

# **Uxbridge Public Schools District Wellness Policy**

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# UXBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS Wellness Policy

## Preamble

**UXBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT** is committed to the optimal development of every student. The District believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social success, we need to create positive, safe and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

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.<sup>i,ii,iii,iv,v,vi,vii</sup> Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.<sup>viii,ix,x</sup> 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.<sup>xi,xii,xiii,xiv</sup> Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.<sup>15</sup>

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 schools 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.

## **I. School Wellness Committee**

The Wellness committee will work together to develop, implement, evaluate and if necessary, revise the policy in order to achieve goals for school nutrition and physical activity throughout the district. The committee will also serve as a resource for school sites for implementing these policies. The committee will consist of a group of individuals representing the school and community that will includes, parents, students, school nutrition representatives, school committee, school administrators, physical education teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.

## **II. Nutrition Quality and Standards of Food & Beverage Sold and Served in Schools**

### ***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 and model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns. The school meal program will operate in accordance National School Lunch Standards and applicable Massachusetts and local laws and regulations.

In addition, the school meals program wants to ensure each student is well prepared to learn to their fullest capacity and we will ensure no student goes hungry while in school.

### ***Breakfast***

The schools will participate in the School Breakfast program at each school in order to provide children with a balance breakfast to start their day and enhance their ability to learn.

### ***Free and Reduced Meals***

Applications are available and accepted all year for the Free and Reduced program. All students are assigned a pin number in order to prevent the overt identification of students.

### ***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](#). The food service program will offer professional development for directors, managers and staff according to their requirement level.

### ***Water***

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

### ***Sharing of Foods and Beverages***

The schools should discourage students from sharing food and beverages given the concerns about allergies and dietary restrictions.

### ***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. These competitive foods refer to vending machines, cafeteria a la carte, fundraisers and school stores.

To be consistent with The School Lunch program, all competitive foods will remain in compliance with the Massachusetts Nutrition Law #4459. These guidelines are in effect on school premises from one half hour before school begins, during school and one half hour after school ends.

Events that take place outside of these hours are not required to follow these guidelines and have flexibility to choose the items.

### ***Rewards and Snacks***

Rewards must be “food free” throughout the district. Classroom snacks should be healthy choices and staff should be aware of food allergies. Food should not be used for a reward in the classroom.

- Exception would be accommodations that are made in 504/IEP.

### ***Curriculum Related Food Lessons***

When a teacher decides to include a food as part of the curriculum, he/she will send permission forms home 5 calendar days before the lesson. On this form, parent/guardians will be able to indicate if their child can participate in the curriculum related food lesson. Please refer to the permission form.

### ***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.

Items such as candy, soda etc. will not be allowed to be sold or distributed during the school day.

Fundraising during school hours will sell only non-food items or foods and beverages that meet or exceed the Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These guidelines do not apply to outside groups.

### ***Nutrition Promotion***

The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school district, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs.

### ***Nutrition Education***

The District will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services;

### **III. Physical Activity**

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

The District will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts. The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. The District will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

#### ***Recess***

All elementary schools will offer recess on all days during the school year, preferably outdoor when feasible. In the event of **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable.

#### ***Physical Activity and Punishment***

Teachers and other personnel will not use physical activity or withhold opportunities for physical activity as punishment. For example, recess should not be withheld as a result of misbehavior or incomplete work.

#### ***Active Transport***

The District will support active transport to and from school, such as walking or biking. The District will encourage this behavior by engaging in:

- Designate safe or preferred routes to school
- Promote activities such as participation in walk and/or bike to school.
- Secure storage facilities for bicycles and helmets (e.g., shed, cage, fenced area)

- Use crossing guards
- Use crosswalks on streets leading to schools

#### **IV. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness**

##### ***Healthy and Safe Environment***

The District is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning and working environment for both students and staff. Buildings, grounds and facilities will meet all current health and safety standards. The district officials will work with local law officials to create a safe school environment. School grounds will be free of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. District supports culture where everyone is respected and accepted.

