

Pennsylvania School for the Deaf Wellness Policy



Pennsylvania School for the Deaf

Mission

The Pennsylvania School for the Deaf educates students to succeed by recognizing and developing individual strengths, building confidence, collaborating with families and communities in a nurturing, dynamic, and language-rich environment steeped in cultural awareness of Deaf, Hearing, and worldwide diversity.

The Pennsylvania School for the Deaf Wellness Policy

Introduction

Obesity rates in the United States have risen significantly, particularly among young people. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that children who were overweight by age 8 were more severely obese as adults.

- The prevalence of overweight among children aged 6-11 years has more than doubled in the past 20 years and among adolescents 12-19 has more than tripled.
- Nearly 80% of young people do not eat the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables.
- Type-2 diabetes has become more prevalent among children and adolescents as rates of overweight and obesity rise.

Participation in physical activity declines as children get older. During the past 20 years the percentage of young people who are overweight has tripled because of significantly reduced physical inactivity.

Health and physical education provide students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to achieve and maintain a physically active and healthful life, not only during their time in school but for a lifetime. Health and physical education are integral components of a balanced educational program. Children who are healthy and physically active increase their chances of achieving their highest academic potential and are better able to handle the demands of today's hectic schedules.

The Board adopts this policy based on the recommendations of the Wellness Committee and in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.

PSD's Wellness Goals

The Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (PSD) is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and development of lifelong wellness practices of each student, and providing guidance in the areas of nutrition, health, physical activity and safety, as well as positive social/emotional growth. [**7 CFRSec. 210.31**]

Specific goals include:

- Child nutrition programs are consistent with federal and state requirements.
- Child nutrition programs are accessible to all children.
- Nutrition education is provided and promoted through Health Education and Food Service.

- Planned instruction for Health & Physical Education aligns with Pennsylvania’s academic standards.
- School-based activities are consistent with the school wellness policy.
- Students are encouraged to engage in physical activity daily (i.e. Physical Education, recess, athletics, intramurals, co & extra-curricular activities).
- PSD promotes the healthy and positive social-emotional development of all students.
- Well-informed decision-making skills are integrated throughout wellness education.
- Appropriate professional development for staff will be provided.
- PSD operates an economically sustainable meal program that provides a healthy nutritious breakfast and lunch to students so that students are prepared to learn and reach their fullest potential.

Delegation of Responsibility [7 CFR Sec.210.31]

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or designee shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of this policy to ensure PSDs schools, programs and curriculum is compliant with this policy, related policies and established guidelines or administrative regulations.

Each building principal or designee shall annually report to the CFO or designee regarding compliance in his/her school.

- *The CFO or designee shall annually report to the Board on the district’s compliance with law and policies related to school wellness.*
- *The CFO or designee and the established Wellness Committee shall conduct an assessment at least once every three (3) years on the contents and implementation of this policy as part of a continuous improvement process to strengthen the policy and ensure implementation. This triennial assessment shall be made available to the public in an accessible and easily understood manner and include how PSD is in compliance with law and policies related to school wellness.*
- *At least once every three (3) years, the district shall update or modify this policy as needed, based on the results of the most recent triennial assessment and/or as PSD and community needs and priorities change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information and technologies emerge; and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued.*
- *PSD shall annually inform and update the public, including parents/guardians, students and others in the community, about the contents, updates and implementation of this policy via the district website, student handbooks, newsletters, posted notices and/or other efficient communication methods. This annual notification shall include information on how to access the School Wellness policy; information about the most recent triennial assessment; information on how to participate in the development, implementation and*

periodic review and update of the School Wellness policy; and a means of contacting Wellness Committee leadership.

Recordkeeping [7 CFR Sec. 210.15, 210.31]

PSD shall retain records documenting compliance with the requirements of the School Wellness Policy which include:

- 1. The written School Wellness Policy.*
- 2. Documentation that PSD informed the public, on an annual basis, about the contents of the School Wellness policy and any updates to the policy.*
- 3. Documentation of meetings and efforts to review and revise the School Wellness policy, including who is involved in the review and methods used to inform the public of their ability to participate in the review*
- 4. Documentation of the most recent assessment on the implementation of the School Wellness policy and notification of assessment results to the public.*

Wellness Committee [7CFR Sec. 210.31]

PSD shall establish a Wellness Committee comprised of, but not necessarily limited to, at least one (1) of each of the following: School Board member, administrator, food service representative, student, parent/guardian, school health professional, physical education teacher and member of the public. It shall be the goal that committee membership will include representatives from various grade levels and reflect the diversity of the community.

The Wellness Committee shall meet a minimum of three times each school year and serve as an advisory committee regarding student health issues and shall be responsible for developing, implementing and periodically reviewing and updating a School Wellness policy that complies with law to recommend to the Board for adoption.

The Wellness Committee shall review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in establishing goals for nutrition education and promotion, physical activity and other school based activities that promote student wellness as part of the policy development and revision process.

