

Effective: April 7, 2022

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**Policy Outline**

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**I. Policy Value Statement**

The Board of Education of Howard County recognizes the connection between health and wellness and student achievement and that students need sufficient nourishing foods and physical activity in order to grow, learn, and thrive. The Board recognizes that food is a core determinant of health and food insecurity leads to numerous health outcomes. The Board also recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for all students. The Board believes that employee wellness is also an integral part of a healthy school environment and believes that promoting employee wellness fosters improved health status, improved morale, greater commitment to the health of students, and positive role modeling opportunities.

The Board further acknowledges the necessity for the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) to ensure a coordinated approach to school health. The Board recognizes that mental health is part of the overall wellness and well-being of students and employees and will support programs to acknowledge this. The Board also acknowledges the necessity to ensure that the school environment promotes and protects students' ability to learn by providing nutrition education, physical activity, and a variety of healthy food and beverage choices. The Board believes schools have a responsibility to help students develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

## **II. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to HCPSS employees regarding employee and student wellness through nutrition education, physical education, physical activity, and the selection of nourishing foods and beverages and to fulfill the requirements of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

## **III. Standards**

### **A. Health and Nutrition Education**

Health and nutrition education provides students with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for making health-promoting decisions, achieving health literacy, adopting health-enhancing behaviors, and promoting the health of others.

1. The HCPSS will implement a comprehensive health education program which includes nutrition education as part of the instructional program, in accordance with COMAR 13A.04.18.
2. Health literacy skills to support healthy eating will be included in the health education curriculum each year in prekindergarten-grade 8, and in the high school health education curriculum that enables students to meet graduation requirements and to select a health education elective.
3. The health education curriculum will be aligned with the National Health Education Standards and the Maryland State Health Education Curriculum.
4. Nutrition education will be offered and integrated in appropriate curricular areas at each grade level 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.

### **B. Physical Education**

Physical education provides instructional opportunities for students to gain the necessary skills and knowledge for lifelong participation in physical activity.

1. The HCPSS will implement a curriculum in physical education in accordance with Maryland State Physical Education Curriculum, COMAR 13A.04.13, and the Fitness and Equity Act 2008.
2. Physical education will be provided each year for all students in prekindergarten-grade 8.

3. In grades 9–12, program offerings will be provided to enable students to meet graduation requirements and to select physical education electives.
4. Under the Maryland State Board of Education regulations, the physical education curriculum will be modified if a student’s physical limitation or medical condition warrants such accommodation rather than exemption from physical education.

C. Physical Activity

Physical activity opportunities will be offered throughout the school day to support student learning and achievement.

1. Recess will be a daily component of all elementary and middle school students’ physical, social, and academic development.
2. Recess will provide an opportunity for students to take a break from classwork, engage in play with their peers, and participate in unstructured activities.
3. School employees will not deny participation in recess or other physical activity opportunities as a form of discipline or punishment unless the safety of students is in question.
4. Physical activity will not be used as a punishment (e.g. running laps or doing push-ups).
5. All school employees will be provided professional development on physical activity breaks and encouraged to incorporate physical activity into classroom instruction.
6. All middle school students will have the opportunity to participate in intramural sports and other physical activities which will be provided by each middle school.
7. Each high school will provide an interscholastic athletic program in accordance with Policy 9080 Interscholastic Athletic Program and Policy 9070 Academic Eligibility for High School Extracurricular Activities.
8. The HCPSS will promote using school facilities outside of school hours for physical activity programs offered by community-based organizations. Priority for space within school buildings will be given to school-sponsored activities and community-based activities in accordance with Policy 10020 Use of School Facilities.

## D. Nutrition Services; Foods and Beverages

The HCPSS will provide access to a variety of nutritious and appealing meals that accommodate the health and nutrition needs of all students. The following standards apply to all foods and beverages made available to students at school during the school day.

### 1. General

- a. All foods will meet safety guidelines (as outlined in the Howard County Health Department Regulations).
- b. All schools will have in place a food safety plan based on process Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles.
- c. Foods and beverages will not be consumed as part of the instructional program except as defined in the curriculum and/or when indicated in a student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) or 504 Plan.
- d. Foods and beverages will not be offered as a reward or withheld as punishment, except when indicated in a student's IEP or 504 Plan.
- e. All students and employees will have free access to clean and safe drinking water throughout the school day and at after-school activities. The HCPSS promotes the consumption of water as an essential element that plays a role in overall health and wellness.
- f. All foods sold and advertised outside the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards and will comply with the Maryland Nutrition Standards for All Food Sold in School. The HCPSS will comply with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Nutrition Standards for these foods. Foods and beverages will comply with the IOM Nutrition Standards.
- g. Information on USDA Smart Snacks in Schools and the IOM Nutrition Standards will be available on the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service website.
- h. Food related fundraisers during the school day are prohibited.

