

Wellness Policy Toolkit for Oklahoma Schools



By implementing programs and policies that educate students, encourage healthy living, and provide opportunities to develop healthy behaviors, schools and school districts can improve student, faculty, and staff health, and can help students achieve academic success.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

The purpose of this toolkit is to help communities work with school districts to establish and implement strong wellness policies for Oklahoma public school students in full-time kindergarten (K) classes through 12th grade. Equally important is promoting the health of teachers and school employees. Specifically, the toolkit does the following:

1. Discusses why local school wellness policies are critical for promoting not just the health and wellness of students but also their academic and long-term success.
2. Summarizes the relevant federal and state laws that communities and districts should be aware of when drafting and implementing wellness policy standards.
3. Offers tips for how communities can most effectively work with school districts.
4. Outlines the key steps to follow in developing and implementing a successful local school wellness policy.
5. Provides a Sample School Wellness Policy, which communities are encouraged to use when helping districts assess their needs, establish benchmarks, and develop policy language and standards.

What is a local school wellness policy?

All school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program are required by law to adopt a written wellness policy. A local school wellness policy sets nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on campus; defines benchmarks for physical activity and physical education; and provides guidelines for nutrition promotion, nutrition education, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. It also designates one or more district or school officials to be responsible for ensuring compliance with these standards.



WHY LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICIES?

Schools play a critical role in fostering lifelong healthy habits in children. Children and youth spend the majority of their time during their formative years at school, where they consume at least half of their daily calories.¹ Studies have shown that students who are more physically active and eat a more nutritious diet perform better in school.² Conversely, unhealthy behaviors, such as poor eating habits and physical inactivity, can be detrimental to a student's academic performance, attendance, and ability to focus in the classroom.³ By implementing programs and policies that educate students, encourage healthy living, and provide opportunities for students to develop healthy behaviors, schools and school districts can improve students' health and help them achieve academic success.

Recognizing the fundamental role schools play in promoting student health and wellness, Congress enacted the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, which required all school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program or other child nutrition programs to adopt a local school wellness policy by the 2006-2007 school year. In 2010, Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA), which added new requirements pertaining to the implementation, evaluation, and public reporting of local school wellness policies. Subsequently, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) finalized regulations in July 2016 that spell out in detail the local school wellness policy requirements. The final rule also ensures stakeholder participation in the development of wellness policies and increases transparency of wellness policies through assessments and reporting.⁴

While federal law provides certain mandates that all school districts must follow, each district is responsible for tailoring its policies to address the specific needs of its communities and for ensuring that individual school sites properly implement the district-level policy. This toolkit includes information on how to draft a policy that takes into account a district's needs and goals as well as tips for working with both a district and its schools.



FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The first half of the table below outlines the elements that districts are required to include in their written wellness policies and/or follow under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and the USDA's final rule. The second half highlights additional wellness-related requirements that schools and districts must follow but do not necessarily need to include in their written wellness policies.

Elements that Must Be Included in Local School Wellness Policies	
Stakeholder Involvement and Participation	<p>Districts must do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority,^a physical education teachers, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, review, and update of the local school wellness policy. • Include a written plan for allowing the participation of the above-named individuals.
Local Leadership	<p>Districts must do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate one or more district or school officials to ensure that each school complies with the local school wellness policy. • Identify, within the written wellness policy, the district or school official(s) responsible for ensuring each school's compliance with the policy.
Content of the Local School Wellness Policy	<p>At a minimum, the local school wellness policy must include goals for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition promotion • Nutrition education • Physical activity • Other school-based activities that promote student wellness <p>In establishing the above-named goals, the district must review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques.</p>
Nutrition Guidelines	<p>Local school wellness policies must include nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages sold to students on campus during the school day.</p> <p>The guidelines must, at a minimum, comply with the USDA's meal pattern requirements for reimbursable meals under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, as well as the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards (Smart Snacks standards) that govern competitive foods (i.e., foods and beverages available for sale on campus outside of the school meal program).</p> <p>Local school wellness policies must also establish standards for all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students on campus during the school day.</p>
Policies for Food and Beverage Marketing	<p>Local school wellness policies must include guidelines that, at a minimum, only allow on-campus marketing of foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks standards (i.e., those foods and beverages that may be sold on the school campus during the school day).</p>

^a The "School Food Authority" is the governing body responsible for the administration of one or more schools and has the legal authority to operate the child nutrition programs. 7 CFR 210.2 (National School Lunch Program).

