

NORTH METRO FLEX ACADEMY
POLICY No. 8.4.1
WELLNESS

I. PURPOSE

North Metro Flex Academy recognizes the link between health and academic achievement and the importance of creating a healthy school environment. The purpose of this School Wellness Policy is to articulate the actions we are taking to comply with the USDA regulations following the 2010 Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act. The district goals in implementing this policy are to improve the diet quality, physical fitness, and overall health of our students and staff.

II. A COMMITMENT TO NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

North Metro Flex Academy will maintain a District Health and Wellness Advisory Council that will meet periodically throughout the year to address nutrition and physical activity issues. The Advisory Council will continue to develop, implement, and evaluate guidelines that support a healthy school nutrition environment. This committee will offer revisions to these guidelines annually or as required.

The District Health and Wellness Advisory Council members shall include school administration, Food Service Director, Physical Education/Health Teacher, school staff, students, and community members. The mission of the committee will be as follows:

To create an environment that promotes and establishes a healthy foundation that allows students to make positive choices regarding physical activity and nutrition, thus assisting students to reach their full academic potential.

III. Leadership

1. The school administrator, The Physical Education/Health Teacher, and the Food Services Director will convene the District Health and Wellness Advisory Council and facilitate collaborative development of, and/or updates to the wellness policy.
2. The District Health and Wellness Advisory Council will meet a minimum of (3) times per year to oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the district-level wellness policy.
3. The membership of the District Health and Wellness Advisory Council will include, to the extent possible, representation from all school levels, parent/guardians, student representatives, school nutrition providers, health and physical education department staff, school administrators, school board members, and community organizations. A letter will be sent to the school community via email and will be posted in a central area in all school buildings inviting members of the community to join the wellness committee.
4. School principals will continue to address compliance concerns such as kinds of foods available to their campus, sufficient mealtime, nutrition education, and physical activity with the support of the Physical Education/Health Teacher and the Food Services Director.
5. Nutrition education is integrated across the K-8 Health Education curriculum, and physical activity will continue to be encouraged daily as an extension of the Elementary and Middle school physical education curricula.

6. The school food service management team will participate in making decisions and guidelines that will affect the school nutrition environment.

IV. Goals for Nutrition Promotion and Education

Student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, will be promoted in the District's educational program, school activities, and meal programs. In accordance with the federal and state law, it is the policy of the Board of Education to provide students access to healthy foods and beverages; provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity; and require all meals served by the District meet or exceed the federal nutritional guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the "Connecticut Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools," whichever are greater. This policy shall be interpreted consistently with Section 204 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296).

In developing goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness, the District will, as required, review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques.

V. Nutrition Education

Nutrition Education will be offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive standards-based health education curriculum that meets all state and national standards. Students in grades K-8 will receive annual nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy behaviors. Students will be given opportunities to practice or rehearse the skills taught. Nutrition education will be offered in the school cafeteria and classrooms with coordination between the teaching staff and the food service staff.

VI. Nutrition Promotion

North Metro Flex Academy will conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents, and the community. Schools are encouraged to form School Nutrition Teams responsible for developing and maintaining these activities. School Nutrition Teams may be composed of but are not limited to, representatives from the School Governance Council, Student Council, Parent Teacher Organizations, School Administrators, food service staff, teachers, school nurses, health and physical education teachers, and/or coaches. The District aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Are designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health
- Are part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects.
- Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally relevant, and participatory activities such as cooking demonstration or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure that promotes physical activity/exercise
- Link with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services.
- Teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing
- Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff
- Encourages staff to model healthy eating habits.

VII. Physical Education

Physical education will be taught in all grades and shall include a standards-based, developmentally planned, and sequential curriculum that fosters the development of movement skills, enhances health-related fitness, increases students' knowledge, offers direct opportunities to learn how to work cooperatively in a group setting, and encourages healthy habits and attitudes for a healthy lifestyle. The program sequence and the curriculum will include:

1. All physical education classes at North Metro Flex Academy are taught by certified physical education teachers.
2. Implementation of a quality, standards-based, sequential Physical Education curriculum for all students in grades K-8, with instruction that focuses on competency in gross motor skills and skill development, and evaluation in alignment with age-appropriate progression of skills and concepts as identified by the Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework.
3. All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. The District will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.
4. The District's Physical Education Program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments, the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment, and/or other appropriate assessment tools that use criterion-based reporting for each student.
5. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g. interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.
6. Student enrollment in other courses (e.g. math, science, or vocational training) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.
7. Students are moderately to vigorously active for at least 50% of class time during most or all physical education class sessions.
8. All physical education teachers are required to participate in at least one yearly professional development workshop within their content area.
9. The District K-8 Physical Education curriculum includes but is not limited to the following essential topics:
 - The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
 - How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
 - How an active lifestyle contributes to prevention and management of chronic disease
 - Health-related fitness, including cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
 - Differences between physical activity such as warm-up, workout, and cool down
 - Overcoming barriers to physical activity

VIII. Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program that includes these components; physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, walk and bicycle to school, and out-of-school time activities. North Metro Flex Academy is committed to providing these opportunities, but will also ensure that these varied opportunities are in addition to, and not considered as a substitute for, Physical Education.

