

RITCHIE COUNTY SCHOOLS WELLNESS POLICY

The Ritchie County Board of Education recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the health and well-being of the County's students. Furthermore, research suggests that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her ability to learn. Moreover, schools can play an important role in the developmental process by which students establish their health and nutrition habits by providing nutritious meals and snacks, supporting the development of good eating habits, and by promoting increased physical activity both in and out of school.

The Ritchie County Board of Education, however, believes this effort to support the students' development of health behaviors and habits with regard to eating and exercise cannot be accomplished by the schools alone. It will be necessary for not only the staff, but also parents and the public at large to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support and model such healthy behaviors and habits.

The Ritchie County Board of Education sets the following goals in an effort to enable students to establish good health and nutrition habits:

I. Nutrition Education

- a. Nutrition lessons shall be included in the health education program and integrated into other subject areas of the general curriculum, when appropriate.
- b. Nutrition education curriculum is aligned with state and federal learning objectives and standards. Nutrition topics shall be integrated within the comprehensive health education curriculum and taught at every grade level (K-12) in accordance with West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 2520.5, and, where pertinent, 2520.13 and 2520.55.
- c. These are meant to complement, not replace, the standards and benchmarks for health education.
- d. The nutrition education program may work with the school meal program to develop school gardens and use the cafeteria as a learning lab.
- e. Schools will provide nutrition education lessons that cover topics such as reading a Nutrition Facts label.

II. Standards for USDA School Meals

- a. All Ritchie County Schools will provide breakfast through the USDA School Breakfast Program and West Virginia Feed to Achieve Act.
- b. All meals served to students shall be reimbursable school meals that meet current USDA nutrition standards.
- c. All meals will follow guidelines established in West Virginia Policy 4321.1.
- d. Meals will be provided free of charge to all students enrolled in Ritchie County Schools through the Community Eligibility Provision. While participating in the CEP, paper or online applications will not be required.

- e. All meals will follow the USDA National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program standards.
- f. In an attempt to increase participation in the school meal programs, all schools will implement a breakfast strategy, such as Breakfast in the Classroom, Breakfast After First, or Grab and Go Breakfast. Students will be provided the opportunity to provide input on local, culture, or ethnic favorites. Competitive foods cannot be served during any meal service period.
- g. Students will be given 10 minutes to eat breakfast, and 20 minutes to eat lunch, at a minimum. This time begins after the last student receives their food.
- h. Annual training for food and nutrition services staff will be in accordance with USDA Professional Standards. The USDA Professional Standards for Local Nutrition Programs are followed to ensure that professional development in the area of food and nutrition is provided for food service directors, manager, and staff.
- i. Schools shall provide adequate space/seating, supervision, and a clean, pleasant environment in the cafeteria. This includes appropriate supervision.
- j. Nutrition information for school meals will be shared and publicized to students and parents as requested. It could be made available on menus, websites, handouts, newsletters, on cafeteria menu boards, or other point-of-service materials.
- k. School will be encouraged to schedule recess before the lunch period, whenever possible.
- l. Water will be available for self-service in the cafeteria during the meal period.

III. Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages

- a. This policy relates to the sale or service of foods outside the USDA school meals.
 - i. Foods sold to students during the school day will follow the guidelines in West Virginia Policy 4321.1, as well as USDA Smart Snack Guidelines
 - ii. All foods sold to students during the school day are required to meet, or are in compliance with, the USDA Smart Snacks Federal Nutrition Standards, as well as additional standards set forth in West Virginia Policy 4321.1, such as the prohibition of caffeinated beverages.
 - iii. All snacks sold in vending machines, school stores, or concession stands during the school day will be fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low fat dairy or protein foods that contain
 - 1. <200 calories
 - 2. <35% sugar by weight
 - 3. <35% calories from total fat
 - 4. <10% calories from saturated fat
 - 5. Zero trans fat
 - 6. <200mg of sodium
 - iv. All beverages sold in vending machines, school stores, or concession stands during the school day will comply with the USDA Smart

Snacks Nutrition Standards and standards set for the in West Virginia Policy 4321.1.

- v. Food and beverages sold in high schools are not to contain non-nutritive sweeteners (artificial or natural), no caffeine.
- vi. Vending machine sales are prohibited during meal periods. Vending machine sales during the school day must follow WV Policy 18-2-6a. It is the responsibility of school personnel to control what products are placed in vending machines, school stores and/or snack bars. School personnel should obtain product analysis information from vendors upon which the decisions are made. These analyses are to be written on vendor/company letterhead and signed by an authorized company official. These should be kept on file at the school for review. In addition, parents and students shall be provided a detailed list of nutrition information of all foods and beverages sold at school for foods other than school meals.
- vii. National School Lunch Program After-School Snacks and Child and Adult Care Feeding Program After-School Supper will follow guidelines set forth by said program.
- viii. Schools will not use foods or beverages as a rewards for academic performance or good behavior and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as punishment. Candy is prohibited. Schools are encouraged to use activity-based rewards.
- ix. Schools should limit celebrations/parties that involve food during the school day. It is strongly recommended that alternate non-food items be sent for these events. These events must meet the Smart Snacks in School Guidelines. All food must be commercially processed, packaged or sealed with a nutritional label. School-based administrative approval is needed for multi-cultural class activities involving food. If any food is involved for these events, the school must develop written procedures to address any student allergy, disability or food restriction.
- x. If food items are sent, we encourage them to be healthy food items, such as fruits and vegetables
- xi. Schools should strive to offer foods and beverages at school-sponsored events (including, but not limited to, athletic events, dances and performances) outside the school day that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually.
- xii. Foods sold or advertised for sale as fundraisers during the school day must meet Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards and standards set forth in West Virginia Policy 4321.1.

