

School District Profile

School District: Farmington Public Schools	Grades: K-12	Enrollment: 4,400
Number of Schools: 7	Education Reference Group (ERG): B	
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School Health Team in Place before Pilot Project: No

School Health Team Members:

School principal, school nurse, school food service director, parent representative, health and physical education coordinator, health educator, physical education teacher, family and consumer sciences teacher and dietitian

Other People Who Should Have Been Included on the School Health Team:

Elementary classroom teachers and school social worker

Policy Adoption:

The final policy draft will be reviewed for board adoption during the 2005-2006 school year.

Number of Times School Health Team Met: 8

Length of Each Meeting: 1.5 hours

Continuation of School Health Team after Pilot Completion:

The School Health Team will broaden its focus to include policy implementation as well as promotion and communication throughout the school district. The team will also move beyond nutrition and physical activity to other issues that impact student health and achievement.

Process for Identifying and Prioritizing Program Improvement Needs:

We used the *School Health Index* to get an initial sense of where we stood and to create the context for our discussions. We then used team member input and information gathering to prioritize our actions for policy development.

Steps Used for Policy Development and Adoption:

1. Developed the School Health Team.
2. Used the *School Health Index* (SHI) to identify areas of focus.
3. Expanded the team to include additional members for more representative input.
4. Reviewed the results of the SHI modules with the expanded team and brainstormed strategies.
5. Appointed a small subcommittee to draft initial policy statements using model language from existing resources (e.g., *Fit, Healthy and Ready to Learn* and Rhode Island's *School District Nutrition & Physical Activity Model Policy Language*).
6. Shared initial draft with team and made changes based on group feedback.
7. Brought draft policy to administration for review.
8. Planned for policy adoption during the 2005-2006 school year.

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Challenges to the Policy Development Process:

- Time to meet as a group.
- Getting representation on the School Health Team from all of the key people in the district.

Successes with the Policy Development Process:

- Increased awareness of nutrition and physical activity issues and possible alternatives to past practices.
- Increased communication and coordination among school staff members from different disciplines, which provides a foundation to continue our efforts.
- Increased coordination of district efforts around student health and learning.

Critical Resources Needed to Ensure Success with Policy Development:

- Getting the right people involved in the School Health Team.
- Materials to guide the work and time, e.g., policy development resources and model language.
- Administrative support.

Characteristics Important to an Effective, Productive and Successful School Health Team:

- Keep a solid focus on your priorities.
- Work hard to get everyone you want to the table.
- Use time wisely by keeping meeting agendas focused and on track.

Activities Conducted as a Result of Work on the School Nutrition Policies Project:

- Developed a high school parent newsletter which focuses on the work of the School Health Team and provides resources and information to support parents.
- Developed a staff wellness project based on a 10,000 steps program. Participants were given a pedometer and invited to take part in our "Walk Across America" program.
- Developed a nutrition PowerPoint presentation for PTO meetings.
- Supported a Grade 7 *World of Wellness Day* and a high school program for *Stress Free Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)*.
- Developed and implemented numerous curriculum revisions and program offerings within the context of wellness and school health. For example, health and physical education are combined into a full-year wellness course in Grades 9 and 10, with a focus on health literacy and physical activity promotion. For Grades 11 and 12, we have created semester-long electives (e.g., Personal Wellness, Social Dance and Strength and Conditioning) to better meet students' needs for increased autonomy and choice. We have also revised and enhanced the health program at the middle school with an introduction to the concepts of wellness.

Strategies for Promoting Adoption and Districtwide Support of the Policies:

- Parent newsletter.
- Information on the back of the school menu.
- Meetings with the board, the District Leadership Council and school staff members to provide implementation strategies and alternatives to previous practices.
- Distribution of a staff packet with essential information on policy implementation strategies and resources, e.g., alternatives to food as a reward, importance of recess, and physical activity guidelines.
- Districtwide "kickoff" event for families when policies are adopted, followed by support events at each local school.

Strategies for District Implementation of the Policies:

- The School Health Team will work with local school leadership through the District Leadership Council.

Methods for Evaluating Success of District Implementation of the Policies:

- Evaluation measures for physical activity will include parent surveys on students' physical activity and collecting pre- and post-assessment data on student recess logs (e.g., how much time is spent being active versus inactive time due to lack of play, make-up work, disciplinary action and instrumentals).
- Additional evaluation measures for nutrition and other policy areas will be determined after the policy has been adopted by the board of education.

Recommendations for Success with the Policy Development Process:

- Ensure that the School Health Team has good representation and includes all of the right people.
- Enlist the help of those individuals who can champion your efforts at the local school level.
- Communicate regularly with all schools regarding policy issues, e.g., problems, practices and solutions.
- Focus on policy implementation (e.g., developing resources and strategies for school-level implementation), not just the development of the policy document.

Policies

*Farmington Public Schools
Draft Physical Activity and Nutrition Policies*

Student Physical Activity and Nutrition

Policy Intent/Rationale

The Farmington School District promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. The District supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. Schools contribute to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that no child is left behind.

- A. Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity. A healthy school environment should not be sacrificed because of a dependence on revenue from high added fat, high added sugar, and low-nutrient foods to support school programs.

- B. Support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance.

All foods available on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the district nutrition standards. Emphasis should be placed on foods that are nutrient-dense per calorie. To ensure high-quality, nutritious meals, foods should be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety, and packaging.

- C. Provide more opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.

