

EVANSTON SKOKIE DISTRICT 65 WELLNESS COUNCIL

SCHOOL WELLNESS TEAM HANDBOOK:

A GUIDE FOR SCHOOL WELLNESS TEAMS



EVANSTON SKOKIE DISTRICT 65 WELLNESS POLICY

What is a School Wellness Team?

A School Wellness Team is a local school committee charged with overseeing the implementation of the District 65 Wellness Policy and related activities aimed at creating a more healthy school environment, students, staff, parents, and community.

What is the District 65 Wellness Policy for?

A disturbing number of children are inactive and do not eat well. The result is an alarming 16 percent of children and adolescents are overweight – a three-fold increase since 1980. Congress passed the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 on June 30, 2004. Recognizing the role schools can play in health promotion; this law requires local education agencies participating in a program authorized by the National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to develop a local wellness policy. The objectives of the wellness policy are to improve the school nutrition environment, promote student health and reduce childhood overweight. In addition, Public Act 094-0199 amends the Illinois School Code, requiring the Illinois State Board of Education to establish a state goal that all districts have a wellness policy.

What is the District 65 Wellness Council?

The original charge of the council was to write the Wellness Policy and Procedures. After adoption of the policy, the council shifted its focus to informing all stakeholders about the policy and providing guidance for the formation of local wellness teams. As we move towards full implementation, the council will monitor and evaluate implementation across the district while working with school Wellness Teams to do the same at the local schools. The District 65 Wellness Council is comprised of a board member, the health coordinator, food service coordinator, communications manager, curriculum coordinator, principals, teachers, and parents.

What can the District 65 Wellness Council do for you?

We can provide support by helping you ‘kickoff’ your local Wellness Team. This might mean attending your first meetings to help you get started, helping you understand what the policy means, and providing ongoing support and direction towards resources throughout the year.



CREATE A WELLNESS TEAM

This and subsequent sections are based on The Quick and Easy Guide to School Wellness by the Healthy Schools Campaign. For more information visit: <http://healthyschoolscampaign.org/campaign/wellness/>

Policies and plans developed in isolation rarely succeed long-term, so it is critical that you establish a solid foundation for your school wellness program by involving many stakeholders. Your School Wellness Team should include those who can make decisions concerning your school's program, as well as those who will be affected by it.

Work With Existing Structures or Start Fresh?

A Wellness Team may already have been created to respond to the federal wellness policy mandate or independent of the federal requirement. For example, some schools have collaborated with local PTAs to implement the Wellness Policy. Depending on your school and experience to date, you have several options:

1. Work with the existing committee to put together the plan and implement it;
2. Add new members to the committee to enhance the scope and impact of the team throughout the school; or
3. Create a new team more aligned with the specific Wellness planning and implementation needs of your school environment.

Who Should Be Involved?

Your Wellness Team should include representatives from among the following groups within the school:

- **Principal** - Gaining the support and involvement of the principal is very important. The principal can make sure the wellness team has the right people and resources to succeed. The principal also can make necessary changes in school policy to allow wellness strategies to work, for instance, change the daily schedule to allow recess before lunch.
- **Teachers** - Involve teachers, especially PE teachers, who can emphasize physical fitness as well as healthy eating on a daily basis. Wellness messages also can extend beyond the PE or Family and Consumer Science and be incorporated into academic subjects in a variety of ways. Teachers also serve as important role models to students for pursuing healthy lifestyles.
- **Students** - You can lead a student to wellness, but you can't make her eat well and exercise if she's receiving the opposite message from peers and the media. Students should be included in discussions about wellness and encouraged to speak out about the challenges they face. Capture student voices and give them opportunities to communicate with peers about the benefits of healthy lifestyles.
- **Parents** - In order for good health habits started at school to be maintained, they must be reinforced at home. Parents can become your best wellness allies and role

models if they are engaged in this process from the beginning, and if their viewpoints and cultural traditions are taken into account. Be sure to involve your parent-teacher organization, as their members can be a great resource and advocate for your efforts.

