

## Student Wellness Policy

### Rationale/Purpose of the Policy

In accordance with MGL 223, Chapter 111, 105 CMR 215.000, the Milford Public Schools promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness\*, public nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment and to ensure that the school district has a system in place to deal effectively with school health issues. The Milford Public Schools supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. The Milford Public Schools contributes to health and wellness of children by facilitating and supporting learning through the promotion of good nutritional and physical activity habits. Improved health and wellness habits, attention to nutrition, overweight and childhood obesity, and the promotion of physical activity are the underpinnings of this comprehensive policy.

*\*Wellness means a process by which individuals move toward optimal physical and mental health, regardless of current health status or disability, by practicing healthy choices within an enabling environment which encourages healthy decision-making.*

### Components of the Policy

#### **1. Health Education, Physical Activity & Other School Based Activities**

Health Education – Milford Public School system is committed to educating students with the most current health knowledge and information specific to health and wellness.

- Milford Public Schools employs health teachers, who are certified in health education at the elementary, middle school and high school level;
- Nutrition and health is integrated into classroom and Physical Education instruction at the elementary level;
- Milford Public Schools utilizes updated curriculum materials to teach nutrition content within the comprehensive health education program;
- Curriculum materials, topics and standards are aligned with the State of Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Frameworks and National Health Education Standards
- Resources and plans for individual dietary, fitness and wellness goals will be taught to all students;
- Staff and Curriculum will link health and physical education in order to establish lifelong wellness. The Milford Food Service Program promotes the concepts of nutrition education through foods offered and marketing initiatives.

Physical Activity – The Milford Public School system promotes as well as teaches the values of physical activity and physical fitness as it pertains to wellness.

- Milford Public Schools employs physical education teachers, who are certified in physical education in grades PreK-12;
- Milford Public Schools utilizes updated curriculum materials to teach the benefits of physical fitness within the comprehensive physical education program;
- Curriculum materials are aligned with the state and national frameworks for physical education;

- Specifically, curriculum addresses age appropriate content with regard to the components of physical fitness, benefits of a fit lifestyle, types of team sports, individual sports and lifetime activities that promote fitness;
- Additional curriculum content includes, but are not limited to, age appropriate anatomy, physiology and kinesthetic awareness;
- Milford Public Schools recognizes the importance of recess (age appropriate), in which students are encouraged to be moderately active;
- Physical activity programs, such as intramurals, extended day programs, and extra curricular activities are available before and after school for all levels.

Milford Public Schools Physical Education programs shall require that:

- Pre-school students shall receive no less than 30 minutes per week of physical education taught by a certified instructor;
- Elementary grade students K-5 shall receive no less than 2 x 40 minutes of physical education per week taught by a certified instructor;
- Middle school students in grade 6-8 shall receive no less than 2 classes per week of physical education taught by a certified instructor;
- High school students will be required to participate in 1 semester of physical education per school year (no waivers allowed).

### **Other School Based Activities**

The Milford Public Schools system offers, at all age levels, programs and activities, as well as caters existing extra curricular programs to coincide with the wellness policy.

- The Wellness Policy is aligned with the Medical Awareness Policy;
- Milford Public Schools encourages students to be involved in other extra curricular programs within the community that value nutrition, physical activity and overall wellness;
- Advertising: The advertising of food and beverages in schools must be consistent with the established nutrition guidelines;
- Fundraising: It is not recommended to use fundraisers that sell single serving candy items that encourage students to sell them to each other and consume them. Fundraisers should promote positive physical activity.

### **Parent Communication**

- The school district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children by:
  - Encouraging a healthy diet at home or at school;
  - Sending home monthly menus including nutritional information and healthy snack ideas;
  - Providing a link from the schools' web page for nutritional sites;
  - Offering parents to share their healthy ideas and practices with the community;
  - As required by Massachusetts General Law, schools provide screening for height and weight and the calculating and reporting of the Body Mass Index (BMI) for all students in Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10. BMI is used as a guideline to help assess whether a person is underweight or overweight;

## 2. Nutrition Guidelines & Food Services

Food Services - Milford Public School systems Child Nutrition Program will comply with all of the federal, state and local requirements and is accessible to all students.

- All foods adhere to healthy and safety regulations and guidelines;
- Milford School District adheres to the “Massachusetts A La Carte Food and Beverage Standards to Promote a Healthier School Environment” by Action For Healthy Kids as a guideline for all A La Carte snack vending (including those sold through snack lines, vending machines, school stores, and fundraising activities);
- School meals are priced and marketed to appeal to all students who are encouraged to choose and consume a complete balanced meal;
- To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn, Milford will operate the school breakfast program;
- Students are offered a variety of meats/ poultry, fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy and whole grains on a daily basis;
- School Food Service staff is trained in appropriate substitutions of foods in order to meet the nutritional goals of the program;
- The Food Service Program aims to be financially self-supporting. However, budget neutrality or profit generation will not take precedence over the nutritional needs of the children.
- Parents, students and staff advisory groups will be consulted in menu planning through surveys, taste tests, and focus groups;
- Schedule meal periods so that other school activities will not conflict;
- Food preparation areas meet all health and safety regulations;
- Provide a dining area that is safe, comfortable and pleasing that allows ample time and space to purchase and eat meals.

