

# **Medina Valley ISD Wellness Policy**

## **Framework**

Children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive. The prevalence of overweight children age 6-11 years has more than doubled in the past 20 years and among adolescents age 12-19 has more than tripled. In 2009, only 22.3% of high school students reported eating fruits and vegetables five or more times daily. Heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood.

Although school health programs are not the only answer to this crisis in children's health, schools can foster an environment that is health promoting and provides students with the knowledge and skills to create lifelong healthy habits. Children who eat well and are physically active are more likely to learn and become healthy, successful adults who contribute to our community.

Therefore, it is the policy of the board to:

- A. create a health-promoting environment in our schools;
- B. provide students access to nutritious food;
- C. provide opportunities for physical activity and developmentally appropriate physical education;
- D. provide accurate information related to these topics through a comprehensive health education program.

The Superintendent shall oversee development and implementation of a comprehensive district-wide school wellness program consistent with state and federal requirements for districts sponsoring the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program.

## **Coordination of Effort**

### **School Health Advisory Council**

As per education code chapter 28.004 the board of trustees shall establish a local school health advisory council (SHAC) to assist the district in ensuring that local community values are reflected in the district's health education instruction. A school district must consider the recommendations of the SHAC before changing the district's health education curriculum or instruction. The SHAC shall have a minimum of five members. A majority of the members must be parents of students enrolled in the district and who are not employed by the district. One of those members shall serve as chair or co-chair of the council. The board of trustees also may appoint a representative(s) from groups such as but not limited to: teachers, administration, students, healthcare professionals, the business community, law enforcement, senior citizens, the clergy, nonprofit health organizations, and local domestic violence programs. The SHAC requests that members be appointed to represent each of the eight components as recommended by the required coordinated school health program. The SHAC may make recommendations regarding the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy. The council may also recommend to the superintendent and the board of directors approaches in both programs and policies to enhance the health and wellness of students, families and staff.

## **Connection to Other Initiatives and Programs**

The SHAC shall regularly assess efforts across the district and community focused on improving student health and learning. Where possible, the council will recommend policies and procedures to reduce duplication of these efforts, coordinate resources, and make efficient use of district resources and staff.

The health and well-being of students is inextricably linked to academic success. The district and campus improvement plans shall demonstrate this link through the inclusion of goals and measures stated in this policy.

## **Diversity Statement**

The board acknowledges the link between disparities in health and academic achievement and the role this policy plays in mitigating these gaps. To this end, the adoption and implementation of this policy shall be carried out with respect for the diversity of the district's students, staff, and families. Programs and opportunities outlined in this policy shall be applied and accessed equitably regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, family formation, religion, ability, gender, etc.

## **Nutrition**

The district shall take a proactive effort to encourage students to make nutritious food choices. The district dietitian shall ensure:

- A. a variety of healthy food choices are available whenever food is offered on district property or at district-sponsored events
- B. the sale or serving of foods or snacks high in fat, sodium or added sugars will be regulated
- C. all school meals and snacks served by the school nutrition and food services operation comply with state and federal laws and regulations.

## **Food Services Program**

The district shall provide wholesome and nutritious meals and snacks for children in the district's schools. In addition, the school breakfast and lunch programs shall meet USDA School Meals Initiative standards for reimbursable meals. The district school meals program will offer food and nutrition education that reflects the diversity and cultural norms of the student population.

In addition, school food service staff will be trained annually to enable them to carry out the nutrition standards and federal rules required by the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program.

## **Free and Reduced-Price Food Services**

The district shall provide free and reduced-price breakfasts, lunches, snacks and milk to students according to the terms of the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs and the laws and rules of the state. The district shall inform parents of the eligibility standards for free or reduced price meals. Reasonable efforts shall be made to protect the identity of students receiving such meals. A parent has the right to appeal any decision with respect to his/her application for free or reduced-price food services to the district designee.

## **Nutrition Standards**

The link between nutrition and learning is well documented. The district shall provide school breakfasts and lunches which meet the nutritional standards required by state and federal school breakfast and lunch programs.

