

Examples of Policy Language for Local Wellness Policies

Background

Public Law 108-265, Section 204, requires that all Local Education Agencies (LEA) participating in the National School Lunch Program develop Local Wellness Policies by the first day of school after July 1, 2006. The law requires that each LEA develop nutrition guidelines for all foods available on the school grounds during the school day; goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities; a plan to measure implementation; and oversight responsibilities to be assigned to one or more people. Parents, students, at least one representative of the school food authority, school administrators, school board members, and the public must participate in the development of the policy.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education's Division of Food and Nutrition and the Bureau of Teaching and Learning Support, School Health Programs, collaborated to develop sample policy language specifically related to "goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities." Schools may select any of the following bulleted examples or create their own language. A draft of *Examples of Policy Language for Local Wellness Policies* was distributed to experts and practitioners for review.

When writing the wellness policy, it is important to remember that the goals and objectives stated in the language must be measurable. Any of the examples provided may need to be modified in order to be measurable at the local level. Inserting this language is dependent upon local level activities and tactics that will support the language. For example, policy language contained in this document states:

- "Schools will partner with parents and community members to institute programs that support physical activity." At the local level, those "programs" would need to be defined and documented in order to measure implementation.
- "Nutrition education will be integrated into other subjects to complement, but not replace, standards-based nutrition education." In order to measure implementation, the LEA will need to document how this will be accomplished, (i.e., through math classes, incorporating nutrition into X number of lessons).
- "Students and parents will be involved in menu selections." The LEA will need to document how this will be accomplished (taste testing, surveys, nutrition advisory councils, etc.).

This is a resource for Pennsylvania schools as they develop their local wellness policies. The policy language examples have been extracted from several sources and are intended to provide schools with a bulleted resource list of appropriate language. Any of the following bulleted examples can be selected and inserted into a Local Wellness Policy.

In the development of this resource, the USDA Wellness Policy Website was reviewed and policy language was compiled from the following sources:

USDA's Local Wellness Policy Website

www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/wellnesspolicy.html

Arizona
South Carolina
Colorado
North Carolina
Rhode Island

School Nutrition Association-Wellness Policy Template

www.schoolnutrition.org

National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA)-Wellness Policy Template

<http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/>

Current Nutrition Education and Physical Education Requirements in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania schools must already meet the curricular requirements for Nutrition Education and Physical Education as defined in Chapter 4 of the State Board of Education Curriculum Regulations (www.pde.state.pa.us/k12/lib/k12/ch4b.pdf), the Academic Standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education (www.pde.state.pa.us/stateboard_ed/lib/stateboard_ed/SandyHealth.pdf) and the Academic Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences. (www.pde.state.pa.us/stateboard_ed/lib/stateboard_ed/pdffamily.pdf.) Nutrition education is one part of a comprehensive health education program. The requirement for nutrition education will be cited as health. Since these standards are already required for schools in the Commonwealth, it is not necessary to include them as part of your language. However, language in your local wellness policy should complement the current state requirements, which are summarized as follows:

- Curriculum Regulation § 4.21 Elementary education: primary and intermediate levels. Planned instruction in health and physical education shall be provided to every student every year in the primary (approximately 8 years of age) and intermediate (approximately 11 years of age) programs.
- Curriculum Regulation § 4.22 Middle level education. Planned instruction in health and physical education shall be provided to every student in the middle level (approximately 11-14 years of age) program.
- Curriculum Regulation § 4.23 High school education. Planned instruction in health and physical education shall be provided to every student in the high school program.
- Curriculum Regulation § 4.27(b) The physical education program shall be adapted for students who are unable to participate in the regular physical education program.
- Curriculum Regulation § 4.12 (h) Academic Standards. School districts are responsible for assessing individual student attainment of academic standards and for assisting students who have difficulty attaining them.

- Curriculum Regulation §4.52 Local assessment system. Local assessment systems must be in place to determine the degree to which students are achieving academic standards (Health, Safety and Physical Education).

