

**LEXINGTON CITY SCHOOLS
WELLNESS POLICY**

“A healthy school is one that integrates community, family, and schools to provide for students a positive continuum of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development on which to base lifelong decisions.” (Source: National Association of State Boards of Education, Healthy Schools Vision Statement.)

The Lexington City Schools’ School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs will follow the U.S. Nutritional Standards and Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The Lexington City School Board recognizes that childhood obesity has reached epidemic levels throughout the country. Overweight children are at a higher risk for developing severe long-term health problems, and overweight children are affected by discrimination, psychological stress, and low self-esteem. However, research indicates that obesity and subsequent diseases are largely preventable through diet and regular physical activity. Research also indicates that becoming physically active and maintaining a regular physical activity program significantly reduces the risk of some obesity and some cancers, diabetes and other chronic diseases.

Accepting that families are the primary teachers and caregivers for their children, and that the primary mission of schools is education, Lexington City Schools believe they must share with families and the community the responsibility for the physical, mental, and social well-being of its students. The present and future health, safety, and well-being of students are the concern of Lexington City Schools.

Children who eat well-balanced meals and are healthy are more likely to learn in the classroom. The board supports increased emphasis on nutrition as well as physical activity at all grade levels to enhance the well-being of our district’s youth. Therefore, it is the policy of the board to:

- A. Provide students access to nutritious food;
- B. Provide opportunities for physical activity and developmentally appropriate exercise; and
- C. Provide accurate information related to these topics.

Food Services

The Superintendent shall establish rules for the sale of foods sold during the school day consistent with this policy and the goals of the district.

The district will provide free and reduced price meals to students according to the terms of the National School Lunch Program, federal law and the rules of the state. The district will inform parents of the eligibility standards for free or reduced priced meals. Reasonable efforts will be made to protect the identity of students receiving such meals. A parent has the right to appeal any decision with respect to his/her application for free or reduced priced meals to the superintendent.

The board may establish a program whereby school meals may be provided to anyone other than students of the district at the greatest price charged any student plus an amount representing the portion of the lunch cost paid for from state and federal assistance (cash and food).

Food Services shall aim to be self supportive.

Nutrition - Food and Beverages

National School Lunch Program/School Breakfast Program:

- Meals must meet the USDA Nutritional Standards and the American Dietary Guidelines
- Meals must contain calories according to age group with 30% or less calories from fat and 10% or less of calories derived from saturated fat.
- Meals will be planned to encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e. whole grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables.
- Salad bars and other types of food bars will be encouraged.
- Certified organic foods will be considered.
- Foods should be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste and safety to ensure high quality meals.
- The district will use food commodities made available under the Federal Food Commodity Program for school meals.
- All food and beverage shall meet federal, state and local guidelines for safety and sanitation.

Ala Carte, Vending Machines, School Stores and other Food Sales:

- Carbonated beverages cannot be sold to students anywhere on the school campus during breakfast and lunch.

Elementary Schools

- Vending machines will not be available to students. Ala carte sales during breakfast and lunch are limited to milk, a second meal or an entrée item after the first meal has been received. Milk will be available for purchase to students who bring a sack lunch from home.

Secondary Schools

- Healthy food and beverages, as determined below, may be sold during the school day from vending machines or the Food Service Department. The school principal will instruct teachers not to allow students to leave class during and before the end of the class period to purchase food or beverages.
- During the school day, individual food items can be no larger than . . .
 - 1.5 oz or less-Snacks and Sweets
 - 2 oz-Cookies and Cereal Bars
 - 3 oz-Bakery Items
 - 3 oz-Frozen Desserts
- To give healthful items a competitive edge, pricing of products will be implemented.
- All food and beverages must meet federal, state and local guidelines for safety and sanitation.
- Vending sales of candies and chewing gum will not be permitted during the school day.

Eating Environment

- Meals are scheduled at appropriate times, with adequate time and space to eat and socialize in a pleasant environment, which has attractive serving and eating

areas. It is recommend that at least 20 minutes be allotted for lunch from the time the student is seated.

- Lunch periods are scheduled as near the middle of the day as possible.
- Convenient access to hand-washing facilities before meals will be available. Students will wash their hands before eating.

Teacher-to-Student Incentive

- Strong consideration should be given to nonfood items as part of any teacher-to-student incentive programs.

Physical Activity

- A quality physical education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity. Physical activity should be included in a school's daily education program from grades K through 8. Physical activity should include regular instructional physical education, co-curricular activities, and recess. Substituting any one of these components for the other is not appropriate.
- It is recommended that schools provide brief exercise breaks throughout the school day to enhance student focus and attention.
- Physical activity should not be used or withheld as a form of discipline.

Education

- All instructional staff are encouraged to integrate positive health promotion themes into daily lessons when appropriate. The benefits of good health and physical activity should be emphasized.
- Nutrition and health education should be provided to parents in the form of handouts, postings on the District website, newsletters, or presentations that focus on healthy lifestyles.
- The district will develop and teach a health and physical education curriculum that meets Virginia SOL standards and is articulated K-12.

Wellness Policy Evaluation

The Superintendent will provide an annual report to the School Board on the implementation and progress of this policy and provide recommendations to the board for policy revision.

Staff Wellness

The board encourages school staff to pursue a healthy lifestyle that contributes to their improved health status, improved morale, and a greater personal commitment to the school's overall comprehensive health program. This personal commitment often transfers into greater commitment to the health of students and creates positive role modeling. Health promotion activities have improved productivity, decreased absenteeism, and reduced health insurance costs.