

# POLICY

SOMERSET COUNTY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Date Submitted:**

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**Subject:**

Student Health and  
Wellness Services

**Date Approved:**

September 15, 2014

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September 15, 2014

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to support the role for student health services and a healthy school environment which comprise of 1) establishing uniform county-wide guidelines for foods available to students, including sales of competitive food and foods that the U.S.D.A. deems of minimal nutritional values, during the school day, 2) to endure the integrity of child nutrition programs, 3) promote learning through the health and wellness of students.

## 2. GUIDELINES

A. The Somerset County Board of Education, the Food and Nutrition Services Department, along with Congress recognizes that schools play a critical role in promoting student health, preventing childhood obesity, and combating problems associated with poor nutrition and physical inactivity. Although parents have the primary responsibility for the health care and wellness of their children and should assume the major role as guardians of the child's health, however children spend the majority of their day in a school setting, therefore it is the responsibility of the schools and the Board of Education to provide a school environment that promotes students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

B. Schools must assume an increased responsibility for ensuring the nutritional health and physical activity of children by using the relatively low cost, but long-term health benefits associated with school meals and Physical Education programs. To ensure the integrity of the school system's wellness programs and to maximize benefits to students, the Board of Education of Somerset County supports the following areas:

### 1. **NUTRITION EDUCATION & WELLNESS PROMOTION**

a. Nutrition education shall be an integral part of the curriculum at each grade level from Pre-Kindergarten through grade 8, following the Maryland State Department of Education's Standards for Health Education. High School students will receive nutrition education that is aligned with the Maryland Health Education State Standards, as a part of the high school health graduation requirement.

- b. The school cafeteria shall serve as a laboratory for promoting nutrition education, applying critical thinking skills taught in the classroom, and emphasizing how behavior and nutrition impact one another.
- c. Through the Maryland Meals for Achievement, teachers are encouraged to take part in the program and promote the breakfasts being served.
- d. Schools are encouraged to have school-based wellness committees/plans that encourage staff to be role models of healthy eating and physical activity.
- e. The SCPS Wellness Committee shall consist of at least one community member and one parent, along with a variety of SCPS employees. Families will be provided the nutritional information for school meals through flyers, school menus (in hard-copy form and electronically on the county webpage). School menus shall provide student choice for all aspects of their meal.

## **2. USDA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND SCHOOL MEALS**

- a. All students in Somerset County shall be provided a free breakfast and lunch through federal funding/grants. SCPS will continue to this practice as long as funding is available.
- b. Nutrition standards shall be based on current dietary guidelines for Americans. Emphasis will be placed on increasing the dietary fiber and the variety of foods and reducing fat, sodium, and sugar in school meals.
- c. All school meals will meet or exceed the requirements established by the State and Federal Agencies for Child Nutrition Programs
- d. Students, staff, and parents will provide input on the food selection and planning of the menus through surveys.
- e. All students shall be provided a minimum of 30 minutes for lunch, while all teachers and staff will receive a 30 minute duty-free lunch period.
- f. All cafeteria managers and food service workers will participate in an annual training that focuses on nutrition, menu planning, and food service regulations.
- g. Each school shall provide the students with a safe and clean eating environment.
- h. Nutritional information about school meals (e.g., calories, saturated fats, sugar) shall be sent to parent per request and posted on the county website.

## **3. COMPETITIVE AND OTHER FOODS & BEVERAGES**

All foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus, including cafeteria a la carte items, vending machines, school stores, and fundraising activities will meet the Maryland Nutrition Standards for all Foods Sold in Schools.