- **Health Clerk** - Today's health clerks do much more than take temperatures and dispense medication. These healthcare professionals have an impact on the well-being, academic success, and life-long achievement of students. At the forefront of the battle against childhood obesity, the health clerk can be the leading champion for school wellness.
- **Food Service Personnel**- When it comes to wellness programs, no one faces more challenges than food service personnel, who must try to provide appealing, nutritious meals to a large number of children with extremely limited human and financial resources. It is essential that you involve the food service director and approach her with an understanding of her requirements and limitations.
- **Other School Staff**- Other staff members, such as social workers, psychologists, secretaries, and garden coordinators can also help support school wellness.
- **Community Leader** - Board of education members, healthcare professionals, public health officials, social workers and counselors, county extension workers, public officials, and community organizations can provide helpful insights and resources for efforts to improve student health.

The Coordinator's Role

The Wellness Team coordinator's role is to promote teamwork and further decision-making. His or her main functions include:

- **Leadership:** Coordinates the Wellness Team and encourages a sense of shared responsibility and cooperative effort. Provides the Team with information, and in coordination with other members, oversees implementation of the wellness plan. Attends Wellness Council meetings to share Wellness Team progress and learn what other schools are doing and what is happening district wide.
- **Communication and Coordination:** Disseminates information, facilitates meetings, tracks the health status of students and staff, and communicates with school administration, staff, students, parents, and the press.

Choosing the Coordinator

The coordinator does not have to be an expert in food, fitness or student health. Ideally, he or she should be someone with a genuine interest in improving school wellness and have the authority to interact with district-level administrators, school staff, students, and parents, and to make budget recommendations.

The coordinator may be the principal, health clerk, a teacher, or other school staff. Occasionally, it is necessary to designate co-coordinators or set up subcommittees to divide work into manageable chunks and work on issues outside the meeting times. Subcommittees may be composed of selected individuals from the community, such as

local health department staff, parents, and volunteers from local businesses who have special skills, such as healthcare providers or fitness trainers.

Establish a Team Schedule

Convene the Wellness Team frequently and establish a regular time to meet. In the beginning, weekly or biweekly meetings may be required to work out the Wellness Plan. Later, monthly or quarterly meetings may be sufficient to update participants on progress, address problems and concerns, and revise the plan.

Establish a Space

Space is a premium in most schools. However, your team will be generating materials that must be organized in a usable fashion. Finding a space that the team can call home will help keep the process organized and focused on the mission, avoiding the "fell through the cracks" syndrome. In the tightest quarters, even a dedicated file cabinet, bulletin board and a table in the staff lounge can be effective.



RESOURCES

Five Ways To Improve Student Fitness and Nutrition

1. Improve Food Available at School

The availability of tasty, nutritious food is a critical component of a healthy school environment. In order for students to choose healthier food options, these changes must be part of a larger commitment to wellness that should include nutrition education and opportunities for physical activity.

2. Increase Physical Activity

Helping students become more physically active is an essential part of a school wellness program. Exercise is one of the most potent weapons against increasing rates of childhood obesity and related diseases, particularly when combined with good nutrition.

3. Teach Good Nutrition

When it comes to healthy eating, the food that students are served in the cafeteria needs to be connected to what they learn in the classroom. Many schools have reported that students are more likely to choose healthy items from the cafeteria when they have learned about the principles of good nutrition in class.

4. Encourage Staff Wellness

After parents, teachers are children's most important role models. How staff take care of themselves makes a big impression on children. Attention to wellness improves the overall school environment; studies show that staff morale is higher, health care costs are reduced, and staff are more productive and miss fewer days, promoting continuity and learning.

5. Engage Parents

Schools can't change students' exercise and eating habits by themselves. Parents and other caregivers must support the school's healthy snack and fundraising policies, and reinforce healthy behaviors at home. That is why it is essential to engage parents and other caregivers in school wellness programs from the start.

