

**Somerset Public Schools
Local Wellness Policy
June 30, 2006**

The Somerset School District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity, while enhancing the development of lifelong wellness practices.

Thus, the Somerset School District is committed to promoting and protecting children's health and well being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity, by addressing the following requirements in the local wellness policy, as established by Section 204 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004:

- *Goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school based activities (Refer to Appendix, Sections 1,2,3).*
- *Nutrition Guidelines selected by the Somerset School District for all foods available on each school campus under the district's objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity (Refer to Appendix, Section 4).*
- *Guidelines for reimbursable school meals, which are no less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture (Refer to Appendix, Section 5).*
- *A plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy (Refer to Appendix, Section 6).*
- *Community Involvement, including parents, students and representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators and the public in the development of the school wellness policy (Refer to Appendix, Section 7)*

Guiding Principles: A Vision for Wellness

- Recent passage of Public Law 108: Section 204 requires each LEA to have a local wellness policy in place
- The district's child nutrition programs comply with federal, state and local requirements, and are accessible to all children.
- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals and health educators in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- Adults serve as role models and school and community members are informed of the policies that improve the long-term health and well being of students.

- Schools will 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.
- Sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education is provided and promoted.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in the district will participate in available federal school meal programs, and provide assurances that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture.
- Phase in policies that all foods and beverages made available in schools (including vending, concessions, a la carte, student stores, parties and fundraising) during the school-day are consistent with current dietary guidelines.
- All foods made available in schools adhere to food safety and security guidelines.
- Qualified child nutrition and food service professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; and will accommodate the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body.
- The school environment is safe, comfortable, pleasing and allows ample time and space for eating meals. Food and/or physical activity is not used as a punishment.
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis
- Patterns of meaningful physical activity connect to student’s lives outside of physical education
- All school-based activities are consistent with Local Wellness Policy principles/goals.
- Somerset School District has a strategic role to play in implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Wellness policy, with oversight provided by the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Wellness Advisory Council, and Wellness-Subcommittee.

Implications for Students and their Overall Well-Being:

- A healthy lifestyle and maintaining a healthy weight requires a combination of healthy food choices and appropriate amount of physical activity.
- Children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and thrive.
- Good health fosters student’s attendance and education.
- The healthy, physically active child is more likely to be academically successful.

Policy and Appendix excerpted/cited from: School Nutrition Association—Local School Wellness Policies; National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity-Model Local School Wellness Policies; Massachusetts A La Carte Food and Beverage Standards to Promote a Healthier School Environment; Local Wellness Policy: A Guide for Development—Minnesota Department of Education; Local Wellness Policy Requirements: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Food and Nutrition Service; USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Chapter II, Part 210—National School Lunch Program; Inside the Food Pyramid—USDA; Massachusetts Association of School Committees—Local Wellness Policy (Specific citations to follow)

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Appendix

Nutrition Education-Section 1

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
- Includes engaging, developmentally appropriate, and culturally relevant participatory activities.
- 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.
- Provides integration with K-12 health education, school meal programs and nutrition-related community services and programs.
- Includes training for teachers and other staff, including food service.
- The staff responsible for nutrition education will be adequately prepared and participate regularly in professional development activities to effectively deliver an effective nutrition education program as planned. Preparation and professional development will provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with skill practice in program-specific activities and instructional strategies designed to promote healthy eating habits.
- Nutrition education information will be reviewed by a qualified, credentialed health educator/nutrition professional.
- Nutrition education will involve sharing information with families and the broader community to positively impact student's health and the community.
- School district will provide information to families that encourage them to teach their children about health and nutrition and to provide nutritious meals for their families.
- Students will be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast.

Physical Activity-Section 2

- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities.
- Is integrated at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive standards-based physical education program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to be physically active.
- Physical education provides an environment where students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate physical activity/motor skills, social skills and knowledge.
- Physical education includes the instruction of individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage life-long physical activity and wellness.
- Physical activity participation will take into account the “balancing equation” of food intake and physical activity.
- Adequate equipment is available for all students to participate in physical activity. Physical education facilities on school grounds will be safe.
- The school provides a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted.
- Policies ensure that state-certified physical education instructors teach in all physical education classes.
- Time allotted for physical activity will be consistent with research, national and state standards. Children should have opportunities for physical activity during the school day (i.e. recess at the elementary level).
- Continue to provide a daily recess period at the elementary level, which is not used as a punishment or reward.
- Information will be provided to families to help them incorporate physical activity into their student’s lives.
- Schools encourage families and community members to institute programs that support physical activity.

