

Merkel ISD

Wellness Plan

This document, referred to as the “wellness plan” (the plan), is intended to implement policy FFA(LOCAL), which has been adopted by the Board to comply with the requirements for a school wellness policy. [Section 9A(a) of the National School Lunch Act (NSLA), 42 U.S.C. 1758b; 7 C.F.R. Part 210]

The District’s local school health advisory council (SHAC) will work on behalf of the District to review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques to develop and implement nutrition guidelines and wellness goals required by federal law.

Soliciting Involvement and Input

Federal law requires that certain stakeholders be involved in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. The SHAC will solicit involvement and input from parents, students, the District’s food service provider, physical education teachers, school health professionals, Board members, administrators, and members of the public by:

1. Electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the district’s website
2. Non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents
3. Posting on the District’s website the dates and time of SHAC meetings at which the wellness policy and plan are scheduled to be discussed.
4. Listing in the student handbook the name and position of the person responsible for oversight of the District’s wellness policy and plan along with an invitation to contact that person if the reader is interested in participating in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the wellness policy and plan.

Responsibility for Implementation

Each campus principal is responsible for implementing FFA(LOCAL) and this wellness plan at his or her campus, including submitting necessary information to the SHAC for evaluation.

The *Superintendent* is the District official responsible for overall implementation of FFA(LOCAL), including development of this wellness plan and any other appropriate administrative procedures, and for ensuring that each campus complies with the policy and plan.

Goals for Nutrition Promotion

Federal law requires that the District establish goals for nutrition promotion in its wellness policy. The District’s nutrition promotion activities will encourage participation in the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, and any supplemental food and nutrition programs offered by the District.

The District will ensure that any food and beverage advertisements marketed to students during the school day meet the Smart Snacks standards.

The SHAC will monitor this by:

5. Frequent monitoring by district and campus administration
6. Annual wellness plan review
7. Triennial progress assessments

Although the District is not required to immediately remove or replace food and beverage advertisements on items such as menu boards or other food service equipment, or on scoreboards or gymnasiums, the SHAC will make recommendations when replacements or new contracts are considered.

Implementing Goals for Nutrition Promotion

GOAL 1: The District shall share educational nutrition information with families and the general public to promote healthy nutrition choices and positively influence the health of students.

Objective 1: The District will research opportunities to offer supplemental food and nutrition programs and will regularly inform families and the community regarding any program offered by District.

Action Steps:

- Research food access programs available in the community with which the District could partner (food pantry programs supported by a local area food bank, backpack programs, summer meal programs, etc.)
- Send out information on available programs via ParentSquare and website

School and Community Stakeholders: foodservice staff, administrators, and teachers

Measures of Success:

- Number of supplemental programs the District currently offers or promotes
- Annual review, triennial assessment

Objective 2: Consistently post in an easily accessible location on the District's or each campus's website the monthly school breakfast and lunch menus, along with the nutritional information.

Action Steps:

- Work with the District administration and Child Nutrition Director to develop and implement menus that are in compliance with the objective and are designed at least one month in advance.
- Post nutritional information on website

School and Community Stakeholders: Child Nutrition Director, Campus administration, and teachers

Resources Needed:

- Website location

- Staff to create and distribute the menus for posting to the website

Measures of Success:

- The number of times the menus were viewed during the school year.
 - Google form sent to parents and staff for feedback to ask about accessibility of menus
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Goals for Nutrition Education

Federal law requires that the District establish goals for nutrition education in its wellness policy. State law also requires that the District implement a coordinated health program with a component addressing nutrition services and health education at the elementary and middle school levels. [See EHAA]

Implementing Goals for Nutrition Education

GOAL 1: The District shall deliver nutrition education that fosters the adoption and maintenance of healthy eating behaviors.

Objective 1:

- At least 90 percent of students enrolled in physical education courses throughout the District will achieve at least a semester grade average of 80 on a scale of 100.

Action Steps:

- Create a plan to obtain the semester grade averages of students enrolled in physical education.

School and Community Stakeholders: Child Nutrition Director, Campus administration, and teachers

Resources Needed: Support from central administration to obtain grade averages

Measures of Success:

- Average semester grades at the end of the first and second semesters for all District students enrolled in physical education
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Goals for Physical Activity

Federal law requires that the District establish goals for physical activity in its wellness policy. In accordance with state law, the District will implement a coordinated health program with physical education and physical activity components. The District will offer at least the required amount of physical activity for all grades [see BDF, EHAA, EHAB, and EHAC], as follows:

- In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA, the district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten-grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135, minutes per week.

- In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA, district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters.

Implementing Goals for Physical Activity

GOAL 1: The District shall encourage teachers to integrate physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.

Objective 1:

Action Steps:

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum.
- Physical activity during the school day will not be withheld as punishment for any reason.
- The District physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments through FitnessGram for each student.

School and Community Stakeholders: campus administrators, & teachers

Resources Needed: FitnessGram

Measures of Success: Annual Review; triennial assessment, Google Form for feedback through ParentSquare

GOAL 2: The District shall encourage students, parents, staff, and community members to use the District's recreational facilities, such as the tracks, that are available outside the school day.