Evanston/Skokie District 65 Wellness Policy

Board Policy Manual Chapter 5: School Organization and Instruction

A. School Wellness

Evanston/Skokie School District 65 will promote student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, in its educational program, school activities, and meal programs consistent with Section 204 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

B. District 65 Goals for Nutrition Education (Legal Reference: Section 204 (a) (1))

1. Support and promote good nutrition for students
2. Foster the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and the capacity of students to develop and learn
3. Develop appropriate nutrition education as part of the District's education curriculum in grades K-8
4. Develop Parent nutrition education initiative in coordination with PTAs.

C. District 65 Goals for Physical Activity (Legal Reference: Section 204 (a) (1))

1. Support and promote an active lifestyle for students
2. Provide Physical Education instruction in grades K-8 that includes a curriculum that incorporates relevant Illinois Learning Standards for Physical Development and Health as established by the Illinois State Board of Education that:
 - a. Fosters the development of movement skills
 - b. Enhances health-related fitness
 - c. Offers direct opportunities to learn how to work cooperatively in a group setting
 - d. Encourages healthy habits for a healthy lifestyle
3. Unless otherwise exempted, all students, during the school day, will participate daily in a physical education course.
4. Promote community partnerships with other organizations such as park districts and YMCA's to provide students with opportunities to be active.

D. Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available on School Campuses (Legal Reference: Section 204 (a) (2))

1. District 65 will offer and promote nutritious food (such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy and whole grain products) and beverage choices consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Food Guidance System published jointly by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services.
2. District 65 Food Service a la carte offerings will meet the nutritional guidelines established by the District 65 Wellness Policy Council as outlined in Attachment A.
3. District 65 staff are required to use the guidelines established by the USDA for FMNVs¹ for all food sold or offered by District 65 staff, in school or for school-

¹ FMNVs are foods of minimal nutritional value. Guidelines for FMNVs are established by the USDA

sponsored events or activities, including fundraising, classroom snacks, and rewards. A list of recommended selections is outlined in Attachment B.

4. Parents are required to use the guidelines established by the USDA for FMNVs for all food sold during the school day. A list of recommended selections is outlined in Attachment B.
 5. Parents are encouraged to use the guidelines established by the USDA for FMNVs and select suggested offerings for in-school offerings including classroom snacks, and for all school-sponsored events that occur outside the school day, including fundraising activities. A list of recommended selections is outlined in Attachment B.
- E. Guidelines for Reimbursable School Meals (Legal Reference: Section 204 (a) (3))
Reimbursable school meals served will, at a minimum, meet the nutrition requirements and regulations for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program.
- F. Implementation and Monitoring (Legal Reference: Section 204 (a) (4))
1. In order to promote health and reduce childhood overweight, the Superintendent or designee will establish administrative procedures to control food sales that compete with the District's non-profit food service in compliance with the Child Nutrition Act.
 2. The Superintendent or designee, in collaboration with the District Wellness Council and with input from a representative of each schools' PTA, will provide periodic reports to the Board of Education to enable the Board to monitor and ensure the implementation of the District Wellness Policy.
- G. Community Input (Legal Reference: Section 204 (a) (5))
The Superintendent or designee will invite suggestions and comments concerning the implementation and improvement of the District Wellness Policy from parents, teachers, school administrators, students, representatives of the school food authority, school health personnel, community members and the public.

Adopted: August 21, 2006

² "In-school" means during the school day. School-sponsored events include after-school programs.