IV. Physical Education and Physical Activity

- a. Physical Education Curriculum
 - i. A sequential, comprehensive physical education program shall be provided for students in K-12 in accordance with the content and

objectives established by the West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 2520.6

- ii. Physical education minimum times shall be in accordance with West Virginia Policy 2510 for grades K-12.
- iii. Physical education for grades K-12 is required to be taught by a certified/licensed teacher who is endorsed to teach physical education.
- iv. The county shall provide all physical education teachers with annual professional development opportunities that are focused on physical education/physical activity topics and competencies specifically for physical education teachers.

b. **Physical Activity**

- i. Schools are encouraged to develop a plan that provides physical activity throughout the school day, including physical activity breaks.
- ii. Schools should promote walking and biking to school, as applicable.
- iii. Students should have the opportunity to be physically active before and after school.
- iv. Elementary schools should provide recess for students daily.
- v. Each school should provide physical activity opportunities at the school to all students and staff, as well as families and community members.
- vi. School will provide all teachers with professional development opportunities that are focused on the integration of physical activity into classroom academic content and schedule throughout the school day.
- vii. Schools will develop joint-use agreements with community partners in order to provide expanded physical activity opportunities for all students and community members.

V. Wellness Promotion and Marketing

a. **Wellness Promotion**

- i. Staff should model healthy behaviors, such as drinking water in the classroom.
- ii. Teachers wishing to consume snack alongside their students should ensure that only health food/beverages are present. The staff is provided with break/lunch periods and are not required to eat with students.
- iii. Teachers should model positive physical activity by participating in exercise during class time with their students.
- iv. The use of food or candy as a classroom reward in any school is prohibited. Staff are encouraged to use physical activity as a reward when feasible. Physical activity may not be assigned to students as a consequence of poor behavior or punishment for any reason.
- v. Recess and other opportunities for physical activity are an essential part of the school day. Teachers are encouraged to find alternatives to withholding recess or other physical activities as a punishment.

- vi. Schools shall promote healthy food items including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products. Promotions may include taste tests, posters, signage, or highlighting healthy option on the menu during morning announcements.
 - vii. Schools shall encourage participation in after school sports, intramurals, and other non-competitive physical activity programs via school announcements, school newsletters, or poster. Schools aim to promote physical activity opportunities for all students.
 - viii. School are encouraged to host family wellness activities and include families and the wider community in school sponsored wellness activities.
- b. Wellness Marketing
- i. It is recommended that schools limit food and beverage marketing to items that meet the USDA Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards. This includes building exteriors and interiors score boards, etc.
 - ii. Criteria for selecting education materials for the classroom shall be expanded to include review of advertising content. Every effort will be made to select materials free of brand names/logos and illustrations of unhealthy foods.
 - iii. Advertising of any food or beverage that may not be sold during the school day is prohibited on food displays, vending machines, and food and beverage containers during the school day.
 - iv. Schools will limit advertising of unhealthy products in school publications. All advertising in school publications and school media outlets must be approved by the principal.

VI. Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

- a. The Ritchie County Local Wellness Committee will meet quarterly. These dates and times will be posted on the Ritchie County website.
- b. Teachers, students, parents, administrators, and allied health professionals are encouraged to join and attend.
- c. The Director of Child Nutrition shall be responsible for ensuring that the Wellness Policy is implemented. Schools that are not in compliance with the Local Wellness Policy will be provided with a specified period of time to institute appropriate changes and will be provided with assistance, as needed. School principals will be required to report to the Child Nutrition Director on progress toward compliance until goals are reached.
- d. Each school shall have at least one staff member responsible for ensuring compliance within the school and for reporting progress to the district wellness committee. Schools shall have wellness committees to work on implementation issues.
- e. The annual assessment of the implementation of the school wellness policy will take place at the end of the school year.
- f. A quantitative assessment of policy implementation shall be conducted every two years using the Wellness School Assessment Tool, or another tool as necessary.

- g. The Ritchie County Local Wellness Committee will present a report annually for the Superintendent, school staff, students, and parents, evaluating the implementation of the policy and regulations and including any recommended changes or revisions.
- h. This progress report will be shared publicly on the Ritchie County Schools website following presentation to those mentioned in part g. The report will include a link to the Local Wellness Policy, a progress report for each school in the district, a summary of wellness activities at each school, and contact information for wellness committee chair.
- i. The Wellness Policy will be reviewed every two to three years and will be updated accordingly.
- j. Ritchie County Schools will engage families to provide information about nutrition education and wellness, through the county website, articles in newsletters, or other media.

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