

***Rondout Valley Central School District
Wellness Policy
Adopted June 13, 2006
Policy # 5661***

Nutrition

Purpose

The Board of Education recognizes the important connection between a healthy diet and a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve success in school. To help ensure that students possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices for a lifetime, the superintendent or designee shall prepare and implement a comprehensive district nutrition program consistent with state and federal guidelines.

The program shall reflect the Board's commitment to providing adequate time for instruction to promote healthy eating through nutrition education, serving healthy and appealing foods at district schools, developing food-use guidelines for staff and establishing liaisons with nutrition service providers, as appropriate.

Goals

1. Ensure that no student in the Rondout Valley Central School District is hungry.
2. Ensure that children have access to adequate and healthful food while in school.
3. Ensure that all qualified children become eligible for free/reduced price meals.
4. Ensure maximum participation in the school food service program.
5. Ensure a healthy environment and eating patterns which support adequate time for food consumption.
6. Ensure that food sales by school related groups and the use of vending machines are in compliance with state and federal law and do not impair student participation in the district's food service program.
7. Promote healthy food choices at school activities involving staff, students and community when food is served.
8. Ensure that the food options available are as appealing and nutritious as possible.
9. Ensure respect for cultural food_ and family traditions.

Education

Nutrition education is part of a comprehensive health education curriculum that focuses on understanding the relationship between personal behavior and health. Age-appropriate and culturally sensitive instruction in health education and physical education should be provided to help students develop the knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors to adopt, maintain and enjoy healthy eating habits and a physically active lifestyle.

1. Stress the importance of combining regular physical activity with sound nutrition for an overall healthy lifestyle in the K-12 Health Curriculum and nutrition education lessons.
2. Implement nutrition education as part of a sequential, comprehensive health education curriculum designed to help students adopt healthy eating behaviors. Students should learn both specific nutrition related and general health skills.
3. Coordinate nutrition education with School Nutrition Services and with other components

- of the school program to reinforce messages about healthy eating.
4. Provide staff training for those involved in nutrition education, and on-going in-service training about teaching strategies for promoting healthy behaviors.
 5. Involve family members and the community in supporting and reinforcing nutrition education.

Nutrition Services

The purpose of School Nutrition Services shall be to promote academic achievement and good health. School Nutrition Services shall aim to be financially self-supporting with nutritional needs of students taking precedence.

School meals should be a significant aspect of the educational mission of schools. Efforts should be made to coordinate the nutrition service, the classroom, and the school health programs to achieve common goals. It should be an integral part of the overall school experience - reinforcing students' adoption of healthy eating habits. School meals should model healthful choices. This includes food options that are low in fat, calories, sodium and added sugars. Healthy à-la-carte snacks should be offered using the standards adopted by New York State School Food Service Association (NYSSFSA) (*See footnote*).

All students should be encouraged to participate regardless of income. The need for good nutrition encompasses the entire school community.

Food and meals should be priced affordably, and designed to encourage students to purchase nutritious items.

Efforts should be made to ensure that families are aware of need-based programs for free or reduced-price meals and eligible families should be encouraged to apply. Confidentiality of applicants will be maintained in accordance with NYS regulations.

A system shall be in place to accommodate student food allergies or other special nutritional needs, to the maximum extent possible.

Other Food Choices at School

Other food choices include food available in the school store, at concession stands, for fund raising, as classroom snacks, for parties, and at vending machines.

1. The majority of other food choices at school should contribute to eating patterns that provide foods that are low in fat, calories, and added sugars. For NYSSFSA guidelines and recommendations regarding nutritional value and portion sizes, *see footnote*.
2. Teachers will be encouraged to use healthy choices when food is in the classroom. Using food as a means of academic reward or discipline will be discouraged.

Nutrition-related Health Problems

1. Appropriate school personnel shall recognize nutrition related health problems among students and staff and refer them to the proper services. Sensitive practices related to assessment and referral will be practiced.

2. School health care providers, counselors, psychologists, social workers, and other appropriate staff will participate in training activities that address eating disorders and other nutrition-related problems.
3. School Personnel will collaborate with community nutrition service providers as appropriate.

Footnote:

Standards adopted by RVCSD, based on those developed by NYSSFSA

Snack Items/Per serving	Beverage Choices/Per Serving
Fat = 7 grams or less	100% Juice only will be available
Saturated Fat = 2 grams or less	Low fat milk and low fat flavored milk
Sodium = 360 mg or less	Less than 10 mg of caffeine per serving
Sugar = 15 grams or less	Water or flavored water without added sugar, artificial sweeteners or caffeine

Physical Activity

Purpose

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, regular physical activity is one of the most important things people can do to maintain and improve their physical health, mental health, and overall well-being. Physical activity has been related to higher levels of self esteem and lower levels of stress and anxiety and, therefore, higher academic achievement.

