

Niagara Falls City School District Wellness Policy



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Niagara Falls City School District Wellness Policy

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Wellness Policy

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A. Wellness Policy Goals

Niagara Falls City School District's Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition.

The Niagara Falls City School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Niagara Falls City School District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades Pre K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will 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.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, and National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks]).
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.
- The District Health and Wellness Committee will meet every other month during the school year to discuss current District Health and Wellness programs, and new Health and Wellness initiatives. The committee mission statement and purpose are as follows:

Committee Mission: To improve student and employee health and well-being while reducing risk factors associated with the leading causes of death and disability.

Committee Purpose: To promote healthy lifestyles through educational programs that identify health risks and encourage lifelong wellness.

1. Nutrition Education

Nutrition Education and Promotion

Niagara Falls City School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion in the following ways:

- offering Pre K – Grade 6 nutrition education as part of the elementary health curriculum
- offering Prep School nutrition education in Grade 7 as part of the Prep school health curriculum
- offering nutrition education in Grade 11 as part of the high school health curriculum
- offering Garden Club Project initiatives in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Niagara County to all District elementary schools (currently Abate and Kalfas Elementary have School Garden Projects)
- promoting fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health enhancing nutrition practices through our health curriculum;
- emphasizing caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- linking with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- continue to partner with community organizations like Cornell Cooperative Extension of Niagara County, Independent Health, Niagara County Health Department, and Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center to offer health workshops and guest speakers in schools for our students and staff

2. Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals

School Meals

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

- be appealing and attractive to children
- be served in clean and pleasant settings
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) Nutrition Standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs
- offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables at each school
- serve only low-fat (1 %) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA)
- attempt to serve whole grain items
- occasionally offer new healthy entrees. In addition, schools will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students upon request
- include suggested healthy eating tips in their monthly newsletters and on the District web site
- forward healthy eating tip ideas to schools for use in their newsletters

Breakfast

To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- Schools will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation
- Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program
- Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means

Free and Reduced-Priced Meals

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. Toward this end, schools utilize electronic identification and payment systems; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as "grab-and- go" whenever possible.

Meal Times and Scheduling in Schools

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch
- will schedule lunch periods when possible between 10:30am and 1:30pm
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during meal times, unless students may eat during such activities
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat, meals or snacks
- will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk)
- signage in student restrooms encouraging students to wash their hands after using the restroom

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

Qualified professionals will administer the school meal programs with assistance from a registered dietician. The District Health and Wellness Committee will forward free food service training opportunities to the Food Service Director for consideration. The Food Service Director will make reasonable attempts to send District Food Service workers for training when possible.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

All District schools should discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions in some children's diets.

3. Nutrition Standards for Competitive and other Foods and Beverages

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (i.e., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

Elementary Schools

The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools will be provided as balanced meals. Foods and beverages sold individually are required to meet the same USDA nutrition standards as outlined through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program.

Prep and High Schools

In our Prep schools and Niagara Falls High School, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, are required to meet the same USDA nutrition standards as outlined through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program.

Beverages

All beverages served must meet the USDA nutrition standards as outlined in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program.

Allowed: water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 25% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA): Water machines should be provided in schools when possible as a healthy beverage alternative.

Not allowed: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit based drinks that contain less than 25% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low or fat free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine)

A food item sold individually: Foods

Students are our customers, and we cannot change their selection of what to eat; they must make that change for themselves. What we can do is provide the education component to help students learn to make that choice. We will provide nutrition information which can help students select wisely.



Choose Sensibly (www.nyssfsa.org)

The Choose Sensibly program encourages students to apply what they are being taught in the classroom in order to make sensible snack choices. All foods may be appropriate choices some of the time. Reading nutrition labels to make sensible choices is a skill which students need to develop and practice. Learning to make sensible choices will provide our children with the ability to use their knowledge of nutrition throughout their lives.

Our snacks all meet the criteria of the Choose Sensibly program, specifically:

Snacks:

- 7 grams or less of fat
- 2 grams or less of saturated fat
- 15 grams or less of sugar
- 360 milligrams or less of sodium

Beverages:

- one serving per package
- All low fat milk, including low fat flavored milks, are acceptable
- Juice drinks must contain at least 25% real juice
- Beverages with milligrams or less of caffeine
- Water or flavored waters shall not contain added sugar, artificial sweeteners or caffeine

We will consider an a la carte item to be a Sensible Choice if it meets the federal nutritional standards for school lunch and breakfast programs.

