

# Methuen Public Schools



## WELLNESS POLICY

Last Revision: 2021

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Health, Family Consumer Science and Wellness

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# Wellness Policy Guidelines

## INTRODUCTION

This policy was developed by a team in 2005-2006. The latest update to this policy is January 2019. The current team members include:

<b>Representing School Food Authority/Child Nutrition Program</b>	
Robert Frati	Director of School Nutrition Services
<b>Representing School Administration</b>	
Jeffrey Osgood	Supervisor of Phys. Ed, Health, FCS and Wellness
<b>Representing Staff</b>	
Robin Hollenbeck	CGS Lower School Physical Education Teacher
Patti Comeau, RN	Director of School Nurses
Catie Keenan	CGS Grammar School Health Education Teacher
Liz Fulks	Tenney Grammar School Health Education Teacher
Brian Angelari	Timony Grammar School Physical Education Teacher
Brian Camara	K-12 Adapted Physical Education Teacher
Emily Wehring	CGS Grade 2 Teacher
<b>Representing Methuen Public Schools Students &amp; Community</b>	
	Methuen High School Student
	Methuen High School Student
<b>School Committee</b>	

The following guidelines (Local Wellness Policy) are meant to clarify areas of the Methuen Public Schools Wellness Policy so that all stakeholders in the Methuen Public Schools will be able to ensure that students are provided with a total school environment supporting healthy food choices, personal fitness, and the importance of overall good health. The City of Methuen will encourage and support promotion of activities addressing all facets of the Wellness Policy.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) promulgates regulations that provide the framework and guidelines for schools and school food authorities, and state agencies to establish healthy school environments that promote student health and wellness. A copy of these guidelines can be obtained at <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/mass-in-motion/school-nutrition-guide.pdf>.

## NUTRITION

Obesity rates in the United States have risen significantly, particularly among young people. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Type 2 diabetes has become more prevalent among children and adolescents as rates of overweight and obesity rise. Type 2 diabetes was formerly known as Adult Onset Diabetes, but the name has been changed because of the prevalence of the disorder among young people.

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Overweight children and adolescents are more likely to become overweight or obese adults. CDC reports that children who were overweight by age 8 were more severely obese as adults.

The CDC reports:

- Approximately 16% of children and adolescents ages 6-19 years are overweight.
- The prevalence of overweight among children aged 6–11 years has more than doubled in the past 20 years and among adolescents aged 12–19 has more than tripled.
- Less than 40% of children and adolescents in the United States meet the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for saturated fat.
- Nearly 80% of young people do not eat the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables.
- Only 39% of children ages 2 – 17 meet the USDA’s dietary recommendation for fiber.
- Eighty-five percent of adolescent females do not consume enough calcium. During the last 25 years, consumption of milk, the largest source of calcium, has decreased 36% among adolescent females.
- A large number of high school students use unsafe methods to lose or maintain weight.

Massachusetts now requires schools to measure the Body Mass Index (BMI) of all public schools students in grade one, four, seven and ten.

Evaluation will be done on knowledge of the importance of healthy eating and personal fitness, sustained lifestyle changes, and the percentage of the community with a BMI greater than 85% for the age group evaluated.

School districts have a key responsibility in affecting the eating behaviors of students. The Nutrition Education Program should be designed to influence students’ eating habits. Connections between nutrition theory and practice should be immediately apparent to students.

In a joint statement, the American Dietetic Association, the American School Food Service Association (now the School Nutrition Association) and the Society for Nutrition Education have stated that “comprehensive nutrition services must be provided to all of the nation's preschool through grade twelve students.” Several research studies have shown that multi-faceted programs involving classroom education, parental involvement and food service changes are effective in changing student behaviors. Programs that give students the opportunity for skill-building with hands-on activities work best. Good nutrition education programs connect to the larger school environment and families. These connections should include the school food service program and any other food sales in school.