## 3. Guidelines for Reimbursable School Meals

Reimbursable School Meals – The Milford Public Schools assures that guidelines are not less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture as they apply to schools.

- The National School Lunch and Breakfast Program shall be consistent with the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The rule established specific minimum standards for calories and key nutrients for specific age groups.

## 4. School Health Services

School nursing is a specialized practice of professional nursing that advances the well-being, academic success, and lifelong achievement of students. The Milford Public Schools employs a full time DESE certified school nurse in all of its schools. The services provided through the Health Office are defined by the National Association of School Nurses as well as the School Health Unit of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

The following are the services provided by the school nurses in the Milford Public Schools:

- Provides direct health care to all students and staff
- Provides leadership for the provision of health services
- Provides screening and referrals for health conditions
- Promotes a healthy and safe school environment
- Serves in a leadership role for health policies and promotion
- Serves as a liaison between school personnel, family, community, and health care providers

The mission of the Milford Public Schools Mental Health Services is to provide a comprehensive counseling program that collectively addresses the academic, social, behavioral, and emotional needs of students at all grade levels to promote optimal mental health and wellness. Therapeutic providers, consisting of school adjustment counselors, school psychologists, and guidance counselors, collaborate with administration, faculty, parents, and the community in order to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community for all students. Counseling services are designed to help each student reach personal and academic success through short-term, long-term, individual, or group therapeutic initiatives. Mental health services can assist with several life issues including but not limited to:

- Academic concerns
- Personal decision making
- Peer relationships and social skills advancement
- Crisis intervention and conflict resolution
- Self-esteem promotion
- Coping skills acquisition
- Stress and anger management
- Substance abuse
- Grief, trauma, and divorce
- Mental health concerns, including depression, anxiety, self-injury, and eating disorders
- Bullying

Mental health school providers make referrals to a multitude of community programs and services for students that require additional external support.

#### **4. Plan for Implementation & Evaluation**

The Milford Public Schools **Wellness Advisory Committee** is established for the purposes of:

- Developing guidance to explicate this policy;
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy;
- Evaluating policy progress;
- Making recommendations concerning health/wellness policies, programs, and practices;
- Serving as a resource to school sites;
- Reviewing or revising the policy as necessary.

Milford Public Schools Wellness Advisory Committee

In accordance with required activities promulgated by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Milford Public Schools Wellness Advisory Committee will:

- Meet at least 4 times per year;
- Maintain meeting minutes;
- Conduct an annual needs assessment which addresses nutrition, physical activity, and obesity;
- Develop and implement an annual Action Plan which addresses nutrition, physical activity, and obesity and that includes:
  - Measurable, observable goals and objectives for the coming year to promote student wellness;
  - An explanation of how the School Wellness Advisory Committee (SWAC) will work with the school district and school personnel, including school nurses, to achieve the goals and objectives;
  - Ways to develop community support and to coordinate school and community wellness initiatives;
  - A process for monitoring and evaluating progress in reaching goals and objectives;
  - Recommendations concerning school-level wellness initiatives.
- Present an Annual Report to the Milford School Committee\* that:
  - Addresses the student health data and policy/programmatic information
  - Considers suggestions from students, parents, teachers, school nurses, administrators, nutrition staff, physical education staff, and others;
  - Considers input from all schools potentially affected by the goals and objectives;
  - Includes:
    - Policy recommendations
    - Action Plan with required components
    - Assessment of accomplishments for the year and of work still needed
    - Review of membership and participation

*\*Departments of Public Health and/or Elementary & Secondary Education may request a copy of the Annual Report*

Milford Public Schools Wellness Advisory Committee:

1. District Food Service Director
2. School Administrator(s)
3. School Committee Representative
4. School Nursing Director
5. Health & Physical Education Teacher(s)/Curriculum Team Leaders
6. School Resource Officer
7. Parent Representative(s)
8. Student Representation(s)
9. Community Representative(s)
10. School Psychologist

MSC Approved: 8/17/2006  
Revised: 11/19/2008  
Amended: 12/17/2009  
Amended: 2/7/2013  
Revised: 10/29/15  
Revised: 2/8/16  
MSC First Reading: 7/21/16  
MSC Approved: 8/18/16