

DARTMOUTH SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICIES

File: ADF

Wellness Policy

The Dartmouth School District promotes healthy learning communities by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. The District supports an environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. Schools contribute to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that no child is left behind.

The components of a healthy school environment are:

1. A commitment to nutrition
2. Physical activity
3. Other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness

School Nutrition Environment

The Dartmouth Public Schools will ensure participation in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). All Dartmouth Public Schools, encompassing grades pre-K through 12, shall provide and actively promote an environment consistent with USDA, NSLP regulations and district established regulations. All cafeteria foods shall be prepared in accordance with high standard nutritional guidelines specifically oriented towards reducing the incidence of childhood obesity and Type II diabetes by eliminating the consumption of foods with "minimal nutritional value". All children shall have access to adequate and healthy foods and beverages at school, prepared and served in a safe food environment.

Everyone: parents, students, administrators, food service professionals, teachers, coaches, nurses, and the community, has a role in creating a healthy school nutrition environment. The environment is one that instructs and encourages students to develop healthy eating and physical activity habits, and where subsequently, students' test scores and attendance will increase and behavior problems will decrease.

Sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education will be provided and promoted. Beginning at the elementary level, parent nutrition education will be provided. Our goal will be to continue to educate parents throughout middle and high school levels. Nutrition education will be made available and provided in the form of handouts, posting(s) on the district website, articles and information provided in-district or through school newsletters, presentations at health-related events, consultation with staff, student instruction, and through any other appropriate means available for reaching parents and the community.

Nutrition guidelines that require the use of products that are high in fiber, low in added fats, sugar and sodium, and served in appropriate portion sizes in accordance with USDA guidelines for school meals shall be followed and shall be consistent with the Healthy and Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 and M.G.L., c. 111, §222.

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Guidelines for Foods and Beverages Served or Sold

- At the elementary level, parties and celebrations involving food will be limited to no more than four per school year. Food free parties and celebrations will be strongly encouraged and promoted. Parties must be approved in advance by the Building Administrator. Staff members organizing parties must check with the School Nurse in advance of the event in regards to allergy awareness.
- At the secondary level, food free parties and celebrations will be strongly encouraged and promoted.
- Food as a reward will be eliminated in the classrooms.
- The use of food within the curriculum or for special school events must be approved by the building Principal and school nurse, and only when it has been determined that other instructional tools and accommodations cannot be substituted.
- Staff shall not provide students with food, candy or beverages that do not meet the nutritional requirements referenced in this policy.
- All foods and beverages sold individually by the food service program, a la carte or in vending machines, will serve to enhance a student's school lunch with the focus on healthier food and beverage choices.
- Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will be appealing and attractive to children, served in clean and pleasant settings, meet or exceed nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations, and offer a variety of fruits and vegetables. Portion control and nutritious food choices will be considered in the pricing of our school lunch.
- Schools will provide students with adequate time to eat lunch, appropriate to each age group. Lunches will be scheduled at times consistent with our students' need for nutrition, fluids, and socialization opportunities within the school day.
- Student vending machines will be available only at the high school level.
- Schools will promote the use of non-food items for fundraising activities and will make available to the school community a list of alternative ideas for fundraising activities.

These guidelines have been established with the understanding that parents may communicate their own nutritional guidelines on the amounts/types of food their child may eat as medically and/or nutritionally warranted. This information should be conveyed (in writing) to the Director of Food Services, and/or their child's respective school(s) cafeteria manager.

Physical Education and Activity

Every effort will be made to provide physical activities that are inclusive of all students. Physical education will continue to include instruction in individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage lifelong physical activity. This instruction will include the five areas of physical fitness—cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, body composition and flexibility. The techniques used to train these five areas are—frequency, intensity, time, and type. Students will be exposed to skill related fitness to improve their agility, balance, coordination, speed and reaction time. Efforts will continue to be made to provide community access to and encourage students and community members to use the school's physical activity facilities outside of the normal school day. We will encourage families and community members to institute programs that support physical activity and good health practices.

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Social and Emotional Wellness

All District schools shall provide a school climate that values the social and emotional well-being of students, families and staff. This will include opportunities to develop and practice the skills needed to understand and respect the diversity of our community.

- The District shall provide a supportive environment that includes guidance, counseling and school social work services that encourage students, families and staff to request assistance when needed and links them to school or community resources.
- Students and staff shall be encouraged to balance work and recreation and helped to become aware of stressors which may interfere with healthy development, and personal wellness and productivity.

Health Service

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 District students and staff. The District health care delivery system shall provide services as required by current state and federal laws and regulations, and current District policies.

- A coordinated program of accessible health services shall be provided to District students and staff and shall include, but not be limited to, violence prevention, school safety, communicable disease prevention, health screenings, community health referrals, immunizations, parenting skills, first aid and other priority health education topics.

Family, School and Community Partnership

Long term effective partnerships improve the planning and implementation of health promotion projects and events within each District school and throughout the community.

- Schools supported by the District, shall actively develop and support the engagement of students, families and staff in community health enhancing activities and events at the school and throughout the community.
- The District will convene a Wellness Advisory Committee at least quarterly for this purpose.

Administrative Support

The district will provide oversight and administrative support for the implementation of this policy to include:

- Clear lines of authority and responsibility for implementation of all aspects of this policy
- Clear and open communication with school administrators to promote understanding of the policy and its requirements.

SOURCE: Dartmouth Health Advisory Committee

LEGAL REFS.: 105 CMR 215

Adopted: 6/8/15