Other School Based Activities to Promote Student Wellness-Section 3

- Conduct a student survey to assess needs as they relate to physical activity, nutrition, and personal wellness/fitness.
- Local Wellness Policy vision and goals will be considered in planning all-school based activities (including field trips, school events, dances, and assemblies, fundraising).
- Support for health of all students is demonstrated by access to health educators, guidance/social adjustment counselors and nursing staff.
- Provide consistent nutrition messages throughout the school (in classrooms, cafeteria, hallways etc).
- Consider implementing programs that encourage physical activity beyond the school-day (i.e. after-school programs; increasing access to the gym).
- Consider sponsoring/hosting various health-related events and activities (i.e. wellness/health fair; parent workshops).
- Provide a coordinated approach to health and wellness education through K-12 health/physical education curriculum development, state and federal grant programs, and the district's Safe and Drug Free Schools and Wellness Advisory Council and Wellness Sub-Committee.

Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods in Schools-Section 4

- All schools will meet Federal nutrition requirements. Schools will provide students with healthy foods consistent with the recommendations of the USDA *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, as follows: [Re: School Lunch Program]
 - No more than 30% of an individual's calories come from fat.
 - No more than 10% from saturated fat.
 - School meals provide one-third of the *Recommended Daily Allowance* of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium and calories.
- District menu planning is based on a traditional food-based nutritional analysis of the week's menu, which includes minimum component quantities of meat or meat alternate; vegetables and fruits; grains or breads; and milk (See Attachment 1—*Minimum Nutrient and Calorie Levels for School Lunches-Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach—School Week Averages*; Food and Nutrition Service, USDA; Section 210.10, 7 CFR Ch. II (1-1-05 Edition)—On File with Food Service Director.

- Food providers will take every measure to ensure that student access to food and beverages meets federal, state and local laws and guidelines. Food providers will offer a variety of age appropriate healthy food and beverage selections for students at the elementary, middle and high school levels.
- The district will conduct a review of nutritional guidelines established by the USDA *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (2005) and *Massachusetts A La Carte, Food, Beverage Standards* (2004). The district will establish a nutrition policy for eventual implementation based on this review, as it relates to the following areas:
 - General Foods
 - Meat/Beans/Nuts
 - Fruits and Vegetables
 - Dairy
 - Juice
 - Grains/Carbohydrates
 - A La Carte/Competitive Foods
 - Beverage contracts
 - Fundraisers
 - Concession Stands
 - Student Stores
 - School parties/celebrations
- The district will incorporate food choices from the USDA Food Pyramid (MyPyramid.gov) into K-12 nutrition education and nutritional guidelines for school lunch, school day and extended-day snack programs and other school-based activities.
- School fundraising involving any foods should support a healthy school environment and be free from solicitation of foods that do not meet established nutritional guidelines [*To be phased in once nutritional guidelines are established*].
- A healthy diet can include all foods, as long as snacks, desserts, side dishes and entrees are appropriately portioned. Competitive foods should not take the place of a nutritionally balanced meal [*Refer to Massachusetts A La Carte, Food, Beverage Standards (2004) for guidance*].
- Schools should reinforce healthy messages by teaching proper nutrition and healthy eating habits in the classroom.

- The school environment should be a place where students can learn to make healthy choices. Marketing or advertising aimed at children that promotes consumption of foods of low nutritional quality (High calorie/high saturated and/or trans fat) should be phased out throughout the school environment. Advertising messages should be consistent with and reinforce the educational and nutritional goals of the district.
- Nutrition education/healthy messages are incorporated during snack time, extended-day programs and other activities during the school day, and not just during meals. Food and beverages sold at fundraisers, concessions and school stores should include healthy choices/options and provide age appropriate selections for elementary, middle and high school students [*To be phased in once nutritional guidelines are established*].
- The district will conduct periodic parent workshops and staff training related to healthy nutrition.
- Schools should promote health and nutrition messages consistent with those taught by parents, teachers, health educators, nurses and nutritionists.

Guidelines for Reimbursable School Meals-Section 5
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- The District will provide an assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of section 10 of the Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. 1779) and section 9 (f) (1) and 17 (a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758 (f) (1), 1766 (a) 0, as those regulations and guidance apply to schools.
- District menu planning for reimbursable school lunches is based on a traditional food-based nutritional analysis of the week's menu, which includes minimum component quantities of meat or meat alternate; vegetables and fruits; grains or breads; and milk (See Attachment 1—*Minimum Nutrient and Calorie Levels for School Lunches-Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach—School Week Averages*)—On File with Food Service Director.
- Such reimbursable school lunches shall meet the established nutrition standards as specified by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Federal Regulation 210.10 (7 CFR Ch. II; 1-1-05 edition)—On File with Food Service Director.