Additional Wellness-Related Requirements

Water	Schools must provide access to clean drinking water (at no charge) during school meal service where meals are served to students.
Informing the Public	Districts must inform and update the public (including parents, students, and others in the community) about the content and implementation of the local school wellness policy.
Measuring Implementation	At least once every 3 years, districts must measure implementation efforts and make available to the public an assessment of how the local school wellness policy has been implemented, including the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The extent to which schools are in compliance with the policy• How each school's adopted policy compares with the district's sample policy• A description of the progress made in attaining the policy's goals
Updates	Districts must make appropriate updates or modifications to the local school wellness policy, based on the triennial assessments.
Recordkeeping	Each district must retain basic records demonstrating compliance with the school wellness requirements set forth by law. These records include, but are not limited to: (1) The written local school wellness policy; (2) Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements; and (3) Documentation of the triennial assessment of the local school wellness policy for each school under its jurisdiction.



OKLAHOMA STATE REQUIREMENTS

This table summarizes the wellness-related requirements that school districts must follow under Oklahoma state law (but do not necessarily need to include in their written wellness policies).

Wellness Requirements Under Oklahoma Law	
Competitive Foods/ Fundraising	The USDA's Smart Snacks standards allow state governments to develop their own policies regarding the number of exemptions schools may claim from the standards—that is, the number of school-related fundraising events during which the standards need not be met for all food sold. The Oklahoma State Board of Education has opted to allow up to 30 exempted fundraisers per school (each of which can last up to 14 days); however, these exempted fundraisers cannot be held during normal meal service times. School districts may choose to allow fewer, or zero, exempted fundraisers.
Physical Education	All elementary school students (in full-day kindergarten and grades 1-5) must receive a minimum of 60 minutes of physical education per week (not including recess time). Districts are encouraged, but not required, to provide physical education to middle and high school students (grades 6-12). All physical education programs must do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sequential and developmentally appropriate. • Help students develop the motor skills, self-management skills, and knowledge necessary to participate in lifelong physical activities. • Allow students to choose among many types of physical activity, including both cooperative and competitive games. • Ensure that students are moderately to vigorously active for at least 50 percent of physical education class time.
Physical Activity	In addition to the required 60 minutes of physical education per week, school districts must ensure that elementary school students (in full-day kindergarten and grades 1-5) participate in a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity each week. This may include, but is not limited to, additional physical education, exercise programs, fitness breaks, recess, classroom activities, and wellness and nutrition education.
Recess	School districts are strongly encouraged to provide students (in full-day kindergarten and grades 1-5) with at least 20 minutes of daily recess.
Physical Activity Reports	School districts must provide parents or guardians of students with an annual physical activity report that includes these components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary of how physical activity is incorporated into the school day • A summary of the types of physical activities the students are exposed to in their physical education programs • Suggestions on how to monitor a child's physical activity progress and on how to encourage regular participation in physical activity • Information regarding the benefits of physical education and physical activity
Health Education	Although school districts in Oklahoma are not required to provide health education for any grade level, high schools are strongly encouraged to require students to complete two units of health and physical education. Additionally, when teaching health, Oklahoma public schools are strongly encouraged to follow the Oklahoma Academic Standards.

WORKING WITH OKLAHOMA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

As previously discussed, all districts are legally required to adopt local school wellness policies. Accordingly, school districts are a critical partner in promoting the health and well-being of children and youth. When working with school districts, the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) recommends that communities keep the following in mind:⁵

- Education will likely be the district's first priority and health may be a secondary priority.
- Schools are busy places, and people who work at schools have many competing priorities.
- There are many different kinds of schools, and the needs of schools will vary by location (e.g., urban vs. rural).
- Similarly, the decision-making process will likely vary by district. In some districts, policy adoption may take a long time and require multiple rounds of review.

Communities working with districts to develop and implement a comprehensive wellness policy should follow these steps:

1. Know the Basics

Prior to initiating a conversation about a local school wellness policy, communities should have a comprehensive understanding of their local school landscape. You should ask different kinds of questions, such as: How many schools are in the district? How many students do those schools serve? In what type of community are the schools located (e.g., rural, urban, suburban)? What type of student-related data or information is available?

Knowing the answers to these questions and having a basic understanding of the school system, both specific to the particular district with which you are working and with respect to Oklahoma as a whole, will set the stage for the successful drafting and implementation of a local school wellness policy. Communities may find this information online or by reaching out to the district directly.

Additionally, communities should investigate whether the district already has a wellness policy and/or any health-related policies in place; many districts may have existing policies that overlap with local school wellness policies (e.g., standards for food service, facilities, curriculum, etc.). Communities must ensure that any new policy language remains consistent with existing standards or that existing standards are updated to be consistent with the new local school wellness policy.

Finally, you should familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations that govern what must be included in wellness policies. One way to do this is to use the tables on pages 4–6 as a reference. The tables are useful tools for understanding and navigating federal and state laws pertaining to student wellness.