Nutrition and Health Education

At PSD, building nutrition knowledge and skills helps children make healthy eating and physical activity choices. To make a difference, nutrition education for children should be appropriate for the students' ages, reflect their cultures, and provide opportunities for them to practice skills and have fun. Health education will include promoting fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free products, reduced sugar and salt intake and healthy food preparation.

- Health education shall continue to be formally taught beginning in 1st grade and will be aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Standards and other best practices in the field.

- Nutrition education shall include age and developmentally appropriate information and shall be infused into other core curriculum areas such as math, science, social studies and language arts as applicable.
 - At the Early Childhood and Early Elementary school level, Health Education, including nutrition education, is taught by the classroom teacher.
 - From mid-Elementary through the High School level Health Education classes shall continue to be taught by certified Health Education teachers as a separate course.
 - High School students are required to complete 1.5 Physical Education/Health Credits for graduation. PSD requires at least one full semester of Health Education. Healthy decision-making skills are reinforced every year through advisory periods with trained counselors.
 - High School Health Education course work includes Nutrition Education, Human Sexuality, and Drug/Alcohol Education.
 - *Nutrition promotion will include consistent messages disseminated and displayed throughout the school, classrooms, cafeterias, homes, community and media.*

Physical Education and Activities

PSD's Physical Education Program is designed to stress physical fitness and encourage healthy, active lifestyles. The Physical Education program consists 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.

- Physical education/activity is provided every day for students.
- Physical activity is integrated across curricula and throughout the school day. Movement can be made a part of health, science, math, social studies and language arts.
- Physical Education promotes an environment where students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills and knowledge.
- Planned instruction is designed to meet the needs of all children (athletic and non-athletic), feature cooperative as well as competitive activities, and focus on understanding and ownership of personal fitness and wellness for life.
- Activities include self-management, movement, cooperation, fair play and social skills.
- State-certified Physical Education instructors teach Physical Education.
- Physical education classes have an appropriate student/teacher ratio.
- A daily supervised recess period is provided in early childhood, elementary, and middle school, and is not withheld as punishment.

- At the High School level, 1.5 credits of Physical Education/Health are required for high school graduation and includes at least two semesters of fitness (1.0 credit) as well as Elective Fitness courses.
- Students are supported in setting and meeting personal fitness goals that result in the achievement and maintenance of a health enhancing level of physical fitness.
- The Physical Education program is adapted for students who are unable to participate in the regular activities.
- Safe and adequate equipment, facilities and resources are provided.
- PSD's Physical Education planned instruction aligns with the Pennsylvania Core Standards.

Other School-Based Activities [7CFR 210. Sec 210.10, 210.30, 220.8]

- *Drinking water shall be available and accessible to students, without restriction and at no cost to the student, at all meal periods and throughout the day.*
- *Nutrition professionals who meet hiring criteria established by the district and in compliance with federal regulations shall administer the school meals program.*
- *Professional development and continuing education shall be provided for district nutrition staff, as required by federal regulations.*
- After-School programs that encourage physical activity, making healthy nutritional choices and promote healthy habits and decision making are provided.
- The goals outlined by the Wellness policy will be considered in planning all school-based activities (such as school events, field trips, dances and assemblies).
- Support for the health of all students is demonstrated by hosting health fairs, health screenings, and helping to enroll eligible children in state health insurance programs.
- A physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activities for all students is provided.
- Physical activities are not used as a form of punishment

Nutrition Guidelines for all Foods/Beverages at School [7CFR Sec. 210.10, 220.8]

Healthy school meals provide energy and nutrients children need for sound minds and bodies. Studies confirm what parents and teachers have said for years – children who are not well nourished have difficulty learning. The variety of healthy foods offered in school meal programs allows children to learn to enjoy different foods, develop healthy eating patterns, and reduce the onset of childhood obesity.

- PSD will follow the guidelines set forth by the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program when offering breakfast and lunch.
- School food service staff is properly qualified according to current professional standards and participate in professional development activities.
- Food safety and sanitation is a key part of the school food service operation.

- Menus meet the nutritional standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, conforming to appropriate menu planning principles, and featuring a variety of healthy choices that are tasty, attractive, the best possible quality, and are served at the proper temperature.
- Students will be given the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural and ethnic favorite foods.
- The school is a safe, comfortable, pleasing environment, with ample time and space for eating meals.
- Menus are made available to students, families and staff (on printed menu boards, TV screens using sign language and email notices).

Competitive Foods – [7 CFR Sec. 210.11, 220.12a, 210.31]

Competitive foods available for sale shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School). These standards shall apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold to students, which may include, but are not limited to: a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, snack carts and fundraisers.

Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages offered or sold to students on school campus during the school day, which are not part of the reimbursable school breakfast or lunch.