Therefore, the Board of Education believes that every student shall be engaged in physical education and activity – that is, shall develop the knowledge and skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, appreciate the short-and long-term benefits of physical activity, and value and enjoy physical activity as an ongoing part of a healthful lifestyle. In addition, staff, families, and community are encouraged to participate in and model physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

Goals

The Superintendent shall develop and implement a comprehensive plan to encourage and facilitate physical activity that includes the following:

- A focus on safety as a priority, acknowledging that physical activity involves inherent risks.
- A sequential program of physical education that involves moderate to vigorous physical activity; teaches motor skills, self-management skills, and positive attitudes, as well as the academic PE curriculum; promotes activities that students enjoy and can pursue throughout their lives; is taught by well-prepared and well-supported staff; and is coordinated with the health education curriculum.
- Time in the elementary and middle school day for supervised physical activity.
- Opportunities and encouragement for students to voluntarily participate in before- and after-school physical activity programs.
- Cooperation between school and community recreation activities.

- Opportunities and encouragement for staff to be physically active.
- Strategies to involve family members in program development and implementation.

Definitions.

For the purposes of this policy:

- “Extracurricular activities” refers to school-sponsored voluntary programs that supplement regular education and contribute to the educational objective of the school.
- “Interscholastic athletics” refers to organized individual and team sports that involve more than one school.
- “Extramurals” refers to activity programs that provide opportunities for students to participate in sport, fitness and recreational activities with other schools.
- “Intramurals” refers to physical activity programs that provide opportunities for all students to participate in sport, fitness, and recreational activities within their own school.
- “Moderate physical activities” refers to activities that are equal in intensity to brisk walking.
- “Physical education” refers to a planned, sequential program of curricula and instruction taught by a certified physical education teacher that helps students develop the knowledge, attitudes, motor skills, self-management skills, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physically active lifestyles.
- “Recess” refers to regularly scheduled periods within the school day for structured or unstructured physical activity and play.
- “Regular physical activity” refers to participation in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day at least twice per week.
- “Vigorous physical activity” refers to exertion that makes a person sweat and breathe hard, such as basketball, soccer, running, swimming laps, fast bicycling, fast dancing, and similar aerobic activities.

Physical Education

Every student in each grade, kindergarten through twelve shall participate in physical education. Schools shall establish specific learning goals and objectives for physical education based on state and national standards. A sequential, developmentally appropriate curriculum shall be designed, implemented, and evaluated to help students develop the knowledge, motor skills, self-management skills, attitudes, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physical activity throughout their lives. The physical education program shall:

1. Emphasize knowledge and skills for a lifetime of regular physical activity.
2. Be consistent with NYS learning standards for physical education and with national standards that define what students should know and be able to do.
3. [Devote at least 50 percent of class time to actual physical activity in each week, with as much time as possible spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity.]
4. Provide many different physical activity choices over the course of the year.
5. Feature cooperative as well as competitive games.

6. Meet the needs of all students, regardless of athletic talent, gender, or cultural and religious differences in students' interests and needs.
9. Actively teach cooperation, fair play, sportsmanship, and responsible participation in physical activity.
11. Promote participation in physical activity outside of school.
12. Focus on helping children K-12 develop an active lifestyle which will serve them throughout adulthood.
13. Be an enjoyable experience for students.

Extracurricular Physical Activities and Interscholastic Athletic Program

Recess, intramural programs, physical activity clubs, and interscholastic athletics are a vital part of the total educational experience for students. Schools shall provide every student with opportunities to voluntarily participate in extracurricular physical activities. In addition to a varied and comprehensive interscholastic athletic program encouraging participation of all eligible student athletes, competitive and non-competitive, structured and unstructured activities shall be offered to the extent that staffing permits as well as our facilities will allow. The primary focus of extracurricular physical activity programs will be on facilitating participation by all interested students, regardless of their athletic ability.

Other Opportunities for Physical Activity

- *Recess in Elementary Schools.* Recess provides opportunities for physical activity, which helps students stay alert and attentive in class and provides other educational, social and physical benefits. The removal of a student's participation in recess or other physical activity as a form of discipline or punishment will be discouraged.
- *Staff Physical Activity.* The District shall provide opportunities for staff to conveniently engage in regular physical activity.

Implementation Plan

Introduction

The most important tool in implementing the Rondout Valley School District's Wellness Policy will be *The School Health Index*. The *School Health Index (SHI)* is a self-assessment and planning guide that will enable us to:

- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of our schools' programs for promoting health and safety.
- Develop an action plan for improving student health and safety and
- Involve teachers, parents, students and the community in improving school programs and services.