1. Physical Activity during the school day will not be withheld as punishment for any reason. Teachers and other school personnel are prohibited from denying physical activity or exercise, or withholding opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, and physical education) as punishment. Physical Education class time, recess, or other opportunities for physical education are not withheld as a measure to enforce the completion of academic

work. Appropriate alternate strategies have been developed as consequences for negative or undesirable behaviors.

2. Physical activity shall not be assigned to students as a consequence of poor behavior or punishment for any reason (e.g., running laps or pushups).
3. To the extent practicable, North Metro Flex Academy will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The District will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.
4. Through formal joint and/or shared use agreements with the Board of Education, indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities may be open to students, their families, and the community outside of school hours.
5. The District will support community partners to encourage activity for as many students as possible.
6. The District ensures that students with special physical and cognitive needs have equal physical activity opportunities, with appropriate assistance and services.
7. Wherever appropriate, the District will continue to advocate with local public works, public safety and/or police departments, etc., to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school (i.e., Safe Routes to School Programs).

IX. Recess

All elementary school students, including all K-5 school students, have a minimum of twenty (20) minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity and provide space, equipment, and an environment that is conducive to safe and enjoyable activity. (Public Act 12-173)

1. Staff members are restricted from denying participation in recess or other physical activity opportunities as a form of discipline or punishment (unless safety of students is in question), nor shall recess or physical education time be taken for academic/instructional purposes.
2. Schools will discourage extended periods of two or more hours of inactivity.
3. Outdoor recess will be offered when the weather is feasible for outdoor play, at the discretion of the building administrator based on his/her best judgment of safety conditions.
4. In the event that the school or district must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. Each school will maintain and enforce its own indoor recess guidelines.
5. Recess will complement, not substitute, Physical Education classes.
6. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active and may serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

X. Physical Activity Breaks/Active Academics

The District recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Each school shall provide at least one short (3-5 minute) physical activity “brain break” to students for every 60 minutes of academic instruction daily. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute for, Physical Education class, recess, and class transition periods.

1. Teachers shall incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction whenever possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies, and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day. Opportunities for physical activity in other subject lessons can be used as reinforcement, reward, and celebration for achievement, positive behavior, and completion of assignments. Classroom teachers may also provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes as appropriate and/or provide physical fitness activities after school.
2. The District strives to support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing professional development opportunities and resources,

including information on leading activities, activity options, and make available current research on the connections between brain development, cognitive learning, and movement.

3. Teachers are encouraged to serve as role models by being physically active alongside their students when possible.
4. Participation in fundraising events through physical activity that support disease prevention. (i.e. Jump Rope for Heart; Walk for Life; Walk Against Hunger; Backpacker's Programs; Race for the Cure; Relay for Life, etc.)
5. Supporting open-gym nights during the school year, where students and parents can participate in non-competitive physical activity.

XI. Before and After School Activities

If the District offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activities either before and/or after the school day (or both) it will be through a variety of methods such as clubs, physical activity in aftercare programs, intramural sports, interscholastic and varsity sports, summer recreational programs, etc.

XII. Active Transport

The District strives to support active transport to and from school, such as walking or biking.

The District will promote this behavior by:

1. Designation of safe or preferred routes to school – sidewalks
2. Instruction on walking / bicycling safety will be provided to students
3. Promoting a Safe Routes to School Program to students, staff, and parents
4. Utilization of crossing guards
5. Identifying existing crosswalks on streets leading to schools
6. Creation and distribution of maps of school environments (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, roads, pathways, bike racks, etc.)

XIII. Marketing

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the USDA "Smart Snacks in School" nutrition standards. Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with the commercial interest in the product. As the School Nutrition Services reviews existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment and product purchasing (and replacement) decisions should reflect the applicable marketing guidelines established by the District Wellness Policy.