2. Learn to Speak the Language of School Educators

Messaging is key. In order to demonstrate the importance of wellness policies, communities must clearly communicate how such policies can help improve academic performance and student attendance in addition to promoting student and staff health and well-being. Providing data that illustrates the connection between public health and educational goals can be an effective approach. Communities should be careful, however, not to overwhelm districts with too much data or public health jargon.

TIP

For more guidance on how to most effectively communicate and work with school districts, communities should review the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors' [Speaking Education's Language: A Guide for Public Health Professionals Working in the Education Sector](#).



Successful collaboration with school districts requires ensuring that everyone is on the same page. Be aware that some terms, like “school health,” may have one connotation for school educators (e.g., conjuring up associations with the school nurse, pregnancy prevention, etc.) and a completely different meaning for public health advocates (e.g., healthy eating, physical activity, etc.).

3. Build Relationships

If the community has not already done so, it should develop relationships with partners at schools and at the district level. To start creating partnerships, you may want to call the district to introduce yourself, find someone who can introduce you to school district staff, or attend board meetings or school events.

Once you have established a relationship, begin developing goals and expectations for the partnership. To do this, you should find out some key pieces of information: With whom from the district will you be working? When, where, and how will meetings take place? What is the best way to communicate with school and school district personnel?

Finally, remember that the community is working *with* districts to accomplish shared goals. It is not imposing demands and requests on them. By working in a collaborative spirit with schools, the community will attract buy-in from districts and other key stakeholders, ensure better partnerships, and achieve long-term policy success.

4. Become a Resource for Schools

Familiarize yourself with available resources the community can use to help districts understand federal and state laws pertaining to wellness policy requirements. The tables provided on pages 4–6 of this toolkit can serve as a starting point for understanding relevant federal and state laws.



ASSESSING THE NEEDS AND READINESS OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT: INSTRUCTIONS FOR HEALTHY LIVING GRANTEES

Assessing the needs and readiness of a district will help guide the development of a local school wellness policy. TSET has created several resources for Healthy Living Grantees to use to assess the needs and readiness of districts, including a *Healthy Living Assessment Guide*, an *Informal Conversation Guide*, and a *Policy and Practice Tool*.

Form a Partnership

Before Healthy Living Grantees can begin the assessment process, they will need to establish a partnership with the district. The *Informal Conversation Guide* provides questions to facilitate the initial conversation between grantees and the district's leadership, and directions for establishing a partnership before moving to the next assessment step. The *Healthy Living Assessment Guide* has more information about using the *Informal Conversation Guide*.

Assess Needs

Once a Healthy Living Grantee has partnered with a district, the next step is to assess the district's needs. A needs assessment can be completed by reviewing the district's existing policies and practices. Grantees should use the *Policy and Practice Tool* to determine the strengths and weaknesses of any existing nutrition, physical activity, and tobacco policies. It is important to note that some districts may have healthy living practices that are not included in existing policies. If that is the case, those practices should be added to the policy. The *Healthy Living Assessment Guide* has more information about using the *Policy and Practice Tool*.



Assess Readiness

After completing the needs assessment using the *Policy and Practice Tool*, the Healthy Living Grantee must assess the district's readiness level. The readiness assessment will identify how willing and prepared the district is to improve student and staff wellness. Readiness levels can range from low (little to no awareness about the problem) to high (aware of the problem and taking steps to address it). Districts with a low readiness level may not be aware of the need for a local school wellness policy, or they may think that a wellness policy cannot help improve student or staff health. Districts with a high readiness level will be more ready to adopt and implement a wellness policy that contains best practices. The strategies used to help a district develop a local school wellness policy are different depending on the district's readiness level. Conducting a readiness assessment can help ensure successful adoption and implementation of the wellness policy. TSET has created the *Organizational Readiness Model* to help Healthy Living Grantees assess district readiness. It includes strategies that others have used to increase readiness. The *Healthy Living Assessment Guide* also has more strategies that may be useful.

TIPS FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A WELLNESS POLICY

The following list outlines key steps for developing and implementing a local school wellness policy. Communities can share and review this list with school districts that are developing, assessing, or revising their wellness policies.

1. Assemble a Wellness Committee Team

A team of parents, students, physical education teachers, school health professionals, members of the school board, school administrators, and the general public is vital to the successful development and implementation of any local school wellness policy. Under federal law, districts are required to establish a diverse team of community stakeholders to assess the district's needs and develop a policy that promotes students' health and wellness. Districts, however, have broad discretion to determine exactly how they will implement this requirement. The stakeholders that ultimately end up forming the wellness committee will vary by district.

Here are some ideas for how to form a team and build support:

- Seek out parents, students, school nurses, teachers, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members, and other advocates within the community and ask for their support and feedback.
- Inform school administrators and the school board of your desire to draft a new policy or revise an existing policy. Ask for their input, support, and cooperation.
- Meet with your school's wellness committee (if one already exists) and enlist their feedback and collaboration.

