

WELLNESS POLICY

The Greater Fall River Vocational School District is committed to providing a school community that promotes and protects the health and well-being of students and staff by supporting healthy eating, physical activity, health and physical education, and wellness initiatives. The district recognizes that support of these objectives is essential to maximize full academic and technical potential and achieve lifelong health and well-being.

The Wellness Committee is responsible for establishing and measuring the implementation of the District's Wellness Policy. The Superintendent-Director or designee will ensure compliance with recommended state guidelines. Committee members work collaboratively and offer multiple perspectives to assure that the Wellness Policy is designed to optimize the health and well-being of students, and fulfills the requirements of Section 204 of The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265).

The below provide goals and guidelines for the Greater Fall River Vocational School District through categories provided under the guidance of the Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) 2.0, per recommendation of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Nutrition Education

- Students receive a standards-based health education curriculum, and nutrition topics shall be integrated within the comprehensive health education program.
- Nutrition education curriculum is aligned with state and federal learning objectives and standards.
- Students receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.
- Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Staff that provides nutrition education has appropriate training.
- Nutrition education will incorporate lessons helping children acquire skills for reading food labels and menu planning.

Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals

- The cafeteria manager shall ensure that the meals and snacks offered by the school food service program meet all legal requirements for participation in the USDA's National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, including compliance with nutritional standards.
- The food service department will continue to work on improving the nutritional quality and student acceptance of school meals by focusing on food presentation, and giving students opportunities to sample new foods.

- The food service department and school food service staff will receive regular health education training.
- DRVTHS encourages student participation in the school breakfast and lunch programs.
- All children who participate in subsidized food programs are able to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner. All students have access to the same food and the same lines in the cafeteria.
- DRVTHS will provide a clean and safe meal environment for all students, along with adequate time for students to sit and eat lunch scheduled as near to the middle of the school day as possible. Lunch periods are 25-minutes in length.
- Staff members and parents/guardians are encouraged to utilize the John Stalker "A List" of recommended snack foods and beverages when selecting refreshments for daily snacks, celebrations, fundraising and school events.
- Staff members and parent groups conducting fundraisers are encouraged to hold non-food related fundraisers. All fundraisers that do sell food must be conducted during non-school hours.
- The district has a closed campus policy. School staff may not provide permission for students to leave campus for the purpose of obtaining lunch.
- Appropriate supervision shall be provided in the cafeteria and rules for safe behavior shall be consistently enforced.
- School meals will meet all current USDA nutrition standards. In addition, juice will not be served as a substitute for fruit and vegetables.
- Morning bus routes will be scheduled to allow students to arrive at school in time to eat breakfast.
- All food service personnel will have adequate training in food service operations.
- Applications for free/reduced priced meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year, and the application will also be available online.
- Students will be made aware of the availability of water during meals. Students are encouraged to bring water bottles and will be allowed access to water throughout the meal period.

Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages

- Items sold in vending machines will meet USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition regulations.
- Vending machines will contain only beverages that meet USDA Smart Snacks standards including plain or carbonated water in any portion size, and 100% juice and low-fat unflavored milk or fat-free flavored or unflavored milk in portion sizes up to 12 ounces.
- No beverages with non-nutritive sweeteners (artificial or natural), such as diet iced tea, diet soda, etc. will be sold to students during the school day.
- Beverages containing caffeine will not be sold to students on the high school campus.

- Students and staff will have access to free, safe, and fresh drinking water throughout the school day.

Physical Education and Physical Activity

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, during lunch periods, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- DRVTHS will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with health-care needs.
- Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity as punishment.
- Physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs are also designed and implemented to benefit the staff as well.
- The school district's comprehensive, standards-based physical education curriculum identifies the progression of skill development in grades 9-12. Physical education curriculum revision will follow a formally established periodic review cycle congruent to other academic subjects.
- The physical education curriculum for grades 9-12 will be aligned with established state physical education standards.
- Every effort will be made to support physical education classes having the same student/teacher ratios used in other classes.
- Physical education for grades 9-12 is required to be taught by a certified/licensed teacher who is endorsed to teach physical education.
- All staff involved in physical education are encouraged to attend opportunities for professional development.
- All students in grades 9-12 shall be required to take a physical education class or complete an Athletic Study. Athletic Study Request Forms are available for students in grades 11 and 12. Students who meet the criteria to be eligible for an Athletic Study will be placed in the Athletic Study on a first-come, first-serve basis until course capacity is met.
- DRVTHS will not allow students to be exempted from required physical education without medical documentation.
- Efforts will be made by DRVTHS to provide opportunities for physical activity to all students and faculty during before and after-school hours.

Wellness Promotion and Marketing

- DRVTHS prohibits the withholding of food for punishment or as a consequence for behavior or work effort.
- DRVTHS staff will not use candy or food as a reward for student accomplishments.
- Staff are encouraged to model healthy behavior, including through nutrition and physical activity.
- DRVTHS shall encourage participation in after-school sports, intramurals and other, non-competitive physical activity programs.
- Busses, building exteriors, score boards, etc. on and around school property shall be free of brands and illustrations of unhealthful foods.
- All advertising in school publications and school media outlets must be approved by the principal and will not include food marketing.

Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

- The Superintendent-Director or designee shall be responsible for ensuring that the wellness policy is implemented in the school.
- The Superintendent-Director or designee will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The Principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in this school and will report on the compliance to the Superintendent-Director or designee.
- The school food service staff at the school will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within the school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Supervisor of Food Services.
- The Wellness Policy Committee will monitor, review, and make suggestions for revision to the district's nutritional and physical activity programs as appropriate. The Committee will serve as a general clearing-house for continual improvement in the school's practices in these and other related areas.
- The Superintendent-Director or designee will provide periodic reports to the School Committee on the school's compliance with the established Wellness Policy. The Superintendent-Director or designee will provide periodic reports to the School Committee on the school's compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The Superintendent-Director or designee will work with the Wellness Committee to determine the distribution of the report to stakeholders in the school and larger community.
- The Wellness Committee will meet a minimum of four times throughout the school year.
- Students, parents, staff, community members, and/or other stakeholders are welcome to join the committee. An email will be sent to the school community welcoming participation.
- Every two-three years, the Wellness Committee will undertake an evaluation of policy implementation and will report on outcomes that may be influenced by the policy.

- Every two-three years, the Wellness Committee will review the latest national recommendations pertaining to school health and will update the wellness policy accordingly.
- The Wellness Committee will determine how best to share wellness policy information with the school and general community.

Social Emotional Learning

In addition to the Wellness School Assessment Tool 2.0, DRVTHS supports the social and emotional health and wellness of its school community. The following guidelines have been developed in regards to Social Emotional Learning (SEL):

- DRVTHS will support the development of a Social Emotional Learning Committee that will meet regularly and provide guidance to the Wellness Committee and school administration in SEL development.
- DRVTHS will support professional development and resources for staff related to SEL.
- DRVTHS will maintain an SEL plan to establish a system for continuous improvement of SEL development.

References

- The National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity
- U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004
- The MA Comprehensive Health Education and Physical Education Curriculum Frameworks
- John Stalker "A List" of Recommended Snack Foods and Beverages
- The USDA's National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

Approved by School Committee 9/15/2022