For purposes of this policy, **school campus** means any area of property under the jurisdiction of the school that students may access during the school day. [7 CFR Sec. 210.11, 210.31]

For purposes of this policy, **school day** means the period from midnight before school begins until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the official school day. [7 CFR Sec. 210.11, 210.31]

Fundraiser Exemptions –

Fundraising activities held during the school day involving the sale of competitive foods shall be limited to foods that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, unless an exemption is approved in accordance with applicable Board policy and administrative regulations.

The district may allow a limited number of exempt fundraisers as permitted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education each school year: up to five (5) exempt fundraisers in elementary and middle school buildings, and up to ten (10) exempt fundraisers in high school buildings. Exempt fundraisers are fundraisers in which competitive foods are available for sale to students that do not meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

The district shall establish administrative regulations to implement fundraising activities in district schools, including procedures for requesting a fundraiser exemption.

Non-Sold Competitive Foods

Non-sold competitive foods available to students, which may include but are not limited to foods and beverages offered as rewards and incentives, at classroom parties and celebrations, or as shared classroom snacks, shall meet or exceed the standards established by the district.

- 1. Rewards and incentives shall not use foods and beverages as a reward for classroom or school activities unless the reward is an activity that promotes a positive nutrition message (e.g., guest chef, field trip to a farm or farmers market, etc.).*
- 2. Classroom parties and celebrations with food/beverages shall be limited to no more than one (1) per month in each classroom and offer at maximum 2 items containing added sugar as the primary ingredient (e.g., cupcakes, cookies) and provide fresh fruits/vegetables; and Water, 100% juice, or low fat milk.*
- 3. Parents/Guardians shall be informed through newsletters or other efficient communication methods that foods/beverages should only be brought in when requested for scheduled parties.*
- 4. PSD district shall provide a list of suggested nonfood ideas and healthy food and beverage alternatives to parents/guardians and staff, which may be posted via the district website, student handbook, newsletters, posted notices and/or other efficient communication methods.*

Marketing/Contracting

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School) and comply with established policy and administrative regulations.

Exclusive competitive food and/or beverage contracts shall be approved by the Board, in accordance with provisions of law. Existing contracts shall be reviewed and modified to the extent feasible to ensure compliance with established federal nutrition standards, including applicable marketing restrictions.

Other Healthy Environment Guidelines

Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choices available the guidance provided in the school environment. Healthy practices support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability and the ability to learn.

- Nutrition guidelines require that the use of products that are high in fiber, low in added fats, sugar and sodium, and served in appropriate portion sizes are consistent with USDA standards.

- Guidelines for school operated vending machines (as outlined in the National School Lunch Act - Competitive Foods Rules) are followed. PSD's vending machines *will only be located in areas accessible to adults, students will not have access at any time*. School personnel will assist all students in developing the healthy practice of cleansing hands before eating.
- PSD encourages appropriate socializing among students, and between students and adults. Adults will properly supervise dining rooms and serve as role models to students by demonstrating proper conduct and communication.
- PSD's nutritional program ensures that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods that they need to stay healthy and learn well.
- Students are encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast.
- PSD strives to increase participation in the federally funded child nutrition programs (i.e. school lunch, school breakfast, afterschool snack and summer foodservice programs).
- Opportunities for the staff to be physically active are encouraged.
- Access to the food service operations are limited to food service staff and authorized personnel for safety and security.
- PSD actively teaches students anti-bullying and safe school behaviors and promotes a non-stigmatizing atmosphere for all.
- PSD uses positive behavior support practices.
- PSD provides safe and adequate facilities that encourage physical activity.

Management of Food Allergies

PSD shall establish policy and administrative regulations to address food allergy management in schools in order to:

- Reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions.
- PSD's nursing staff work closely with families, students and faculty to proactively manage each student's special food allergy needs.

Drug and Alcohol Education and Support Services

The use and abuse of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs by youth in our Commonwealth continues to pose one of the most serious problems facing educators, parents and communities. Section 1547 of the PA School Codes, enacted as Act 211 of 1990, requires school districts to implement a comprehensive tobacco, alcohol and other drugs program including instruction in the classroom.

Section 1547 requires each public-school student to receive instruction in alcohol, chemical and tobacco abuse in every grade from kindergarten to grade 12. The law requires that the instruction be age appropriate, sequential, discourage use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, and communicate that the use of illicit drugs and the improper use of legally obtained drugs is

wrong. The law does not require local schools to set up an independent course of study but rather to integrate the instruction in health or other appropriate courses of study. Section 1547 calls upon the schools to reach out to parents and the community, to prevent and deal with the problems which arise from the use and abuse of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

- PSD's Student Development Team (SDT) has trained counseling professionals who work with students in all departments to provide drug and alcohol guidance.
- SDT counselors collaborate with families and/or community agencies to help students make healthy drug/alcohol decisions.
- Elementary through High School Student Handbooks address drug and alcohol guidelines.