Attachment A

Food or Beverage	Healthier US School Challenge Nutrition Standards* These criteria focus on decreasing fat and added sugar, increasing nutrient density, and moderating portion size.
Fruits and Non-fried Vegetables	Fruits and vegetables may be fresh, frozen, canned or dried, and they must be found in the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs. http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/FBG/2003FBG/%20Section%202.pdf Examples of products that cannot be sold/served as a fruit or vegetable include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snack-type foods made from vegetables or fruits, such as potato chips, and banana chips; • Pickle relish, jam, jelly; and • Tomato catsup and chili sauce
Approved Beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flavored or plain reduced fat (2%), low-fat (1%), skim/nonfat fluid milk meeting State and local standards for pasteurized fluid milk and/or USDA approved alternative dairy beverages⁴; • 100% full-strength fruit and vegetable juices; and • Water (non-flavored, non-sweetened, and non-carbonated) • Any beverage exempted from the USDA's list of FMNV
Any Other Individual Food Sales/Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calories from total fat must be at or below 30 % excluding nuts, seeds, nut butters, eggs, cheese packaged for individual sale, or any other food listed in Appendix B to the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. This is determined by dividing the calories from total fat by the total calories and multiplying by 100. If calories from fat are not available, multiply the grams of fat by 9 to equal calories from fat. • Total sugar must be at or below 35% by weight. This is determined by dividing the grams of total sugar by the gram weight of the product and multiplying by 100. This includes both naturally occurring and added sugars. This limit does not include fruits and vegetables or flavored milk as defined above. • Portion size for a la carte sales in the school cafeteria are not to exceed the serving size of the food served in the National School Lunch Program/School Breakfast Program. Single serving size, calories<200.
Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value**	Examples of products that cannot be sold/served include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chewing gum, hard candies, marshmallows, fondants, licorice, jellies, and candy-coated popcorn.

⁴ There are no USDA approved alternative dairy beverages at this time. Public Law 108-265 (Child Nutrition Program Reauthorization) authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to establish nutritionally equivalent non-dairy beverages by July 1, 2005. Please check with the Illinois State Board of Education for clarification.

*The above Nutrition Standards are criteria for sales/service of a la carte and/or vended items from the United States Department of Agriculture's HealthierUS School Challenge. Please be aware that these criteria are only meant to apply to individually sold foods and that foods sold as part of a reimbursable school meal may not necessarily meet these criteria although menus meet the nutrition standards set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for school meals. Local policy makers may wish to modify the standards but should be aware that this may make schools ineligible to meet the criteria for the HealthierUS School Challenge.

**Food of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV) means:

- (i) In the case of artificially sweetened foods, a food which provides less than 5% of the Reference Daily intakes (RDI) for each of 8 specified nutrients per serving; and
- (ii) In the case of all other foods, a food which provides less than 5% of the RDI of each of 8 specified nutrients (protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, niacin, riboflavin, thiamine, calcium, and iron) per serving.

The categories of FMNV include: soda water, water ices, chewing gum, certain candies, hard candy, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, spun candy, and candy coated popcorn.

District 65 nutrition standards follow state regulation 305. State & federal law are subject to change.

Attachment B

Healthful Food and Beverage Options for School Functions*

At any school function (parties, celebrations, meetings, etc.) healthful food options should be made available to promote student, staff and community wellness. Examples of nutritious food and beverages that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are listed below.

- Raw vegetable sticks/slices with low-fat dressing or yogurt dip
- Fresh fruit wedges – cantaloupe, honey dew, watermelon, pineapple, oranges, tangelos, etc.
- Sliced fruit – nectarines, peaches, kiwi, star fruit, plums, pears, mangos, apples, etc.
- Fruit salad
- Cereal and low-fat milk
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- Frozen fruit pops with fruit juice or fruit as the first ingredient
- Dried fruits – raisins, cranberries, apples, apricots
- Single serving applesauce or canned fruit in juice
- Peanut butter with apple wedges or celery sticks
- Fruit smoothies made with fat-free or low-fat milk
- Trail mix (dried fruits and nuts)
- Dry roasted peanuts, tree nuts and soy nuts (not coconut or palm nuts)
- Lean meats and reduced fat cheese sandwiches (use light or reduced fat mayonnaise in chicken/tuna salads)
- Party mix (variety of cereals, nuts, pretzels, etc.)
- Pretzels or reduced fat crackers
- Baked chips with salsa or low-fat dip (Ranch, onion, bean, etc.)
- Low-fat muffins (small or mini), granola bars and cookies (graham crackers, fig bars)
- Mini bagels with whipped light or fat-free cream cheese
- Pasta salad
- Bread sticks with marinara
- Fat-free or low-fat flavored yogurt & fruit parfaits
- Fat-free or low-fat pudding cups
- Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products (string cheese, single-serving cottage cheese, cheese cubes)
- Flavored soy milk fortified with calcium
- Pure ice cold water
- 100 Calorie Snack packages

