

MILTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WELLNESS POLICY
January, 2018

INTRODUCTION

The Milton Public Schools Wellness Policy is meant to actively promote the health and wellness of the school community.

In respect to students, we will support both their healthy development and readiness to learn. We recognize that by addressing the physical, social and emotional well-being of our students, that we will help them achieve academically and improve their life prospects.

We recognize that by promoting the health and wellness of school faculty and staff, we will improve morale and their ability to optimally contribute to the goals of the district.

GOALS

Our wellness goals will encompass:

- Fostering healthy nutrition habits and promotion of daily physical activity (i.e. exercise) of both students and faculty/staff
- Encouraging healthy student attitudes, decision-making, and responsible behaviors
- Providing life skills to guide students in their unique personal development and their efforts to mature socially, emotionally and ethically
- Linking students to appropriate medical and behavioral health services
- Creating a supportive and safe school culture and physical environment

AREAS OF WELLNESS PROMOTION

In an effort to support these goals, the following areas of wellness promotion will guide the district:

1. Nutrition education
2. Food available on campus
3. Physical education
4. Physical activity before, during and after school
5. Health education and life skills
6. Other school-based wellness activities
 - a. Healthy and safe environment
 - b. Social emotional well being
 - c. Staff wellness
 - d. Active transportation

1. Nutrition Education

Nutrition Education is recognized as an essential part of the comprehensive health education curriculum in order to foster lifelong healthy eating behaviors and to reduce the incidence of obesity. The Nutrition Education program will be reviewed on a regular basis within the context of Science, Health, Physical Education and Family and Consumer Science Curriculum. We commit to using the most updated nutritional information available for instruction.

2. Food Available on Campus

The Milton Public Schools recognizes that proper nutrition is related to students' physical well-being, growth, development and readiness to learn. Therefore, foods available on campus shall support and promote proper dietary habits, contributing to the student's health status and academic performance.

- All foods sold or offered are consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Massachusetts State Guidelines for Schools.
- All children shall have access to adequate and healthy meals on school days at reasonable prices. MPS Guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the US Secretary of Agriculture.
- The Milton School System encourages the consumption of nutrient dense foods such as whole grains, fresh fruit, vegetables and dairy products.
- Nutritious snack foods and beverages shall be made available to MPS students, in compliance with USDA nutrition standards for snack foods and beverages sold or made available to children at school during the school day. The standards, required by the Healthy, Hunger Free Act of 2010, will allow schools to offer healthier snack foods to children. .
- The USDA Smart Snacks in School standards builds on healthy advancements and ensure that kids are only offered tasty and nutritious foods during the school day. All food and beverages made available at school stores, in the cafeteria, and in all vending machines from midnight the night before until 30 minutes following the end of the school day shall be provided in compliance with USDA Smart Snacks in School standards and according to MA regulations governing vending machines, must be in compliance at all times. Soda shall not be sold or offered at any time in the school building through vending machines as it is not compliant with the competitive food regulations.No food shall be allowed during the school day in the classroom with the exception of student's individual snacks from home.
- The school environment is safe, comfortable, pleasing and allows ample time and space for eating meals. Students should have a minimum of twenty minutes for lunch and a minimum of ten minutes for breakfast.
- All foods prepared on campus adhere to food safety and state sanitary code, Chapter X- Minimum Sanitation 105 CMR 590.000, standards for food establishments.
- Advertising messages in MPS shall be consistent and reinforce the objectives of the educational and nutritional environment goals of the school. Only marketing of those foods and beverages that may be sold on the school campus during the day shall be permitted in schools. Fundraisers that promote positive health behaviors such as non-food and nutritious food items, as well as extra-curricular activities that support physical activity shall be encouraged.

3. Physical Education

The MPS Physical Education department (K-12) goal is to develop physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity. Quality physical education programs help to improve physical competencies, health-related fitness, self-responsibility and foster enjoyment of physical activity for all students. The MPS Physical Education department will provide students a curriculum that is approved by MPS and is aligned with MA DESE Frameworks and National Standards.

To pursue a lifetime of healthful physical activity, a physically literate individual:

- Has learned the skills necessary to participate in a variety of physical activities.
- Knows the implications and the benefits of involvement in various types of physical activities.
- Participates regularly in physical activity.
- Is physically fit.
- Values physical activity and its contributions to a healthful lifestyle.

Physical education is an integral part of the total educational program from kindergarten through grade 12. Physical education contributes, primarily through movement experiences, to the total growth and development (including social and emotional skills) of all students. Student experiences are designed to meet the appropriate level of development and help students to become skillful movers who are physically fit. MPS shall provide opportunities for children to develop their potential for movement mastery in a variety of ways, not just within the context of games/activities. By challenging children to think, to operate creatively within limits of their own abilities, to solve problems collaboratively, to share thoughtfully, and show respect for self and consideration for others, our program provides a meaningful experience to the total education of the student.