Once the team is assembled, the district should make available to the public and school community a list of names and position titles (or relationship to the school/district) of each team member, as well as the name, position title, and contact information for the lead individual(s).

2. Set Goals

Based on identified needs and the district's readiness, the team should establish goals that are attainable and appropriate for the district's schools, prioritizing those that are most urgent. Central to any effective wellness policy are strong, clear goals with specific objectives and measurable benchmarks.

Remember that the district's goals may diverge somewhat from those of the community. Make an effort to learn about the district's educational priorities and discuss the ways in which public health goals can help facilitate the achievement of the district's educational goals.

Keep in mind that the district also has a wellness mandate. Under the National School Lunch Act, districts must establish goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness,⁴ and they must do so using evidence-based strategies and techniques.

Finally, be considerate of the district's timeline and remember that the district's expectations and imperatives may be very different from those of the community. Schools are often on a tight schedule and under great pressure to demonstrate success in the face of annual academic testing and reporting requirements. Communities, by contrast, may be used to the longer timeframes necessary to see significant health or behavioral changes after policies are developed and implemented. Ask about the district's calendar, and be aware of busy periods in the school year (e.g., year-end testing period).



3. Review the Policy

The sample policy provided in this toolkit offers a starting point for school districts and other stakeholders, who can incorporate provisions from the sample into their own new or revised local wellness policies. For example, if a team wants to keep all or part of an existing policy, it can integrate selected provisions from the sample into the language of the existing policy, and customize the added provisions to fit the specific goals and needs of the community.

Throughout the drafting process, communication within the team—as well as with other community stakeholders—is critical to ensuring that all wellness-related issues are adequately addressed. Moreover, good communication can foster the consensus necessary for seamless and successful implementation of the policy.

4. Implement and Promote the Policy

Communities should work with the district to determine the school board's policy for approving new or amended wellness policies. Once the policy is approved and adopted, there are numerous ways to support its implementation and long-term success.

One of the best ways to ensure that a policy is effectively implemented and followed is to spread the word to students, school staff, parents, and the broader community. Non-compliance with wellness policies is often the result of lack of awareness, as opposed to apathy or intentional disregard of wellness requirements. It is therefore critical for districts to make everyone aware of the policy's existence, provisions, and mandatory nature. This can be accomplished by making the policy publicly available and providing additional information and resources to students, parents, staff, and the general public (e.g., through school websites, notice boards, or handouts).

5. Monitor and Update the Policy

Also essential to long-term success is continued monitoring and updating of the policy once it is in place. Both federal and state law require school districts to assess their policies at least once every three years to ensure that their goals and objectives are being met. If a district is not meeting its goals, it must change the policy as necessary. Communities can play an important role in this process by working with school districts to conduct periodic assessments and provide technical assistance.

6. Celebrate Success

Finally, celebrate success. Recognize the leaders and team members who have worked with dedication to create lasting change. Or help the district write a success story. Highlighting success strengthens the partnership between the community and the district. It also provides a powerful example to other communities by showing that success is attainable.

Making Changes to Sample Policy Language

If the district wishes to make changes to the sample policy language before adoption, grantees should contact the Oklahoma State Department of Health, Center for Advancement of Wellness to identify language options that will address their needs.



OVERVIEW OF THE SAMPLE WELLNESS POLICY

The Sample School Wellness Policy has four main sections: (1) Nutrition, (2) Physical Activity and Physical Education, (3) Other Activities that Promote School Wellness, and (4) Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation. Each section is an essential component of a comprehensive school wellness policy, and contains policy elements that are based on national best practices and recommendations from experts.

The **Nutrition** standards ensure that all students have access to nutritious food and clean water before, during, and after school. They require that all foods available on campus, at any time, comply with federal nutrition standards. They also set goals for healthy food promotion, classroom celebrations, fundraising, nutrition education, food marketing, and school gardens, among other activities designed to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.

The **Physical Activity and Physical Education** policies aim to allow every student the opportunity to maintain physical fitness; reduce sedentary time; learn about cooperation and fair play; and develop the knowledge, skills, and appreciation for lifelong physical activity and what it means to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

The **Other Activities that Promote School Wellness** section provides policies that promote staff wellness, professional development, and health education.

Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation contains policies that establish the leadership for policy development and implementation, encourage broad public participation throughout this process, and outline the procedures by which districts must monitor and update their policy.

All districts revising a wellness policy should compare the newly drafted policy and language with any existing policies (such as an existing district wellness policy, any overlapping community health-related policies, and/or other relevant district-level policies) to ensure consistency. For example, this sample policy contains a general provision supporting community use of district recreational facilities. Because many school districts have Board of Education or Superintendent-issued policies regarding community use of facilities, shared/joint use agreements, or open use, those policies should be reviewed and/or cross-referenced to avoid any inconsistency or contradiction.