### 2. School Meals

- a. The HCPSS will provide the opportunity for all students to begin the school day with a nutritious breakfast.
- b. The HCPSS School Food and Nutrition Service Office will make meal pattern lunches available to students each day that school is in session (including early dismissal days), as well as a la carte and snack/dessert items.
- c. School nutrition programs will reflect the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the Healthier US Schools Challenge Standards, and the IOM Nutrition Standards. Nutritional information will be posted on the HCPSS School Meals website.
- d. No physical segregation of or other discrimination against any child eligible for a free lunch or a reduced price lunch will be made by the school nor will there

- be any overt identification of any child by special tokens or tickets, announced or published lists of names, or by other means.
- e. Schools 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.
- f. All HCPSS employees will follow HCPSS Policy 4200 Meal Charges.
- g. At the beginning of each school year, and whenever there is a change in eligibility criteria for free and reduced-price meals, the HCPSS will send communication to families, including the application form for free and reduced-price meals. The communication will include how the household may apply/qualify for benefits.

### 3. Other Foods and Beverages

- a. A la carte and snack/dessert items sold by the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service will be reviewed by HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service employees and meet the USDA Smart Snacks guidelines and Maryland Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School and guidelines from the IOM Nutrition Standards. Nutritional information will be posted on the HCPSS School Meals website.
- b. School celebrations involving foods and beverages may be permitted by the principal no more than twelve times per year after the end of the last lunch period. Schools are encouraged to develop alternatives to the use of foods and beverages for celebrations.
- c. All foods and beverages sold in vending machines that are accessible to students during the school day will meet the USDA Smart Snacks guidelines and Maryland Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School, and will meet the IOM Nutrition Standards.
- d. Clubs and organizations authorized to raise money on school property using order forms for foods and beverages to be consumed off of school property are encouraged to offer healthier options. Clubs and organizations are also encouraged to consider other fundraising activities that do not involve foods and beverages.

### 4. Food and Beverage Advertising and Marketing in Schools

- a. The HCPSS is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions.
- b. The HCPSS will prohibit the marketing and advertising of non-nutritious foods and beverages through signage, vending machine fronts, logos, scoreboards, school supplies, advertisements in school publications, coupon or incentive programs, free giveaways, or other means.

- c. The HCPSS will prohibit marketing and advertising of all foods and beverages on the school campus that do not meet nutrition standards consistent with this policy.
  - d. Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet the USDA Smart Snacks guidelines and Maryland Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School and comply with established Board policy and administrative procedures. The HCPSS will comply with the IOM Nutrition Standards for these foods.
- E. Employee Health and Wellness
- 1. The HCPSS highly values the health and well-being of every HCPSS employee and will plan and implement activities and programs that support personal efforts by employees to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
  - 2. The HCPSS will encourage and provide opportunities and programs related to employee wellness in collaboration with community partners, healthcare providers and other agencies.
  - 3. All HCPSS employees are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity.

#### **IV. Responsibilities**

- A. The Superintendent/designee will provide an annual report on the implementation of the policy.
- B. The Superintendent/designee will ensure that any subsequent changes to this policy are reported to the MSDE.
- C. The Superintendent/designee will develop, implement and monitor a process for the development and review of the HCPSS's curriculum and assessment programs that complies with state and local requirements and provides sufficient academic rigor for students.
- D. The Superintendent/designee will provide for annual notification of this policy and procedures to HCPSS employees, students, parents, and the community.
- E. The Superintendent/designee will review this policy at least every three years and recommend it for revision as necessary.
- F. The Superintendent/designee will ensure that opportunities for physical activity are provided during the school day in accordance with this policy.

- G. The Superintendent/designee will oversee school implementation and compliance with this policy, including:
1. Provide technical assistance and support to assist schools with implementation of the policy and improve programming functions.
  2. Ensure schools are offered support services through various departments including the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service, Physical Education, and Health and Physical Education, to ensure the full implementation of this policy.
  3. Establish a process for identifying and distributing resources made available by qualified agencies and community organizations for the purpose of collaborating with schools and community organizations such as Boosters, the Community Advisory Council (CAC), and the PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC) to enhance implementation of this policy.
  4. Establish a process to gather feedback from individual schools, community partners, students, and parents on the implementation of the policy.
  5. Conduct periodic evaluations and report on systemwide and individual schools' compliance with the policy.
  6. Conduct systemwide review and assessment of this policy on its effectiveness and, based on this assessment, propose policy revisions at least every three years.
  7. Retain records documenting compliance with the requirements of HCPSS Policy 9090 Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Activity.
- H. Each school principal will ensure that a School Wellness Team is formed annually to spearhead health and wellness initiatives at the school that are in compliance with this policy. The principal will establish a system to annually identify School Wellness Team members which may include parents/guardians, teachers of physical education, classroom teachers, school nurses/assistants, students, school administrators, and community health and wellness partners.
- I. Each school principal will annually designate a school employee to serve as the School Wellness Champion who will:
1. Lead and coordinate their school's efforts to increase healthy eating and physical activity for students.
  2. Serve as the liaison for their respective school's policy implementation and reporting.