Fun, participatory activities will keep students’ attention and will be more memorable, thus

translating to action. Teacher and student- friendly materials are critical components of a good educational program. In light of this information, the Methuen Public Schools has adopted the following standards, food service procedures, and educational goals:

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- Students receive consistent nutrition messages throughout the school, classroom, and cafeteria.
  - District health education curriculum standards and guidelines include nutrition education and physical education.
  - Staff members who provide nutrition education have appropriate training. ●
- School menus are followed and analyzed using USDA-approved software.
- Students are offered, on a daily basis, a variety of fat-free, low-fat, flavored and unflavored milk.
  - Students are offered a variety of meats/poultry, fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and whole grains on a daily basis.
  - Meal times are scheduled near the middle of the day.
  - Water must be available for no cost at all times (water fountain).
  - All food service equipment and facilities will meet applicable local and state standards for safe food preparation, handling, sanitation and workplace safety as outlined in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.
  - All food service staff will comply with the Methuen Public Schools' Food Allergy Policy.
  - Methuen Public Schools will implement a food safety program for the receiving, preparation, and service of all school meals based upon the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Principles.
  - Physical activity will be promoted in all classrooms as a way to enhance overall wellness, including social, physical and mental health.
  - All schools will provide a safe, encouraging, physical and social environment for physical activity, especially for individuals who are not athletically inclined.
  - All students will increase awareness of the importance of daily physical activity and will be provided opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active in school and outside of school.
  - All students will be afforded the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of inter-scholastic sports including those offered through the City of Methuen recreation department.

### **Assessment Criteria**

The amount of healthy choice products students are consuming will be measured by quarterly

usage reports provided by suppliers of the products. A graph showing the healthy choice trends throughout the school year will be created and will be available in the Office of the Director of School Nutrition Services and posted online at the end of each school year.

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### **Promoting School Nutrition Program Goals**

The United States Department of Agriculture established Nutrition Standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. These Standards have helped the Methuen Public Schools improve the nutritional value of meals served as part of federally funded programs.

The school nutrition program operates in accordance with these standards and applicable laws and regulations of Massachusetts. Schools offer varied and nutritious food choices that are consistent with the federal government's current Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Food Marketing Programs will be designed and used to encourage students to purchase nutritious meals.

- Students will be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast using poster contests, and prizes.
- Schools will promote Healthy Snack Day once per week to encourage families to choose healthy snacks, including fruit and vegetables.
- All school meals will feature a variety of age-appropriate healthy choices that are tasty, attractive and of high quality.
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to support a healthy school environment by providing a variety of nutritious foods if meals are sent from home.

Creating a healthy environment across the school community may be a challenge, but it can be done. The links below connect to websites with ideas for creating a healthy school environment and using innovative fund-raising and rewards techniques:

- Action for Healthy Kids – Great suggestions for creating a healthy school environment for kids; information database on over 100 working approaches to improve children's health and readiness to learn through better nutrition and physical activity.
- American Public Health Association- Info on food advertising and marketing to kids.
- Constructive Classroom Rewards – Information on the food reward issue with suggestions for healthy rewards.
- USDA's Team Nutrition - Training and technical assistance for food service, nutrition education for children, and school and community support for healthy eating and physical activity, link to: [www.teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/EatSmart/choosingfood.pdf](http://www.teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/EatSmart/choosingfood.pdf); [www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/changing.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/changing.html)

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## **FOOD SOLD FOR FUNDRAISING**

The Methuen School District will allow only non-food items to be sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities during the school day. This mandate extends from 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after the school day. The Ranger Zone School Store at Methuen High School is exempt from this mandate but should consult with the wellness committee and building administration to choose snacks and food items that are healthy and nut free.

“The standards (Massachusetts Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages) do not apply to foods and beverages sold or provided at booster sales, concession stands, and other school sponsored or school related fundraisers and events” (outside of the time frame listed above). *Healthy Students, Healthy Schools: Revised Guidance for Implementing the Massachusetts School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages, Page 8, (2012)* <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/mass-in-motion/school-nutrition-guide.pdf>

School sponsored events to raise funds that do not take place during the school day should include healthy alternatives in addition to traditional offerings. Examples include a school-sponsored “Family Night Out” fundraiser at a local restaurant, where healthy choices and options are available; ice cream socials can offer and promote healthy choices by offering non-fat yogurt option and fruit as a topping rather than high fat alternative.

While it is a challenge to find a way to raise the funds needed for education and after school programs while adhering to the philosophy that health and nutrition are important, there are other ways to generate this much needed money. Non-food products such as sports equipment, tee-shirts, tickets to sports and performances, calendar raffles, CDs, wrapping paper, candles, emergency kits and gas cards have been very successful fundraisers for a number of surrounding districts. More information about non-food based fundraising ideas can be found in Appendix A.

**All fundraiser events must have prior approval by the school administration.**

## **HEALTHY CLASSROOM PARTIES AND CELEBRATIONS**

The Methuen School District recognizes that classroom parties and celebrations are a tradition at school. However, with the current goals of promoting healthy eating, and to protect all students, parents are not allowed to bring or send in any food items to share with the class. Parents are

encouraged to recognize their child's birthday celebration with items such as donations of a favorite book, special pencils or an educational game to the classroom.