- A. All foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus, including cafeteria a la carte items, vending machines, school stores, and fundraising activities, from 12:01 am until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the official school day will meet the following criteria:
1. All foods must fall in one of the following categories:
    - a. Be whole grain-rich ( $\geq 50\%$  whole grain by weight, or listed as first ingredient)
    - b. First ingredient must be: fruit, vegetable, dairy product, or protein food
    - c. Be a combination of food that consists of  $\geq 1/4$  cup of fruit and/or vegetables.
    - d. Contain at least 10% of the Daily Value of a nutrient of public health concern: calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber.
  2. They must also meet ALL of the following standards:
    - a. Calories: snacks/side dish  $\leq 200$  cal. entrees  $\leq 350$  cal.
    - b. Sodium: snacks/side dish  $\leq 230$  mg entrees  $\leq 480$  mg
    - c. Fats: Total:  $\leq 35\%$  of calories  
Saturated fat  $< 10\%$  of calories  
Trans. Fat – zero grams
    - d. Sugar: weight sugar  $\div$  total weight  $\leq 35\%$  of total weight from sugar
  3. Beverages must meet these standards:
    - a. Plain water/carbonated plain water – any size at all levels
    - b. Milk (Low-fat unflavored) (non-fat unflavored or flavored) – ELEM:  $\leq 8$  fl oz. MID/HS:  $\leq 12$  fl oz
    - c. 100% Fruit/Veg Juice - ELEM:  $\leq 8$  fl oz. MID/HS:  $\leq 12$  fl oz
    - d. Other flavored &/or Carb. Bev – ELEM/MID: not allowed  
HS:  $\leq 12$  oz must have  $\leq 40$  cal/8oz  $\leq 60$  cal/12 oz  
 $\leq 20$  oz must have  $\leq 5$  cal/8 oz  $\leq 10$  cal/12 oz
    - e. Soda - NOT allowed at any level
    - f. Caffeine –NOT allowed at any level
- B. School principals shall regulate class parties and school celebrations by enforcing a limited time and encourage the distribution of healthy snacks and discourage snacks that trigger common allergies (peanuts, red dye, strawberries, tree nuts, etc.)
1. School principals shall encourage teachers and staff members to use other means to reward students rather than using food.
  2. All schools shall have working water fountains for students to have access to throughout the day.

3. School principals shall be encouraged to limit the number of school wide fundraisers that involve the purchase of food items.

#### C. PHYSICAL EDUCATION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

1. All Physical Education courses (grades K-12) will follow the Maryland State Health and Physical Education Standards.
  - a. Students shall take part in a minimum amount of time in physical activity:
    - 1) Elementary School- 160 minutes of physical activity per week (which includes the combination of recess and Physical Education class). A minimum of 20 minute outdoor recesses per day (weather permitting)
    - 2) Middle School: 90 minutes of Physical Education per week
    - 3) High School: ½ credit of Physical Education and ½ credit of Health Education
  - b. All Physical Education teachers shall meet annually to review standards, requirements, additional training.
  - c. Physical Education classes shall not exceed a 1:30 teacher-student ratio.
  - d. The Physical Education Supervisor and Facilities Director shall complete annual reviews of the physical space and equipment used at each school campus for Physical Education and outdoor recess.
  - e. All Physical Education instructors must be highly qualified according to MSDE standards.
  - f. Students who are unable to participate in Physical Education for medical reasons must present a medical weaver from a certified physician.
  - g. School Principals shall encourage teachers to incorporate movement into their daily lessons.
  - h. Physical Education class shall not be withheld from a student as a form of punishment.
  - i. Physical activity opportunities (clubs, classes, intramurals, and/or interscholastic) shall be provided to students at other times of the school day (before, after, or lunch time) will be explored and implemented as appropriate.
  - j. Schools shall be available for community organizations to use for physical activities. Refer to Policy 200-13 – Use of School Facilities.

- C. Implementation Regulations/Guidelines
  - 1. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee will develop a plan to ensure consistent, on-going implementation of this policy.
  
- D. Expectations for Evaluation, Review, and Updates:
  - 1. The Somerset County Public School Wellness Committee will review and update this policy as necessary to ensure compliance with State and Federal requirements.
  - 2. Policy will be assessed at each school to determine the extent to which schools are in compliance with the policy;
  - 3. Results of this assessment will be shared with the school and community through written and electronic means.
  - 4. This policy will be evaluated using the Wellness School Assessment Tool (Well SAT, Schwartz et al., 2009)
  - 5. Results of this evaluation will be shared with the school and community through written and electronic means