

# **Pocola School District's Wellness Policy**

The Pocola School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well being, and ability to learn. Students and staff must be physically, mentally, and socially healthy for Pocola Schools to achieve their primary mission of educating students for lifelong learning and success.

## **I. School Health Councils**

The school district and/or individual schools within the district will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies.

- All sites shall post information on the nutritional content of food served and post a summary of laws and school district policies pertaining to nutrition.
- School counselors and nurses will provide guidance on health, and, if necessary, referrals for nutritional problems.

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

### **School Meals**

- Nutritious and appealing foods, such as fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy foods and low fat grain products shall be available wherever food is offered at school.
- Food items should be served fresh and in an appealing manner
- All sites shall contain pleasant eating areas for students and staff with adequate time for unhurried eating.
- There shall be nutrition standards regulating all food and beverages sold or served at school, including school meals, vended items, items sold as part of fund raisers, and items given to students as rewards.
- Each site shall encourage teachers, staff, and parents to eat with students.
- All sites shall have adequate food service staff to prepare food items on site and provide adequate service to students, staff, and visitors.
- All school eating areas shall contain free, safe drinking water sources.

Pocola School will engage students and parents through surveys in selecting food sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthy, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should 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, or posted in the classrooms each Monday morning for the entire week.

**Breakfast:** To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- School will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take home materials, or other means.

Skipping breakfast can adversely affect children's performance in problem-solving tasks ([www.edc.gov](http://www.edc.gov)). A study of low-income elementary school students indicated that those who participated in the School Breakfast Program had greater improvements in standardized test scores and reduced rates of absence and tardiness than did children who qualified for the program but did not participate ([www.edc.gov](http://www.edc.gov)).

**Meal Times and Scheduling:** Schools:

- will provide students with at least ten minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.
- Should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff:** Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. Nutrition and food services personnel will promote healthy eating behavior, food safety, maintaining safe, orderly and pleasant eating environments and other topics directly relevant to the employee's job duties. Ongoing professional development training opportunities for staff will be encouraged. Staff responsible for nutrition education will be encouraged to participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned.

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages:** Schools should 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.



**Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (i.e., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, snacks, fundraisers, etc...).**

**Elementary** – Even though elementary students do not have access to food through vending machines, teachers still must be mindful not to distribute unhealthy foods to students and that cafeterias don't sell them as extra snacks. It is important that PTAs and other school organizations and teachers know that students are not to receive unhealthy foods during the school day, on field trips, or at parties.

**Middle and High School** – In middle and high schools all vending machines shall only offer approved items. The superintendent shall review all vending contracts prior to the approval of the contracts to ensure that every contract complies with school food policies.

Examples of Vending Machine Foods low in Saturated Fat:

canned fruit, fresh fruit (apples, oranges), fruit juice, vegetable juice, low fat crackers, and cookies, pretzels, Granola bars, snack mixes (cereal, fried fruit), peanut butter and low fat crackers.

#### **Beverages**

- Allowed: Water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners, fruit and vegetable juices and fruit based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional sweeteners.

#### **Foods**

- A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered at any location where foods are sold.

**Fundraising Activities:** To support children's health and school nutrition education efforts, school fundraising activities should not involve food that does not meet nutrition standards.

**Snacks** – 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 emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage.

**Rewards** – Pocola School will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment.

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

Pocola School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students.

#### **Nutrition Education:**

- Shall integrate food and nutrition issues and activities into the academic curriculum.
- Include fitness and nutrition information in report cards to parents.
- Shall provide a planned sequential instructional program that provides knowledge and teaches skills to help students adopt and maintain lifelong healthy eating habits.

**Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting:** For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 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.

\*Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons

\* Classroom teachers will provide short, physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

**Communication with Parents:** The school will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities during the school day. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials.

**Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education:** In order to insure students are offered the opportunity to engage in physical activity in the school setting, the district will provide all students in grades K-12 with some form of physical education each day.

**Daily Recess -** All elementary students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which moderate to vigorous physical activity should be encouraged. Lower elementary shall have a minimum of two 20 minute recesses per day.

Teachers and other school personnel will not use physical activity as punishment.

#### **IV. Monitor and Review**

**Monitoring:** Each school principal will be responsible for ensuring compliance with federal, state, and district food policies. The principal may order to remove or turn off vending machines and cease the sale of food or beverage items that are in violation of food policies.

School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the principal.

Each school site will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the school health program in promoting healthy eating, and change the program as appropriate to increase its effectiveness.