3. Establish and lead a School Wellness Team that develops goals, strategies, and initiatives for student health, wellness, and physical activity during the school year.
- J. Each school principal will provide annual updates to the Superintendent/designee regarding the school's health and wellness initiatives and the school's implementation of this policy.
- K. The Howard County School Health Council, which serves in an advisory capacity, will provide feedback annually to the Board.
- L. The HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service Office and school principals will ensure that all foods and beverages made available to students in schools or through school-sponsored events until the end of the school day, are in compliance with this policy.
- M. Professional development on the implementation of this policy will be provided annually as part of the regular professional development program for employees.

**V. Delegation of Authority**

The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures for the implementation of this policy.

**VI. Definitions**

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. A La Carte – Individually priced food items, provided by HCPSS Food and Nutrition Services, which are available for sale in the school dining center that are not part of the reimbursable meal served through the school meal programs.
- B. Celebrations – Special events or activities occurring in a classroom or elsewhere at school whether before, during or after the school day.
- C. Competitive Foods – Those foods and beverages, which are sold outside of federally reimbursable school meals programs during lunch periods. This includes items sold a la carte from the cafeteria from vending machines and in school stores.
- D. Comprehensive School Health Education – A sequential curriculum that addresses the physical, emotional, and social dimensions of health; develops knowledge, attitudes, and skills regarding health; and is tailored to the developmental level of children.
- E. Coordinated School Health – A systematic approach to improving the health and well-being of all students so they can fully participate and be successful in school.

Coordinated school health typically integrates health promotion efforts across eight interrelated components that already exist to some extent in most schools. These



components include health education, physical education, health services, nutrition services, counseling, psychological and social services, healthy and safe school environments, employee wellness, and family and community involvement.

- F. Curriculum – The prescribed elements of programs and courses which state clearly and specifically what students are expected to know and be able to do, how well they will be able to do it, how they will meet the learning objectives, and by what means they will be assessed.
- G. Extracurricular Activities – Activities available to students beyond the regular school day which are voluntary and are not required for satisfactory completion of a particular class.
- H. Fundraising Activity – Any activity or event held by the school system, individual schools, or a school-sponsored organization that sells goods or services in order to generate money for the school system as well as any activity or event advertised as intended to raise revenue on behalf of a charitable cause.
- I. Health Literacy – The degree to which individuals obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services to make informed health decisions.
- J. Healthy Eating Behavior – The federal recommendations for meals, such as making one’s plate half fruits and vegetables, eliminating sugary drinks, and limiting empty calories.
- K. Howard County School Health Council (HCSHC) – An advisory group, which identifies needs, reviews practices, programs and policies, and generally provides advice to the HCPSS and the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) on aspects of child health as defined by the coordinated school health approach.
- L. Institute of Medicine (IOM) Nutrition Standards – Recommendations regarding appropriate nutritional guidelines for consumption of foods at schools.
- M. Interscholastic Athletics – Approved athletic competition between or among two or more high schools.
- N. Intramural Program – An extracurricular activity program within a school that provides students an opportunity to participate in activities that are an extension of the physical education program.
- O. Nutrition Education – Educational strategies that are part of comprehensive health education and a planned, sequential, prekindergarten-grade 12 curriculum or supplemental education program that addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions of health related to nutrition.

- P. Physical Activity – A behavior consisting of bodily movement that requires energy expenditure above the normal physiological (muscular, cardio respiratory) requirements of a typical school day.
- Q. Physical Education – A sequential curriculum that teaches skills, knowledge, and attitudes which are needed to establish and lead a physically active life.
- R. Recess – Regularly scheduled periods within the school day for unstructured physical activity and play.
- S. School Day – The period from midnight (12:01 a.m.) before to 30 minutes after the dismissal bell for students.
- T. Smart Snacks in School – New Competitive Foods standards issued as part of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. These standards were formerly known as Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value.
- U. Wellness – The overall positive state of psychological, social, spiritual, intellectual, environmental and physical well-being. Attaining this contributes to an individual reaching his/her fullest potential and ideal health status.