- As a participant in the *National School Lunch Program*, the District adheres to the guidelines established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service for reimbursable school meals.
- School meals are consistent with USDA *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (1995), as follows:
 - Eat a variety of foods.
 - Limit total fat to 30% of total calories.
 - Limit saturated fat to less than 10% of total calories
 - Choose a diet low in cholesterol.
 - Chose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables and fruit.
 - Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.
 - Lunches provide, on average over each school week, at least 1/3 of the Recommended Daily Allowance for protein, iron, calcium, and vitamins A and C in the appropriate levels for ages/grades, depending on menu planning approach used (Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, Section 210.10, 7 CFR Ch. II (1-1-05 Edition)—On File with Food Service Director.
- The contents of a reimbursable school lunch is as follows:
 - Includes at least three menu items. One of those menu items must be an entrée, and one must be fluid milk as a beverage. An entrée is a combination of foods or is a single food item offered as the main course. All menu items or foods offered in a reimbursable lunch contribute to nutrition standards established in section 210.10, Paragraph b, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, 7 CFR Ch. II (1-1-05)—On File with Food Service Director
- The district shall adhere to following requirements for reimbursable school lunches as established by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, Sections 210.7 and 210.8 in 7 CFR Ch. II (1-1-05 Edition)—On File with Food Service Director
 - Reimbursement for school food authorities
 - Claims for reimbursement

Plan for Measuring Implementation of the Local Wellness Policy-Section 6

- The district has established a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy, including designation of 1 or more persons within the Somerset School District (*Director of Curriculum, Director of Business, Food Service Manager and K-12 Health/Physical Education Content Coordinator*), charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the schools meet the Local Wellness Policy.

- *Components of the Implementation Policy*
 - Form District Wellness Sub-Committee (March 2006)
 - Conduct Initial Needs Assessment—survey students in grades 4, 7 and 11 regarding nutrition, physical activity and general wellness; survey principals regarding current status of vending, snacks/refreshments, fundraisers, and school stores involving food/snack items (April-June 2006).
 - Results will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs (April-August 2006).
 - Review K-12 Health and Physical Education curriculum as it relates to the *Local Wellness Policy* (April-June 2006; on-going 2006-2007)
 - The district will continue to assess education curricula and materials pertaining to wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the state and district’s educational goals and learning standards (Massachusetts Association of School Committees).
- Review anecdotal data (surveys, observations, informal interviews, curriculum review etc.) to provide a baseline assessment of the district’s existing nutrition, physical activity and wellness environments and policies (April-June 2006; on-going 2006-2007).
- Identify priority needs/areas for improvement for the initial Local Wellness Policy; April-June 2006; on-going 2006-2007)
- Draft policy language that addresses each component of the Local Wellness Policy, as required by federal law. (April-June 2006).
- Submit Local Wellness Policy to Somerset School Committee for formal review and approval for implementation not later than during the first day of the school year beginning after June 30, 2006 (July-August 2006).
- Identify key indicators for various components of the Local Wellness Policy to determine the level of successful implementation; collect and evaluate data (ongoing through 2006-2007).
- Review and evaluate the Local Wellness Policy and make revisions, as needed (2007-2008 school year).
- Identify a coordinator who will ensure that the district implements the Local Wellness Policy and will collect and summarize the evaluation results (March 2006-August 2006; on-going 2006-2007)

School and Community Involvement-Section 7

- As required by law, parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school committee, school administrators and community representatives were involved in the initial planning and development of the Local Wellness Policy. Collaborative input was provided through meetings, surveys, informal interviews, observations, curriculum review and discussions involving various stakeholders in the local wellness initiative.
- The District's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Advisory Council and Wellness Sub-Committee were involved in the initial planning and development of the Local Wellness Policy. This Advisory Council and Sub-Committee includes parents, students, health educators, guidance staff, food service director, administrators, community representatives and a member of the Somerset School Committee.
- Next Steps for Community Involvement:
 - *Build upon existing efforts and initiatives* (K-12 Health/Physical Education curriculum development; Nutrition education and awareness; expand parent workshops/trainings on nutrition education/awareness; partner with local wellness organizations and universities—Southeast Center for Healthy Communities, Brockton; Johnson and Wales University; UMASS/Dartmouth)
 - *Build support from existing groups* (i.e. Safe and Drug Free Schools and Wellness Advisory Council; Parent Organizations (PTO); School Improvement Councils; Student Councils)
 - *Publicize the vision and goals of the Local Wellness Policy* (announcements in school newsletters; Wellness link on district-website; parent workshops/trainings; press releases to news media; encourage wellness stakeholders—parents, teachers, students, community representatives—to speak at each other's meetings).
 - *Continue to Build Capacity* (support wellness programs and activities with grant funds; solicit small business partnerships; provide program feedback through variety of mediums (i.e. district website, surveys, focus groups); parent trainings/workshops; establish partnerships with local health/wellness organizations; support wellness events and activities at the district and school level.

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