

Nicholls Elementary School Wellness Policy

Nicholls Elementary School (hereto referred to as NES) is committed to the optimal development of every student. NES believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year. Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during, and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. This policy outlines NES approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions.

Nutrition Education Goals

NES will educate all students about healthy eating habits. Nutrition education is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.

- 1) Nutrition education will include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally- relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens.
- 2) Nutrition education will be included in the Health curriculum so that instruction is sequential and follows the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Georgia Public Schools Nutrition Policy. Nutrition education will also be integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, and social science.

NES teaches students nutrition education using scientifically-based, up-to-date nutrition information consistent

with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. NES will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- *Food guidance from <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- * Reading and using USDA's food labels
- * Balancing food intake and physical activity
- *Food Safety
- *Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture
- *How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- *Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
- * Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

Nutrition Promotion Goals

NES students and staff will participate in School Nutrition Week and receive consistent nutrition messages throughout the school, classrooms, gymnasium, and cafeteria. NES will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs.

- 1) Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten Smarter Lunchroom techniques.
- 2) NES will implement at least one of the following four Farm to School activities:
 - Local and/or regional products are incorporated into the

school meal program;

-School has a school garden;

-School hosts field trips to agricultural center

-School utilizes promotions or special events (Imagine Me cooking school), such as tastings, that highlight the local/regional products.

Physical Activity Goals

NES will ensure opportunities for all students to maintain physical fitness by participating in physical education class and/or recess every day. NES will offer students a variety of physical activity opportunities that are in addition to, and not as a substitute for physical education.

- 1) Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks, or physical education) will not be required or withheld as punishment for any reason
- 2) NES will offer at least 20 minutes of recess on all or most days during the year.
 - a) Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. *Active recess programming will be utilized to create universal participation by offering multiple activities at recess; designate different areas of play throughout the playground; provide equipment to decrease congestion on play structures.
 - b) In the event that the school or district must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. * *NES staff provides short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. Activity break ideas are available through Brain Breaks and Go Noodle.

- c) All NES students will participate in physical education that meets or exceeds state standards.
 - d) All NES students in grades K 5 will receive physical education for at least 60 minutes per week throughout the school year.
- 3) NES will have at least (1) one yearly fitness event (ex. Field Day, Slides, or Fitness Gram).

Nutrition Standards Goals

NES will provide all students with meals and Smart Snacks that are USDA compliant. NES is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams trans fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. NES will participate in the USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBA) committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs.

- 1) All school meals are accessible to all students
- 2) Drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day.
- 3) Students will be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and seated.
- 4) All school nutrition program staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals.
- 5) The foods and beverages sold outside of the school meals

programs will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum.

- 6) All food offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Exemptions may be allowed at the discretion of the school principal, but shall not exceed more than one exemption per class.

*NES will provide a list of healthy party ideas and snacks to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas

*NES will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards

* NES will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Food and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as performance or behavior.

*Only food and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in school nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus during the school day.

Other School-Based Activity Goals

NES will create a total school environment that is conducive to being physically active for all students. NES will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, and physical activity facilities. NES will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

- 1) NES will continue relationships with its community partners, including mental health agencies, and our local hospital, in support of this wellness policy's implementation.
- 2) NES will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be invited to participate in school-sponsored events and will receive information about health promotion.
- 3) When feasible, NES will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school.

Standards for Foods and Beverages Sold During the School Day

NES will adhere to Standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages by only using market/advertised foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks in school nutrition standards.

Responsible School Officials:

Nicholls Elementary will follow the guidelines set forth by the Coffee County Healthy School Environment and Wellness Policy. At the school level, Nicholls Elementary will rely on the Wellness Team to ensure that school goals are aligned with district and state guidelines. The Wellness Team will monitor to ensure adherence to the standards. The school counselor will be responsible for the oversight of the wellness team.