

## 537 WELLNESS

Adopted: August 9, 2006

Revised: ~~August 12, 2020~~ March 3, 2025

### I. PURPOSE

~~The purpose of this policy is to set forth methods that promote student wellness, prevent and reduce childhood obesity, and assure that school meals and other food and beverages sold and otherwise made available on the school campus during the school day are consistent with applicable minimum local, state, and federal standards.~~

The purpose of this wellness policy is to promote the health and well-being of all students by fostering a school environment that encourages healthy eating, regular physical activity, mental wellness, and active family and community engagement. The district is committed to providing students with the resources, opportunities, and support they need to make informed health choices, develop lifelong healthy habits, and achieve academic success. Through accessible resources, workshops, and communications, the district will engage families and promote holistic wellness initiatives. By prioritizing physical, mental, and emotional health, the district aims to ensure wellness initiatives are inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of students, contributing to their overall growth, development, and academic success.

### II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

~~A. The school board recognizes that nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and learning.~~

~~B. The school environment should promote students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.~~

~~C. The school district encourages the involvement of parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the school district's wellness policy.~~

~~D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.~~

~~E. All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.~~

~~F. Qualified food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.~~

- A. **Commitment to Student Wellness:** The district recognizes that nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and wellness initiatives are vital to student success. Promoting good health supports better attendance, engagement, and lifelong healthy habits.
- B. **Health-Promoting Environment:** The school environment fosters student well-being by encouraging healthy eating, regular physical activity, emotional well-being, and healthy digital habits, strengthening the link between health and academic performance.
- C. **Collaboration and Engagement:** The district encourages the active involvement of parents, students, staff, and the community in developing and reviewing wellness policies to ensure they meet the needs of all students, with a focus on health, mental wellness, and academic success.
- D. **Access to Healthy Foods and Activity:** The district is committed to providing students with nutritious food options, structured physical activity opportunities, and wellness resources, supporting their growth, learning, and overall well-being.
- E. **Physical Activity for All Students:** All K-12 students will have regular opportunities for physical activity, both during PE classes and through additional structured breaks, promoting physical health, emotional well-being, and academic success.
- F. **Nutritional Standards and Safe Eating:** The district provides nutritious, culturally inclusive meals in a clean, safe, and supportive environment, meeting students' health and dietary needs, and promoting informed food choices.

## II. VISION STATEMENT

We envision a community where all students have access to nutritious food, physical activity, mental health resources, and the support needed to make informed health choices, leading to lifelong wellness, emotional well-being, and academic success.

## III. MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to promote student wellness by providing nutritious food, encouraging physical activity, supporting mental health, and fostering a safe and inclusive environment. We engage families and the community to empower students to make informed health choices, develop healthy habits, and achieve both academic success and overall well-being.

## III. WELLNESS GOALS

### ~~A. Nutrition Promotion and Education~~

~~1. The school district will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:~~

~~—a. offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;~~

~~—b. part of health education classes, as well as classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate; and~~

~~—c. enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, and field trips.~~

~~—2. The school district will encourage all students to make age appropriate, healthy selections of foods and beverages, including those sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs, such as through a la carte/snack lines, vending machines, fundraising events, concession stands, and student stores.~~

#### **B. Physical Activity**

~~—1. Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, health and physical education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities, such as watching television;~~

~~—2. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and~~

~~—3. Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.~~

#### **C. Communications with Parents**

~~—1. The school district recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary role in promoting their children's health and well-being.~~

~~—2. The school district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.~~

~~—3. The school district encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value.~~

~~—4. The school district will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.~~

### **A. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

**Overall:** By the end of the 2026-27 school year, the school district will engage at least 80% of parents and guardians in a health and wellness initiative that promotes healthy eating, physical activity, and overall wellness by providing accessible resources, workshops and communications.

#### **Annual Goals**

- **2024-25:** Engage at least 50% of parents and guardians in health and wellness initiatives through online resources, newsletters, and one virtual workshop.
- **2025-26:** Increase engagement to 65% of parents, incorporating at least two in-person or hybrid workshops and/or events on wellness and health promotion.
- **2026-27:** Achieve 80% parent engagement in health and wellness initiatives through workshops, accessible resources, and school-based wellness activities.

## B. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

**Overall:** By the end of the 2026-27 school year, the school district will enhance physical activity opportunities outside of PE classes/recess for students by incorporating structured activity breaks and reinforcing healthy lifestyle choices, with the goal of increasing student participation in physical activity by 30% thereby promoting both well-being and academic success.