##### ***Family, School and Community Partnerships***

The District realizes the importance of partnerships amongst families, schools and the community to work together to promote and maintain health and wellness. For this reason, the committee is comprised of a variety of team members. The wellness policy will be accessible via the Uxbridge Public Schools website.

#### **V. Wellness Policy Evaluation & Documentation**

The wellness committee will consistently review the policy in accordance to needs and goals of the district and ensure compliance. The wellness policy will be assessed and updated at least every three years. All documentation and assessments will be kept on file and made available to the public on an annual basis.

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- <sup>i</sup> Bradley, B, Green, AC. Do Health and Education Agencies in the United States Share Responsibility for Academic Achievement and Health? A Review of 25 years of Evidence About the Relationship of Adolescents' Academic Achievement and Health Behaviors, *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 2013; 52(5):523–532.
- <sup>ii</sup> Meyers AF, Sampson AE, Weitzman M, Rogers BL, Kayne H. School breakfast program and school performance. *American Journal of Diseases of Children*. 1989;143(10):1234–1239.
- <sup>iii</sup> Murphy JM. Breakfast and learning: an updated review. *Current Nutrition & Food Science*. 2007; 3:3–36.
- <sup>iv</sup> Murphy JM, Pagano ME, Nachmani J, Sperling P, Kane S, Kleinman RE. The relationship of school breakfast to psychosocial and academic functioning: Cross-sectional and longitudinal observations in an inner-city school sample. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*. 1998;152(9):899–907.
- <sup>v</sup> Pollitt E, Mathews R. Breakfast and cognition: an integrative summary. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 1998; 67(4), 804S–813S.
- <sup>vi</sup> Rampersaud GC, Pereira MA, Girard BL, Adams J, Metz J. Breakfast habits, nutritional status, body weight, and academic performance in children and adolescents. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. 2005;105(5):743–760, quiz 761–762.
- <sup>vii</sup> Taras, H. Nutrition and student performance at school. *Journal of School Health*. 2005;75(6):199–213.
- <sup>viii</sup> MacLellan D, Taylor J, Wood K. Food intake and academic performance among adolescents. *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*. 2008;69(3):141–144.
- <sup>ix</sup> Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Dixon LB, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate consumption of dairy products among adolescents. *Journal of Nutrition Education*. 1997;29(1):12–20.
- <sup>x</sup> Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption among adolescents. *Preventive Medicine*. 1996;25(5):497–505.
- <sup>xi</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *The association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance*. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, 2010.
- <sup>xii</sup> Singh A, Uijtendwilligne L, Twisk J, van Mechelen W, Chinapaw M. *Physical activity and performance at school: A systematic review of the literature including a methodological quality assessment*. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*, 2012; 166(1):49-55.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Haapala E, Poikkeus A-M, Kukkonen-Harjula K, Tompuri T, Lintu N, Väistö J, Leppänen P, Laaksonen D, Lindi V, Lakka T. *Association of physical activity and sedentary behavior with academic skills – A follow-up study among primary school children*. *PLoS ONE*, 2014; 9(9): e107031.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Hillman C, Pontifex M, Castelli D, Khan N, Raine L, Scudder M, Drollette E, Moore R, Wu C-T, Kamijo K. *Effects of the FITKids randomized control trial on executive control and brain function*. *Pediatrics* 2014; 134(4): e1063-1071.
- <sup>15</sup> Change Lab Solutions. (2014). *District Policy Restricting the Advertising of Food and Beverages Not Permitted to be Sold on School Grounds*. Retrieved from <http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/district-policy-school-food-ads>

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Permission Form for Curriculum Event

Event \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom/Teacher involved \_\_\_\_\_

Food to be provided. (List specific brand, flavor, etc. Photocopy of ingredient list encouraged)

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Please complete one of the following:

I give my child \_\_\_\_\_ permission to participate in this lesson.

My child \_\_\_\_\_ **MAY NOT** participate in this food event as planned.

Please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss alternative foods.

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This form must be returned by \_\_\_\_\_.

\*\*If this form is not returned to school, your child will not be able to participate in this classroom curriculum related food activity.