



WELLNESS POLICY

Statement of Responsibility

The staff, administration, and School Board of Groton Area School District recognize that there is a link between nutrition education, the food served in schools, physical activity, and environmental education, and that wellness is affected by all of these. We also recognize the important connection between a healthy diet and a student’s ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school.

The staff, administration, and School Board recognize that it is the District’s role, as part of the larger community, to model and actively practice, through policies and procedures: the promotion of nutrition education to influence students’ eating behaviors, the opportunity to learn about and participate in physical activity, the initiation of healthy life long habits, and the commitment to the types of foods and beverages made available to them.

The staff, administration, and School Board further recognize that the sharing and enjoyment of food, and participation in physical activities, are fundamental experiences for all people and are primary ways to nurture and celebrate our diversity. We believe in the commitment to the success and well-being of all members of the community.

Rationale

The increasing rates of overweight and obese youth threaten to jeopardize the future health and productivity of our children. A healthy school environment must go beyond school meals in the cafeteria. Living a healthy lifestyle and maintaining a healthy weight requires a combination of healthy food choices, knowledge of nutrition, and appropriate amounts of physical activity. All foods made available throughout the school day should offer children nutritious choices. Nutrition education and physical activity should be incorporated into the school day as often as possible. The healthy, nutritionally astute, and physically active child is more likely to be academically successful.

A coordinated effort by the entire community of school staff, administration, school board, students and parents is necessary. These efforts involve adults serving as role models and community members being informed of the policies that improve the long-term health and well-being of students. The Groton Area School District has a vital role to play in improving the health and well-being of children.

I. Nutrition Education and Promotion

The primary goal of nutrition education and nutrition promotion is to influence students’ lifelong eating behaviors. Nutrition education will be offered as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote their health. Nutrition promotions are messages targeted to a specific audience to inspire/motivate them to take action. Nutrition education and nutrition promotions will be incorporated into the school day as often as possible.

- Nutrition education and nutrition promotion are intended for students, parents, and the community.
- Nutrition education uses the SD Health Education Standards to include health knowledge and skills.
- Nutrition education and nutrition promotion provide consistent scientifically-based nutrition messages throughout the school, classroom, cafeteria, home, community, and media.
- Nutrition education and promotion are part of health education classes and/or stand-alone courses.
- Nutrition education and promotion offers information to families that encourage them to teach their children about health and nutrition, and assists them in planning nutritious meals for their families.
- Nutrition education and nutrition promotion will be delivered by staff who are adequately prepared and who participate in professional development activities in order to deliver effective programming.
- Nutrition promotion encourages staff to be role models for health and to exhibit a positive outlook toward healthy behaviors.

II. Physical Activity and Physical Education and Promotion

The primary goal for the physical activity component is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, reduce sedentary time, and provide health education in order to instill an understanding of the short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

A. Physical Education Classes K-12

- All students in grades K-5 will receive 25-30 minutes of physical education two days a week. Students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and those in alternative educational settings will be included.
- All students in grades 6-8 are required to take a quarter each of health and physical education.
- All students in grade 9 are required to take a semester of health and a semester of physical education.
- Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- The physical education curriculum should demonstrate progression and sequence and be consistent with South Dakota Physical Education standards for Pre-K through grade 12.
- All physical education will be taught by highly qualified physical education teachers.
- Student participation in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.

B. Physical Activity across the Curriculum

- Opportunities for physical activity are encouraged in other subject areas (e.g. math, language arts, science, and social studies), but not as a substitute for Physical Education class.

C. Recess and Transitional Time

- All elementary school students will have at least 25-30 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which students are encouraged to engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- When feasible, recess will occur prior to lunch to ensure appropriate healthful food and beverage intake.
- Extended periods of inactivity, two hours or more, are discouraged. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of

time, students will be given periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

- When appropriate, physical activity should be encouraged during transition, break, and free-time.

D. Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

- Open gym may be available to students and any interested adults in the community.
- All high schools and middle schools, as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs and physical activity clubs.
- Schools will educate and encourage participation in community or club activities.
- After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.
- Active transportation (walking, biking, etc.) to and from school will be encouraged as a healthy alternative.

Withholding or Punishing

- Food will not be withheld from students as a consequence for inappropriate behavior or academic performance.
- Teachers and other school personnel will not prohibit or deny student participation in recess or other physical activity as a consequence for inappropriate behavior or academic performance; nor will they cancel recess or other physical activity for instructional make-up time.
- Withholding meal time will not be used as a punishment.

E. Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

- School spaces and facilities will be available to students, staff, and community members before and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations.
- Schools will educate the community, including parents and staff, about utilizing the facility. These spaces and facilities will also be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs.
- School policies concerning safety and supervision will apply at all times.