Meals served in school before the end of the last lunch period shall conform to the national and state guidelines. Foods and beverages sold in competition with the federal school food and breakfast programs (including a la carte) will be in compliance with national and state guidelines.

Vending machines shall be limited to only those that dispense items which are nutritionally healthful and meet the guidelines from the state for school competitive foods and beverages. No food or drink items shall be offered in vending machines unless they have been approved by the district dietitian.

Other food sales/concessions: Water, 100% juice and fruit must be available at all school concessions. It is recommended that soda be sold in no larger than 12 ounce containers. Concessions are encouraged to offer healthy low fat snacks.

## **Fundraising Activities**

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the required nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

## **Celebrations**

Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet the required nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually. The district will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

## **Physical Education, Physical Activity**

### **Physical Education**

A comprehensive physical education curriculum consistent with Texas Education Agency (TEA) requirements and aligned to national physical education standards shall be adopted. The curriculum will be developmentally appropriate, utilizing strategies that support needs of the diversity of the student population. All physical education classes will include student assessment of skills and knowledge and this assessment will be documented on the report card every term that a student is enrolled in physical education.

All students in elementary grades pre-kinder through fifth are required to participate in 135 minutes of physical education per week throughout the academic year. All middle school level sixth through eighth are required to participate in 150 minutes of physical education per week for at least 4 semesters of their middle school education. Middle school level students will also be encouraged to enroll in additional physical education as their schedules permit. This includes instruction and practice in basic movement and fine motor skills, progressive physical fitness, and wellness activities through age-appropriate activities. All high school students are required to complete 1.5 credits of physical education, and may enroll in additional physical education classes as their schedules permit. The district encourages all high schools to offer a variety of health and fitness classes for each grade in the high school.

Physical education classes shall be appropriately modified or adapted to promote the participation of all students, in particular students with chronic health conditions and/or special needs.

## **Physical Activity**

In addition to required physical education, students at the elementary level should have the opportunity to participate in daily recess and physical activity. The district shall provide daily recess period(s) for elementary school students for at least 20 minutes, featuring time for unstructured but supervised active play. Co-curricular physical activity programs, including fully inclusive intramural programs and physical activity clubs should be available to all students. School facilities shall be used for physical activity programs offered by the school and/or community-based organizations outside of school hours as feasible. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate physical activity in the classroom throughout the day by implementing programs such as JAMmin' minutes through the JAM School Program.

## **Health Education and Nutrition Education**

The superintendent shall adopt and implement a comprehensive health education curriculum consistent with TEA requirements and aligned to national health education standards. The curriculum will provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate, skills-based instruction for grades K-12. Instruction will include topics of healthy eating and physical activity. All health education classes should include student assessment and this assessment should be documented on the report card every term that health education is offered.

Nutrition, health and fitness topics shall be integrated within the sequential, comprehensive health education curriculum taught at every grade level, kindergarten through eighth and high school health, and coordinated with the district's nutrition and food services operation.

Because good health is integral to a successful and productive future, health education featuring information on healthy eating and physical activity will be integrated where possible into other subject areas.

## **School Employee Wellness**

The health, safety and attendance of school teachers and staff are critical to our students meeting the rigorous learning goals we have set. In addition, school staff members are a unique and valuable resource. To this end, the SHAC will recommend that the district establish a school employee wellness program that may include, but is not limited to physical activity and nutrition information, weight management, stress management, health screenings, tobacco cessation, and other evidence-based approaches. This program should be evaluated annually for its overall effect on staff health and well-being, staff attendance, and return on investment.

## **Implementation and Evaluation**

The School Health Advisory Council with assistance from the District Wide Advisory Committee shall oversee the implementation of this policy and report to the school board at least annually on the status of policy. Each campus principal or their designee will be responsible for implementing, monitoring and annually evaluating the local wellness policy. (Please see attached MVIDS Wellness Policy Annual Evaluation.)

*Reviewed/approved April 22, 2015 by CSHAC*