A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 25% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

**Food vending machines that sell items that do not meet the above mentioned District nutritional requirements are required to be turned off during school day hours according to New York State law.*

Portion Sizes

Shall not exceed the recommended portions required by the federal nutrition standards.

Fundraising Activities

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, all schools will encourage fundraisers that meet the nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will discourage fundraisers that promote or sell food items that do not meet USDA nutrition standards. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water and milk as the primary beverages. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. Schools can disseminate a list of healthy snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

Rewards

Schools should not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations

Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day when possible. Schools can disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers. It should be stressed by schools, that foods for parties be healthy.

Healthy Snack, Celebration, and Fundraiser Options

Healthy Classroom Snack Options	Healthy School Party/Celebration Options	Healthy School Fundraiser or Project Options
Raw vegetable sticks	Vegetable Dip	Walk-a-thon
Fruit wedges	Fruit dip	Recycling programs
Dried fruit	Fruit/Yogurt Parfait	Dance marathon
Single serve apple sauce (low fat)	Smoothies	School Garden projects
Trail mix	Watermelon popsicle sticks	Book Fairs
Pretzels	Apple Cider	Plant and flower sales
Granola bars	Educational party games (word bingo, multiplication bingo, etc)	Healthy food sales
Pudding cups (low fat)	Healthy food tasting Party	Auctions
Yogurt (low fat)	Outdoor games	Cookbook fundraisers
Low fat cheese	Scavenger hunts	Fruit sales
Bread sticks	Nature walks	Magazine subscription sales
Water	Caroling at the Senior Center	School T-shirt sales

School Stores

Schools should encourage school stores to sell items that meet USDA nutrition standards.

School-sponsored Events

(such as but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances). Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day for **elementary** and **prep schools** are encouraged to meet the USDA nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). At **high school** events, the school should make an effort to offer healthy alternatives to foods that do not meet USDA nutrition standards for School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

4. Physical Education

Physical Education: Pre K-12

All District students in grades Pre K - 12, including special education students, will participate in a Physical Education program that includes a sequential curriculum and complies with the New York State commissioners regulations. All physical education classes will be taught by a certified Physical Education teacher. The District has in place a comprehensive Pre K – 12 Physical Education curriculum.

(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.

5. Physical Activity

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

The Niagara Falls City School District recommends that students receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

1. classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television
2. efforts should be made for physical activity to be incorporated into other subject lessons
3. elementary classroom teachers implement physical activity through nature walks, walk-a-thons, Deskercise, and garden planting

Physical Activity and Punishment

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (*e.g.*, running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (*e.g.*, recess, physical education) as punishment.

Safe Routes to School

The school district assesses and, to the extent possible, makes needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. The district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

All District schools and facilities will be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These facilities are available after school hours to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times. All organizations are required to complete District facility use forms, and provide the District with a copy of the required liability insurance documentation before using District facilities.

Physical Activity Opportunities After School

Elementary schools, Prep schools, and the high school offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs, extended day, or intramural programs. Secondary District schools also offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including special education students.

Elementary Schools- District Mile Run, District Swim Meet, District Elementary Basketball League, and Walking Clubs.

Inter-scholastic Sports-

Boys- Track, Golf, Cross Country, Football, Soccer, Swimming, Volleyball, Basketball, Bowling, Wrestling, Baseball, and Tennis

Girls- Soccer, Swimming, Volleyball, Basketball, Cheerleading, Bowling, Softball, Tennis, and Lacrosse

District Summer Camp

A **Free** July – August Summer Camp Program hosted at NFHS for 6th – 12th Grade District students offering Co-ed, Drama Club, Art, Basketball, Baseball, Swim, Tennis, Soccer, and Wrestling.

Camp Wolverine

A summer camp at Niagara Falls high school for prep and high school Special Education students that offers fitness, arts and crafts, an academic component, and community field trip opportunities.

Prep School Health Fairs

LaSalle Prep School and Gaskill Prep School both offer annual health fairs for students that feature various community health organizations.

District Wellness Center at NFHS

The Wellness Center at NFHS is open daily from 6:30pm - 9:00pm, and free to the community. It offers a pool, fitness room, and walking track.

District Fitness Report Cards

Students in grades 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 are fitness tested by their school Physical Education teacher. A Fitness Report Card is then generated and mailed home to parents.