Communities and school districts should be aware that several topics generally covered in local school wellness policies are not included here because they are outside the scope of this particular toolkit, which focuses on healthy eating and active living. For example, provisions related to bullying and domestic violence prevention, among others, are often included in local school wellness policies but are not addressed through Oklahoma's Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET) Healthy Living program. Although this toolkit does not address tobacco use, a 24/7 tobacco-free school sample policy and accompanying toolkit are available separately.



SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

[*Insert District Name*] School District Wellness Policy

Purpose

The [*Insert District Name*] School District (the District) recognizes the important role that schools play in the development of children's lifelong health habits, their ability to learn, and their overall well-being. Schools can improve the health of students not only by educating them about the importance of healthy behaviors, but also by implementing policies that promote those behaviors.

Therefore, the District establishes the following policy to promote the health and wellness of students and staff and to ensure its schools comply with those standards established by federal and state law. Specifically, this policy requires all schools in the District to do the following:

- Allow parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, physical education teachers, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, review, and update of the school wellness policy.
- Establish nutrition guidelines that meet or exceed the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) school meal requirements and the nutrition standards for competitive foods and beverages.
- Create goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and physical education, and other activities that promote student as well as staff health.
- Adopt a plan to ensure the policy is properly implemented, regularly assessed, and periodically updated.

Definitions

- **School campus**
All areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.
- **School day**
The period of time from the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day.
- **Competitive foods and beverages**
Foods and beverages that are sold on campus outside of the federal reimbursable school meals program during the school day (e.g., in vending machines or school stores).
- **Smart Snacks standards**
Nutrition standards, issued by the USDA, that set limits on the amount of calories, salt, sugar, and fat in competitive foods and beverages.

SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Nutrition

School Meal Requirements

The District will make nutritious foods available on campus during the school day to promote student and staff health. At a minimum, the District Child Nutrition Program will serve reimbursable meals that meet the *United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) requirements* and follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA).

Specifically, the District will ensure that all meals are the following:

- Accessible, appealing, and attractive to all children
- Served in a clean, pleasant, and supervised setting
- High in fiber, free of added trans fats, and low in added fats, sugar, and sodium
- Respectful of cultural diversity (e.g., students will be encouraged to suggest local, cultural, and favorite ethnic foods) and religious preferences
- Reviewed by a registered dietitian or other certified nutrition professional OR based on a meal plan provided by a professional resource (such as the State Department of Education, the USDA, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, or The Lunch Box)

The District will also ensure that schools do the following:

- Encourage students to start the day with a healthy breakfast.
- Provide breakfast through the USDA School Breakfast Program.

Water: Schools will make clean drinking water available and accessible without restriction and at no charge at every district facility (including cafeterias and eating areas, classrooms, hallways, playgrounds, and faculty lounges) before, during, and after school. Schools will also ensure the following:

- Students will be provided drinking cups, glasses, or reusable water bottles in places where meals and snacks are served.
- Students will be allowed to bring drinking water from home and take water into the classroom, provided that the water is in a capped container, such as a bottle, to prevent spills.
- All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene standards (including drinking fountains, water jugs, hydration stations, and other methods for delivering drinking water).

Information and Promotion: As required under the National School Lunch Program (7 CFR 210.12), the District will promote activities to involve students and parents in the School Lunch Program. In addition, the District will do the following:

- Inform families about the availability of breakfasts for students.
- Distribute materials to inform families of the availability and location of free Summer Food Service Program meals for students when school is not in session.
- Post information on the nutritional content and ingredients of school meals on menus in the cafeteria, on the District website and/or websites of individual schools, and/or in school newsletters.
- Send applications for reimbursable meal programs to families at the beginning of the school year and make applications available on the District website.

Adequate Time to Eat: The District will allow students at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and 20 minutes to eat lunch from the time they are seated.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

All competitive foods and beverages sold to students during the school day must meet or exceed the *USDA's Smart Snacks standards*.⁶

SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Nutrition (continued)

Other Foods Provided at School

Other foods and beverages provided (not sold) on campus (e.g., for classroom parties, celebrations, and after-school programming) must meet the USDA's Smart Snacks standards.

The District will provide parents and teachers with a list of ideas for healthy food as well as non-food alternatives for classroom parties (e.g., the USDA's resources on "[Healthy Celebrations](#)") and after-school programming (including celebrations).

Fundraising

Fundraising on Campus During the School Day: Only fundraisers that feature non-food items or foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks standards will be permitted.

The following will also occur:

- Fundraising activities will not promote any particular food brands (e.g., fundraisers by fast food chains).
- The District will encourage fundraisers that do not sell food and/or that promote physical activity.

After-School Concessions and Fundraisers: Foods and beverages offered at after-school concessions or as part of fundraisers held outside of school hours must also comply with the USDA's Smart Snacks standards.