## VII. References

- A. Legal  
 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010” (Sec. 204 of Public Law 111-296) 124 Stat. 3183 Code of Federal Regulations, as amended  
 Local School Wellness Policy Implementation, 7 C.F.R. Parts 210 and 220 (2016)  
 National School Lunch Act, Public Law 79-396, Section 9 amended  
 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Public Law 108-265, Section 204  
 42 U.S. Code §1758b - Local school wellness policy  
 7 CFR 210.10 - Meal requirements for lunches and requirements for afterschool snacks  
 7 CFR 210-11, Foods of Nutritional Value  
 7 CFR 220.12, Competitive Food Services  
 7 CFR 210.31 - Local school wellness policy  
 COMAR 13A.04.13 Maryland State Physical Education Curriculum  
 COMAR 13A.04.13.01 Requirements for Physical Education Instructional Programs for Grades K-12  
 COMAR 13A.04.18 Program in Comprehensive Health Education  
 COMAR 13A.05.05 Programs of Pupil Services  
 COMAR 13A.05.05.05-.15 Regulations for School Health Services  
 COMAR 13A.06.03 Interscholastic Athletics in the State  
 COMAR 13A.06.04 Corollary Athletic Programs  
 Maryland State Student Health Promotion Act of 2005  
 Fitness and Equity Act 2008

- B. Board Policies
  - Policy 2050 Advisory Committees to Staff and Schools
  - Policy 2060 Advisory Committees to the Board of Education
  - Policy 4020 Fundraising by Schools and School-Sponsored Organizations
  - Policy 4200 Meal Charges
  - Policy 5200 Student Transportation
  - Policy 6020 School Planning/School Construction Programs
  - Policy 7120 Selection of Coaches and Advisors of High School Extracurricular Activities
  - Policy 8000 Curriculum
  - Policy 8090 Non-School-Hour Curricular Programs
  - Policy 9070 Academic Eligibility for High School Extracurricular Activities
  - Policy 9080 Interscholastic Athletic Program
  - Policy 10000 Student, Parent, Family and Community Engagement
  - Policy 10010 Distribution and Display of Materials and Announcements
  - Policy 10020 Use of School Facilities
  
- C. Relevant Data Sources
  - Policy 9090 Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Activity Annual Reports
    - Howard County Public Schools – Maryland Wellness Policies and Practice Project
  - Lifetime Fitness Course Assessment
  - Trend data for Fitnessgram
  - Maryland Youth Tobacco and Risk Behavior Survey (CDC)
  - Maryland Hunger Solutions – School Breakfast in Maryland’s Counties Policy Brief
  - Maryland Hunger Solutions – The Federal Nutrition Programs in Howard County Report
  - Team Nutrition: Local Wellness Policy Resources CDC Healthy Schools – Local School Wellness Policy
  
- D. Other
  - HCPSS Student Code of Conduct
  - Howard County Health Department Regulations
  - Institute of Medicine (IOM) Nutrition Standards
  - Health Department Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP)
  - Maryland State Department of Education, School and Community Branch,
    - Management and Operations Memorandum (MOM) #12
  - USDA Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs
  - USDA Memorandum on Wellness Policies
  - USDA Guide to Smart Snacks in School (2016)
  - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health Local School Wellness Policy
  - USDA Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs (2015)
  - USDA. School Nutrition Environment and Wellness Resources
  - U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans

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WellSAT 3.0: Wellness School Assessment Tool

**VIII. History<sup>1</sup>**

ADOPTED: March 23, 2006  
REVIEWED:  
MODIFIED: September 17, 2015  
April 7, 2022  
REVISED: July 1, 2006  
October 11, 2007  
May 13, 2010  
April 10, 2014  
January 13, 2022  
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<sup>1</sup> Key: *Adopted*-Original date the Board took action to approve a policy; *Reviewed*-The date the status of a policy was assessed by the Superintendent's Standing Policy Group; *Modified*-The date the Board took action to alter a policy that based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee did not require a comprehensive examination; *Revised*-The date the Board took action on a policy that based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee needed a comprehensive examination; *Effective*-The date a policy is implemented throughout the HCPSS, typically July 1 following Board action.

**WELLNESS THROUGH NUTRITION  
AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

Effective: January 13, 2022

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**I. Implementation Procedures Statement**

Coordinated school health is a systematic approach to improving students' health and well-being so they can participate and succeed in school. Developing habits for healthy eating and regular physical activity can have a lifelong positive impact on students' health. A coordinated approach calls for the Board of Education, Superintendent, and employees to work together, engage families and communities, and commit to consistent modeling of healthy behaviors to ensure access to affordable, nutritious food. Attention to the physical, social, emotional, and mental health of our student body involves the entire community, including students, parents, counselors, teachers, health professionals, community organizations, administrators, and more.

