



DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY

ADOPTED: APRIL 18, 2006

AMENDED: April 15, 2024

Bessemer Board of Education

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Bessemer City Schools Local Wellness Policy

The Bessemer City School System is committed to providing healthy lifestyle patterns that are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, physical and mental growth. We have the responsibility to help students and staff establish and maintain lifelong, healthy lifestyle patterns. The intent of this policy is to outline the district's on-going commitment in support of wellness in the areas of nutrition education, physical activity, school nutrition and other school-based activities that promote health and wellness.

To accomplish these goals:

- Child Nutrition Programs comply with federal, state and local requirements. Breakfast and lunch are served daily. The Child Nutrition Program is accessible to all children.
- The Bessemer City School system will encourage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- The Bessemer City School environment is safe, comfortable, pleasing, and allows ample time and space for eating meals. Food and/or physical activity are not used as rewards or punishments.
- Bessemer City schools will encourage eligible pupils to participate in the school lunch program by removing any barriers to participation.
- Bessemer City schools will ensure that all school-based activities are consistent with local wellness policy goals. All foods and beverages made available on campus (including vending, concessions, a la carte, student stores, parties and fundraising) during the school day are compliant with USDA Smart Snack guidelines.

Bessemer City Schools Wellness Program Assessment

The Wellness Program provides a variety of resources to help members of the school community address student health concerns. This program is directed by the Wellness Committee whose members represent every constituency in the system. The Wellness mission of Bessemer City schools is to provide opportunities and experiences that foster personal development, enhance academic productivity, increase physical and psychological health and encourage social interaction through involvement in health, wellness, and physical/recreational activity. The Wellness Program Assessment is designed to evaluate whether the creation of a healthy learning environment that motivates students, faculty, staff and community members toward healthier lifestyles and encourages them to make informed choices has been successful. To accomplish the development of a comprehensive wellness policy, the Wellness Committee will seek opportunities to educate the school community on trends and information related to health and wellness, and will encourage community partnerships that assist the district in this effort.

Wellness Program Review Summary

Student Centered Activities

- BCS students are required to participate in physical education classes that range from 30 minutes to 1 hour based on age and grade requirements.
- Students are encouraged to participate in city sponsored and/or school sponsored athletic activities.
- Nurses obtain valuable health information through the Health Assessment Form distributed annually with student registration cards.
- Extracurricular activities such as band, dance, cheerleading and a full cadre of athletics, including volleyball, football, basketball, cross-country, softball, baseball, soccer and track, provide intense physical activity for participants.
- Healthy foods are served in cafeterias that comply with the provisions of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act
- Snacks sold at schools meet Smart Snack standards

Faculty and Staff Activities

- Wellness Screenings are conducted annually as part of the PEEHIP medical insurance plan.
- Faculty members across the system are encouraged to participate in Scale Back Alabama.

Goal 1: Nutrition Education

All students will have the opportunity to obtain the knowledge, skills necessary to make nutritious, and enjoyable food choices for a lifetime. Staff members are encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. This plan makes effective use of school and community resources and equitably serves the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in cultural norms and physical limitations.

The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students' eating behaviors while building nutrition knowledge and skills. Nutrition education helps students make healthy food and physical activity choices.

Bessemer City schools will

- Provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity.
- Promote nutrition education that provides instruction including, but not limited to, the benefits of healthy eating, essential nutrients, nutritional deficiencies, principles of healthy weight management, the use and misuse of dietary supplements, and safe food preparation, handling, and storage.
- Support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
- Enable all students, through a comprehensive curriculum, to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy food choices for a lifetime.
- Encourage the use of lessons that emphasize the importance of proper nutrition and seek to encourage healthy living.

Nutrition education should be appropriate for students' age, reflect their culture and be integrated into other subjects such as science, health and reading. Assisting students in making good choices while having fun at the same time will produce lasting benefits.