Nutrition Education

Schools will offer—and integrate into the core curriculum—nutrition education to all grades (K-12), providing students the knowledge and skills necessary for lifelong healthy eating behaviors, including the following:

- What it means to eat healthfully, consume the proper nutrients, and maintain a wholesome and balanced diet.
- How to read labels and understand the problems associated with unhealthy food marketing to children.

In addition, schools will ensure that nutrition education accomplishes the following:

- Complies with state learning objectives and standards.
- Provides opportunities for students to practice and apply the skills and knowledge taught in the classroom (e.g., by using the cafeteria as a learning lab, visiting local farms, etc.).
- Is made available for staff.
- Is promoted to families and the community.

Rewards and Punishment

Foods, beverages, and candy will not be used to reward or punish academic performance or student behavior.

Nutrition and Healthy Food Promotion

The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices and appropriate portion sizes by doing the following:

- Exhibiting posters, signs, or other displays on the school campus that promote healthy nutrition choices.
- Providing age-appropriate activities, such as contests, food demonstrations, and taste-testing, that promote healthy eating habits.
- Offering information to families (via communications with parents, educational workshops, screening services, and health-related exhibitions and fairs) and encouraging them to teach their children about nutrition and healthy eating behaviors.
- Encouraging school staff to display healthy eating habits and physical activity choices to students (e.g., by eating with students during meal times, consuming only healthy snacks, meals, and beverages in front of students, sharing positive experiences with physical activity with students, etc.).

SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Nutrition (continued)

Food and Beverage Marketing

Only foods and beverages that meet the USDA's Smart Snacks standards may be marketed in schools. The marketing of any brand, without reference to a specific product, is prohibited unless every food and beverage product manufactured, sold, or distributed under the corporate brand name meets the Smart Snacks standards.

Marketing includes the following:

- Advertising on any property or facility owned or leased by the school district or school and used at any time for school-related activities (including school buildings, athletic fields, parking lots, school buses, vending machines, scoreboards, uniforms, educational materials, and supplies).
- Coupons, discounts, and corporate incentive programs that reward students (e.g., when they reach certain academic goals) with free or discounted items. Such rewards may not include foods or beverages that fail to satisfy the USDA's Smart Snacks standards.
- Corporate-sponsored programs that provide funds to schools in exchange for consumer purchases of certain items. Programs involving purchase of foods and beverages that do not meet the USDA's Smart Snacks standards are not permitted.

If the non-compliant advertising is a permanent feature of a permanent fixture (e.g., a scoreboard), such advertising can remain until the permanent fixture is removed or replaced.

Staff Qualifications and Training

The District will follow the USDA's Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition Programs in selecting local school nutrition program directors. Also, the District will require all personnel in the school nutrition programs to complete annual continuing education and training.

In addition, Child Nutrition Staff will do the following:

- Receive training in basic nutrition, nutrition education, safe food preparation, and nutrition standards for healthy meals and snacks.
- Organize and participate in educational activities that support healthy eating behaviors and food safety.

Farm-to-School Programs and School Gardens

The District will allow school gardens on District property.

The following will also occur:

- The District will dedicate resources (e.g., tools, materials, volunteer hours, etc.) to build a school garden on District property and/or actively participate in community gardens by dedicating the same resources as would be required for gardens on District property.
- The District will incorporate local and/or regional products into the school meal program.
- Schools will take field trips to local farms.
- As part of their education, students will learn about agriculture and nutrition.

SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Physical Education and Physical Activity

General Requirements

The District will ensure that all students (K-12) participate in a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity each day, whether through physical education, exercise programs, after-school athletics, fitness breaks, recess, classroom activities, or wellness and nutrition education.

Recess and Physical Activity Breaks

Recess: The District will require schools to provide elementary school students (K-5) at least 20 minutes of recess each day (in addition to the physical education requirements). Additionally, the District will do the following:

- Develop indoor recess guidelines to ensure students can have adequate physical activity on days when recess must be held indoors.
- Require schools to hold recess before lunch, in order to increase food consumption, reduce waste, and improve classroom attentiveness when students return from lunch.⁷

Physical Activity Breaks: The District will require schools to provide all students (K-12) short breaks (three to five minutes) throughout the day to let them stretch, move around, and break up their time spent sitting. These physical activity breaks may take place during and/or between classroom time.

Physical Education (PE)

The District will require all schools to establish a comprehensive, standards-based PE curriculum for each grade (K-12). Schools will ensure that PE classes and equipment afford all students (K-12) an equal opportunity to participate in PE.

Elementary school students (K-5) will participate in at least 150 minutes of PE per week throughout the entire school year.

In addition, the following requirements apply to all students (K-12):

- During PE, students will be given the opportunity to participate in many types of physical activity, including both cooperative and competitive games.
- Students will engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity for more than 50 percent of the PE class time.
- PE classes will have a teacher/student ratio comparable to core subject classroom size.