There is no approved foods list for the purpose of school celebrations. Students will eat snacks brought from home on designated days of celebration. Students are not allowed to share snacks with other students. School personnel, including but not limited to teachers and administrators, will not provide any food items to students. All student eating will take place in the cafeteria.

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### **FOOD USED AS A REWARD OR PUNISHMENT**

The Assertive Discipline behavior management program rewards students via extra recess, Gold Slips, Marbles in a Jar, and coupons for tangible rewards so that students will engage in pro-social behaviors. Teachers, administrators, and school staff may not offer food items as a reward for students, and never circumvent lunch period as a punishment for unacceptable behavior. Teachers, administrators, and school staff will not take away recess or any Specialist classes (PE, Art, Music, etc) as a punishment for behavior. Every attempt must be made to ensure the maximum recess times. Some examples of creative mechanisms for providing rewards to children that are non-food related are a game day or extra recess.

### **CONCESSION STANDS**

Due to the accelerating rate of obesity, high number of students with life threatening food allergies as well as the liability of selling such products on school premises, sales of any product containing sesame seeds, nuts, nut-related products, is not allowed on school grounds. The Methuen School District strongly encourages that a variety of healthy food options be offered to patrons, i.e. water, sugar-free or zero calorie drinks, baked chips, and limited calorie snacks.

All food sold at concession stands or food related products sold as fundraisers by groups that utilize Methuen Public Schools buildings must be approved in advance of being sold by the Supervisor of Physical Education, Health, FCS and Wellness to confirm that there are no nut products being sold. For more information, contact Jeff Osgood, Supervisor of Physical Education, Health, FCS and Wellness K-12, by email at [jyosgood@methuen.k12.ma.us](mailto: jyosgood@methuen.k12.ma.us) , or by phone at 978-722-6000 x1106.

### **NUTRITION EDUCATION**

The Methuen Public Schools are dedicated to providing students with the knowledge and means to make healthy food choices, healthy lifestyle, and physical activity choices. This is accomplished by increasing awareness of; the benefits of eating healthy, getting the recommended amount of daily physical activity, defining nutrition and physical activity goals through an integrated approach of nutrition topics in grades kindergarten through four, students

will:

- Begin to learn about nutrition basics.
- Learn the difference between healthy and non-healthy foods.
- Be encouraged to join the “healthy snack club” by bringing healthy snacks to school.
- Begin to understand the importance of eating according to My Plate.
- Begin to understand the impact poor food choices have on health and weight.

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Methuen Public Schools aims to achieve the National Standards for Nutrition and Physical Activity education through the use of the My Plate and the Michigan Model and the use of nutrition and physical activity in grades 5-12, addressing: eating disorders, fad diets and supplemental drug use, tobacco use, stress reduction, sex education, and bullying prevention.

**More information about these programs can be found at [www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov) and Michigan Model [www.emc.cmich.edu/mm/](http://www.emc.cmich.edu/mm/)**

### **Goals for Nutrition Promotion**

Students will:

- comprehend concepts related to nutrients the body needs for health and to prevent disease.
- comprehend the importance of choosing water over other beverages to keep the body hydrated.
- comprehend concepts related to guidelines for healthy eating.
- demonstrate the ability to access valid information from food labels.
- demonstrate the ability to choose snacks and plan meals using specific criteria to meet nutrition guidelines.
- comprehend the causes of food borne illnesses.
- demonstrate the ability to prevent food borne illnesses using appropriate food handling practices.
- comprehend the benefits of healthy eating and daily physical activity including the benefit of weight management.
- comprehend the relationship between self perception, body image, body weight and physical activity.

- analyze how their perception of weight influences healthy eating and being physically active.
- demonstrate the ability to recognize and manage environmental influences, personal preferences, restrictions, and barriers that affect food selection, physical activity and obtaining the right amount of sleep.
- demonstrate the ability to set health-enhancing personal dietary and physical activity goals based on the federal guidelines and recommendations and to develop a plan to achieve the goals.

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- demonstrate the ability to support others in choosing healthy foods and physical activities.
- comprehend the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity and the recommendations and guidelines for young people.
- demonstrate the ability to evaluate personal food intake and physical activity. ●  
analyze the influences of popular sedentary activities on being physically active. ●  
comprehend concepts related to a healthy body image.
- locate and assess resources related to healthy weight management, unhealthy eating patterns, nutrition information for various foods, health claims made by food advertising, and nutrition information for foods served in restaurants.
- demonstrate the ability to analyze restaurant menu items, including fast food restaurants and the school cafeteria.
- effectively deal with the pressure to eat in unhealthy ways and persuade others to eat healthy and be physically active.
- demonstrate the ability to set personal goals for healthy eating and physical activity, including finding solutions to barriers for achievement.
- demonstrate the ability to advocate for healthy foods through the school environment.