<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/local-wellness-policy-resources/nutrition-promotion>

Goal 2: Physical Activity

The Bessemer City School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy physical activity. The schools provide physical education and encourage engagement in physical activity that:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide student with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Provides a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted.
- Provides information to families to help them incorporate physical activity into their children's lives.
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions.
- Encourages participation in extra-curricular activities such as JROTC, athletics, marching band and community programs.
- Ensures that physical education classes are taught by certified physical education teachers

<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/local-wellness-policy-resources-library/physical-activity>
Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, US Department of Health and Human Services
Physical Education Guidelines, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

Goal 3: School Nutrition & CNP Operations

The policy supports the mission of the Bessemer City schools to provide quality education in all aspects of students' lives. Bessemer City schools Child Nutrition Program will:

- Comply with federal, state and local requirements.
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health enhancing nutrition practices;
- Provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students.
- Make accommodations for the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning
- Provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- Provide a pleasant positive environment for dining
- Ensure that all students have access to healthy food choices during school
- Allow a minimum of 20 minutes for students to eat lunch and socialize in designated cafeteria area.
- Reduce student access to foods of minimal nutritional value.
- Ensure the integrity of the school lunch program by prohibiting food and beverage sales that are in direct competition with lunch/breakfast programs.
- Encourage the practice of good nutrition by eliminating the sale or distribution of foods of minimal nutritional value.

<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/local-wellness-policy-resources/nutrition-promotion>

Goal 4: Food Safety & Food Security

All foods made available on campus will comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.

- Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented.
- The Houston County Health Department conducts regular inspections and reports are posted.
- At least one ServSafe certified worker will be on site in each kitchen at all times during regular meal service.
- For the safety and security of food and facility use, access to the food service operations is limited to Child Nutrition staff and authorized personnel. For additional guidance, see the USDA and Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Security guidelines.

Other School Based Activities

Dining Environment

- The school district provides a clean, safe, enjoyable meal environment for students.
- The school district provides enough space and serving areas to ensure all students have access to school meals with minimum wait time.
- The school district encourages all students to participate in the school meals program and protects the identity of students who receive free and reduced priced meals.

Time to Eat

- The school district will allow a minimum of 20 minutes for students to eat lunch and socialize in the designated cafeteria area.
- The school district will schedule lunchtime as close to the middle of the school day as possible.

Food or Physical Activity

- The school district will discourage the use of foods of minimal nutritional value as a reward or withholding of food as a form of punishment in schools.
- The school district will not deny student participation in recess or other physical activities during the school day as a form of discipline. Time allocated for physical activity may not be used for classroom make-up time.

Fundraising / Celebrations

The school district will ensure that all school fundraising efforts during school hours are supportive of state and federal nutritional guidelines. Fundraisers that involve food sales during the school day will follow the guidelines as outlined in *Alabama's Implementation of USDA Smart Snacks in Schools & Exempt Fundraisers*. Classroom celebrations and parties will be included in the maximum exempt events.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods on Campus during School Day

- Foods made available on campus (vending machines, a la carte, etc.) will comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- CNP Staff will take necessary steps to ensure that the access students have to foods and beverages meets Federal, state and local laws and guidelines. Food providers will offer a variety of age appropriate healthy food and beverage selections for elementary, middle and high schools. These selections will adhere to guidelines prescribed for breakfast, lunch and snacks.

Other

- The school district will provide opportunities for on-going professional training and development for foodservice staff in the areas of nutrition and physical education.
- The school district encourages parents, teachers, school administrators, students, foodservice professionals, and community members to serve as role models in practicing healthy eating and being physically active, both at school and at home.

Updates to Wellness Policy

The Wellness Policy of Bessemer City schools is posted on the system website and will be updated as needed and/or required by Federal and state mandates.

Interested parties within the school district and in the community are invited and encouraged to participate by contacting one of the following District Child Nutrition Program, @ (205) - 432-3008, District Lead Nurse, @ (205)-432-3028 or District Student Service Department, @ (205) - 432-3007.