**This list is not all inclusive and is meant only to provide parents and school staff with guidance for healthier food and beverage choices. Not all food and beverage items on this list will necessarily meet district nutrient standards (Attachment A) as items vary in sugar, fat and calorie content from brand to brand. However, all of the items in the list are believed to be consistent with the intent of the wellness policy to promote student health and reduce childhood overweight.*

Attachment C

Fundraising Ideas

- Raffle
- Candles
- Book sale
- Bath Accessories
- Brick / stone / tile memorials
- Buttons, pins and stickers
- Coupon books
- Emergency kits for cars or first aid kits
- Flea Market
- Gift or Fruit and Vegetable baskets
- Gift wrap, boxes and bags
- Jewelry
- License plate frames with school logo
- Magazine subscriptions
- Mugs
- Personalized Stationary
- Scarves
- Cookbook
- *Car wash
- *Walkathons
- Student artwork
- Stuffed animals
- Stadium pillows / Football seats
- School photo ID
- Educational games
- Holiday ornaments / decorations
- Shopping donation programs
- School mascot temporary tattoos
- Faculty and/or student talent show
- Teacher/student sports competition
- Auction of donated goods and services
- Balloon bouquets for special occasions
- Bottled water with the schools own label
- Refillable water bottle with the school logo
- Glow in the dark novelties (popular at dances)
- Greeting cards, especially designed by students
- School calendars with all the important school dates on them
- Party bags for kids' birthday parties filled with non-food novelties
- Sale of flowers and balloons for the family to purchase for student graduates
- School spirit items — tee-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, lanyards, pennants, bracelets and caps
- Growing and/or selling flowers, bulbs and plants.

*These fundraisers have the added benefit of promoting physical activity for students.

Attachment D

Classroom Rewards

- A smile
- Going first
- Verbal praise
- Sit by friends
- Teaching the class
- Helping the teacher
- Enjoy class outdoors
- A field trip for the class
- Choosing a class activity
- Walk with a teacher during lunch
- Eat lunch outdoors with the class
- Eat lunch with a teacher or principal
- Extra credit or class participation points
- Taking care of the class animal for a day
- Have lunch or breakfast in the classroom
- A photo recognition board in a prominent location in the school
- A note from the teacher to the student commending his or her achievement
- A phone call, email, or letter sent home to parents or guardians commending a child's accomplishment
- Recognition of a child's achievement on the school-wide morning announcements or school website
- Ribbon, certificate in recognition of achievement or a sticker with an affirming message (e.g. "Great job")
- Take a trip to the treasure box (filled with: stickers, temporary tattoos, pencils, pens, highlighters, sidewalk chalk, notepads, erasers, bookmarks, etc.)

Websites

General School Wellness

“Healthy Schools Campaign”
<http://healthyschoolscampaign.org/>

“Healthy Schools Campaign: The Quick and Easy Guide to School Wellness”
<http://healthyschoolscampaign.org/campaign/wellness/>

“Action for Healthy Kids”
<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/index.php>

“National Alliance for Nutrition and Physical Activity”
<http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/nana.html>

“Coordinated Approach to Child Health”
<http://www.sph.uth.tmc.edu/catch/about.htm>

“Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program”
<http://www.kidseatwell.org/>

“Learn To Be Healthy”
<http://www.learntobehealthy.org/>

“Healthy Youth! School Health Index”
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/SHI/brochure.htm>

Nutrition

“School Nutrition Association”
<http://www.schoolnutrition.org/>

“Team Nutrition”
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/>

Physical Fitness

“President’s Council on Physical Fitness”
<http://fitness.gov/index.html>

“PE4Life”
<http://www.pe4life.org/>

All information regarding the District 65 Wellness Council and Wellness Policy can be found on the district website.

1. Go to www.district65.net
2. On the left menu bar, click on Committees
3. On the Committees page, click on Wellness Council

Celebrate your school's success with wellness by sharing your story! Contact the District 65 Communications Office: 847-859-8100