In order to successfully implement this policy, the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) is committed to engaging and educating the community, employees, and students of the importance of health and well-being to academic achievement.

**II. Health and Nutrition Education**

- A. Students in prekindergarten-grade 12 will receive health education in multiple formats with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for making health-promoting decisions, achieving health literacy, adopting health-enhancing behaviors, and promoting healthy lifestyles.
- B. The health education curriculum will include nutrition education for students in prekindergarten–grade 8 and in the required high school health education courses. Nutrition education will provide students with developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities to develop student understanding of the food system and to experience a variety of tastes.
  - 1. At the elementary level, the health education curriculum will be taught by the classroom teacher as one of the five content areas in the elementary curricular program.
  - 2. At the middle school level, the health education curriculum will be taught every day for one quarter, or in a schedule with a comparable number of hours.
  - 3. Commencing in school year 2022-2023 at the high school level, the health education curriculum will be taught for one semester during the 9<sup>th</sup> grade year

and one semester during the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade year, to meet high school graduation requirements.

4. Health education will be taught by a qualified and certified health education teacher.
  5. Nutrition education, which also includes food literacy, will develop student understanding of the food system and aid students in experiencing different tastes through programs such as: school gardens, visiting local farms, Days of Taste or similar programs, Department of Agriculture Robinson Nature Center, community college curriculum, and others.
  6. The cafeteria will be utilized as a learning environment to reinforce nutrition education.
- C. Nutrition education will be included in the essential objectives in appropriate elective courses such as Family and Consumer Sciences, Health Education, and Physical Education.
- D. School employees will be encouraged to teach nutrition education through content integration in curricular areas such as science, mathematics, and social studies. HCPSS will provide resources to all teachers on how to integrate nutrition education into the curriculum.
- E. School employees will collaborate with other programs and offices such as the Gifted and Talented Program, and Student Services to deliver nutrition education through classroom, small group, and individual activities.
- F. Nutrition information and resources will be provided to families through newsletters, publications, health fairs, the HCPSS website, and other means.

### **III. Physical Education and Physical Activity**

- A. Physical Education
1. Students at all grade levels will have access to the physical education curriculum.
  2. The HCPSS will implement a physical education curriculum for students in prekindergarten-grade 8.
    - a. The elementary school schedule will reflect an average of 90 minutes of physical education per week.
    - b. The middle school master schedule will reflect 50 minutes of physical education daily for a minimum of two quarters annually.

- c. The HCPSS may not:
  - i. Authorize a student to substitute other activities for a standards-based physical education program for graduation credits, such as but not limited to interscholastic sports, community-based sports, physical therapy, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), or marching band.
  - ii. Waive the standards-based physical education requirement needed to meet graduation requirements.
  - iii. Excuse students from the standards-based physical education program to participate in content area classes or to complete classwork assignments in other content areas; or
  - iv. Withhold students from the standards-based physical education program as a punishment, unless the student is also removed from the regular classroom setting as part of an in-school suspension or similar disciplinary intervention.
3. In grades 9-12, students will receive one-half credit of physical education instruction, the Lifetime Fitness course, to meet graduation requirements. In addition, HCPSS will offer a variety of physical education electives.
4. Physical education will be taught by a qualified and certified physical education teacher. Should that teacher be absent, physical education class will be taught by a substitute teacher.
5. Physical education teachers will receive appropriate professional development on an ongoing basis.
6. The HCPSS will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the HCPSS will work together with local government and/or community partners to support those efforts.

**B. Physical Activity**

With the goal of limiting extended periods of inactivity and to promote learning, employees will receive resources, guidance, and professional development on ways to incorporate physical activity within the school day.

1. Recess
  - a. Each elementary school will provide a 30 minute daily recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity through the provision of adequate space and equipment. Exceptions may be made by the principal for circumstances such as shortened days, special events, and altered schedules.
  - b. Recess must be adequately and appropriately staffed and supervised.

- c. At the middle school level, time permitting, schools will provide students with daily opportunity for supervised physical activity.
- d. Schools will implement recess guidelines for outside recess.

2. Other Physical Activity During School

- a. All school employees will be encouraged to incorporate physical activity breaks whenever possible into classroom instruction.
- b. HCPSS will provide training that encourages physical activity to aid teachers in implementing physical activity breaks.
- c. School Wellness Teams will proactively communicate with parents/guardians about the importance of physical activity.

3. Extracurricular and Intramural Programs

- a. Each middle school will provide an intramural program that offers all students an opportunity to participate in sports, games, and/or dance activities that focus on cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, endurance and flexibility.
- b. Each high school will provide a comprehensive interscholastic athletic program under Policy 9080 Interscholastic Athletic Program.