### Annual Goals

- **2024-25:** Increase student participation in physical activity by 10% by incorporating two structured activity breaks per day in grades K-4.
- **2025-26:** Increase participation by an additional 10% (total of 20%) by expanding activity breaks to grades 5-8 and introducing movement-friendly classroom routines.
- **2026-27:** Achieve a 30% increase in student participation by expanding structured activity breaks to high school students and reinforcing the importance of physical activity in academic success.

## C. MENTAL HEALTH AND DIGITAL WELL-BEING AWARENESS

**Overall:** Implement the “Live More, Screen Less” (LMSL) initiative (2024-2027) to promote mental health awareness, emotional well-being, and healthy digital habits, with a 20% increase in students’ ability to manage digital stress and mental health.

### Annual Goals

- **2024-25:** All high school staff will complete a 60-90 minute Digital Wellbeing 101 training facilitated by a Public Health Educator from Koochiching County and will also participate in facilitated conversations demonstrating the power of LMSL.
- **2025-26:** Staff will be equipped with the LMSL Toolkit, facilitate conversations with students when needed, and 80% of families with students in grade 4 and under will attend a workshop/event, leaving with a concrete plan and follow-up support to reinforce learning.

- **2026-27:** A student leadership program will be created where 90% of students in grades 10-12 will facilitate LMSL conversations with younger students, collecting feedback via “exit tickets” and sharing data with Koochiching County for analysis.

#### D. NUTRITION PROMOTION AND EDUCATION

**Overall:** The school district will continue to implement for the next three years (2024-2027) the SMART Snack nutrition standards that encourage healthy eating and empower students to make informed food choices. This initiative will aim for a 25% increase in students selecting nutritious options across all food-related activities, alongside a robust nutrition education component designed to enhance student understanding of healthy habits.

##### Annual Goals

- **2024-25:** Increase student engagement with SMART Snack standards by enhancing the appeal of nutritious snack options and integrating nutrition education into weekly activities--Aim for a 10% increase in students selecting healthier sides during school provided meals, particularly focusing on high school students.
- **2025-26:** Expand SMART Snack standards to incorporate robust- age-appropriate nutrition education for elementary and middle school students, aiming for a 15% increase in both student understanding of healthy eating habits and healthy snack selection across the district.
- **2026-27:** Achieve district-wide adoption of a comprehensive, K-12 nutrition education program, aiming for a 25% increase in students selecting nutrition food options. The program will be fully embedded into the curriculum and will include expanded engagement strategies across all grade levels.

#### VI. STANDARDS AND NUTRITION GUIDELINES

##### A. School Meals

1. The school district will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.
2. The school district will inform students of the free drinking water available during school provided meals and passing time between classes.
3. Food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students.
4. Food service personnel will try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning.
5. Food service personnel will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

6. Food service personnel will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meets or exceeds all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations and that reimbursable school meals meet USDA nutrition standards.
7. Food service personnel shall adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.
8. The school district 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.
9. The school district will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
10. The school district will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day.
11. The school district will discourage tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes unless students may eat during such activities.

#### B. School Food Service Program/Personnel

1. The school district shall designate an appropriate person to be responsible for the school district's food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA guidelines.
2. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school district will provide continuing professional development for all food service personnel in schools.

#### C. Competitive Foods and Beverages

1. All foods and beverages sold on school grounds to students, outside of reimbursable meals, are considered "competitive foods." Competitive foods include items sold a la carte in the cafeteria, from vending machines, school stores, and for in-school fundraisers.
2. All competitive foods will **be regulated** meet the USDA **SMART Snacks nutrition standards** ~~Snacks in School (Smart Snacks) nutrition standards~~ and any applicable state 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.
3. Before and Aftercare (child care) programs must also comply with the school district's nutrition standards unless they are reimbursable under USDA school meals program, in which case they must comply with all applicable USDA standards.

#### D. Other Foods and Beverages Made Available to Students

1. Student wellness will be a consideration for all foods offered, but not sold, to students on the school campus, including those foods provided through:

a. Celebrations and parties. ~~The school district will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non food celebration ideas.~~

- (1) The school district will follow SMART Snack standards with the exception of the following Holidays: *Halloween, Christmas, Valentines Day, and Easter.*
- (2) The school district will continue to provide, educate, and encourage parents and staff to purchase celebratory food/snacks following a list of healthy party ideas, including non food celebration ideas that follow SMART Snack standards.

b. Classroom snacks ~~brought by parents. The school district will provide to parents a list of suggested foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.~~

- (1) The school district will provide to parents a list of suggested foods and caffeine-free beverages that meet SMART Snack nutrition standards.
- (2) The school district will require that teachers only purchase snacks for their students that are individually packaged and follow SMART Snack nutrition guidelines.

