

STUDENT WELLNESS

The County Board of Education recognizes the link between student health and learning and desires to provide a comprehensive program promoting healthy eating and physical activity for Santa Cruz County Office of Education (COE) students. The County Superintendent of Schools or designee may build a coordinated school health system that supports and reinforces health literacy through health education, physical education and activity, health services, nutrition services, psychological and counseling services, health promotion for staff, a safe and healthy school environment, and parent/guardian and community involvement.

To encourage consistent health messages between the home and school environment, the County Superintendent or designee may disseminate health information and/or the COE's student wellness policy to parents/guardians through school newsletters, handouts, parent/guardian meeting, COE and school web sites, and other communications. Outreach to parents/guardians shall emphasize the relationship between student health and academic performance.

School Health Council/Committee

The County Superintendent or designee may permit parents/guardians, students, physical education teachers, school health professionals, County Board members, school administrators, and members of the public to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the COE's student wellness policy.

To fulfill this requirement, the County Superintendent or designee may appoint a school health council or other committee whose membership may include representatives of these groups. He/she also may invite participation of other groups or individuals, such as health educators, curriculum directors, counselors, health practitioners, and/or other interested in health issues.

Nutrition and Physical Activity Goals

The County Board may adopt goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.

The COE's nutrition education and physical education programs shall be based on research, consistent with the expectations established in the state's curriculum frameworks and content standards, and designed to build the skills and knowledge that all students need to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Nutrition education may be provided as part of the health education program and, as appropriate, shall be integrated into other academic subjects in the regular educational program.

The County Board prohibits 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 give-aways, or other means.

All students shall be provided opportunities to be physically active on a regular basis. Opportunities for moderate to vigorous physical activity shall be provided through physical education and recess and may also be provided through school athletic programs, extracurricular programs, programs encouraging students to walk or bicycle to and from school, in-class physical activity breaks, and other structured and unstructured activities.

The County Superintendent or designee may encourage staff to serve as positive role models for healthy eating and physical fitness. He/she may promote work-site wellness and may provide opportunities for regular physical activity among employees. Professional development may include instructional strategies that assess health knowledge and skills and promote healthy behaviors.

Nutritional Guidelines for Foods Available at School

For all foods available at each site during the school day, the COE may adopt nutritional guidelines which promote the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.

The County Board believes that foods and beverages available to students at COE schools should support the health curriculum and promote optimal health, taking into consideration the needs of students with special dietary needs.

In order to maximize the COE's ability to provide nutritious meals and snacks, all COE schools may participate in available federal school nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and after school snack programs, to the extent possible. When approved by the California Department of Education, the COE may sponsor a summer meal program.

The County Superintendent or designee shall encourage parents/guardians or other volunteers to support the COE's nutrition education program by considering nutritional quality when selecting any snacks which they may donate for occasional class parties. Class parties or celebrations should be held after the lunch period, when possible.

Program Implementation and Evaluation

The County Superintendent may designate one or more COE employees, as appropriate, to ensure that each school site complies with this policy.

The County Superintendent or designee may inform and update the public, including parents/guardians, students, and others in the community, about the contents and implementation of this policy. He/she may periodically measure and make available to the public an assessment of the extent to which COE schools are in compliance with this policy, the extent to which this policy compares to model wellness policies available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy.

To determine whether the policy is being effectively implemented throughout the COE and at each school, the following indicators may be used:

1. Descriptions of the COE's nutrition education, physical education, and health education curricula by grade level
2. Number of minutes of physical education instruction offered at each grade span
3. Number and type of exemptions granted from physical education
4. Results of the states fitness test
5. An analysis of the nutritional content of meals served based on a sample of menus
6. Student participation rates in school meal programs, compared to percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals
7. Number of sales of non-nutritious foods and beverages in fundraisers or other venues outside of the COE's meal programs
8. Feedback from food service personnel, school administrators, the school health council, parents/guardians, students, teachers, before and after school program staff, and/or other appropriate persons

Adopted: 10/16/2014