1. Schools will consider student needs in planning for a healthy school nutrition environment through student surveys and feedback.
2. Food service will promote healthy food choices with the aid of online nutrition menus and promotional websites and visual healthy and nutritional marketing in the cafeterias. Unhealthy marketing in the cafeteria will not be allowed.
3. The advertising of foods and beverages that are not available for sale in district schools (i.e., that do not meet Smart Snack nutrition standards) will not be advertised on any school property, including but not limited to
 - School facilities, including buses, building exteriors, scoreboards, signs, and sports equipment;
 - Educational materials, including textbooks, curricula, and other printed or electronic educational materials;

- Areas where food is purchased, including the exteriors of vending machines, food and beverage cups and containers, food display racks, coolers, and trash and recycling receptacles;
 - School publications and media, including advertisements in school publications, school radio stations, in-school television, computer screensavers, school-sponsored Internet sites, and announcements on the public announcement (PA) system; and
 - Fundraisers and corporate-sponsored programs, including fundraising programs that encourage students and their families to sell, purchase, or consume products (e.g., McTeacher's Nights), and corporate incentive programs that provide funds to schools in exchange for proof of purchases of company products (e.g., Box Tops for Education).
4. Through access to the district website, televised board meetings and local newspapers, and the online food service menu page, the community can be informed of school nutrition and physical activity initiatives that promote a healthy learning environment.
 5. The District will continue to cultivate relationships with community partners (i.e. hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation.
 6. Students and their families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts in their schools.
 7. School staff will be provided with health promotion programs such as fitness, healthy eating, stress management, and smoking cessation that are accessible and available at no cost to staff.

XIV. Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Sold In Schools

Students will be offered and schools will promote nutritious food choices consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and **My Plate**, published jointly by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Agriculture, and federal and state statutes and national health organizations.

The focus is on moderating calories, limiting fats, sodium, and sugars, and increasing consumption of nutrient-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats, and legumes. In addition, in order to promote student health, the Superintendent or designee shall establish such administrative procedure to control food and beverage sales that compete with the District's nonprofit food service in compliance with the Child Nutrition Act. The District will prohibit the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. All beverages sold to students on school premises will be healthy choices that meet the requirements of the state statute and USDA beverage requirements. (Schools must follow whichever requirements are stricter).

All sources of food sales to students at school must comply with the state and federal guidelines including, but not limited to, cafeteria a la carte sales, vending machines, school stores, and fundraisers. The District will ensure that all beverages sold to students comply with the requirements of the state statute and USDA beverage requirements. The stricter requirements where different between the state and federal regulations must be followed. The District will ensure compliance with allowable time frames for the sale of competitive foods as specified by state law.

Smart Snack Standards can be found at this link:

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/smartsnacks.pdf>

XV. School Food Services and Meal Programs

The District will offer the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) at participating schools sites during the school year. Students and staff are highly encouraged to promote and participate in these programs.

Meal Programs

- A. School meals will meet, at a minimum, the nutrition standards established by the Minnesota State Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, offering varied and nutritious food choices of quality products. School meals offer a variety of fruits and vegetables; serve only low-fat and fat-free milk and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives as defined by the USDA and that meet the requirements of the state beverage statute; ensure that all of the servings of grains served per week are whole grain. Nutritional information about the meals is available for students, families, and school staff members.
- B. School food service staff will be properly qualified and trained annually according to current professional standards and regularly participate in professional development activities that help administer the Child Nutrition Programs.
- C. Food safety will be a key part of the school food service operation including, but not limited to, current Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) practices and procedures.
- D. Students will be given the opportunity to provide input and encouraged to participate in local tasting events and a youth advisory committee programs to share information to promote food choices and preferences on local fresh products, cultural, and ethnic favorites.
- E. School personnel, along with parents, will encourage students to choose and consume full meals including the components for a healthy selection. Positive nutrition information will be promoted to students on a regular basis.
- F. Special Dietary Needs: with appropriate medical documentation, modified meals will be prepared for students with food allergies or other special dietary requirements.
- G. Reimbursable school meals served will meet at a minimum the nutrition requirements and regulations for the National School Lunch Program and/or the School Breakfast Program.
- H. The cafeterias are cashless—all students, regardless of the type of payment they make for school meals, or the food being purchased (meal or a la carte) are given a code to enter at the cash register. Schools will reach out to the family of a child with an unpaid balance to assess whether the child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
- I. Applications for free/reduced-priced meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year. The application is also available on the district website.

Food Services

The Food Service provider will work in collaboration with the appropriate stakeholders to ensure students are provided with meals and snacks that align with the Board of Education policy and state mandates. Requirements in this area will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Review and recommend to the superintendent annually a pricing structure consistent with the USDA Pricing equity policy.
- B. Ensure that lunch periods last no less than 20 minutes.
- C. Ensure that student lunch tables are washed and cleaned properly after meal periods.
- D. Provide periodic food tasting and promotions to encourage taste testing of healthy options and new food items being introduced on the menus.
- E. Promote and encourage waste reduction and smarter lunchroom programs.
- F. Utilize the services of a registered dietary nutritionist to assist in dietary regulations, requirements, and special dietary menu planning.
- G. Coordinate and encourage community participation with local farmers and utilize Farm to School promotions, including locally and regionally grown fruits and vegetables.
- H. Coordinate Youth Advisory Committees within the district to encourage students to provide feedback on menus and programs.
- I. Food Service will provide and support nutritional education programs, food safety, development of healthy eating environments, special event planning, and farm-to-school promotional activities within the district.
- J. Support and accommodate individual student needs in regards to cultural lifestyle, religious and medical concerns, with foods as able within the requirements of the NSLP, SBP, and ASSP Programs.