2. Rewards and Incentives. Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan or behavior intervention plan) and will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.

- The school will only use food or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior that follows SMART Snack nutrition guidelines during the monthly PBIS All School Celebrations..
- Staff will follow SMART Snack Standards when using food or beverages for classroom rewards and incentives.
- Staff will be encouraged to use other forms of rewards that do not include food items such as extra physical activity, academic-related items, or PBIS incentives.
- Food or beverages will not be withheld as punishment or as a consequence of misbehavior.

3. Fundraising, *Marketing, and Education:* ~~The school district will make available to parents and teachers a list of suggested healthy fundraising ideas.~~

#### E. ~~Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools~~

~~1. School based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion.~~

~~2. Schools will restrict food and beverages marketing to the promotion of only those foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards.~~

- The school district will make available to parents and teachers a list of suggested healthy fundraising ideas.
- School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion through homeroom interventions, lunch menus/signage, and social media/newspapers published by the district.
- Schools will restrict food and beverage marketing to the promotion of only those foods and beverages that meet the SMART Snack nutrition standards.
- Nutrition education will be integrated into other subjects beyond health education that meets Minnesota state science and health curriculum standards.

## VII. PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### A. CURRICULUM & PHYSICAL EDUCATION STAFF

1. The district will follow a written physical education curriculum for grades K-12 that is MDE approved using Minnesota State standards.
  - The curriculum adopted or created by district staff will promote a physically active lifestyle.
  - The physical education instructor will include the weekly duration of physical education instruction provided to all grade levels (K-12) in their lesson plans.
2. The district will employ licensed physical education instructors for both elementary, middle school, and high school students.
3. The district will provide relevant professional development opportunities for employed physical education instructors.
4. According to Minnesota state statute, physical activity will not be withheld or used as punishment for any students.

## VIII. WELLNESS LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### A. Wellness Coordinator

1. The superintendent will designate a school district official to oversee the school district's wellness-related activities (Wellness Coordinator). The Wellness Coordinator will ensure that each school implements the policy.
2. The principal of each school, or a designated school official, will ensure compliance within the school and will report to the Wellness Coordinator regarding compliance matters upon request.
3. The Wellness Coordinator is responsible for the development, implementation, and periodic review, and update of the wellness policy.
4. The Wellness Coordinator is responsible for organizing a Wellness Committee that is representative of the diverse needs of the district. This can include ensuring the committee is composed of members from various stakeholder groups, such as school administrators, teachers, parents, students, healthcare professionals, nutritionists, and community partners.



5. The Wellness Coordinator will oversee four quarterly meetings with the Wellness Committee to ensure ongoing collaboration and progress towards wellness goals, with the aim of fostering a well-rounded and inclusive approach to Wellness initiatives across the district.
6. The Wellness Coordinator is responsible for development and implementation of monthly Staff Wellness Initiatives during each school year using district and NWSC Mini Grant funds.

#### B. Public Involvement

1. The Wellness Coordinator will permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy.
2. The Wellness Coordinator will hold meetings, from time to time, for the purpose of discussing the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. All meeting dates and times will be posted on the school district's website and will be open to the public.

### VI. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

#### A. Implementation and Publication

1. After approval by the school board, the wellness policy will be implemented throughout the school district.
2. The school district will post its wellness policy on its website, to the extent it maintains a website.

#### B. Annual Reporting

~~The Wellness Coordinator will annually inform the public about the content and implementation of the wellness policy and make the policy and any updates to the policy available to the public.~~

The Wellness Coordinator will annually inform the public about the wellness policy content, implementation, and any updates using the school website and parent/guardian messaging platform (JMC).

#### C. Triennial Assessment

1. At least once every three years, the school district will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and create a report that includes the following information:
  - a. The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the school district are in compliance with the wellness policy;

b. The extent to which the school district's wellness policy compares to model local wellness policies; and

c. A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the school district's wellness policy.

2. The Wellness Coordinator will be responsible for conducting the triennial assessment.

3. The triennial assessment report shall be posted on the school district's website or otherwise made available to the public.

#### D. Recordkeeping

The school district will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy. The records to be retained include, but are not limited to:

1. The school district's written wellness policy.

2. Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including requirements to make the local school wellness policy and triennial assessments available to the public.

3. Documentation of the triennial assessment of the local school wellness policy for each school under the school district's jurisdiction efforts to review and update the wellness policy (including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the school district uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the Wellness Committee).