

**CODE: STUDENT NUTRITION/WELLNESS**  
**Category: Students**  
**File No.: JLCA-1**

**Adopted: 6/20/06**  
**Revised: 04/10/13,**  
**4/19/2016**

## **1.0 General Policy Statement**

The correlation between nutrition, physical fitness and learning is well documented. Healthy lifestyle patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy diet and physical activity are demonstrably linked to reduced risk for mortality and development of many chronic diseases as adults. Schools have the responsibility to help students and staff establish and maintain lifelong, healthy lifestyle patterns.

The intent of this policy is to outline the district's on-going commitment in support of wellness in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote health, wellness and nutrition promotion. Using Section 204 of Public Law 108-265 – Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 and : recommendations by the Massachusetts Department of Education and Public Health, the following beliefs guide our efforts:

1. All students will have the opportunity to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious and enjoyable food choices for a lifetime. Staff is encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. This plan shall make effective use of school and community resources and equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in cultural norm and physical limitations.
2. Consistent with current federal and state nutrition regulations, the Southwick-Tolland – Granville Regional School District (STGRSD) will continue to increase the availability and sale of nutritious selections and discourage the sale and consumption of beverages and foods of low nutritional value during regular school hours.
3. To accomplish the development of a community wellness policy, communication with parents/guardians as well as teachers of physical education and school health professionals is essential.. We will seek opportunities to educate the school community on trends and information related to health and wellness. We encourage community partnerships that assist the district in this effort.
4. Opportunities for physical fitness, both structured (K-12 physical education curriculum) and activity (recess, movement, extracurricular activities, and sports team/clubs) will be supported and strongly encouraged. The STGRSD encourages community partnerships to assist the district to support an active, healthy community of learners.

## **2.0 Commitment to Nutrition**

The STGRSD is committed to implementing a wellness plan to make schools healthier places to learn. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All schools within the District participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP), Special Milk Program (SMP).

To accomplish this goal it is the policy of the STGRSD that:

### **A. Nutrition**

1. The Food Service Director will work with suppliers to ensure healthy snacks are offered in vending machines and a la carte.
2. Food service will promote and serve whole grains, fruits and vegetables.
3. Staff, parents and students will be encouraged to pack healthy lunches, when they are brought to school.
4. The nutritional policy will be reinforced by offering healthy foods and beverages at school functions, school parties, and staff events.
5. Maintain a system to ensure that no pupil is hungry and that a healthy and nutritious breakfast and lunch are available to every pupil at every school so that pupils are prepared to learn to their full potential.
6. There will be an increase in the availability of fruits and vegetables and other foods high in micro-nutrients and fiber, and low in sodium, added sugars, cholesterol, and saturated and trans fat in all school-related food sites.
7. Ensure to the maximum extent possible that food is served fresh.
8. Encourage eligible pupils to participate in the school lunch program by removing any barriers to participation. Schools 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.

## **B. Food Service**

Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutritional recommendations of the *Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act and the USDA Dietary of Guidelines for Americans*

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

1. Be accessible to all students
2. Be appealing and attractive to children
3. Be served in clean and pleasant surroundings
4. Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. STGRSD offers all school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.
5. Be scheduled so that students do not eat unusually early or late, and preferably eat after periods of exercise.
6. Be served in eating areas that contain free, safe drinking water sources and close by hand washing facilities.
7. Schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, and the STGRSD web site.
8. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program.
9. Students will be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated (meets HSP Gold level). Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.
10. Whenever possible, lunch will follow the recess period to better support learning and healthy eating.

The school food service director will ensure compliance with the nutrition policies within school food service areas, and will report on this matter to the superintendent.

## **C. Competitive Foods and Beverages**

STGRSD is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (i.e., "competitive" foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum.

Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day, and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits.

A summary of the standards and information are available at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>.

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks available at [www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnacks](http://www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnacks).

#### **D. Vending Machines/ Ala Carte foods:**

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day\* will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, and snack or food carts.

School food service nutrition staff shall review all food vending contracts prior to the approval of the contracts to ensure that every contract complies with set forth school food policies. STGRSD offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.

The STGRSD will be certain that individually sold snacks will include such items as fruit and vegetables. The sale of soda and junk food will be prohibited. These items will be replaced with healthier items. No school will sell any food or drink that list sugar as its primary ingredient. Food items will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars.

#### **E. Fundraising & Parties**

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus \*during the school day\*. The District will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas [*examples from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and the USDA*].

*Fundraising during and outside school hours will sell only non-food items or foods and beverages that meet or exceed the Smart Snacks nutrition standards. This may include but is not limited to, donation nights at restaurants, cookie dough, candy and pizza sales, market days, etc.*

##### ***Celebrations and Rewards***

All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards through:

1. **Celebrations and parties** - The district will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas from the USDA.
2. **Classroom snacks brought by parents** - The District will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards. The District

will also provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

#### **F. Staff Qualifications and Professional Development**

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

### **3.0 Nutrition Education**

1. The STGRSD administration will work with staff to ensure that pupils receive meaningful, effective nutrition education.
2. Nutrition education in our schools will be strengthened by sending consistent messages outside the classroom.
3. Nutrition promotion and physical activity will be integrated into the overall school curriculum.
4. STGRSD will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.
5. The District Food Service Director will be certain all food service staff are trained in all aspects and procedures of food preparation regarding students with food allergies. This will include menus, recipes, food products and ingredients, food handling procedures and cleaning and sanitation practices.
6. The STGRSD aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating of all students. The district will provide nutrition education in the classroom and through the district website.
7. The STGRSD shall integrate food and nutrition issues and activities into the academic curriculum K-12. The district will develop policies to link nutrition, health education, and physical education efforts. Educators shall encourage elementary, middle and upper level programs to provide students with culturally appropriate and standard based nutritional education and whenever possible, integrate that material into the existing curriculum.
8. Each grade level will include a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.