- All physical education classes shall be taught by a highly qualified MA DESE licensed physical education teacher. All staff will adhere to MA DESE licensure requirements.
- Every MPS student, from kindergarten through 12th grade, shall receive regular, age-appropriate quality physical education. Physical Education classes will provide time for students to learn and practice skills and ongoing assessments will monitor student progress toward meeting grade level outcomes. Physical education shall provide safe and satisfying physical activity for all students, including those with special needs. Some special needs students (504, IEP) may require certain accommodations, where they participate in Physical Education class with an aide accompanying them. Other students may qualify for physical education in an Adapted Physical Education course (either testing into or out of APE by a licensed physical educator, physical therapist or occupational therapist) to be available at the elementary, middle and high school level. (Classes should be taught by a certified Adapted Physical Educator). Schools shall not use participation or non-participation in physical education classes or recess as a disciplinary consequence
- Schools shall facilitate students' participation in physical education. The classes shall have student's participating in physical activities that allow for moderate to vigorous intensity for at least 20 minutes during the allotted class period, in accordance with nationally recommended guidelines for overall health and cognitive benefits.
- Adequate professional development will be provided to teachers in order to sustain a quality physical education program and assess program effectiveness.
- Teachers will work collaboratively to provide consistency in teaching common learning objectives.
- Schools will strive to sustain an appropriate and safe student-teacher ratio.

4. Physical activity before, during and after school

Physical activity opportunities shall be offered to all students through appropriate and feasible before and after school enrichment programming through school-based and community collaboration.

- After-school programs shall include supervised, age-appropriate physical activities that appeal to a variety of interests.
- Schools shall ensure that students have adequate, appropriate space and safe, updated equipment to participate in structured physical education and activity.
- All MPS sport, exercise, fitness facilities and equipment on school grounds shall be regularly maintained to ensure safe use and operation by students and community members.
- Schools shall provide information to parents that includes, but is not limited to the school website, flyers and the principals' newsletter to help them promote and incorporate physical activity and healthy eating into their children's lives.
- Schools shall not use participation or non-participation in physical education classes or recess as a disciplinary consequence.
- Recess in each elementary school is structured so that the expectation is moderate to vigorous physical activity during free play and the play space is supervised by trained adults.
- Bike racks are available at all schools encouraging students to bike to school. School wide physical activity initiatives are encouraged (i.e. Walk/Bike to School Day)

5. Health Education and Life Skills

- MPS shall provide a planned, sequential health education curriculum to provide opportunities for students to acquire health literacy and life skills
- At the Middle level (6-8), a life skills approach is taken to teaching students essentials of health education. Classes are taught by MA DESE licensed health educators. Units are taught using evidence-based curriculum.
- At the High School (9-12), students are required to take 4 years of health education to graduate. Classes are taught by MA DESE licensed health educators. Units are taught using evidence-based curriculum and encourage student engagement and reinforce self-awareness, responsibility in decision-making, problem solving, and peer resistance skills.

6. Other School Based Activities

We will strive to meet quality standards for a Coordinated School Health approach as promoted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. These components include:

a. Healthy and Safe Environment- The physical environment of school buildings and grounds is an important factor in the health and safety of students, staff, and visitors. School buildings and grounds will be designed and maintained to be free of physical and environmental health and safety hazards, and to promote learning. Additionally, students will feel welcomed, included, and safe from physical and emotional harm or abuse.

b. Social and Emotional Well-being- The MPS is dedicated to attending to the "Whole Child" within a "Whole School" environment. MPS works intentionally to support the emotional intelligence and social capabilities of its students, and to provide a school culture where every child feels appreciated, welcomed, supported and respected. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Youth Health Survey, or similar student health behavior assessment tool, will be administered every other year, at a minimum, at the high school level to address areas of concern and applaud areas of strength. This may be reflected in curricular and/or policy changes where necessary to provide the most current, best practices in health education that will address the areas of concern.

c. Staff Wellness- MPS shall strive to promote activities that help maintain and improve the physical and emotional health of staff. Information and activities shall focus on nutrition, exercise, overall health promotion, indoor air quality, and stress management.

d. Active Transportation-The MPS will strive to accommodate all students, parents/guardians, and school staff by creating active transportation opportunities. It is the desire of the District to encourage principles that contribute to the safety, health, and quality of life of students by providing greater opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle trips, including the availability of bike racks, and via formal participation in the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School program including but not limited to: safety training and ongoing walking/bicycling events.

e. Family and Community Partnerships-There is a positive relationship between family involvement and student success. The MPS will encourage caregivers to be involved in their student's learning and efficacy, and will provide families with the skills to be able to contribute to their children's success in school. In addition, the schools will inform and engage community members, businesses and organizations as partners so as to provide expanded learning, social and physical wellness opportunities throughout the year.

f. Medical Services- Milton Public Schools appreciates the critical relationship between health and academic success. School nurses and the athletic training staff, play a vital role in assessing and promoting the health and safety of students. Using clinical knowledge and experience, they are also trained to handle many health conditions, and will do their best to ensure that students receive the medical and behavioral health care they need within the educational process.

g. Nutrition—MPS shall integrate programs that provide access to a variety of nutritious, affordable and appealing meals and snacks for students; nutrition education; and an environment that promotes healthy eating behaviors.

COORDINATION

The School Committee will establish a Health and Wellness Advisory Subcommittee comprised of School Committee members, families, teachers, administrators, community members and students to plan, implement and improve wellness policies and practices with the Milton Public Schools. They will serve as an Advisory Subcommittee to the Superintendent and Milton School Committee. The Milton Public Schools shall conduct an assessment, at least once every three years, to determine compliance, progress, and the extent to which this Wellness Policy compares to other model school wellness policies.

CONCLUSION

The Milton Public Schools will provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong healthy behaviors. The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence the students and staff's understanding, beliefs, and habits as they relate to making healthy life choices.

First Reading: January 3, 2018

Second Reading: January 17, 2018