- K. Provide menus to support needs per physician's notes and requirements and work in collaboration with the school nurse.

Healthy Food Programs and Requirements

North Metro Flex Academy will ensure that the administration, faculty, and staff follow guidelines to support a healthy school culture:

- A. All food sold to students separately from reimbursable meals must meet the Minnesota Nutrition Standards at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, a la carte sales in school cafeterias, concessions, and any fundraising activities on school premises.
- B. All beverages sold to students must comply with the requirements of the state statute.
- C. Foods and beverages offered to students through parties, celebrations, social events, and any school functions are also to meet these requirements.
- D. The District adheres to Sec 203, of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 by making drinking fountains available for students to get water at meals and throughout the day. Free drinking water will also be available during meal times.
- E. School staff shall not use food as a reward or withhold it as punishment.
- F. All fundraisers sold to students on school premises must meet the Minnesota Nutrition Standards and the beverage requirements of state statute, unless they are sold to students at the location of an event that occurs after the school day or on the weekend, provided the sale is not from a vending machine or school store. The District highly encourages organizations to use non-food items for fundraising efforts.
- G. The Minnesota Nutrition Standards and state beverage statute do not apply to fundraisers occurring off school premises. However, if the student brings in money to school for orders taken in advance, the fundraiser must be structured so that the parents/guardians pick up the food or beverage items instead of the students. There can be no exchange of monies for food by a student.
- H. Non-Sold Foods and Beverages brought into the schools by students and other persons for such events as birthdays and classroom celebrations shall comply with the federal nutrition standards.

XVI. Implementation/Monitoring and Recordkeeping

The District Health and Wellness Advisory Council is composed of, but not limited to, students, parents, community service providers, Public Health, Government and school district staff, the Food Service Director, dietician, principals, School-Based Health Center staff, and School Nursing Supervisor, and at large members of the general public. The District Health and Wellness Advisory Council will:

- A. Ensure that a copy of the most current written wellness policy is posted on North Metro Flex Academy's website.
- B. Oversee School Health Advisory Committees (SHACs) at each school in the district. Each SHAC will meet quarterly.
- C. At least once every three years:
 - Conduct a quantitative assessment of policy implementation using the Wellness School Assessment Tool-Implementation (WellSAT-3)
 - Post the triennial progress report on the district website. The report will include an assessment of compliance, the extent to which our wellness policy compares to model wellness policies, and progress made in achieving goals.
 - Conduct a review of the District Wellness Policy to identify strengths as well as areas for improvement. Identified areas of concern will be addressed by the building principals and other administrators with the support of the District Health and Wellness Advisory Council.

- Recommend to the Superintendent or designee any revision to the Student Nutrition/Wellness Policy it deems necessary based on data from the school assessments.
- D. North Metro Flex Academy and/or the District Health and Wellness Advisory Council will retain records to document progress of the wellness policy. Documentation maintained in these locations may include, but not be limited to:
- The written wellness policy
 - Documentation demonstrating outreach for community involvement, including efforts to actively solicit District Health and Wellness Council membership and participation from all stakeholder groups in the development, implementation, and periodic review/updates of the wellness policy
 - Information on how individuals and the public may get involved with the District Health and Wellness Council
 - Documentation of any triennial progress reports
 - The website address for the Wellness Policy and/or how the public can receive access to a copy of the wellness policy
 - An annual summary of each school's events or activities as related to wellness policy implementation
 - The names, position titles, and contact information of the designated District Health and Wellness Council members

XVII. Revisions and Updates

The District Health and Wellness Advisory Council will provide recommendations to North Metro Flex Academy's School Board to update or modify the Wellness Policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and/or as the District's priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerge; and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued.

Legal Reference:

National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program; Competitive Food Services. (7 CFR Parts 210.11 and 220.12)

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Public Law 108-265

Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, 7 CFR Parts 210 & 220

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, P.L. 111-296, 42 U.S.C. 1751

Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (as amended by P.L. 108-269, July 2, 2004)

School Breakfast Program, 7 C.F.R. Part 220 (2006)

National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School (Federal Register, Vol. 78, No. 125, June 28, 2013)

Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains and

Sodium Requirements (Federal Register, Vol. 83, No. 238, December 12, 2018)

Local School Wellness Policy Requirements, 42 U.S.C. 1758b

PA 06-63 an Act Concerning Healthy Food and Beverages in Schools

Local Resources:

Minnesota Department of Education, www.education.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Health, www.health.state.mn.us

County Health Departments Action for Healthy Kids Minnesota, www.actionforhealthykids.org