9. STGRSD families will be made aware of available social programs such as WIC and Federal Food Stamp to assist in providing nutrition to eligible families. Literature informing families of said programs will be available through newsletters, take-home material and web postings.

#### **4.0 Physical Fitness**

The STGRSD aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating and physical fitness of all students. The school district will provide nutrition and lifelong fitness education in the classroom and through the use of the district web site. The goal will be to promote lifelong fitness to students and community.

1. All students in grades Pre-K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
2. The STGRSD administration will work with staff to ensure that pupils engage in healthful levels of vigorous physical activity and enforce existing physical education requirements
3. All students will have daily access to age-appropriate physical activity and all families will be made aware of available affordable physical activities not only in the schools but also in their community.
4. All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings will receive physical education.
5. A certified physical education teacher will teach all physical education. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (*e.g.*, interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
6. All elementary school students will have at least 15 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, weather permitting, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.
7. All schools should discourage extended periods (*i.e.* periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, school should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.
8. The school district will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical clubs or intramural programs. The school district will offer interscholastic sports programs at the appropriate age.

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9. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.
10. Students and parents will be informed of the opportunities of physical activity offered through community based recreation associations such as the Southwick Recreation Center and Westfield YMCA.

### **Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours:**

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during and after the school day. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition program. School district policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

### **5.0 Health/Guidance Services:**

The STGRSD provide programs that support physical, social and emotional health and well being of students and staff to build a healthy school environment by:

1. Providing a supportive environment that includes a multidisciplinary approach including nursing, guidance and/or counseling services that encourages students, families and staff to seek assistance as needed for linkage to school or community.
2. Providing students with the skills via a variety of educational and extracurricular opportunities to express thoughts and feelings in a responsible manner and to give and receive support from others.
3. Instructing students to understand and respect the differences in others, and how to build positive interpersonal relations. Curriculums such as **Strong Teens, Steps to Respect** and **Second Step** are programs embraced by the district to develop positive life-long social skills.
4. Encouraging students and staff to balance work and recreation, and help them be aware of stressors which may interfere with healthy development. Resources will be available in the health and guidance offices and through those programs such as the Employee Assistance Program.
5. Collaborating with the state, community and other health resources such as Baystate Health System, Noble Hospital, area health providers, Southwick Board of Health, and MA Department of Public Health to promote health and wellness for students, families, staff and the school community.
6. Identifying opportunities to improve the health and wellness of students, staff and families utilizing computerized health office data frequency and type of encounters, results of mandated screenings (vision, hearing, postural, height and weight measurement/Body Mass Index) surveys, and other community health information.
7. Providing a multidiscipline approach to create an environment where students, parents/guardians and staff are respected, valued and accepted with high expectations for personal behavior and accomplishments.
8. Providing staff training in appropriate safety procedures (e.g. Emergency Response/Flip Chart, Life Threatening Allergies, Blood Borne Pathogens, MERP, CPR and AED).
9. Working with staff, students and the Southwick-Tolland-Granville Regional School District community in conjunction with local law enforcement to maintain a school environment that is free of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.



### **Administrative Rules Regarding STGRSD Local Wellness Policy**

In order to enact and enforce the Local Wellness Policy, the School Committee, Superintendent and administrative team, with input from teachers, including specialists in health and physical education, parents/guardians, students, representatives of school food service program, and the public will have input into the development of the Wellness Policy.

1. The Southwick-Tolland-Granville Regional School District Health Advisory Committee shall provide oversight of the policy and regulations.
2. The school food service director will ensure compliance with the nutrition policies within school food service areas, and will report on this matter to the Superintendent.
3. Review and revision of this policy shall occur by the Health Advisory Committee and the Superintendent of Schools or designee, as needed, but no less than every two years.
4. Compliance will be monitored at the building level by the principal and at the district by the Superintendent of Schools and the Health Advisory Committee.

### **Measurement and Evaluation**

Evaluation and measurement of progress toward the wellness goals is an integral component of the process to ensure and sustain student health, good nutrition and physical activity. Information relevant to school wellness and nutrition will be available to the School Committee and the public, except where it infringes on the right to privacy of students and staff.

The Superintendent or his/her designee will provide a report to the School Committee at the end of the school year describing the implementation of this Wellness Policy. The report will include but not be limited to: information about staff that have been assigned nutrition and wellness responsibilities, available statistics about the health and wellness status of students, progress and hurdles on implementing the wellness policy provisions, any exceptions that the Superintendent authorized to those provisions, goals and specific actions for improving nutrition and wellness in the coming school year, achievement of the goals and actions from the year just completed, and any recommendations for future revisions to the Wellness Policy itself.