

Policy 421 Student Wellness

The MSD of Mt. Vernon Board of School Trustees supports increased emphasis on nutrition as well as physical activity at all levels to enhance the well-being of the school corporation's students. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board to:

- Promote student wellness through health, nutrition, and physical education;
- Provide students access to nutritious foods and beverages;
- Provide opportunities for physical activity and developmentally appropriate exercise;
- Require that all reimbursable meals served by the school corporation meet the federal nutritional guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture;
- Require that all policy and regulations adhere to IC 20-26-9; and
- Encourage school affiliated organizations to offer healthy alternatives during all school sponsored events and celebrations.

To achieve these policy goals, the District will apply the following guidelines:

I. School Health Committee

The MSD of Mt. Vernon will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the district-wide wellness policy.

II. Nutritional quality of foods and beverages sold and served on campus

A. School lunch and breakfast program

1. Meet the minimum, nutritional requirements established by USDA for federally funded programs.
2. Offer a variety of affordable, nutritious food that meets the health and nutrition needs of students.
3. Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, and low-fat dairy products.
4. Be appealing and attractive to students.
5. Be served in clean and pleasant settings.
6. Accommodate the special dietary, religious, ethnic, and cultural needs of the students.

B. Free and reduced-priced meals: Schools will make an 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.

C. Qualifications of school food service staff: Qualified school nutritional professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school districts responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all school nutritional professionals. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for cafeteria managers and cafeteria workers according to their level of responsibility.

D. 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.

- E. Foods and Beverages sold individually (*i.e.*, foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte lines, fundraisers, etc.): The school will encourage that all food and beverages sold during school hours shall adhere to IC 20-26-9 guidelines.
- F. Rewards: Schools are strongly encouraged not to use foods or beverages as individual rewards for academic performance or good behavior. Schools will not withhold food or beverages as a form of punishment.
- G. Celebrations: All students must have access to well-balanced meals. For this reason, it is recommended that all classroom food celebrations occur after meal service times and not during lunch hours. Schools should encourage serving healthy foods and beverages at celebrations.
- H. The Board of School Trustees shall operate cafeterias in all schools where feasible. In addition to making balanced hot lunches available to pupils, the food service division shall be administered by the staff as an instrument for the teaching of nutrition education. The district may provide food services for school and non-school groups. These services shall be coordinated by the Food Service Director. Expenses and receipts for these services will be processed through district food service accounting. Cafeteria accounts are to be used for cafeteria purposes.

III. Nutrition and physical activity promotion and food marketing

- A. The MSD of Mt Vernon aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating habits by students. Schools shall provide nutritional education that:
 - 1. Is offered at each grade level to provide students with knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
 - 2. Will not be limited to health education classes.
 - 3. Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate activities.
 - 4. Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices.
- B. Communication with parents: The MSD of Mt. Vernon will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The schools will promote activities and nutritional information through school newsletters and other school communication tools available.
- C. Food marketing in schools: School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. Schools will provide choices that include healthy foods and beverages that are sold throughout the school day.

IV. Physical activity opportunity and physical education

- A. The goal of Physical Education curriculum is to develop individual optimal physical ability in movement and who can use physical activity to:
 - 1. Maintain or develop fitness.
 - 2. Develop skills for sport and recreation.
 - 3. Use movement for self-expression, enjoyment, challenge, and social interaction.
 - 4. Achieve lifelong physical wellness.

- B. Physical Education K-12: The Physical Education programs shall consist of physical activities of at least moderate intensity and for a duration that is sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to the differing abilities of students. The schools will provide resources and opportunities to increase physical education activities on an age appropriate level. Schools will adhere to guidelines set forth by the IC 20-26-9 and the Indiana Physical Education Standards.
- C. Daily recess: All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, if weather permitting, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity. Schools should give students periodic breaks during prolonged inactivity in which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.
- D. Physical activity opportunity before and after school: All elementary, middle, and high schools will promote outside camps and activity programs. All elementary schools have walking/running trails for use. Mt. Vernon Senior and Junior High Schools, as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs and intramural programs. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of students.
- E. Staff wellness opportunities: Schools will allow staff to use facilities outside of school hours for activities such as walking programs, weight lifting, lap swimming, water walking, and possible group fitness classes. Staff wellness incentive programs may include free physical wellness screenings, walking/exercise contests, incentives for non-tobacco use, and others.

V. Health and nurse services

The district shall provide ancillary nursing services to assist students with health problems, emergencies, and testing services as deemed necessary by the Board or state law.

VI. Monitoring, evaluation, and policy review

The MSD of Mt. Vernon and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, monitor and revise the wellness policy and develop work plans to facilitate its implementation.

- A. The school corporation will use an evidence-based assessment tool to track the collective health of students over time by collecting data such as body composition (height and weight), aerobic capacity, and/or muscular strength, endurance, and flexibility.
- B. The superintendent is responsible for retaining all documentation of compliance with this policy and its regulations, but the principals shall ensure that their individual schools are in compliance with the district's wellness policy every three school years by assessing wellness implementation strategies. The principals will provide a written report to the superintendent, who will provide a summary report to the school board. The superintendent's report shall contain the following information: the school district's progress toward meeting the wellness goals over the previous three school years; the website address for the wellness policy and how the public can receive a copy of the policy; a description of the progress in meeting the goals, a summary of the events or activities related to the implementation of the policy; the name, position, and contact information of the school official coordinating the School Health Committee; and information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the school district's wellness activities.

- C. The evaluation of the wellness policy and implementation will be directed by the School Health Committee. The Committee will be responsible for the three-year assessment of each school's compliance with the policy and its regulations. The three-year assessment must measure the implementation of this policy and its regulations; the extent to which each school is in compliance with the policy; the extent this policy compares to other model school wellness policies; and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy. As a result of this assessment and evaluation, the policy and regulations will be revised as needed.
- D. The three-year assessment and evaluation report will be made available to the public by posting it on the school district website.