

# **Amityville Union Free School District Wellness Policy**

## **Policy Statement**

Whereas, the Amityville Union Free School District community needs access to an environment that encourages the intake of healthful foods and participation in lifelong physical activity in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, healthy eating, adequate physical activity, and good health foster student attendance and education;

Therefore, it will be the practice of the Amityville Union Free School District that:

- The school district, including all constituencies such as students, parents, staff, food service professionals, health professionals, and other community members will participate in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the district wide nutrition, physical activity, and nutrition education policies.
- All students in grades Pre-K through Grade 12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- The school district will maintain consistent nutritional integrity, which is a level of performance that assures all food and beverages available in the schools are consistent with the USDA's 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and, when combined with nutrition education, physical activity, and a healthy school environment, contributes to enhanced learning and the development of lifelong healthy habits.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutritional needs of the students, as well as provide clean, safe, and pleasant eating surroundings. School schedules will allow adequate time for students to eat.

## **PART I - NUTRITION STANDARDS POLICY**

### **Rationale**

The crisis of the obesity issue among children calls for prompt attention to the foods and beverages provided by school staff and faculty under a whole child perspective. The establishment of universal nutrition standards for foods available to students on school property is necessary for the following reasons:

1. To minimize negative influences to students' health:
  - Excessive calorie intake is a major contributor to the tripling of the obesity rate among U.S. school aged children over the last twenty years.
  - Obesity among children is associated with an increased risk of Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, chronic inflammation, sleep apnea, and depression.
  - In addition, 80% of overweight children remain overweight as adults.
  - Obesity in adults is associated with significantly increased risk for heart attacks, strokes, and many types of cancer.
2. To maximize children's learning potential:
  - Inadequate nutrient intake impedes cognitive development and results in decreased standardized test scores.
  - Excessive intakes of unhealthy fats relative to omega-3 fats also have a negative impact on cognitive development in children.
  - The frequency with which food related non-instructional activities occur unnecessarily drains instructional time.
3. To minimize the negative financial impact of overweight individuals:
  - The costs associated with increased hospitalizations for children and adolescents due to obesity have tripled during the period of 1979-1999.

- National estimates of lost state funding associated with obesity-related absenteeism in suburban school districts range from \$95,000 to \$160,000 per year. Absenteeism among overweight students is six times higher than that of their non-overweight peers.
  - Obesity in adults has an even greater impact. In New York State, obesity attributable health care costs for adults exceeds \$6 billion a year, half of which is financed by Medicaid and Medicare programs - leaving less State revenue for education.
4. To protect children from potential allergens and food-borne illness due to poor safety and sanitation practices:
- Food prepared outside the cafeteria cannot be confirmed to be prepared and held according to Health Department regulations for sanitation standards and accepted temperatures.
  - The distribution and/or serving on food in the classroom increases children's exposure to allergens, which have a life threatening reaction for some children.

## **NUTRIENT STANDARDS**

Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of food and beverages available to them. Nutrient standards should address all foods and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside of school meal programs. The standards focus on increasing nutrient density, decreasing fat and added sugar, and moderating portion size. All food sold or provided to children within the Amityville Union Free School District will meet the following nutrient standards:

**SNACKS** - All snacks must meet the following criteria:

- Total fat equal to or less than 7 grams of fat per serving.
- Saturated fat equal to or less than 2 grams per serving.
- Sodium equal to or less than 360 milligrams per serving.
- Sugar equal to or less than 15 grams per serving.
- No artificial sweeteners.
- All snacks must be provided in single serving packages.
- NOTE: Trans fats (or partially hydrogenated oils) are known to have negative impact on the health of children and adults. As trans-free products become increasingly available, standards regarding trans fats will be considered.

**BEVERAGES** - All beverages must meet the following criteria:

- Total fat equal to or less than 3 grams per 8 ounce serving.
- Sweetened beverages must meet the following standards:  
Sugar equal to or less than 23 grams per 8 ounce serving. (Plain or flavored milk in 8 ounce containers consistent with the Long Island School Food Service Directors' Purchasing Cooperative specifications are acceptable.)
- NOTE: One hundred percent (100%) fruit juices are an exception to the sugar standard since they naturally provide 26-30 grams of sugar per 8 ounce serving. Fruit juice also provides many nutrients, and confers health benefits in moderate proportions. Therefore, 100% fruit juice can be provided in containers that are 12 ounces or less.