**IV. Facilities and Equipment**

- A. When schools are built or renovated, the design of gymnasium facilities will consider the Physical Education Facilities Guidelines issued by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).
- B. The HCPSS will review its permitting and actual space usage each year to ensure maximum use of school facilities during and after school in accordance with Policy 10020 Use of School Facilities.

**V. Nutrition Services; Foods and Beverages**

These procedures apply to all foods and beverages made available to students during the school day including but not limited to:

- School Meals Program
- A la carte and snack/dessert items
- Vending machines
- Classroom lessons
- Beverage contracts
- School stores
- Food brought from home for classes or groups of students
- School parties/celebrations



Foods and beverages covered by this policy will comply with the current U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and federal, state, and local laws, including safety and sanitation standards set by the Health Department Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans and guidelines.

- A. Safety and Security Issues Related to Foods and Beverages
1. Howard County Health Department Regulations (referenced via the Howard County Code) require that food served to the public must be prepared in a licensed facility. The license for the HCPSS School Food and Nutrition Service is not transferable to outside caterers or groups applying for use of the facilities.
  2. For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the food service facilities is limited to HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service employees.
  3. The preparation of foods and beverages during the school day by any group or organization other than the HCPSS School Food and Nutrition Service Office is prohibited, except that students may prepare foods and beverages in accordance with the provisions of Section V.A.4. of these procedures.
  4. Classroom activities that involve cooking are not permitted, except as defined in the curriculum for Family and Consumer Science, Academic Life Skills (ALS), and when indicated in a student's IEP. Any of these activities will not include hazardous foods. Examples of potentially hazardous foods that are excluded from classroom activities include foods made with poultry, meats, fish, rice, eggs, seafood, mayonnaise, dairy products, casseroles, and sauces containing meat.
  5. Schools will provide students the opportunity to wash their hands before and after eating meals or snacks.
  6. Principals and teachers will request that parents and other individuals avoid bringing foods to school that might cause a food allergic student to have an allergic reaction. (See the HCPSS Guidelines for Management of Students with Severe Food Allergies.)
  7. Except as provided in Sections V.A.4. and V.E.2., no foods or beverages are to be sold or given without charge to any students in a school from 12:01 a.m. until after the end of the last lunch period except through the HCPSS School Food and Nutrition Service.
  8. For health and safety reasons, parents/visitors are only permitted to bring in food that is intended to be consumed by their individual student.

9. For health and safety reasons, students are only permitted to bring in food for their own personal consumption given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

B. Student Rewards

Foods and beverages will not be given as a reward to students or withheld as a punishment, except as provided in a student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. Coupons for food items that are to be consumed off school campus may be given. Outside partners providing coupons are encouraged to offer healthy and nutrient-dense food choices (i.e. those that include fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and/or low-fat dairy and foods that limit the sodium, fat, sugar and calories per serving). Informational resources on the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Nutrition Standards and the use of those standards, will be provided by HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service employees to external partners.

Opportunities to engage in additional play and other physical activities may be used as a reward.

C. School Meals Program

1. The HCPSS School Food and Nutrition Service will provide approved school lunches each day that school is in session.
2. School meals will meet nutrition standards established by the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Information on these programs and standards will be available on the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service website.
3. Schools 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.
4. Daily food choices offered to students will include multiple entrees, fresh unlimited salad bars, trays of fruits and vegetables, whole grain breads and rolls, and flavored and unflavored fat-free or 1% milk. Although students are free to choose the foods they want for lunch, at least one of their choices will be a fruit or vegetable.
5. Main course food items offered as alternatives to or in addition to the reimbursable meal will be offered in reasonable portion sizes that are consistent with the USDA for Child Nutrition Programs.
6. The HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service will provide appropriate food substitutions for students who require dietary accommodations because of a disability that is documented under a 504 plan.

7. The School Breakfast Program will be available to all students every weekday morning that school is in session. Exceptions may be made by the school principal on delayed opening days. No advance registration is necessary, students can attend every day or only occasionally, and the meals will be based on the nutrition recommendations set forth in the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The School Breakfast Program models include but are not limited to: Traditional Breakfast, Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab and Go Breakfast, and/or Breakfast after First Period.
8. Morning bus routes will be scheduled to allow students to arrive in time for breakfast.
9. The HCPSS will proactively promote the school breakfast program to students and parents to encourage greater participation.
10. Students are prohibited from leaving the school campus for lunch.
11. School administration will make every effort to schedule lunch periods at appropriate times.
12. Students will be given adequate time to eat. Meal schedules will provide students with at least ten (10) minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and twenty (20) minutes after sitting down for lunch. Exceptions may be made by the school principal on delayed opening days by allowing lunch periods to be compressed and by not offering the breakfast program since lunch periods may start as soon as the students arrive at school.
13. Schools will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
14. The HCPSS School Food and Nutrition Service will incorporate produce from local farms as much as possible and when in season and available.
15. Schools will make nutritional information available to students to make informed decisions. Healthier choices, such as salads and fruit, will be prominently displayed in cafeterias and competitively priced.
16. Students will be provided a pleasant environment in which to eat school meals. Appropriate supervision will be provided in the cafeteria and rules for safe behavior will be consistently enforced.
17. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs.
18. All HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service employees will meet hiring standards and annual continuing education/training requirements as per the USDA Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals.

