

Germantown Central School District

Wellness Policy

Reviewed by the Wellness Committee:

2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015

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Purpose:

Germantown Central School District has developed a local Wellness Policy, which includes goals for physical activity, nutrition education, and programs designed to promote student wellness.

FACTS:

- Poor eating habits and sedentary lifestyles are more prevalent in children today than in the past two decades.
- The percentage of overweight children aged 6-11 has more than doubled in the past 20 years and among adolescents aged 12-19, the figure has more than tripled.
- Less than 40 percent of children and adolescents in America meet the Dietary Guidelines for saturated fat.
- Almost 80 percent of young people do not eat the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables.
- Factors that contribute are: large portion sizes, the over consumption of nutrient-poor foods and children's decrease in their level of activity.
- The burden on society by obesity and related chronic diseases since 1980 has doubled in children and tripled in adolescents. Indicators for diabetes and heart disease are also on the rise.

THEREFORE:

It is critical that children learn and adopt healthy behaviors while they are young, including establishing better eating habits. Tackling this issue at an early age helps young people develop good habits before they face health conditions. Encouraging physical activity and good nutrition are very important. By implementing a comprehensive policy – that includes consideration of and sensitivity to students, schools, families and the community environment – we can foster good nutrition and lifelong healthy choices. This policy is designed to support and meet the requirements of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act.

These model guidelines were developed with input from the following organizations:

- American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD)
- American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
- Council of Chief State School Administrators (CCSSO)
- National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
- National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)
- National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)
- National PTA
- National School Boards Association (NSBA)
- School Nutrition Association (SNA)
- American Dietetic Association (ADA)

Nutrition Education:

- 1.) **The Germantown Central School District** program will ensure that students in kindergarten through grade 12 receive nutrition education that provides the knowledge they need to adopt healthy lifestyles. Nutrition education will be well integrated within a comprehensive school health education program and will include instruction that helps students learn more about the importance of various good groups; caloric, sugar and fat intake; healthy cooking methods; the recognition of the role media play in marketing and advertising foods and beverages; and the relationship of a balanced diet and regular exercise to a healthy lifestyle.
- 2.) Nutrition concepts will be reinforced by all school personnel, and will be integrated into various subject areas. Nutrition education should include reinforcement of the importance of physical activity and the health risks associated with a sedentary lifestyle.
- 3.) The Germantown Central School District will utilize the services of qualified nutrition professionals, including but not limited to the Food Service Department, Home and Career and Health Department members to lead the effort to implement nutrition education. Staff primarily responsible for nutrition education should be properly trained and regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver quality nutrition education.
- 4.) Germantown Central School District will provide educational information and encourage healthy eating and physical activity for families, both within the home and outside the home. Family members should be engaged as a critical part of the team responsible for teaching children about health and nutrition.

Foods and Beverages Served/Sold During the School Day and School Sponsored Events:

- 1.) Foods and beverages available during the school day will include a variety of healthy choices that are of excellent quality, appealing to students, and served at the proper temperature. Germantown CSD will offer a National School Breakfast and Lunch Program that follows the regulations set forth by the USDA, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the NYS Education Department of Child Nutrition.
- 2.) Foods and beverages available during the school day should minimize use of trans and saturated fats, sodium and sugar as defined by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- 3.) Food and beverage providers should offer modest portion sizes that are age-appropriate for elementary, middle and high school students, respectively.
- 4.) A la carte foods that are available should include a variety of choices of nutritious foods in accordance with the guidelines of the NYS School Nutrition Association's Choose Sensibly program.
- 5.) Parents, teachers, students, and school administrators will be engaged in choosing the competitive food selections for their local school and should strictly adhere to the regulations established by the USDA and further refined by the NYS Education Department of Child

Nutrition. The USDA defines competitive food selection as foods offered at school, other than meals served through the USDA's school meal program (school lunch and school breakfast)

6.) Products offered in a la carte, vending and school functions should also offer a variety of healthy choices. The guidelines of the "Choose Sensibly" program can also be applied to these areas and foods so identified.

7.) Drinking water and hand-washing facilities should be conveniently available for students at all times.

8.) Classroom snacks should reinforce the importance of healthy choices.

9.) Classroom celebrations, especially in elementary schools, should encourage healthy choices, and portion control. Parents and families should receive guidance from the school on foods that are appropriate for such celebrations.

10.) Germantown Central School should encourage fundraisers that promote positive health habits such as the sale of non-food and nutritious food items, as well as fundraising to support physical activity events.