Teacher Qualifications, Training, and Involvement

- Teachers will receive training on how to integrate physical activity into the curriculum. Some portion of this training will be incorporated into annual professional development.
- Schools will allow teachers the opportunity to participate in or lead physical activities before, during, and after school.
- PE classes will be taught by licensed teachers who are certified or endorsed to teach PE.

SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Physical Education and Physical Activity (continued)

Punishment and Rewards

- Physical activity will not be used or withheld as punishment. (This does not apply to participation on sports teams that have specific academic requirements.)
- The District will provide a list of alternative ways for teachers and staff to discipline students.
- The District will strongly encourage teachers to use physical activity (e.g., extra recess) as a reward.

Grounds, Facilities, and Equipment

The District will ensure the availability of proper equipment and facilities that meet safety standards and will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Community Use of Recreational Facilities

The District will encourage school staff, students, and their families to participate in physical activity outside of the school day. Allowing staff, students, and their families to use school recreational facilities during non-school hours is one way to increase opportunities to engage in physical activity. Consistent with state law and District policies and procedures [*cross reference any School Board or District policies*] regarding use of school facilities during non-school hours, the District will work with the [*local government - city/county/recreation district*] and community-based organizations to coordinate and enhance opportunities for staff, students, and their families to engage in physical activity using school facilities before and after the school day, during weekends, and during school vacations.

Active Transportation

The District will do the following:

- Encourage children and their families to walk and bike to and from school.
- Work with local officials to designate safe or preferred routes to school.
- Promote National and International Walk and Bike to School Week/Day.
- Provide bike racks for students, faculty, and staff.
- Encourage parents to supervise groups of children who walk or bike together to and from school.

After-School Physical Activity and Screen Time

After-school programming will do the following:

- Dedicate at least 20%, or at least 30 minutes (whichever is more), of program time to physical activity, which includes a mixture of moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Utilize outdoor space for physical activity as much as possible each day (weather permitting and with appropriate protection from the elements).
- Provide equal opportunities for children and youth with disabilities to be physically active.
- Encourage staff to join children and youth in physical activity whenever possible.
- Limit screen time to less than 60 minutes per day to be used only for homework and other educational or physical activity purposes.

SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Other Activities that Promote School Wellness

Staff Wellness

The District recognizes that employee health is essential to student health and to creating healthy school environments. Accordingly, the District will implement an employee wellness program that promotes healthy eating, physical activity, and overall health. The District may partner with community agencies and organizations (e.g., local health departments, hospitals, health insurance companies, and local chapters of national organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Red Cross, and YMCA) to assist in providing education, services, and resources for staff.

The District will do the following to support staff wellness:

Nutrition

- Serve only those foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks standards at all staff meetings, trainings, special occasions (e.g., birthdays and retirement parties), and other workplace gatherings.
- Provide employees with access to a refrigerator, microwave, and sink with a water faucet.
- Provide or partner with community organizations or agencies to offer nutrition education through activities such as seminars, workshops, classes, meetings, and newsletters.
- Partner with community organizations or agencies to offer staff accessible and free or low-cost healthy eating/weight management programs.

Physical Activity

- Promote walking meetings.
- Incorporate 10-minute physical activity breaks into every hour of sedentary meetings, trainings, and other workplace gatherings.
- Provide access to on-campus athletic facilities, such as gyms, running tracks, basketball courts, tennis courts, and swimming pools.
- Promote employee participation in physical activity by creating exercise clubs or groups and/or sponsoring employee sports teams.
- Use posters, pamphlets, and other forms of communication to promote physical activity (including stairwell use, if applicable).
- Provide information about local physical activity resources and facilities, such as walking trails, community parks, and recreation facilities.

SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Other Activities that Promote School Wellness (continued)

General Wellness

- Partner with community organizations or agencies to offer voluntary health screenings annually to staff, including free or low-cost health assessments.
- Partner with community organizations or agencies to provide stress management programs annually to staff.
- Promote tobacco prevention and provide referral information on cessation services through the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline.
- Ensure access to a private space (other than a restroom) that has an electrical outlet, and provide flexible paid or unpaid break times to allow mothers to express breast milk and/or breastfeed.
- Partner with community organizations or agencies to offer immunization clinics (e.g., flu, Tdap, etc.) to staff.
- Provide or partner with community organizations or agencies to offer free or low-cost first aid and CPR training.

Professional Development

The District will provide staff with educational resources and annual training in health and health-related topics.

Health Education

Where applicable, schools' health education curriculums will follow the *Oklahoma Academic Standards*.

SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Leadership

The District will designate one or more official(s) to facilitate the development of the local school wellness policy, oversee appropriate updates to the policy, and ensure each school's compliance with the policy. The District will ensure that the designated official(s) fully understand(s) the federal and state laws related to wellness policies.