6. Communication, Promotion, and District Partnerships

Communications with Parents

The district/school may support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school will send home meal information. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches. ***Schools will on occasion provide parents with a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities in school newsletters, the Our Schools newsletter, OSC 21, and the District Health and Wellness Committee web site.*** In addition, the district and schools will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The district/school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Examples may include, sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. School based marketing must be approved by the Superintendent of Schools. School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; in-school television, such as Channel One; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; sales of fruit for fundraisers; and coupons for discount gym memberships.

District Health Community Partnerships

American Cancer Society- District Relay for Life
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Niagara County
Fidelis Care
Healthy Community Alliance, Inc.
Independent Health
Niagara Falls Boys and Girls Club Run in the Mist
Niagara Falls Housing Authority
Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center
Niagara County Health Department
NYS Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, Inc. (AHPERD)
Police Athletic League
P2 Collaborative of WNY

7. Evaluation

Wellness Policy Monitoring

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

District Wellness Policy Monitoring Chart

Policy Area	How will it be monitored	Who will monitor	Frequency of Monitoring	Who will results be reported to
Nutrition Education	Classroom visitations, teacher planbooks	School Administrative Team	Annually	Administrator for Curriculum and Instruction
School Meals (Breakfast & Lunch)	School cafeteria visitations	Food Service Administrator	Annually	Superintendent
Meal Times and Scheduling in Schools	School cafeteria	School Administrative Team	Annually	Deputy Superintendent
Qualifications of School Food Service Staff	School kitchen visitations	Food Service Administrator	Annually	Administrator for HRO
Competitive Foods and Beverages (Vending machines, fundraising activities, snacks, classroom celebrations, school stores, school special events)	School visitations	School Administrative Team	Daily	Deputy Superintendent
Physical Education Program	Visitations of school PE Programs	School Administrative Team	Annually	Deputy Superintendent
Physical Activity & Punishment	Classroom Visitations	School Administrative Team	Daily	Deputy Superintendent
School Facilities outside of school (Dances, concerts, plays, etc)	Event visitations	School Administrative Team	As necessary	Deputy Superintendent
Extra-Curricular Activities (Interscholastic Sports)	Sporting event visitations	Athletic Director	Daily	Deputy Superintendent
Communications with Parents	Review of school web sites and newsletters	School Administrative Team	Monthly	Deputy Superintendent
Food Marketing	District Wellness Committee	District Wellness Policy Chairperson	Monthly	Superintendent

Wellness Policy Review

The District Wellness Policy will be reviewed as required every 3 years by the District Health and Wellness Committee. The committee will review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements.

The District Health and Wellness Committee will utilize the Wellsat (Wellness School Assessment Tool) as a guide to review the policy. This tool was created by the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity at Yale University.

Niagara Falls City School District Wellness Policy Resources

Kids Nutrition and Healthy Snacks

American Dietetic Association
www.eatright.org

Food Routes
www.foodroutes.org

Food Studies Institute
www.foodstudies.org

Fruits and Veggies Matter
www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

kids Health
www.kidshealth.org

My Pyramid
www.mypyramid.gov

MyPyramid Kids' Page
www.mypyramid.gov/kids/

National Coalition for Food-Safe
www.foodsafeschools.org

New York State School Nutrition Association
<http://www.nyschoolnutrition.org/>

Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-01-26/pdf/2012-1010.pdf>

U.S. Department of Agriculture
www.usda.gov

Healthy School Parties

Classroom Party Ideas
www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/classroompartyideasca.pdf

Healthy School Fundraisers

Guide to Healthy School Fundraising
www.dpi.wi.gov/fscp/pdp/neschfundrsp.pdf

Healthy Fundraising
www.healthy-fundraising.org

Fitness and Activity

Amer-A-Thon
www.amerathon.com

Gardening Across the Curriculum
<http://tinyurl.com/gardencurriculum>

Healthy Rewards

Alternatives to Food Rewards
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/student/nutritioned/food_as_reward_ho1.pdf

Alternatives to Using Food as a Reward
www.tn.fcs.msue.msu.edu/foodrewards.pdf

School Lunches

United States Department of Agriculture National School Lunch Program
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/>

School Wellness Policies

Wellness School Assessment Tool:
<http://wellsat.org/>

Niagara County Health Department

<http://www.niagaracounty.com/health/Home.aspx>

