

# Arkansas School for the Deaf 2018-2019 Wellness Policy

## Preamble

The Arkansas School for the Deaf (referred hereto after as ASD) is committed to the optimal development of every student. The District believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during, and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism, and better performance on cognitive tasks.<sup>1,2,3,4,5,6,7</sup> Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.<sup>8,9,10</sup> In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education, and extracurricular activities – do better academically.<sup>11,12,13,14</sup>

Therefore, it is policy that Arkansas School for the Deaf shall:

- offer opportunities to students, parents, teachers, child nutrition professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing School nutrition and physical activity policies.
- provide all students in grades Pre-k/K-12 opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- require that foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat by qualified child nutrition professionals.
- participate in available federal school meal programs to the maximum extent practicable.
- 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.
- adhere to Federal Smart Snacks regulations.
- adhere to the Arkansas Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards in Arkansas Public Schools, including the Maximum Portion Size List requirements.

This policy applies to all students, staff, and schools in the District.

## **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

### **I. School Wellness Committee**

The School Wellness Committee at ASD will create, strengthen, and work to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The ASD Wellness Committee consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, including the Chairman of the committee, parents, students, the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public. This committee will meet quarterly during the school year.

The Superintendent or designee(s) will convene the District Wellness Committee and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy. Each school will designate a school wellness policy coordinator, who will ensure compliance with the policy.

### **II. Nutrition**

#### **School Meals**

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

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- ensure that all grains served are whole grain rich.

ASD will engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods served through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices.

In addition, ASD will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students upon request. The Wellness Committee will review school menus quarterly.

#### **Water**

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. Drinking water will be available where school meals are served during mealtimes. Students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water throughout the day.

## **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:

- ASD will, operate the School Breakfast Program.
- ASD will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation.
- ASD will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.

## **Meal Times and Scheduling, ASD**

- 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 meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch is scheduled between (11 a.m. and 1 p.m.);
- will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will schedule recess periods to follow lunch periods;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- 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).

## **Summer Food Service Program**

The Arkansas School for the Deaf will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for the two weeks that students are on campus.

## **Qualifications of Child Nutrition Staff**

ASD qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of ASD's responsibility to operate a food service program, continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals at ASD will be provided. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

## **Sharing of Foods and Beverages**

ASD will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

**Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (i.e., such as through vending machines, fundraisers, student stand, etc.)**

## **Beverages**

Allowed: water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% 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);

Not allowed: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

## **Foods**

A food item sold individually:

1. will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined; and will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars;
2. will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, crackers, baked goods and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.

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 50% 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).

## **Portion Sizes**

Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:

1. One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
2. One ounce for cookies;
3. Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items; o Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream; o Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
4. Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water;
5. The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals.
6. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

## **Snacks**

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or residential 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 as the primary beverage. 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. The School Wellness Committee will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, dormitory personnel and parents.

## **Rewards and Celebrations**

Schools will 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.

ASD will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than the allowed nine (9) events per school year.

## **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 will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

## **Nutrition Education and Promotion**

Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students.

The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- implements evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs; and
- promotes foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is integrated into health education classes and other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens;

- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.
- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based health education curriculum that meets state and national standards (meets HSP Silver/Gold level).
- will provide opportunities for students to practice or rehearse the skills taught through the health education curricula (meets HSP Silver/Gold level).

### **Communications with Parents**

ASD will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. ASD will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips, menus and health/nutrition related links on the school's website and provide nutrient analyses of school menus upon request. ASD will encourage parents to offer their children healthy meals and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. ASD will provide parents a list of foods that meets ASD's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.

ASD 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. Such supports will 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. As such, ASD will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually. ASD adopts the policy that 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; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising

activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors include: vending machine covers promoting water and natural juices; promotion of healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; sales of fruit for fundraisers; etc.

### **Staff Wellness**

ASD highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Staff will be notified of health and wellness programs/resources offered through the Employees Benefits Division for state employees.

### **III. Physical Activity**

Children and adolescents should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program (CSPAP) that includes these components: physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, walk and bicycle to school, and out-of-school time activities and the district is committed to providing these opportunities. Schools will ensure that these varied opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in "Physical Education" subsection). All schools in the district will be encouraged to participate in *Let's Move! Active Schools* ([www.letsmoveschools.org](http://www.letsmoveschools.org)) in order to successfully address all CSPAP areas.

- Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks, or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. The district will provide teachers and other school staff with a list of ideas for alternative ways to discipline students.
- To the extent practicable, the District will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The District will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.
- Through formal joint or shared use agreements indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities will be open to students, their families, and the community outside of school hours
- The District will work with schools to ensure that inventories of physical activity supplies are known and, when necessary, will work with community partners to ensure sufficient quantities of equipment are available to encourage activity for as many students as possible.

### **Physical Education**

The District will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts.

- All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. ASD will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.
- ASD **elementary students** in each grade will receive physical education for at least 90-149 minutes per week throughout the school year.
- All ASD **secondary students** (middle and high school) are required to take the equivalent of one academic year of physical education.
- The District physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments.
- All physical education teachers at ASD will be required to participate in at least once a year professional development in education.
- All physical education classes at ASD are taught by licensed teachers who are certified or endorsed to teach physical education.

### **Recess (Elementary)**

All elementary schools will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all or most days during the school year. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

### **Outdoor Recess**

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. Students will be allowed outside for recess except when outdoor temperature is above/below District-set temperature, or at the discretion of the building administrator based on his/her best judgment of safety conditions.

### **Indoor Recess**

In the event that the school or district must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. Each school will maintain and enforce its own indoor recess guidelines.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

### **Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)**



The District recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **periodic opportunities** to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. The District recommends teachers provide short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

### **Active Academics**

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies, and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day. The District will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement. Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

### **Before and After School Activities**

The District offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods. The District will encourage students to be physically active before and after school by clubs, physical activity in aftercare, intramurals, or varsity sports.

## **III. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability**

### **Monitoring**

The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established campus-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In the elementary and secondary schools the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in the school and will report on the school’s compliance to superintendent or designee.

School food service will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent. In addition, the school will report on the most recent USDA administrative review findings and any resulting changes.

The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every school year on campus-wide compliance with the school’s established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from the elementary and secondary schools. The report will be included in the annual Report to the Public and placed on the school website. The report will also be used to revise the wellness priority in the school ASCIP plan as necessary.

The report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health staff, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel.

**Policy Review**

To help with the initial development of the school's wellness policies, the school will conduct a baseline assessment of the existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies using the School Health Index assessment.

Assessments will be repeated yearly to help review policy compliance, assess progress, determine areas in need of improvement, and develop work plans to facilitate implementation.

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<sup>15</sup> Change Lab Solutions. (2014). *District Policy Restricting the Advertising of Food and Beverages Not Permitted to be Sold on School Grounds*. Retrieved from <http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/district-policy-school-food-ads>.