type 2 diabetes, once considered an adult disease, has also increased dramatically in children.

Research also suggests that increasing physical fitness and activity improves academic performance. Further, when schools commit to providing recess, quality physical education courses, and other regular physical activity opportunities, academic performance improves in school. Additional research shows that reading and mathematics are the academic subjects most impacted by physical activity.

The goal of the West Plains R-VII School District Wellness Policy is to promote a comprehensive school environment that supports the development of healthy eating patterns and active lifestyles. When considering changes in the school environment, it is important to clearly communicate those changes to school staff, parents, students, and community members for the best possible outcome.

I. NUTRITION EDUCATION

Goal 1: The district will provide all students with adequate nutrition knowledge, including benefits of healthy eating, nutritional information, the use of dietary supplements, and how to safely prepare and handle food.

Goal 2: Provide students with nutrition-related skills that includes the ability to plan healthy meals using dietary guidelines.

Goal 3: Implement instructional activities across all grade levels that make healthy eating and living appealing.

Goal 4: Encourage students and staff to volunteer in work related to nutrition. This could include volunteering at food banks and the Bridges program.

Goal 5: Provide information to students and staff about the symptoms of nutrition-related conditions.

Rationale: Studies have found that effective nutrition and health education includes intervening in the school environment, as well as in the community. Classroom education alone will not give students the skills necessary to make behavior changes related to healthy eating. Students who hear consistent health messages through different channels—at home, in school, and in the community—are more likely to adopt healthy behaviors.

Action Steps:

1. Integrate nutrition knowledge into the PK-12 curriculum. Survey results indicated that the district can improve at including the following in the curriculum: benefits of healthy eating, principles of healthy weight management, the use and misuse of dietary supplements, safe food preparation and storage, essential nutrients, and nutritional deficiencies.
2. Enhance the curriculum to include nutrition-related skills: plan healthy meals, understand and use food labels, apply dietary guidelines to their meals, and assess personal eating habits.
3. Provide information about the symptoms of nutrition-related conditions such as unhealthy weight, eating disorders and other nutrition-related health problems.
4. Improve our communication to the school community that Smart Snacks suggestions and guidelines are posted on the school website for everyone to view.

II. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Goal 1: Develop a physical education program aligned with the Missouri Learning Standards for every student.

Goal 2: Provide opportunities during and after school, in cooperation with community programs, to create an environment that is safe and supportive of students' physical activities.

Goal 3: Provide joint school and community recreational activities.

Goal 4: Provide opportunities and encouragement for staff to be physically active.

Rationale: Assist students in learning to value and enjoy physical activity as an ongoing part of a healthy lifestyle. If the school prioritizes physical activity during P.E. classes, extra-curricular activities, and co-curricular activities, students are more likely to develop life-long habits and ongoing expectations of physical fitness.

Action Steps:

1. Prohibit the use of physical activity or withholding recess as discipline or punishment.
2. Ensure students receive 20 minutes of recess per day, as appropriate for grade levels.
3. Encourage physical activity and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum.
4. Encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities. Ensure that processes are in place to eliminate barriers to participation.
5. Provide P.E. or a related opportunity for physical activity on a daily basis for all students.
6. Ensure safe and adequate equipment, facilities, and resources, as well as appropriately trained and certified staff, for the full implementation of physical education classes.

III. HEALTHY FOODS ON CAMPUS

Goal 1: Develop and implement policies (ADF) ensuring that all foods and beverages available on school campuses, and at school events, contribute to healthy eating patterns.

Goal 2: Promote the school breakfast program to improve the likelihood of all students eating a healthy breakfast each day.

Rationale: While students are on any West Plains R-VII campus, they should be exposed to a variety of healthy foods and habits. The school district should serve as a role model for healthy living and eating. School personnel should teach students that in all settings, healthy behaviors are appropriate and encouraged.

Action Steps:

1. Provide healthy food options such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and dairy products that are low in fat, calories, and added sugars.
2. Do not include soda in vending machine options.
3. Limit fundraisers in an effort to promote participation in school breakfast and lunch.
4. Ensure that the food sold to students as part of the meal programs meet the USDA requirements.

IV. PROMOTING STUDENT/STAFF WELLNESS

Goal 1: Create a school environment that provides consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity.

Goal 2: Create a community environment that encourages continuity of the school's wellness program through community activities and education.

Goal 3: Notify staff of all health/wellness incentives in an effort to live a healthy lifestyle that prevents illness and identifies potential issues early.

Goal 4: Continue to expand mental health services available to both students and staff in the district.

Rationale: Regular physical activity and good eating habits enhance learning. A school environment that promotes physical activity and healthy food choices that extends to the home environment and the community encourages healthy lifelong habits for students.

Action Steps:

1. Ensure that reward systems do not include unhealthy food or drinks.
2. Develop an age-appropriate system of discipline that does not cause the student to be less active by the withdrawal of recess, outside time, or physical education class.
3. Remain proactive in encouraging extra-curricular and community sponsored use of school facilities for activities that promote an active lifestyle.
4. Encourage appropriate inclusion of health-related activities into the curriculum when possible (e.g. posters on health related topics in art; aerobic movement in music; reading charts on food products in communication skills; portion sizing in math; health related topics as writing assignments).
5. Continue utilizing the Zizzer Clinic and Behavioral Healthcare to provide case management and intensive therapy to students in need.
6. Utilize MEUHP consortium grant funding to promote healthy living and eating within the school community.

V. MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW

Goal 1: Ensure compliance with the established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

Goal 2: Assess the district wellness and nutrition policies every three years to ensure policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement and adjustment.

Action Steps:

1. The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.
2. 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 superintendent or designee.
3. School food service staff, at the school and district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Director of Human Resources and Student Services.
4. The Director of Human Resources and Student Services will complete a review process every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's wellness policies, based on input from stakeholders within the district.