11.) Foods and beverages sold at fundraisers should reinforce the importance of healthy choices.

Food Environment:

1.) Students should be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast since children who start their day hungry may find it difficult to stay alert and learn.

2.) Bus schedules and morning breaks should be coordinated to allow students ample time before class to eat breakfast.

3.) Lunch periods should be scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible.

4.) Recess for elementary grades should be scheduled before lunch, if at all possible.

5.) Students should be provided sufficient time to eat during meal periods.

6.) Dining areas should be attractive and include enough seating areas to accommodate all students who would like to sit and each lunch, as well as enough service areas so that students do not have to spend too much time waiting in line.

7.) Students should be reminded to wash their hands before meals (to prevent the spread of germs and reduce the risk of illness).

8.) Activities to promote wellness should incorporate nutrition education and be connected to strategies that encourage physical activity, academic achievement, and positive youth development.

Food Service Operations:

1.) Germantown CSD will maintain a coordinated and comprehensive outreach, promotion and pricing plan to ensure maximum participation in the school meal program, and should ensure that all eligible children qualify and receive free and reduced-price meals.

2.) Germantown' CSD will ensure that students eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals are not treated differently from other students or easily identified by their peers.

3.) Guidelines for the reimbursable meals served will not be less restrictive than federal regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture.

4.) Germantown CSD will employ a food service director who is properly qualified, according to professional standards, to administer the school food service program and satisfy reporting requirements.

5.) All food service personnel will have adequate training and participate in ongoing professional development.

6.) Germantown CSD will plan menus that, over the course of a week, will meet the nutrition standards recommended in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

7.) Schools will involve families and community organizations in the development of policies and programs to ensure that school meal options are culturally sensitive and meet special dietary needs.

8.) Germantown School District should ensure that required and effective good safety practices are applied to all foods prepared by the Food Service Department, sold or served at school or school-sponsored events.

Physical Education and Physical Activity

- 1.) Germantown CSD will ensure that every student from kindergarten through twelfth grade receives regular, age-appropriate quality physical education in accordance with the NYS Standards. Age-appropriate physical education is activity that utilizes movement concepts, motor skills, cognitive skills and intensity appropriate for a child's state of development.
- 2.) All physical education classes should be taught by certified physical education teachers.
- 3.) Physical education will be designed to build interest and proficiency in the skills, knowledge and attitudes essential to a lifelong physically active lifestyle. It will include providing information, fostering a positive atmosphere, encouraging self-discipline, developing motor skills, and promoting activities that can be carried out over the course of students' lives.
- 4.) The physical education curriculum should be coordinated with the health education curriculum and both meet the NYS Standards.
- 5.) Physical education will provide safe and satisfying physical activity for all students, including those with special needs.
- 6.) Whenever possible, elementary students should be provided daily recess that encourages physical activity.
- 7.) Germantown CSD should ensure that students have adequate space and equipment to participate in structured physical activity. Facilities on school grounds will be kept safe and well-maintained.

Local Wellness Committee:

- 1.) Germantown Central School District will form a diverse local Wellness Committee comprised of the major stakeholder groups: administrators, faculty, food service staff, parents, students, and community members.
- 2.) Germantown Central School will attempt to recruit community members for the local Wellness Committee who are involved in efforts to improve the overall health and well-being of children and youth. These stakeholders can share and apply lessons learned from other programs.
- 3.) The local Wellness Committee should monitor and evaluate the school district's policies to ensure they are properly implemented and progress is made in improving and maintaining students' nutrition and physical activity patterns.

4.) Germantown Central School District will attempt to supplement its efforts by seeking nutrition and physical activity partnerships with relevant community organizations and corporate citizens.

5.) Because school staff and support personnel serve as role models, Germantown Central School District should encourage activities and create programs that support healthy lifestyles for all school district employees.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

1.) Prior to developing new health and wellness guidelines, Germantown Central School District shall use the School Health Index in identifying and prioritizing needs, shaping new policies, and providing a basis for formative and summative assessments of student health before and after implementation of the new policies.

2.) To satisfy the requirements of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, the local Wellness Committee shall monitor the school district's implementation of the wellness policy and evaluate student health and activities. Such monitoring will help gauge whether or not policies have in fact been implemented, whether or not they are effective, and their overall impact on student and staff health. The results may also highlight areas in need of further change and help shape future local policy. The local Wellness Committee will utilize the School Health Index as a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of this plan. In an effort to improve the health of the Germantown Central School District community, the local Wellness Committee will report annually to the Board of Education on the effectiveness of this plan and any proposed changes for subsequent years.