

1. **Philosophy.** The Liberty County School System believes that all students shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food and physical activity choices for a lifetime. We believe healthy children will have greater academic success and lifelong health. We also believe that healthy staff can more effectively perform their assigned duties and model appropriate wellness behaviors for their students. This policy encourages and promotes a coordinated effort that involves school staff, students, parents and community members.

2. **Nutrition.** Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choice and availability of nutritious foods in our schools. Healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability, and ability to learn.

a. Nutrition guidelines that require the use of products that are high in fiber, low in saturated fats, low in added sugar and sodium, and served in appropriate portion sizes consistent with USDA standards shall be established for all foods offered by the School Nutrition Program or contracted vendors. Menu and product selection shall utilize student, parent, staff and community advisory groups whenever possible.

b. Nutrition Program polices and guidelines for reimbursable meals shall not be more restrictive than federal and state regulations require.

c. A la carte offerings to students shall be nutritious and meet federal recommended guidelines and may be selected as a result of input from students, parents and staff. Portion sizes shall be in accordance with the school meal portions.

3. **Foods Sold or Provided Outside of School Meals.**

a. Vending Machines

All snack vending machines shall provide only single serving snacks that meet the following nutrition guidelines: 300 or fewer calories; 15 grams or less of total fat; 1.5 grams or less of saturated fat; 1 or more grams of fiber; at least 10% of RDA of calcium, iron, vitamin A or vitamin C. Half of the vending machine offerings shall contain healthy choices of 160 calories or less per serving. Non-fat, low-fat, plain or flavored milk or yogurt in 8 ounces or less per serving may also be included in the vending machines.

All beverage vending machines in public school areas (accessible by students) and in accordance to the Georgia Beverage Association Vending Policy shall include:

Elementary Schools – Provide only bottled water and 100% juice.

Middle Schools – Provide nutritious and/or lower calorie beverages such as bottled water, 100% juice, sports drinks, no-calorie soft drinks and low-calorie juice drinks. No full-calorie soft drinks or full-calorie juice drinks with 5% or less juice provided until after school hours.

High Schools – Provide a variety of beverage choices to high school students, such as bottled water, 100% juice, sports drinks and juice drinks. No more than 50% of the vending selections will be soft drinks.

The vending machines accessible to faculty and staff only shall provide bottled water, 100% juice, sports drinks and juice drinks. No more than 50% of the vending selections will be soft drinks.

b. Fundraising Activities

Fundraising activities should be chosen that support children’s health and school nutrition education efforts. Saleable items should include non-food and/or healthy food options that are consistent with the current Wellness Policy. All home prepared foods are prohibited.

When possible, fundraising options should include and promote physical activities. Proposed fundraising activities will be approved on these principles.

c. Classroom Treats and Rewards

Foods or beverages that meet the nutritional standard listed in this Wellness Policy should be used on a regular basis as rewards for academic performance or good behavior. Candies, cookies, cupcakes or any other empty caloric treat are should be avoided. All home prepared foods are prohibited.

d. School and Classroom Parties

Every effort should be made to use foods and beverages that meet nutritional standards adopted by the Wellness Policy and available in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Each party should include foods or beverages that are consistent with the Wellness Policy. All home prepared foods are prohibited.

e. School Sponsored Events – to include athletic events, dances and performances.

Care should be taken in the planning of food and beverage options available for sale or as refreshments during school sponsored events. These options should meet daily nutritional requirements; limit sugar, caffeine, and fat intake; and offer good nutritional options rather than just providing high caloric, carbonated drinks and foods that do not meet the nutritional standards for meals or snacks. All home prepared foods are prohibited. Assistance in meeting these guidelines may be obtained from the School Nutrition Program Director.

4. **Nutrition Education and Promotion.** Nutrition education and promotion topics shall be integrated throughout the sequential comprehensive curriculum taught at every grade level, pre-kindergarten through twelfth. Education on these health topics should be included in all content and subject areas. The students shall be provided with opportunities (both in and outside of the classroom) to:

a. obtain nutritional knowledge, including but not limited to the benefits of healthy eating, essential nutrients, nutritional deficiencies; principles of healthy weight management by teaching food portions and other related classroom resources; the use and misuse of dietary supplements; and safe food preparation, handling, and storage;

- b. practice nutrition-related skills, including but not limited to planning a healthy meal; understanding and using food labels; critically evaluating nutrition information; misinformation; commercial food advertising; food energy content such as carbohydrates, proteins and fats; and,
- c. assesses one's personal eating habits; set goals for improvement; and achieve those goals.