Goals for Nutrition Education

Examples of wellness policy language for nutrition education include:

- Nutrition education will occur sequentially from preschool through secondary school.
- Nutrition education will be provided within the sequential, comprehensive health education program as established by the State Board of Education Curriculum Regulations and the Academic Standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education and Family and Consumer Sciences.
- Nutrition education will provide children with the knowledge and skills needed to lead healthy lives.
- Nutrition education lessons and activities will be age appropriate.
- Nutrition education will be integrated into other subjects to complement, but not replace, standards-based nutrition education
- Lifelong lifestyle balance will be reinforced by linking nutrition education and physical activity.
- Nutrition curriculum will be behavior focused (interactive/skills based).
- Coordination between school food service and nutrition education classes will occur to create a learning laboratory.
- Consistent nutrition messages will be provided throughout the school, classroom, and cafeteria.
- The staff responsible for providing nutrition education will be adequately prepared and participate in appropriate professional development.
- Nutrition education will extend beyond the school environment by sharing information with and involving families and communities.

Goals for Physical Activity

Examples of wellness policy language for physical activity include:

A. Recommendations for Physical Activity

- Schools will contribute to providing children the opportunity to accumulate at least 60 minutes and up to several hours, of age-appropriate physical activity on all, or most days of the week. (The 60 minutes also includes physical activity opportunities outside of the school environment, such as outdoor playtime prior to dinner, etc.)
- Children will participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more to contribute to achieving the 60-minute recommendation.
- Children will participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical activities designed to achieve optimal health, wellness, fitness and performance benefits.

- Extended periods of inactivity, periods of two hours or more, will be discouraged for children.
- Organized, age-appropriate physical activity opportunities such as before-school, during recess, after-school, during lunch and interscholastic athletic activities, will be provided for all students in addition to planned physical education.
- Physical activity opportunities and developmentally appropriate activities will be provided for all students.

B. Physical Activity During the School Day Through Physical Education

- Physical education will be the environment through which all children learn, practice, and are assessed on the developmentally appropriate skills and knowledge necessary for participation in lifelong, health-enhancing physical activity.
- Quality physical education instruction that promotes lifelong physical activity and provides instruction in the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong participation will be provided.
- The physical education program will follow the National Association for Sport and Physical Education appropriate practices and the Centers for Disease Control guidelines.
- Adequate amounts of planned instruction and time will be provided in order for students to be able to achieve the proficient level for the Pennsylvania Health, Safety and Physical Education standards. (Schools may insert daily or a specific amount of time for “adequate amounts.”)
- A local assessment system will be implemented to track student progress on the Health, Safety and Physical Education standards.
- A sequential physical education program consistent with the Pennsylvania State Board of Education Curriculum Regulations and the Academic Standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education will be developed and implemented.
- Physical education will be provided by certified Health and Physical Education teachers.
- Physical education classes will have a teacher-to-student ratio comparable with those of other classes.
- A comprehensive physical education course of study that focuses on providing students the skills, knowledge and confidence to participate in life-long, health-enhancing physical activity will be implemented.
- Students will be moderately to vigorously active as much time as possible within the physical education class or as physically active within the physical education class as a documented medical condition or disability will allow.
- A physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students will be provided.
- A varied and comprehensive curriculum that leads to becoming and remaining physically active for a lifetime will be provided in the physical education program.
- Safe and adequate equipment, facilities and resources will be provided.
- Appropriate professional development for staff will be provided.
- Physical activity will not be used as a form of punishment.

C. Physical Activity During the School Day Beyond Physical Education

- Physical activity breaks will be provided during classroom hours.
- Schools will offer organized before-school and after-school intramural programs, physical activity clubs and interscholastic activities that meet the needs and interests of all students that promote physical activity.
- Schools will partner with parents and community members to institute programs that support physical activity.
- After-school programs will provide developmentally appropriate physical activity for participating children.
- Physical activity will not be used as a form of punishment.

Goals for Other School-Based Activities

Examples of wellness policy language include:

A. School Environment

- Physical activity will not be used as a form of punishment.
- Food will not be used as a reward or punishment.
- Recess will be scheduled before lunch (age-appropriate).
- Drinking water will be available at all meal periods and throughout the school day.
- Students will have access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before meals and snacks.
- Fundraising will be supportive of healthy eating.
- Parents, teachers, administrators, students, foodservice professionals, and community members will be encouraged to serve as appropriate role models through staff wellness programs, and parent and community outreach.
- Local Wellness Policy goals will be considered in planning all school-based activities (school events, field trips, dances, etc.).