19. Professional development in the area of food and nutrition will be provided annually for food service managers, employees, and school administrators.
20. The school system will provide periodic food promotions at each school level to encourage taste testing of healthy new foods being introduced on the menu.
21. Students and families will have the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural and ethnic favorites, and the input will be considered in development of the school meals programs.

D. Beverages

1. Students will have access to drinking water that is safe and clean throughout the school day, and free of charge in the school cafeteria, classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, play yards, and athletic fields.
2. The Superintendent/designee will set and maintain hygiene standards for drinking fountains, water coolers, hydration stations, water jets, and other methods of delivering drinking water.
3. High school students may purchase unflavored, unfortified, non-carbonated water from vending machines operated by the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service during the school day.

E. Other Foods and Beverages

1. A la carte and snack/dessert items sold by the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards. HCPSS will follow the IOM Nutrition Standards.
2. All foods and beverages must be caffeine-free except for trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances.
3. A principal may permit food and/or beverages in conjunction with a special celebration no more than twelve times per year after the end of the last lunch period. Such events may not replace the food service provided that day by the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service. The foods and beverages served will be prepared commercially in licensed facilities. Schools are encouraged to develop alternatives to the use of food for celebrations.

The single exception is that an annual celebration in each school is permitted without time constraint once per year.

4. All foods and beverages sold in high school vending machines that are accessible to students will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards. HCPSS will follow the IOM Nutrition Standards.

F. Vending Machines Accessible After the School Day

1. Foods and beverages sold after the end of the school day through vending machines in schools are permitted only at the high school level and will meet IOM Nutrition Standards.
2. All vending machines accessible to students, except those operated by the HCPSS School Food and Nutrition Service, will have and use a timing device to automatically prohibit access to the vending machines during the school day.

G. Food and Beverage Advertising and Marketing During the School Day

The following criteria include any written, graphic, or oral advertising or marketing of a food or beverage product during the school day on any HCPSS school property.

1. Allowed Advertising/Marketing

HCPSS permits advertising/marketing of food or beverage products on school property during the school day if:

- a. The food or beverage products meet the standards of this policy and are consistent with law, or
- b. The foods or beverages are on clothing or personal items worn or used by students, parents, or staff, or
- c. The foods or beverages are on products or on the packaging of products brought from home for personal consumption on school property, or
- d. The food or beverage products are used for educational purposes in the classroom.

2. Advertising/Marketing That is Not Allowed

If not meeting the criteria in Section V.G.1. above, written, graphic, or oral advertising, or marketing of food or beverage products will not be permitted on school property during the school day on:

- a. School equipment such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards, or backboards
- b. Cups used for beverage dispensing
- c. Tray liners
- d. Menu boards, coolers
- e. Trash cans and food service equipment
- f. Vending machines
- g. Posters, book covers, assignment books or school supplies
- h. School publications or mailings
- i. Free product samples or taste tests

- j. Coupons of a product
- k. Fundraising and corporate incentive programs.

3. Phase-In

Items on semi-permanent school property, (e.g. scoreboards) do not need to be immediately removed or replaced.

If these items are replaced or updated over time, guidelines in Sections V.G.1. and V.G.2. above will be followed.

## **VI. District-Level Implementation**

The Superintendent/designee will oversee school implementation and compliance with this policy including:

- A. Provide assistance and support to schools with implementation of the policy and improve programming functions.
- B. Ensure schools are offered support services through various departments including the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service and Health and Physical Education, to ensure the full implementation of this policy.
- C. Establish a process to gather regular reporting and feedback from individual schools, community partners, students, and parents on the implementation of the policy.
- D. Conduct periodic evaluations and report on systemwide and individual schools' compliance with the policy.
- E. Conduct periodic, systemwide review and assessment of this policy and other related Board policies on their effectiveness and, based on this assessment, propose policy revisions.
- F. Assess Policy 9090 Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Activity at least once every three (3) years on the extent to which schools in the system are in compliance with the policy, the extent to which the policy compares to model wellness policies, and the progress made in attaining the goals of this policy.