A School Wellness Analysis Team from each school in the district shall be formed, containing at least one representative from each of the following groups: a member of the District's Wellness Committee, a school administrator (principal or assistant principal), school nurse, PE teacher, teachers of other subjects, mental health specialist, parents, students and community member(s). The team's mission will be to develop a School Health Improvement Plan. Each member of the team will become familiar with the district's Wellness Policy and our goal to promote healthy behaviors among all members of the school community.

The School Health Improvement Teams will open by completing two activities:

- The eight self-assessment modules in the *SHI* and
- A process of planning for improvement which results in the creation of a School Health Improvement Plan.

The *SHI* self-assessment modules are a simple way for the teams to evaluate what the school is currently doing to promote wellness according to the district's Wellness Policy. After the school teams complete the self-assessment modules, areas that received low scores will be identified and recommendations for improving curricula, programs and services will be developed. These recommendations will be prioritized and divided into yearly goals, with the entire School Health Improvement Plan to be accomplished in 3-5 years.

The School Health Improvement Teams will meet regularly until the Plan is accomplished.

Finally, the District's Wellness Coordinator and the Superintendent will review each team's School Health Improvement Plan, coordinate between the schools (particularly where curricula is being developed), monitor progress and provide support to help the teams accomplish their goals for each school.

Implementation Time-line

Year 1

- Educate staff, parents, students and community about the new Wellness Policy
 - Informational sessions for staff will be held on 9/5/06, as well as at Superintendent's Conference Days during the year. Topics may include childhood obesity, changes in the "Food Pyramid" and suggested daily servings, changes in the cafeteria offerings, and positive modeling for students.
 - Parent education letters sent home in September; parent information sessions at open houses and other parent/community nights
 - Each school shall identify the members of its School Wellness Analysis Team no later than November, so that the Team may begin its work.
 - Students shall be educated about the Wellness Policy and its attendant concerns during Health, PE, and Home and Careers class time.
 - At the elementary level, Food Play shall be presented to all students to educate them about healthy eating.
- Goal: reduce the use of food as a reward in the classroom by 30-50% over the course of the year through education and voluntary participation. Teachers shall no longer reward students with candy.
- Goal: apply the NYSSFSA dietary guidelines for snacks to offerings available to students in the cafeteria.
- Goal: eliminate candy sales for school fundraisers district-wide.
- Create a Wellness page on the RV website with information for staff, students, parents and community.
- Make opportunities available to staff for regular physical activity.

Year 2

- Continue education efforts aimed at all levels of the school community as listed above.
- Goal: reduce the use of food as a reward in the classroom by an additional 30-50% over the course of the year through education and voluntary participation.
- Student Wellness efforts shall be added to the District goals for the year, and shall be included in teachers' APPR portfolio.
- Goal: continue to hone cafeteria offerings, further reducing fat, salt and sugar content in servings and making additional vegetarian offerings available at the middle and high school levels.
- Goal: proposed foods to be sold for fundraisers must be approved by each school's School Wellness Analysis Team.
- Goal: expand after-school offerings at the middle and high school levels to include energetic, physical activities which do not require an interest in team sports. Among the various examples, one might list Ultimate Frisbee, dance, fencing, Fitness Club, etc.
- The district shall make opportunities available to staff for regular physical activity.

Year 3

- Continue education efforts aimed at all levels of the school community as listed above.
- Goal: reduce the use of food as a reward in the classroom by an additional 30-50% over the course of the year through education and voluntary participation.

- Student Wellness efforts shall continue among the District goals for the year, and shall remain part of teachers' APPR.
- Goal: continue to hone cafeteria offerings, further reducing fat, salt and sugar content in servings and making additional vegetarian and whole-grain offerings available at the elementary, middle and high school levels.
- Each school's School Wellness Analysis Team shall continue to review all foods available in school or at school functions which are not currently under review by the RV Food Service.
- Goal: expand after-school offerings at the elementary, middle and high school levels to include energetic, physical activities which do not require an interest in team sports.
- Goal: expand opportunities to the community for whole-family physical activities, such as walk-a-thons, use of the school fitness equipment, or other after-school activities as available.

Year 4

- Continue education efforts aimed at all levels of the school community as listed above.
- Goal: eliminate the use of food as a reward in the classroom. Food in the classroom shall be limited to celebrations and shall adhere to the NYSSFSA guidelines.
- Student Wellness efforts shall continue among District goals for the year, and shall feature in each teachers' APPR.
- Goal: continue to hone cafeteria offerings, further reducing fat, salt and sugar content in servings and making additional whole-grain and vegetarian offerings available at the elementary, middle and high school levels.
- Goal: expand after-school offerings at the elementary, middle and high school levels to include energetic, physical activities which do not require an interest in team sports.
- Goal: expand available opportunities to the community for whole-family physical activities, such as walk-a-thons, use of the school fitness equipment, or other after-school activities as available.