## **PHYSICAL FITNESS EDUCATION**

Physical activity guidelines from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, along with recommendations in the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, suggest at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily for children. The American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention support efforts to include increased physical activity in the school curriculum.

Teachers and other adults in the school environment can serve as positive role models and influence young peoples' attitudes about physical activity. Taking the stairs instead of an elevator, walking during lunch, joining students for a fun activity on the playground or in the gym, or participating in school-based health promotion programs are steps that can demonstrate the adults' commitment to physical activity in the school setting.

### **Goals for Physical Fitness Education**

Schools provide an excellent setting for learning and practicing positive physical activity behaviors. Reinforcement of positive physical activity can also be incorporated into the classroom setting, including:

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- using pedometers and a daily log to track the number of steps taken and miles walked each day
- practicing math skills by using “jumping jacks” or “steps taken” to solve addition or subtraction problems.
- learning about the environment by taking nature walks.
- adopting activities that enhance the functional living skills of children with disabilities.

In light of this information, the Methuen Public Schools has adopted the following standards, and educational goals to provide students with an understanding of the importance of being physically fit and to encourage physical activity throughout the lifespan.

### **Physical Activity Standards**

1. The Methuen Public Schools requires physical education at all grade levels with class time allotted for it.
2. Students are regularly assessed for attainment of physical education skills.
3. Qualified teachers are hired to teach physical education and supervise physical activities.
4. Resources are readily available for students and teachers about physical education.
5. District policy for physical education is consistent with State policy or guidelines.
6. Students are provided many choices of physical activity, including cooperative and competitive games.
7. Students are provided with physical activity choices that take into account the gender and cultural differences among children.
8. District encourages physical activity outside of the school day.
9. Recreational facilities are safe, clean and accessible for all students.

Following the guidelines of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Frameworks, the National Health Standards, and the National Association of Sport and Physical Education Standards, the Methuen Public Schools program of studies includes structured physical education classes in grades K-12 and daily outdoor recess time in grades K-8.

### **School Based Activities that promote student wellness**

- Million Step Challenge
- Free Family Fitness nights (Zumba)
- Students Taking Charge
- 5-2-1-0 campaign
- Bulletin boards

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- 5K
- Jump Rope for Heart
- Kid Fit Club
- Turkey Trot
- Walk to School Day

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Non Food Based Fundraising Ideas**

#### **Shopping Donation Programs**

These programs require participants to sign up online, and once registered, a donation is automatically made to the school every time the participant shops. There is no added cost to the

participant; the donation is paid entirely by the merchant.

- Escript: many stores sell scrip; these are gift certificates which your school can buy at a reduced price, and then resell at full face value. Sign up at [www.eScrip.com](http://www.eScrip.com)
- Schoolpop; register at this site and your school will automatically get a donation every time you shop at hundreds of online merchants; works for many catalogs and stores too. [www.schoolpop.com/cgi/welcome.cgi](http://www.schoolpop.com/cgi/welcome.cgi).
- Set up your own website or your own online shopping mall, visit: [www.fundraisingmom.com](http://www.fundraisingmom.com).

### **Corporate Donations**

Many corporations will match employee contributions to schools. Ask parents to check with their employer to see if such benefits are available.

### **Benefit Events**

Some stores and restaurants will allow schools to sponsor a day or evening benefit. The school publicizes the event and distributes flyers; customers bring the flyer with them and a portion of their purchase is donated to the school. Check with local restaurants and retailers for those that may also offer this type of fundraising event.

