Policy E-051 – OTHER DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

Procedure E–051. 8 - WELLNESS - NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

I. Introduction

This procedure was created to address the June 2004 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act and the June 2005 directive from the Governor of Connecticut to the Commissioner of Education to establish guidelines to promote the development and implementation of comprehensive school nutrition policies by local boards of education.

II. Wellness Advisory Committee

The district maintains a Wellness Committee which includes district and school staff, including representatives from food service and the nursing staff, parents, and a representative from Greenwich Hospital. The committee will make recommendations to the school staff to promote staff health and wellness and, together with district and school administrators, will monitor implementation and evaluation of this procedure.

Wellness Mission Statement:

The mission of the District Wide Wellness Committee is to promote healthy eating habits and physical fitness in relation to childhood development and long-term health. We will accomplish this mission by working with the community, the school administration, the teachers and food services to maximize school procedures that encourage wellness through nutrition and physical activity.

III. Communications with Parents

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

The district/school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus.
Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages.

The district/school will provide parents a list of suggested foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.

The district/school will provide opportunities for parents to share their wellness practices with others in the school community:

- Parents and other family members are invited to periodically eat with their student in the cafeteria.
- Families are invited to attend exhibits of student nutrition or health fairs
- Schools will work with community institutions to assure screening services are available for interested families
- 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. 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.

**IV. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served in District Schools**

**Goal**

Schools will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet students’ health needs and accommodate ethnic and cultural food preferences. School meals will include a variety of healthy choices that meet USDA requirements and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and are modified, as appropriate, for special dietary needs. To encourage healthy choices for students, Nutrition Standards used by the District will provide clear guidance about foods and beverages available on school grounds throughout the school day. The Nutrition Standards will focus on increasing nutrient density, decreasing fat and added sugars, and moderating portion size. Procedures and practices will encourage the consumption of nutrient-dense foods, such as whole grains, fresh fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products.

**Greenwich Public Schools Nutrition Standards for School Meals**

1) School meals will include a variety of healthy choices and meet minimum USDA requirements and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

2) School meals will include the “plate lunch” for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program as well as “a la carte” choices.
3) School meals will include no more than 30% of an individual’s calories from fat, and less than 10% from saturated fat; and meet 1/3 of the Recommended Daily Allowances of Protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories.
4) School meals will offer a variety of fruits and non-fried vegetables each day and will offer five different fruits and vegetables over the course of a week.
5) Schools will serve low-fat and fat-free milk and may offer non-dairy milks.
6) Schools will ensure that most of the served grains are whole grain.
7) Schools will prepare all foods with minimal added salt, fat, and sugar.
8) To the extent possible, schools will prepare foods which are free of trans-fatty acids.

Menu Planning

School meals will be appealing and attractive to students.

School meals will be served in clean and pleasant settings.

School meals shall be planned to incorporate the basic menu planning principles of balance, variety, contrast, color, and eye appeal.

Input from students, staff and parents will be considered when planning school lunch menus.

Breakfast

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.

Any child may purchase a meal through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program.

Children from families with incomes at or below 130% of the poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 130% and 185% of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals.

Special Dietary Needs

Upon request, school staff will provide food ingredients and other information to parents so that they may make informed decisions about menu choices for their children while at school. To the extent possible, school staff will work with families to meet students’ dietary needs.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

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

All schools will allow students at least twenty minutes for lunch.

Schools will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.

Schools will encourage scheduled lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary schools).

Schools will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

Schools 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).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff and Cafeteria Supervisory Personnel

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs.

Staff development programs will be provided for all school lunch service and supervisory personnel. Training will include appropriate certification and other programs emphasizing wellness.

Cafeteria Monitors will also be trained on how best to manage and assist children in eating their lunches while maintaining a calm, orderly and relaxed environment.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually

The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools.

In all schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold a la carte, in vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

Beverages

**Allowed:** water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain 100% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk; non-dairy milks.

**Not allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 100% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages that contain caffeine.
Foods

A food item sold individually:

- to the extent possible, 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;
- will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars;
- will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, 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 that do not contain additional caloric and/or artificial sweeteners;
- cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup);
- cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

Portion Sizes

Portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually will be limited to those listed below:

- One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds or dried fruit;
- Up to 1.5 ounces for cookies;
- Up to four ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream (exception is self-serve frozen yogurt at Greenwich High School only);
- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water.

Fundraising Activities

The following recommendations are made to promote healthy choices for children related to fund-raising activities supported by schools:

- Items such as books, gift wrap, candles, plants, flowers, school promotional items, etc. are preferable to food items.
- Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.
• Organizations operating concessions at school functions should include at least some healthy food choices in their offerings. It is recommended that groups market these healthy options at lower profit margins to encourage selection by students.

School-Sponsored Events

To the extent possible, 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).

Competitive Foods

Connecticut schools must comply with federal and state regulations regarding the sale of competitive foods on school premises. “Competitive foods” refer to any foods or beverages sold or dispensed to children at school other than meals served through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s school meal programs.

Regulations allow schools to sell or dispense competitive foods, but only within certain time frames and only if foods meet certain criteria. Connecticut regulations, as they apply in Greenwich Public Schools, prohibit schools from selling or dispensing food or drink products to students anywhere on school premises from 30 minutes prior to lunch periods until 30 minutes after the end of lunch periods. In addition, income from the sale of any foods sold or distributed anywhere on the school premises during this time frame must accrue to the food service account.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in before or 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, 100% fruit juice, low-fat or fat-free milk or non-dairy milks as primary beverages. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, food allergies, children's ages, and other considerations.

The district will disseminate a list of suggested healthful snack items to teachers, before and after-school program personnel, and parents. The needs of students with food allergies must always be considered.

Rewards

Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment. Alternatives to food as rewards can be found on the following websites:

www.tn.fcs.msue.msu.edu/foodrewards.pdf
Parties

Parties at school should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above). Schools will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers. The needs of students with food allergies must be considered when making decisions about party foods and beverages.

V. Nutrition Promotion Through Health Education

Health Education

The Greenwich Public Schools aim to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools provide nutrition education as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based health education program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health. The health education program:

- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

VI. Food Marketing

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools 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. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.
VII. **Staff Wellness**

**Staff Wellness**

The Greenwich Public Schools value 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.

VIII. **Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-11**

All students in grades K-11, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education between 120-150 minutes per week for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 80-90 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**Daily Recess**

All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

**Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School**

All elementary, middle, and high schools will be encouraged to offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. All high schools, and middle schools as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

Before and after-school childcare and enrichment programs will encourage daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

**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.
IX. Monitoring of Procedure Implementation and Evaluation

The Wellness Advisory Committee will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the District’s Wellness procedure and its nutrition and physical activity components, receive any recommendations of changes to the procedure and serve as a resource to school sites.

The committee shall meet a minimum of three times yearly to review the procedure to determine if it is meeting current needs and/or to revise the procedure based on those needs.

In addition to the monitoring of the Wellness Committee, the food services program in the Greenwich Public Schools is continually monitored and evaluated by the Food Services Director and staff. Similarly, the health and physical education programs in schools are continually monitored and evaluated by the Coordinator of Health and Physical Education and staff. The PTA Council Wellness Committee, which is made up of parent representatives of all schools, will also monitor procedure implementation, engaging in two-way communication with the Wellness Advisory Committee to improve programs and services district-wide.

Procedure Revised – January, 2009