Objective 1: Inform the community of the facilities that are available for use outside of the school day by including a statement in at least one District or campus publication, by posting information on the District or campus website, or through the use of appropriate signs.

Action Steps:

- Create sample wording to be used in a publication or on a website. Create wording for a sign that could be posted at certain facilities
- Evaluate appropriate lighting for evening use of facilities

School and Community Stakeholders: Campus Administration

Resources Needed:

- List of the types and locations of facilities that are available for use in the District

Measures of Success: Google form sent to parents for feedback about accessibility of facilities outside the school day

Goals for Other School-Based Activities

Federal law requires that the District establish goals for other school-based activities in its wellness policy to promote student wellness, create an environment that encourages healthful eating and physical activity, and promote a consistent wellness message.

Implementing Goals for Other School-Based Activities

GOAL 1: The District shall allow sufficient time for students to eat meals in cafeteria facilities that are clean, safe, and comfortable.

Objective 1: All campus will build their master scheduled to allow for at least 25 minutes to eat breakfast and 25 minutes to eat lunch

Action Steps:

- Evaluate current mean time allowances by campus
- Work with campus administrators to adjust master schedules as necessary.

School and Community Stakeholders: Campus Administrators, teachers, and food service staff

Resources Needed: Average time to takes for students to receive a meal and be seated

Measures of Success: The number of campuses that currently meet the standard compared to the previous school year, along with annual review; triennial assessment

GOAL 2: The District shall promote employee wellness activities and involvement at suitable District and campus activities.

Objective 1: The District will provide a flu shot and vaccine clinic for all employees, as well as wellness activities.

Action Steps:

- Work with local health organizations to set up clinic locations and dates. Market these dates to employees.
- Annually conduct the Biggest Loser Contest and Step Bet Challenge
- Providing weekly fitness classes

School and Community Stakeholders: Campus Administrators, teachers, and Health Services staff, and community members

Resources Needed: District correspondence to advertise the service

Measures of Success: Documentation of when and how information was shared with employees via ParentSquare.

Nutrition Guidelines

All District campuses participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). As required by federal law, the District has established nutrition guidelines to ensure that all foods and beverages sold or marketed to students during the school day on each campus adhere to all federal regulations and guidance and are designed to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.

Foods and Beverages Sold

The District will comply with federal requirements for reimbursable meals. For other foods and beverages sold to students during the school day, the District will comply with the federal requirements for competitive foods. Competitive foods and beverages are not part of the regular meal programs and occur through sales such as a la carte options or vending machines. For purposes of this plan, these requirements will be referred to as "Smart Snacks" standards or requirements.

The District has also incorporated the following stricter standards that are not prohibited by federal or state law:

The District will not allow exempted fundraisers. All fundraisers will include nonfood items, foods that meet the Smart Snacks standards, or foods that are not intended to be consumed at school.

Exceptions for Fundraisers

State rules adopted by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) allow an exemption to the Smart Snacks requirements for up to six days per year per campus when a food or beverage is sold as part of a District fundraiser. [See CO(LEGAL)]

Foods and Beverages Provided

The District will comply with state law, which allows a parent or grandparent to provide a food product of his or her choice to classmates of the person's child or grandchild on the occasion of the student's birthday or to children at a school-designated function. [See CO(LEGAL)]

Measuring Compliance with Nutrition Guidelines

The District will measure compliance with the nutrition guidelines by reviewing meal reimbursement submissions from the child nutrition department to TDA, reviewing foods and beverages that are sold in competition with regular school meals, reviewing items sold as part of approved District fundraisers, and monitoring the types of foods and beverages made available to students during the school day.

Policy and Plan Evaluation

At least every three years, as required by law, the District will measure and make available to the public the results of an assessment of the implementation of the District's wellness policy. This "triennial assessment" will evaluate the extent to which each campus is compliant with the wellness policy, the progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy, and the extent to which the wellness policy and plan compare with any state- or federally designated model

policies. The SHAC will consider evidence-based strategies when setting and evaluating goals and measurable outcomes.

Public Notification

Annually, the District will notify the public about the content and implementation of the wellness policy and plan and any updates to these materials.

To comply with the legal requirement to annually inform and update the public about the content and implementation of the local wellness policy, the District will create a wellness page on its website to document information and activity related to the school wellness policy, including:

8. A copy of the wellness policy [see FFA(LOCAL)];
9. A copy of this wellness plan, with dated revisions;
10. Notice of any Board-adopted revisions to FFA(LOCAL);
11. The name, position, and contact information of the District official responsible for oversight and implementation of the wellness policy and wellness plan;
12. Notice of any SHAC meeting at which the wellness policy or implementation documents are scheduled for discussion;
13. The SHAC's triennial assessment; and
14. Any other relevant information.

The District will also publish the above information in appropriate District or campus publication.

Records Retention

Records regarding the District's wellness policy will be retained in accordance with law and the District's records management program. Questions may be directed to the Superintendent, the District's designated records management officer. [See CPC(LOCAL)]

Disclaimer: This information is provided for educational purposes only to facilitate a general understanding of the law or other regulatory matter. This information is neither an exhaustive treatment on the subject nor intended to substitute for the advice of an attorney or other professional adviser. Consult with your attorney or professional adviser to apply these principles to specific situations.