## **VII. School-Level Implementation**

- A. Each school principal will ensure that a School Wellness Team is formed annually to spearhead health and wellness initiatives at the school that are in compliance with this policy. The principal will establish a system to annually identify School Wellness Team members which may include parents/guardians, teachers of physical education, classroom teachers, school nurses/assistants, students, school administrators, and community health and wellness partners.

- B. Each school principal will annually designate a school employee to serve as the School Wellness Champion who will:
  - 1. Lead and coordinate their school's efforts to increase healthy eating and physical activity for students.
  - 2. Serve as the liaison for their respective school's policy implementation and reporting.
  - 3. Establish and lead a School Wellness Team that develops goals, strategies, and initiatives for student health, wellness, and physical activity during the school year.
- C. Each school principal will provide annual updates to the Superintendent/designee regarding the school's health and wellness initiatives and the school's implementation of this policy.

### **VIII. Employee Health and Wellness**

- A. The HCPSS will support employee wellness by providing opportunities for employees to improve their overall health by offering resources, programming, services and support for employees to seek healthy lifestyle choices that enhance their physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being. These efforts will assist employees to make informed lifestyle choices in an effort to improve their health status, and provide them with a greater understanding of the system's overall coordinated school and workplace health approach.
- B. All employees will be encouraged to promote a healthy school environment by modeling healthy behaviors throughout the school day and at school-sponsored meetings and events. This includes engaging in physical activity when possible and consuming foods in front of students that meet the competitive food nutritional standards.
- C. When feasible, the HCPSS will offer professional learning opportunities and resources for employees to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom, the workplace, and their personal lives. Professional learning will help employees understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing improvement plans/efforts.

### **IX. Family/Community Collaboration**

- A. The HCPSS will partner with the Howard County School Health Council (COMAR 13A.05.05) and other agencies to support the implementation of coordinated and comprehensive school health practices.

- B. Parents and members of the community have the opportunity to be involved in implementation of this policy through:
  - 1. Howard County School Health Council: Parents and members of the community may serve on the School Health Council and/or its subcommittee.
  - 2. School Wellness Teams: Parents and community health and wellness partners will be invited to participate in school-level School Wellness Teams.
  - 3. Boosters and PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC): The Superintendent/Designee will work with schools and community organizations such as the Boosters and PTACHC.
- C. Parents will receive educational resources and encouragement to help their children implement physical activity.
- D. Families will be informed of school activities that encourage healthy eating and physical activity.

**X. Recordkeeping**

The HCPSS participates in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs and is required to undergo an administrative review every three years. As part of the administrative review, the state agency must assess the HCPSS's compliance with the Local School Wellness Policy Final Rule.

The HCPSS will retain records documenting compliance with the requirements of the this policy, which will include:

- A. The written HCPSS Policy 9090 Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Education.
- B. Documentation demonstrating that the HCPSS has informed the public, on an annual basis, about the contents of this policy and any updates to the policy.
- C. Documentation of efforts to review and update HCPSS Policy 9090 Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Education, including who is involved in the review and methods used by the HCPSS to inform the public of their ability to participate in the review.
- D. Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of HCPSS Policy 9090 Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Education and notification of the assessment results to the public.



## **XI. Definitions**

Within the context of these implementation procedures, the following definitions apply:

- A. Healthy and Nutrient-Dense Food – Foods that provide substantial amounts of vitamins and minerals while limiting the amount of sugar, fat, salt, and calories per serving such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.
- B. Rewards – Incentives offered to students in recognition of good behavior or performance whether offered before, during or after school. Includes individual rewards from teachers or other school employees, as well as small or large group events rewarding attendance, academic achievement, etc.

## **XII. Monitoring**

Policy 9090 implementation procedures will be overseen by the Division of Operations.

## **XIII. History<sup>1</sup>**

ADOPTED: March 23, 2006

REVIEWED:

MODIFIED: May 19, 2015  
September 17, 2015  
June 8, 2017  
August 18, 2020

REVISED: June 14, 2007  
July 1, 2007  
May 13, 2010  
April 10, 2014  
January 13, 2022

EFFECTIVE: January 13, 2022

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<sup>1</sup> Key: *Adopted*-Original date the Board took action to approve a policy; *Reviewed*-The date the status of a policy was assessed by the Superintendent's Standing Policy Group; *Modified*-The date the Board took action to alter a policy that based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee did not require a comprehensive examination; *Revised*-The date the Board took action on a that policy based on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee needed a comprehensive examination; *Effective*-The date a policy is implemented throughout the HCPSS, typically July 1 following Board action.