### **Things to Sell**

- Silent or live auctions of donated good and services
  - Balloon bouquets, flowers or plants for special occasions like Mother's Day, Valentine's Day
  - Book sales, specially used books donated by students and result for \$1 each (also CD's, DVDs)
  - Roadside Assistance/Emergency kits for cars [www.homelandfundraising.com](http://www.homelandfundraising.com) and <http://www.thefirstaidkits.com/>
  - First aid kits [www.safetyfirstline.com/safetyfirst001.htm](http://www.safetyfirstline.com/safetyfirst001.htm)
  - "No Bake" Bake Sale [www.reacheverychild.com/feature/fundraisers.html](http://www.reacheverychild.com/feature/fundraisers.html);
  - Raffles – purchase tickets for donated goods and services, theme baskets
  - School spirit items- tee shirts, sweats, lanyards, pennants all printed with the school logo, link to <http://www.schoolspiritstore.com/>
  - Gift shop, set up before the winter holidays, for students to purchase low-cost items ➤
- Calendars, especially designed by students [www.fundraisingweb.org/listings/calendar.htm](http://www.fundraisingweb.org/listings/calendar.htm)

- Cookbooks, featuring favorite recipes of school families, illustrated, copied and bound at school
- Holiday decorations, wreaths, candles, holiday cards made by students, etc. ➤ Bottled water with the school's own label/logo [www.fundraisingweb.org/listings/water.htm](http://www.fundraisingweb.org/listings/water.htm) ➤

Refillable water bottle with school logo [www.studentsupply.com/bottles.html](http://www.studentsupply.com/bottles.html)

- There are many websites dedicated to school fundraising. Some examples are fundraisingweb.org, fundable.org, abcfundraising.com and fundraiserhelp.com

### **Walkathons and other “thons”**

Walkathons have become popular fund raisers and are a good alternative to food, as they encourage more exercise. Students solicit sponsors to pledge a certain amount per lap for each lap they walk on a set course, track, or laps around a sports field. Schools raise additional money by selling a colorful tee shirt designed by students which promotes the event.

Variations based on the idea that participating students solicit pledges for each unit they accomplish:

- Bike-athons; Skate- athons; Jogathons; Jumprope-athons
- Math marathons- students are given a math test with a set number of problems; pledges are collected for each problem correctly solved.
- Spellathon- hybrid of a spelling bee and a thon, pledges collected for every word correctly spelled; optional bonus pledge collected if student wins the bee
- Readathon-pledges collected for every book (or amount of pages) a student reads in a set time
- For more, check out this site: [www.fundraising-ideas.org/DIY/thons.htm](http://www.fundraising-ideas.org/DIY/thons.htm)
- Hybrid “thon” and entertainment event such as a dance marathon, in which participants pay to enter and a prize is given to the participant who is able to dance nonstop for the longest amount of time.

### **Entertainment**

- Entertainment Book ; Faculty Follies Talent Show; Teacher/Student Sports Competitions ➤ Carnival- games of chance, refreshments, performance by school music group, face painting, tattoos
- Dance for Adults- the students run this one for the parents and teachers; student provide music, sell refreshments, corsages and set up a photo station for parents to have their portraits taken
- Magic Show- hire a professional and/or students and the faculty perform
  - Adult Spelling Bee- just like the student version, but this time it is the parents, teachers, coaches and principal who are competing, while kids run the show and sell the tickets

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Physical Fitness Education & Wellness Websites**

The underlined terms below are links to websites which can aid families in helping students to

understand the importance of being physically active.

- Shape America- [www.shapeamerica.org](http://www.shapeamerica.org) National Organization for Health and Physical Education.
- Action for Healthy Kids – [www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org) Information on state activities promoting healthy school environments.
  - Fitness.gov – [www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov) The President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sport - a gateway to physical activity, fitness and health resources available on government websites.
- National Institute for Health – [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)
- Health Information of Individuals and Families- [www.health.gov](http://www.health.gov)
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention Physical Activity- [www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity](http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity)
- My Plate-[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

## APPENDIX C

**What is the Wellness Policy?**

The Wellness Policy is a State mandated document that addresses the school system's efforts to maintain a safe and healthy environment for students, school staff and the community who utilizes school grounds.

### **What is the goal of the Wellness Policy?**

The goal of the Wellness Policy is to promote overall wellness, protect students, and combat childhood obesity. A team of food service providers, physical education teachers, school health professionals, health and wellness teachers, parents, students and school administrators develop policies that support the nutritional and physical activity needs of the students.

### **Why does the Wellness Policy limit what can be sold as fundraisers or at concession stands?**

The Wellness Policy holds the most weight during the school day, in which no foods should be sold or brought in by parents for celebration. This is to protect students who suffer from life-threatening allergies and to promote healthy eating habits. Events/Fundraisers that take place outside of the school day are not held to the same standards. However, it is our duty to educate both students and parents about healthy eating habits, and to protect ALL students in the district. The suggestions in the Policy are designed to support that message, not to limit fundraising options for PTO/boosters groups. For that reason, many alternative methods of fundraising are suggested for consideration.

If you have additional questions, please contact:

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