Include the name(s), position(s), and contact information of the designated official(s) here:

Name	Position	Contact Information (Email address is sufficient)

Community Involvement

The District will permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, physical education teachers, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, review, and update of the local school wellness policy. To encourage broad public participation in the process, the District will do the following:

- Actively notify parents and the broader community about the content and implementation of as well as any changes to the wellness policy, whether through electronic communications (e.g., email, District website, etc.), non-electronic means (e.g., mailings, presentations, etc.), or both.
- Ensure that all outreach and communication is culturally appropriate and translated as needed.
- Educate community stakeholders on how they can participate in the development, implementation, review, and update of the wellness policy and let them know why their participation is important to the health and wellness of students and the broader community.

Assessments, Revisions, and Policy Updates

At least once every three years, the District will measure the extent to which schools are in compliance with the local wellness policy, as well as progress made in attaining the policy's goals. Additionally:

- Parents, students, physical education teachers, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public will be allowed to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local wellness policy.
- The District will assess how its policy compares with the latest national recommendations on school health, and will update the policy accordingly.
- The District will inform and update the public about the content and implementation of the local wellness policy (via the District's website, handouts, newsletters sent directly to families' homes, etc.).

ORGANIZATIONS & RESOURCES

National Organizations

Alliance for a Healthier Generation

Healthy Schools Program Framework

Identifies best practices for creating a healthy school environment.

www.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/1062yk/07-278_HSPFramework.pdf

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Outlines federal requirements for local school wellness policies and provides online resources to assist school districts in developing, implementing, and promoting local school wellness policies.

Local School Wellness Policy

www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/wellness.htm

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Provides implementation tools and resources to help schools offer healthier and appealing meals and snacks that meet national nutrition standards.

Team Nutrition

www.fns.usda.gov/tn/local-school-wellness-policy

Smarter Lunchrooms Tools

<https://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/healthierus-school-challenge-resources/smarter-lunchrooms>

State Agencies & Universities

Oklahoma State Department of Education

Compiles information on federal programs related to child nutrition as well as links to Oklahoma-specific resources for food services, farm-to-school programs, wellness policies, and nutrition education.

<http://ok.gov/sde/node/20>

Oklahoma State Department of Health

Certified Healthy Oklahoma Program

This resource provides recognition to organizations and communities that are committed to fostering healthy environments. Certified Healthy Oklahoma complements the TSET Healthy Living Program well, as it can showcase those organizations and communities have gone above and beyond by providing wellness opportunities and implementing policies that lead to healthier lifestyles.

www.certifiedhealthyok.com

Oklahoma State University

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

Develops programs using science-based, objective information and provides resources to Oklahoma students and schools that teach agriculture and nutrition education at no cost.

www.oces.okstate.edu/youth-education

Ag in the Classroom

<http://oklahoma4h.okstate.edu/aitc>

Farm to You

www.farmtoyou.okstate.edu

Junior Master Gardeners

<http://jmgkids.us>

Resources for Healthy Snacks, Meals, Celebrations, and Fundraisers

Alliance for a Healthier Generation

Smart Snacks Calculator

The Smart Snacks Calculator can be used to identify food items that meet the USDA's Smart Snacks standards.

www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/smart_snacks/alliance_product_calculator

Center for Science and the Public Interest

Constructive Classroom Rewards

Explains the importance of reinforcing students' good behavior and academic performance with non-food rewards and provides examples of beneficial (and inexpensive) alternatives to rewarding students with food.

http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/constructive_classroom_rewards.pdf

The Lunch Box

Provides resources on healthy meals and snacks, including menus, recipes, and information on procurement.

www.thelunchbox.org

Oklahoma State Department of Health

Center for the Advancement of Wellness

In addition to providing technical assistance, this site has several helpful resources to improve the availability of healthy snacks at schools, including a list of common products that meet healthy snack guidelines as well as a sample letter to parents asking them to provide only healthy items for school snacks, classroom parties, and celebrations.

www.ok.gov/health/Wellness

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Healthy Fundraising

Provides a list of resources related to healthy and active fundraisers.

<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/local-wellness-policy-resources/wellness-policy-elements/healthy-fundraising>

Physical Activity & Education Tools

CDC Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP)

Provides step-by-step strategies to develop, implement, and evaluate school physical activity programs.

www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/physicalactivity/cspap.htm

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

Offers an interactive webtool illustrating ways students can achieve the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity during the school day.

<http://resources.nationalacademies.org/FNB/infographic/get60minutes.html>

Let's Move! Active Schools

Features resources to develop an active school as well as success stories and case studies.

www.letsmoveschools.org

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For more information about the TSET Healthy Living Program, visit TSET.ok.gov.

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