

Russell County School *District* Wellness Plan

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Russell County School District Wellness Plan

Preamble

Russell County School District (hereto referred to as the District) 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.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.^{8,9,10} 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.^{11,12,13,14} Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.^{15,16,17}

This policy outlines the District's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the District have access to healthy foods throughout the school day – both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus– in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the District in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and

This plan applies to all students, staff and schools in the District. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

I. School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

The District will convene a representative district wellness committee (hereto referred to as the DWC or work within an existing school health committee) that meets at least four times per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of this district-level wellness plan (heretofore referred as "wellness plan").

The DWC membership will represent all school levels (elementary and secondary schools) and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (e.g., health education teachers, school health services staff [e.g., nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services], and mental health and social services staff [e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators (e.g., superintendent, principal, vice principal), school board members; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. When possible, membership will also include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education coordinators (SNAP-EDEDSNAP-Ed). To the extent possible, the DWC will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community.

- *Each school within the District will establish an ongoing School Wellness Committee (SWC) that convenes to review school-level issues, in coordination with the DWC.]*

Leadership

The Superintendent or designee(s) will convene the DWC and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school’s compliance with the policy.

Name	Title / Relationship to the School or District	Email address	Role on Committee
Jessica Holt	Food Service Director – Designee For District Wellness Policy	jessica.holt@russell.kyschools.us	Facilitator
Jamie Shearer Tina Fletcher	RSES Asst. Principal RSES PE Teacher	Jamie.shearer@russell.kyschools.us Tina.fletcher@russell.kyschools.us	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness plan implementation
Kimberlee Webb Vince Stephens	SES Principal SES PE Teacher	Kimberlee.webb@russell.kyschools.us Vince.stephens@russell.kyschools.us	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness plan implementation
Lori Loy Brett Blankenship	JES Counselor JES PE Teacher JES Principal	Lori.loy@russell.kyschools.us Brett.blankenship@russell.kyschools.us Diane.blankenship@russell.kyschools.us	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness plan implementation

Diane Blankenship			
Susan Stringer	RCMS Asst. Principal	Susan.stringer@russell.kyschools.us	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness plan implementation
Eric Bennett	RCMS PE Teacher	Eric.bennett@russell.kyschools.us	
Stacy Anderson	RCHS Asst. Principal	Stacy.anderson@russell.kyschools.us	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness plan implementation
Stacy Vanhoosier	RCHS PE Teacher	Stacy.vanhoosier@russell.kyschools.us	
Patty Meece	District Health Nurse	Patty.meece@russell.kyschools.us	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness plan implementation
Tracy Miller	IIA Specialist	Tracy.miller@russell.kyschools.us	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness plan implementation

Each school will designate a school wellness plan coordinator, who will ensure compliance with the plan. Refer to Appendix A for a list of school-level wellness plan coordinators.

II. Wellness Plan Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

The District will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness plan. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines specific to each school; and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where and when; as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. It is recommended that the school use the [Healthy Schools Program online tools](#) to complete a school-level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation and generate an annual progress report.

This wellness plan and the progress reports can be found at: russell.kyschools.us

Recordkeeping

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness plan at the Auditorium /Natatorium Complex and at the District's Central Office. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness plan;
- Documentation demonstrating that the plan has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Local Schools Wellness Plan; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the district uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the DWC;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness plan;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School Wellness Plan has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Plan

The District will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this plan, including its content, any updates to the plan and implementation status. The District will make this information available via the district website and/or district-wide communications. The District will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. Annually, the District will also publicize the name and contact information of the District/school officials leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the school wellness committee.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the District will evaluate compliance with the wellness plan to assess the implementation of the plan and include:

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the District are in compliance with the wellness plan;
- The extent to which the District's wellness plan compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness plan; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the District's wellness plan.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is Jessica Holt – Russell County Schools Food Service Director. 270-866-6300.

The DWC, in collaboration with individual schools, will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness plan.

The District will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Plan

The DWC will update or modify the wellness plan based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as District priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. **The wellness plan will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.**

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

The District is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness plan. The District will actively communicate ways in which representatives of DWC and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness plan through a variety of means appropriate for that district. The District will also inform parents of compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. The District will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the district's website, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness plan, as well as how to get involved and support the plan.

The District will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness plan annually.

Nutrition

School Meals

Our school district is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams *trans*-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meeting the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All schools within the District participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and *Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)*. All schools within the District are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (The District offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards](#).)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using a variety of the following marketing and merchandising techniques:
 - Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans).
 - Sliced or cut fruit is available daily.
 - Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.
 - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal.
 - Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas.
 - A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students

- Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor and promotional ideas.
 - Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
 - Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options.
- *Menus will be posted on the District website or individual school websites*
 - *School meals are administered by a team of child nutrition professionals.*
 - *The District child nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs.*
 - *Students will be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated (meets Healthy Schools Program Gold-level criteria).*
 - *Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.*
 - *Participation in Federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.*

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the [USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals](#). These school nutrition personnel will refer to [USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website](#) to search for training that meets their learning needs.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day* and throughout every school campus* (“school campus” and “school day” are defined in the glossary). The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

The District is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus* during the school day* support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (e.g., “competitive” foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits. A summary of the standards and information, as well as a Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools are available at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks available at www.foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org.

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, à la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and snack or food carts.

Celebrations and Rewards

All food made available on campus will adhere to USDA, food safety and security guidelines.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus* during the school day*.

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

Goal #1 - 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.

Goal #2 – The District will provide students with an environment that allows students an opportunity to practice healthy eating and physical activity. Nutritional messages will be displayed in the cafeteria as a reminder for students to see the importance and benefits of choosing healthy foods.

Nutrition Education

Goal #1 - The District will model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students in order to promote lifelong habits of healthy eating.

Goal #2 - Nutrition education will be integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social studies and elective subjects when possible.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The District is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. The District strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on District property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the District is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of the District to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with the District's wellness policy.

Food Safety and Food Security

All foods made available on campus comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illness in schools.

For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the food service operations are limited to Child Nutrition staff and authorized personnel. For further guidance see the US Department of Agriculture food security guidelines.

III. Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in physical activity every day. Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. Teachers and other school personnel **will not** use physical activity (e.g., running laps, push-ups) as punishment.

Physical Education

Goal #1 - 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. The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.

Goal #2 - All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. The District will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

All District **elementary students** in each grade will receive physical education for at least 45 minutes per week throughout the school year.

All District **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 (via the [Presidential Youth Fitness Program](#) (or modified version) or other appropriate assessment tool) and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

Health education is recommended in all grades (elementary) and required in middle and high school. Topics to be discussed may include:

- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during physical activity

- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture

Recess (Elementary)

All elementary schools will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all 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 will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. 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.

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)

The District recognizes that students are more attentive and readier 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.

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.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

IV. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The District will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. The District will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

Community Partnerships

The District will continue relationships with community partners (e.g., hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, etc.) in support of this wellness policy’s implementation.

Community Health Promotion and Family Engagement

Goal #1- The District will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

The DWC will focus on staff wellness issues, identify and disseminate wellness resources and perform other functions that support staff wellness.

Schools in the District will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. The District promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Professional Learning

Goal #2 - When feasible, the District will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school.

Glossary:

Extended School Day – the time during, before and after school that includes activities such as clubs, intramural sports, band and choir practice, drama rehearsals and more.

School Campus - areas that are owned or leased by the school and used at any time for school-related activities, including on the outside of the school building, school buses or other vehicles used to transport students, athletic fields and stadiums (e.g., on scoreboards, coolers, cups, and water bottles), or parking lots.

School Day – the time between midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day.

Triennial – recurring every three years.

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