III. Other School-Based Activities

Employee Wellness

- School wellness policy provides staff opportunities to participate in physical activities and healthy eating programs.
- School staff will serve as role models and will practice healthy eating, physical activity, and other activities that support staff and student wellness.

A. Professional Development

- Schools will provide ongoing professional development and education regarding the impact of nutrition and physical activity on academic performance for food service professionals, educators, administrators and other staff.

B. Community Education

- Schools will provide nutrition and physical education for students, staff, parents, and, where appropriate, community members.
- Schools will utilize already scheduled events to educate the public about nutrition awareness.

C. Eating Environment

- Students and staff will have adequate space to eat meals in clean, safe, pleasant surroundings and will have adequate time scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible to eat, relax, and socialize.
- Convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene will be available during all meal periods.
- Consideration will be given for passing time, bathroom break, hand washing, and socializing so as to allow ten minutes for breakfast and twenty minutes for lunch once the student is seated.

Convenient and Safe Drinking Water

- Schools will promote drinking water availability as an essential component of student wellness by providing access to free, safe drinking water in varied locations and encouraging student consumption of water throughout the school day.

Rewards and Incentives

- Rewards and incentives will be given careful consideration as to the message they send to the students receiving them. Awards such as extra free time, physical activity, pencils, bookmarks, etc. will be encouraged.

E. Fundraising

- School fundraising activities will support healthy lifestyles. Such activities may include physical activity (e.g. walk-a-thon), school support (e.g. selling school memorabilia), and/or academic achievement (e.g. spelling bee).
- The sale of food or beverages as a fundraiser will not take place from midnight to one hour after the conclusion of the school day with exemptions as provided by the South Dakota policy on Exempt Fundraisers.
- No specially exempted fundraiser foods or beverages may be sold in competition with school meals in the food service area during the meal service.

IV. Nutrition Standards

Students' life-long eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. Foods of good nutritional content such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, lean meat, whole grain products, and plain water will be available wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at school during the normal school day. Examples may include a la carte, snacks, vending machines, school stores, fund raising activities, parties, celebrations, and other school sponsored events.

A. General Guidelines

- Procedures will be in place for providing information to families, upon request, about the ingredients and nutritional values of the foods served.
- Food and beverages sold or served on school grounds during the normal school day will meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Standards for Food and Beverages set forth in this document.
- Food pricing strategies will follow the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010.

C. A La Carte Offerings in the Food Service Program

- A la carte items available during the school day will meet the Standards for Food and Beverages set forth in this document.
- School food service departments will not offer or serve extra portions unless sold a la carte.

D. Snacks

- We will promote healthy snacks. A list will be distributed to teachers, parents, and students.

E. Parties and Celebrations

- The district will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.
- Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day.
- Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet the Standards for Food and Beverages.

F. School Sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to athletic events, dances, etc.)

- Healthy choices of food and beverages that meet the Standards for Food and Beverages will be offered at school-sponsored events outside the school day.

Standards for Food and Beverages

Total Fat	Calories from total fat must be at or below 35% (excluding nuts, seeds, nut butters, and reduced-fat cheese)
Trans Fat	“ <i>Trans</i> fat-free” less than 0.5g <i>trans</i> fat per serving
Saturated Fat	Calories from saturated fat must be below 10%. Reduced-fat cheese is exempt.
Sugar	<i>Total</i> sugar must be at or below 35% by weight (includes naturally occurring and added sugars. Fruits and vegetables are exempt.
Sodium	Must be at or below 480 mg per side dish/entrée Must be at or below 600 mg per main dish/entrée
Portion Sizes	Not to exceed the serving size of the food served in the NSLP/SBP; for other sales, the item package or container is not to exceed 200 calories.
Fruits and Non-Fried Vegetables	Fruits and vegetables may be fresh, frozen, canned, or dried, and they must be found in Chapter 2 of the Food Buying Guide. Dried fruit must have no added sweetener; canned fruit must be packed in juice or light syrup.
Milk	Only low-fat (1% or less) or fat-free milk meeting State and local standards for pasteurized milk and/or USDA approved alternative dairy beverages may be offered daily.
Milk Serving Sizes	Milk serving size is limited to 8-fluid ounces.
Other Approved Beverages	Fruit and vegetable juices: 100% full strength with no sweeteners or non-nutritive sweeteners. Water (non-flavored, non-sweetened, non-carbonated, non-caffeinated, without non-nutritive sweeteners.
Juice Serving Size	Elementary/Middle School: 6-fluid ounces High School: 8-fluid ounces

[Amended: March, 13 2017]