

# Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Wellness Policy

## Background

Local wellness policies were first required under the 2004 reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act and under the South Carolina Students Health and Fitness Act of 2005. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 continues to require each Local Education Agency (LEA) that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) to establish a local wellness policy that applies to all schools in its jurisdiction. These policies must include at least the following:

- Goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based wellness activities; and
- Nutrition guidelines for all foods available on campus during the school day that are consistent with federal regulation and promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.

LEAs must also:

- Permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, school board members, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of local school wellness policies;
- Inform and update the public about the content and implementation of local wellness policies;
- Periodically measure implementation and make the results available to the public; and
- Designate one or more LEA official or school official to ensure that each school complies with the local wellness policy.

# **Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition**

## **Preamble**

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School (WLGOS) is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School

- To engage students, parents, teachers, cadre, food service workers, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students ages 16-19 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of, nutritional and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, WLGOS will participate in available federal school meal programs (School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks], Summer Food Service Program, Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program.)
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

## **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

### **I. School Health Council**

WLGOS will create, strengthen, or work within the school health council to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The council also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and may include parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and staff.)

### **II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus**

#### **Breakfast**

To ensure that all children have breakfast in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- Operate the School Breakfast Program.
- Parents and students are notified of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.

### **Free and Reduced-priced Meals**

WLGOS will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals<sup>1</sup>. Toward this end, WLGOS may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as “grab-and-go” or classroom breakfast.

### **Summer Food Service Program**

Schools in which more than 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for at least six weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year, and preferably throughout the entire summer vacation.

### **Meal Times and Scheduling**

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (*e.g.*, orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

### **Qualifications of School Food Service Staff**

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of WLGOS’s responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals at WLGOS. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child

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It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or "paid" meals.

nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

### **Sharing of Foods and Beverages**

Schools should discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

**Snacks.** Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The district will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

- If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

## **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

### **Nutrition Education and Promotion**

Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School (WLGOS) aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered to 16 to 19 year old students as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;

- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

### **Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting**

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

### **Communications with Parents**

WLGOS will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information. The school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside

of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

### **Food Marketing in Schools**

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products coupons.

### **Staff Wellness**

WLGOS highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Each district/school should establish and maintain a **staff wellness committee** composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, local hospital representative, dietitian or other health professional, recreation program representative, union representative, and employee benefits specialist. The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the school health council annually.

## **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

### **Daily Physical Education (P.E.)**

All students ages 16-19, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education (225 minutes/week for high school students) for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (*e.g.*, interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Schools should discourage extended periods (*i.e.*, periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

### **Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School**

WLGOS will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. WLGOS will offer interscholastic sports programs. WLGOS will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

After-school enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

### **Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours.**

WLGOS spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

## **V. Monitoring and Policy Review**

### **Monitoring**

The Director of Operations will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The Principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school designee.

Food service staff, at WLGOS, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas level. In addition, the school will report on the most recent Administrative Review (AR) findings and any resulting changes. If the school has not received an AR review from the state agency within the past Five years, the school will request from the state agency that a AR review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The Director or designee will develop a summary report every three years on WLGOS compliance with the school's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health

councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principal, and school health services personnel in the school.

### **Policy Review**

To help with the initial development of the WLGOs wellness policies, will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. WLGOs will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementations

## **Laws and Regulations about Wellness Policies**

The U.S. Congress and the South Carolina General Assembly recognized the role schools will play in addressing obesity when they passed the laws and regulations discussed below.

### *Federal Law*

In 2004, Section 204 of Public Law 108-265 reauthorizing the federal Child Nutrition Programs required each local educational agency (LEA) participating in school meal programs to establish a local school wellness policy. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296) restated the need for local wellness policies that, at a minimum:

1. Include nutrition guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day that are consistent with federal requirements and promote student health and reduce childhood obesity;
2. Include goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness.

LEAs must also inform and update the public about the content and implementation of the local wellness policy and periodically measure policy implementation. LEAs must permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority (i.e., school nutrition program), physical education teachers, school health professionals, the school board, school administration, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of local wellness policies.

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**The following organizations assisted with or supported the development of these model policies:**

Advocates for Better Children's Diets  
<[www.nchapman.com/abcd.html](http://www.nchapman.com/abcd.html)>

American Dental Association  
<[www.ada.org/public/topics/diet.asp](http://www.ada.org/public/topics/diet.asp)>

American Diabetes Association  
<[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)>

American Dietetic Association  
<[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)>

American Public Health Association  
<[www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org)>

American School Health Association  
<[www.ashaweb.org](http://www.ashaweb.org)>

American Society of Bariatric Physicians  
<[www.asbp.org](http://www.asbp.org)>

The Food Trust (PA)  
<[www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/comp.school.nutrition.php](http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/comp.school.nutrition.php)>

Howard University Cancer Center  
<[www.med.howard.edu/hucc](http://www.med.howard.edu/hucc)>

Institute for America's Health  
<[www.healthy-america.org](http://www.healthy-america.org)>

National Association for Health and Fitness  
<[www.physicalfitness.org](http://www.physicalfitness.org)>

National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE)  
<[www.naspeinfo.org/template.cfm?template=policies.html](http://www.naspeinfo.org/template.cfm?template=policies.html)>

National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)  
<[www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools](http://www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools)>

National PTA  
<[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)>

National Research Center for Women and Families

<[www.center4research.org](http://www.center4research.org)>

National School Boards Association (NSBA)

<[www.nsba.org/schoolhealth](http://www.nsba.org/schoolhealth)>

Parents' Action for Children

<[www.parentsaction.org](http://www.parentsaction.org)>

South Carolina Department of Education

< <https://ed.sc.gov/agency/os/Nutrition-Programs/LocalWellnessPolicies.cfm>>

United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association

<[www.uffva.org](http://www.uffva.org)>

\*implemented November 2013\*

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