**MEALS** -

- Reimbursable meals served in the cafeteria will meet the program federal requirements and standards, and be consistent with the USDA 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- If breakfast or lunch served to the students is obtained from outside the cafeteria it should be consistent with the USDA Dietary Guidelines, as well as prepared in a facility with a Suffolk County Health Department Food Service Operators permit and employee Food Service Sanitation certificates.

## **NUTRITION GUIDELINES FOR ALL FOOD ON CAMPUS**

### **SCHOOL BASED ACTIVITIES**

All school based activities are to be consistent with the Wellness Policy Guidelines and Goals. All food and beverages made available on campus, (including vending, concessions, meetings, student stores, class parties, fundraising, and any other school functions) during the school day are to consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and in addition will comply with the 1987 Non-Nutritious Food Law (Article 19, Section 915 of NY State Laws) which prohibits the sale of non-nutritious foods in any school within the State, The Wellness Policy will set an example by having the total school environment model the way we are working make changes to healthier lifestyles.

#### **Use of Food in the Classroom**

The Amityville Union Free School District encourages activities, instead of eating, during school and classroom celebrations, and that only healthful foods and beverages in appropriate portions be used in the classroom for parties and snacks brought from home for the primary children. A list of recommended snacks will be provided to the parents and classroom teachers. Food use shall be discouraged in the classroom or distributed in the classroom for the following reasons:

- As an incentive or reward in the classroom
- For instructional purposes\*, (except in home and career classes)

\*Fresh fruits and vegetables may be used to assist instruction when necessary.

\*\*Celebrating birthdays, seasons, and holidays with special privileges, songs, games, skits, etc. are encouraged as an alternative to food-based celebrations.

#### **Fundraising**

Fundraising that requires selling nutrient poor, calorie dense foods and beverages conflicts with developing and maintaining healthy habits. As part of the Coordinated School Wellness efforts, it will be the policy of the School District that food cannot be sold as part of fund raising on campus during the school day. Consider non-food items and activities or contests.

#### **Concessions, School Stores, and Vending**

High quality nutrient dense foods that are competitively priced should be offered. USDA regulations permit schools to market milk, any time, any place.

#### **Disciplinary Action**

Food and Physical Activity will not be withheld from the students as a form of punishment.

#### **Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value**

Foods and beverages of Minimal Nutritional Value and Competitive Foods may not be served or given to students on school premises by any District staff member, group or organization.

## **PART II - NUTRITION EDUCATION**

The Nutrition Education component of the Wellness Policy may be defined as any set of learning experiences designed to influence the students' eating behaviors to improve their health and well being. Schools will link nutrition education activities with the curriculum and with the coordinated school health program. Areas addressed are as follows:

- Sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education is provided and promoted.
- Nutrition education that occurs outside the classroom, or that links the classroom nutrition education to the larger school community.

- School Districts will provide information and outreach to families that encourage them to teach their children about health and nutrition and provide nutritious means to their families, as well as have a positive impact on the health of the community.

### **PART III - PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GOALS**

The physical activity component is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short and long term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle. This shall include:

- Comprehensive physical activity program encompassing a variety of opportunities for students to be physically active, including physical education, recess, physical activity in the classroom.
- Health education that includes physical activity as a main component.
- Patterns of meaningful physical activity connected to the students' lives outside of physical education.

### **PART IV - REVIEW OF THE WELLNESS POLICY**

The Wellness Committee will review and monitor the implementation of the Wellness Policy.

The Wellness Committee will proceed with the School Health Aides, a self-assessment tool and planning guide, that when completed, will enable the committee to make specific recommendations.

The Wellness Policy will be reviewed annually, or when deemed necessary, to assess the impact of the implementation and annual growth. The School Food Service Program operates on a self sustaining, not for-profit basis, and must remain financially solvent.