A quality physical education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity. Physical activity should be included in a school's daily education program from grades pre-K through 12. Physical activity should include regular instructional physical education, in accordance with the Connecticut Physical Education Framework, as well as co-curricular activities, and recess.

Draft Student Physical Activity Policies

Physical Activity Opportunities

- Physical education classes and physical activity opportunities will be available for all students. Due to limited meetings per week, students will not be pulled out of physical education instruction for instruction in other content areas (e.g., music).
- Physical activity opportunities shall be offered daily before school, during school (recess) or after school. Intramural offerings should be maintained at present levels and steadily increased to accommodate lower grades and increased opportunity for all.
- Supervised recess time should be provided within each school day for preschool, kindergarten and elementary school students (K-6). Active play and socialization should be encouraged. Staff members shall not deny participation in recess or other physical activity opportunities as a form of discipline or punishment*, nor shall it be taken for instructional purposes.

*Unless the safety of students is in question.

Physical Education Instruction

As recommended by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), school leaders of physical activity and physical education shall guide students through a process that will enable them to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness through the following:

- expose youngsters to a wide variety of physical activities;
- teach physical skills to help maintain a lifetime of health and fitness;
- encourage self-monitoring so youngsters can see how active they are and set their own goals;
- individualize intensity of activities;
- focus feedback on process of doing your best rather than on product;
- be active role models; and
- introduce developmentally appropriate components of a health-related fitness assessment (Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment) to the students at an early age to prepare them for future assessments. Collect and analyze fitness and physical activity data over time. Forward student fitness and performance data across grade levels.

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Physical Activity Guidelines

Begin fitness or activity logging in elementary school. Assist students to interpret their personal attainments and compare them to national physical activity recommendations.

The 2004 Guidelines from NASPE recommend:

- Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes, and up to several hours, of age-appropriate physical activity on all, or most, days of the week.
- Children should participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day.
- Children should participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical activities designed to achieve optimal health, wellness, fitness, and performance benefits.
- Extended periods (periods of two hours or more) of inactivity are discouraged for children, especially during the daytime hours.
- NASPE recommendations for physical education are 150 minutes per week for elementary students and 225 minutes per week for middle and high school students.

Health Fitness Assessment

Beginning in middle school and through high school, administer a health-related fitness assessment with students. Students shall receive results and use this as a baseline in understanding their own level of fitness, creating fitness goals and plans, and logging activities identified to achieve the goals. Logs should include day, time, type and length of activity, whether the activity was done alone or with others, and how the student felt before and after the activity.

- Physical education classes shall be sequential, building from year to year, and content will include movement, personal fitness, and personal and social responsibility.
- Students should be able to demonstrate competency through application of knowledge, skill, and practice.
- Increasingly, the connection of health and physical education content and standards to a wellness education model focused on positive choice, decision making, constant long term improvement and goal setting shall be developed and implemented.

Draft Nutrition Policies

School Lunch Meal Planning

All menus will be written in accordance with the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) guidelines. These guidelines follow a traditional food-based meal pattern. This pattern meets specific food components including meat/meat alternate, vegetables/fruits, grains/breads and milk. For each food item the meal patterns specify a minimum number and size of servings. All of these food components will be made available each day for all students.

A La Carte Food Sale Program

The snacks sold at the K-8 level should follow an established standard minimizing the content of fat, sodium and sugar. These standards are as follows and are sold at a limitation of one snack per child per day.

- Fat <9 g
- Sodium <250 mg
- Sugar <12 g

Competitive Foods

Connecticut state regulation prohibits schools from the sale of tea, coffee, soft drinks and candy to students anywhere on school premises for 30 minutes prior to the start of the NSLP until 30 minutes after the end of the program. In addition, income from the sale of any foods (including vending machines, school stores, student fundraisers, etc.) sold or distributed anywhere on the school premises during the same timeframe must be accrued to the food service account.

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value

Foods defined as having minimal nutritional value will not be sold in the cafeterias or anywhere on school premises.

1. soda water (excluding the excepted products)
2. water ice
3. chewing gum
4. candies (excluding the excepted fruit snack products)

POS Cash Register System

The Point of Sale (POS) Cash Register system will be used to maintain a pre-payment program; a confidential system for managing the eligibility of students participating in the free/reduced-price lunch program; and extend the ability of parents to restrict and monitor the purchase of food items in the school cafeterias.

Other Food-Related Events

All foods provided by the school during instructional hours will meet the dietary and snack guidelines stated above. It will be strongly encouraged that all food-related events which take place in the classroom, during fundraising activities, PTO events, etc., will meet the same snack standard as defined by the present a la carte program at the K-4 level (see standard above). The food service department will support this effort by extending its purchasing practices and buying power at bid pricing for such events. This buying power is also extended to all grade teams that wish to purchase snacks for students on a regular basis. Whether foods served at special events (ethnic fairs, etc.) meet this guideline is left to the discretion of the building principal.

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Nutrition Education

Science-based, behavior-focused nutrition education will be integrated into the curriculum from pre-K through grade 12 and in after-school programs. All staff members involved in nutrition education will have appropriate training.

Teacher-to-Student Incentive

The use of food items as part of a student incentive program is strongly discouraged. Should teachers feel compelled to use food items as an incentive, they are required to adhere to the District Nutrition Standards.

Marketing Healthful Foods and Beverages

Food service programs and others selling foods and beverages in schools will market nutrient-rich options to students and staff members through the basic P's of marketing – product, placement, price, and promotion.

Vending Machine Policy

A committee will research vending policies and recommend action not covered by above policies.