B. Family and Community

- Schools will partner with parents and community members to institute programs that support nutrition education and physical activity.
- Students and the community will have access to physical activity facilities outside school hours.
- Nutrition analysis of school meals and/or nutrient content of foods will be available to parents and students.
- Students and parents will be involved in menu selections.

C. Nutrition Services

- Students will be provided a clean and safe meal environment.
- Students will be provided adequate time to eat (10 minutes of sit-down time for breakfast, 20 minutes of sit-down time for lunch).
- Meal periods will be scheduled at appropriate hours (i.e. lunch is scheduled between 11-1).

- Schools will provide adequate space for eating and serving school meals.
- Access to the food service operation will be limited to child nutrition staff and authorized personnel.
- Schools will make use of available funding and programs through the school foodservice program to enhance student health (School Breakfast Program, Afterschool Snack Program, and Summer Food Service Program)
- Schools will apply for available grant funds to enhance the nutrition and nutrition education environment (i.e., PDE/Project PA, Dairy Council, Action for Healthy Kids, PANA).

D. Professional Development

- Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meals program.
- Schools will provide appropriate professional development for all child nutrition staff. Professional development should be provided appropriately according to job responsibilities.
- Schools will provide appropriate in-service training to all staff on components of Local Wellness Policy.

E. Health Promotion for Staff

- Staff will be provided with health education/wellness programs.
- Staff will be encouraged to participate in health education/wellness programs.

Resources

School Health Councils and Coordinated School Health

American Cancer Society
 Contact your local American Cancer Society
 1-800-ACS-2345

Policy Structure Resource

National Association of State Boards of Education
 Fit Healthy, and Ready to Learn
www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/healthy_eating.html

School Environment Assessment Resources

Center for Disease Control and Prevention
 School Health Index
<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/>

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
 Changing the Scene School Improvement Checklist

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/support.pdf>

Nutrition and Nutrition Education Resources

USDA Team Nutrition

–Wellness Policy Section

–Making It Happen

–Changing the Scene

<http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/healthy-schools.html>

Project PA

“Preventing Childhood Overweight and Obesity: Parents Can Make a Difference”

Healthy School Nutrition Environment Policies

Increasing School Meals Participation-Breakfast

<http://nutrition.psu.edu/projectpa>

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Marketplace for the Mind

<http://www.marketplaceforthemind.state.pa.us>

School Nutrition Association (formerly American School Food Service Association)

Keys to Excellence

www.schoolnutrition.org/keys

Action for Healthy Kids

www.actionforhealthykids.org

Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity (PANA)

www.panaonline.org

Family and Community Careers Leaders of America (FCCLA)

www.fcclainc.org

National Dairy Council

www.nationaldairyCouncil.org

5 A Day

www.5aday.org

CDC Guidelines for School Health Programs to Promote Lifelong Healthy Eating

www.cdc.gov

Physical Activity and Physical Education Resources

National Association for Sports and Physical Education (NASPE)

www.naspeinfo.org

National Association for Sports and Physical Education (NASPE)

- Appropriate Practices in Movement Programs for Young Children 3-5
- Appropriate Practices for Elementary School Physical Education
- Appropriate Practices for Middle School Physical Education
- Appropriate Practices for Secondary School Physical Education

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=peappropriatepractice/index.html>.

- Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years
- Physical Activity for Children: A Statement of Guidelines for Children 5-12, 2nd Edition

http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=ns_index.html

Quality Physical Education

http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=publications-nationalstandards_3.html

Action for Healthy Kids

www.actionforhealthykids.org

Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity (PANA)

www.panaonline.org

Recess Before Lunch

www.opi.state.mt.us/school-food/recessBL.html

CDC Guidelines for School and Community Programs to Promote Lifelong Physical Activity among Young People

www.cdc.gov

For additional information regarding the Local Wellness Policy requirement, contact:

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