

# NUTRITION WELLNESS POLICY

The Wellness Policy of the Spencer East Brookfield School District will adhere to all mandated Massachusetts State Guidelines.

The goal of the Nutrition Wellness Policy of the Spencer East Brookfield Regional School District is to ensure that we offer students food and beverage choices that will enhance learning, contribute to their healthy growth and development, and cultivate life-long healthy eating behaviors.

## **Nutrition Wellness Committee**

The Nutrition Wellness Committee will create, strengthen, develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise the school nutrition and physical activity policies accordingly with the Massachusetts State Guidelines. The Food Service Director and Principals of each school will serve as a resource for implementing the policy. A Nutrition Wellness Committee consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, a representative of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.

## **Nutritional Guidelines**

The Spencer East Brookfield Regional School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect student's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the School District that:

Food and beverages sold or served to students, **30 minutes before** the beginning of the school day until **30 minutes after** the school day, must comply with the standards of the National School Lunch Program.

Competitive foods and beverages sold or made available in the School District must follow the 2010 MA School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverage Act (52:125) and future revisions of the regulations. However, foods and beverages sold in vending machines must comply with the standards at all times.

Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of the students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

The School District will provide students with at least **10 minutes to eat** after sitting down for breakfast, and **20 minutes** after sitting down for lunch.

The School District should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings

or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities. Food rewards must meet the nutritional state guidelines unless it is specified in a student's IEP, 504, or behavior plan.

Only food purchased from the school cafeteria or a lunch brought from home are permitted in the school cafeteria. No club or organization may sell or make available any food or beverage in the school cafeteria at any meal time. No outside deliveries of food (take-out) for student consumption may enter the schools during school hours.

The Food Service Director will provide information on Alternative and Non-Food Rewards and Healthy Fundraising ideas at the beginning of a school year via the district web site, and through notices sent home to families. The Food Service Director will also work with the principals of each school and their parent groups. The School District will continue to promote Farm to School connections and buy locally grown fruits and vegetables as a priority whenever possible.

### **Fundraising Activities**

Organizations are encouraged to offer non-food items for fundraisers. Teachers are also encouraged to offer non-food items for classroom activities to avoid food allergies and must check in with the school nurse for each activity. Any food offered at school must also comply with the SMART SNACKS Federal Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and the MA Competitive Foods Bill of 2012 or subsequent regulatory revisions.

### **Physical Education (P.E.)**

All students in grades PK - 5 will receive physical education for the entire school year. Knox Trail Middle School students in grades six through eighth will have gym one trimester of the school year. High School students will participate in gym as the block scheduling allows. Student's involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.

### **Free & Reduced Meals**

The School District 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. The School District may utilize electronic identification and payment systems.

### **Daily Recess**

All elementary school students will have at least **20 minutes a day of supervised recess**, preferably outdoors

## **Sharing of Foods and Beverages**

The School District discourages students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack time, due to concerns about contagious diseases, allergies, and other dietary restrictions that a student may have. Students may bring their own snacks/lunches to school. All staff members are encouraged to instruct on healthy nutrition but may not take any foods brought in from home away from the student. Students who continue to try to share their lunch or snack with others will be redirected and educated in regards to the risks for allergies or restrictions. A different approach will be considered by the Principal if the behavior becomes a consistent problem. The Food Service Director and Cafeteria Staff will provide nutrition education with a list of healthful snacks and food items for lunches to parents/caretakers to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating.

## **Staff Wellness**

The School District highly values the health and wellness of every staff member. Staff are encouraged to model positive nutrition behavior and habits among students.

## **Monitoring**

In each school, the Principal or designee will be compliant with the Wellness Policy in his/her school. The Food Service Director, Cafeteria Manager, and Cafeteria Staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the School Principal if the problem is not resolved. In addition, the School District will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.

The Food Service Director will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity 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**

The Nutrition Wellness Committee will review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the Nutrition Wellness Committee will review the district's nutrition and physical activity policies; will encourage an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and will revise nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The Nutrition Wellness Committee will, as necessary, revise the Wellness Policy and will develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

## **References**

fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act  
fns.usda.gov/tags/competitive-foods  
professionalstandards.nal.usda.gov/

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