5. **Physical Education and Life Skills.** Healthy exercise and living skills shall be taught as part of the regular instructional program and provide the opportunity for all students to understand and practice concepts and skills related to health promotion and disease prevention.

- a. The program shall provide the opportunity for all students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to participate in a lifetime of healthful physical activity.
- b. Each school shall provide for an interdisciplinary, sequential skill-based health education program based upon state standards and benchmarks.
- c. Students shall have access to valid and useful health information and health promotion products and services.
- d. Students shall have the opportunity to practice behaviors that enhance health and/or reduce health risks during the school day and as a part of before or after school programs.
- e. Students shall be taught communication, goal setting and decision making skills that enhance personal, family and community health.
- f. School personnel will not use physical activity or withhold physical activity opportunities as punishment (i.e. pushups and running laps) on a regular basis. Children who have lost recess privileges should be given an alternate supervised physical activity.
- g. When possible, after-school activities such as line dancing and aerobics will be offered in conjunction with health information (to include tips to control weight, healthy lifestyles and simple strengthening/flexibility exercises) for all faculty and students. Use of school facilities for such purposes that promote activity will have the facility use fee waived.

6. **Healthy and Safe Environment.** A healthy and safe environment supports academic success. Safer communities promote healthier students. Healthier students do better in school and make greater contributions to their community.

- a. School buildings and grounds, structures, buses and equipment shall meet all current health and safety standards, including environmental air quality, and be kept inviting, clean, safe, and in good repair.
- b. Schools and district offices shall maintain an environment that is free of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.
- c. Safety procedures and appropriate training for students and staff shall support personal safety and a violence and harassment free environment.
- d. Each work site, school and classroom shall work to create an environment where students, parents/guardians and staff are respected, valued and accepted with high expectations for personal behavior and accomplishments.

7. **Social and Emotional Wellness.** Programs and services that support and value the social and emotional wellness of students, families and staff build a healthy school environment.

a. Each school shall provide a supportive environment which includes information regarding guidance, counseling, and school social work services. Students, families and staff will be encouraged to request assistance when needed and offered links to school or community resources.

b. Students shall be provided the skills to express thoughts and feelings in a responsible manner and give and receive support from others.

c. Students shall be taught to understand and respect the differences in others and to build positive interpersonal relations.

d. Students and staff shall be encouraged to balance work and recreation and helped to become aware of stressors which may interfere with healthy development.

8. **Health Services.** An effective health care delivery system that promotes academic achievement by providing a broad scope of services from qualified health care providers will improve the mental and physical health of students and staff.

a. Coordination of health services through the available school health insurance program, trained school health care practitioners, the support and direction of the Liberty County School System and the Liberty County Health Department.

b. The Liberty County School System shall collaborate with community health liaisons and resources to promote health and wellness for students, families, staff and community.

c. A coordinated program of accessible health services from the school health insurance program, the trained school health practitioners, the Liberty County Health Department and local pediatricians shall provide students and staff information on violence prevention, school safety, communicable disease prevention, health screening, including Body Mass Index (BMI), community health referrals, immunization monitoring, parenting skills, first aid and other priority health education topics.

9. **Family, School and Community Partnership.** Long term effective partnerships improve the planning and implementation of health promotion projects and events within each school and throughout the community.

a. Family, student, health and physical education teachers and community partners shall be included on an ongoing basis in school and district wellness planning processes.

b. The equality and diversity of the school and district community shall be valued in planning and implementing wellness activities.

c. Community partnerships shall be developed and maintained as a resource for school and district programs, projects, activities and events.

d. Schools and the district shall actively develop and support the engagement of students, families and staff in community health enhancing activities and events at the school or throughout the community.

10. **Staff Wellness.** The district and each work site shall provide information about wellness resources and services to assist in identifying and supporting the health, safety and wellness of site staff. Use of school facilities for such purposes that promote activity will have the facility use fee waived.

Updated January 23, 2012