

Pathways Strategic Teaching Center Health and Wellness Policy



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Definitions

Competitive Foods – is any food or beverage sold outside of the reimbursable school meals program (School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program)

Smart Snack – the national nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold outside of the federal reimbursable school meal programs during the school day.

School Campus – is defined as all areas of property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the day.

Reimbursable meal – means a meal (breakfast, lunch or afterschool snack) which meets all of USDA's meal requirements for reimbursement

Food/Beverage Marketing and advertising – oral, written, or graphic statement or representation, including a company logo or trademark, made for the purpose of promoting the use or sale of a product by its producer, manufacturer, distributor, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product.

PSTC – Pathways Strategic Teaching Center – consists of both the Centre of New England Blvd, Coventry and Commonwealth Ave, Warwick locations.

PA – Physical Activity – is any leisure or non-leisure movement of the body that expends energy, such as exercise, sports dance, mobility training or physical therapy, brisk walking, swimming or other body movements that results in an increased heart rate.

PE or APE – Adapted Physical Education - a sequential, developmentally appropriate K-12 curriculum, in accordance with the Rhode Island Physical Framework, enabling students to develop the knowledge, motor skills, self-management skills, attitudes and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physical activity throughout their lives.

School Day - is defined as the period from the midnight before, to one hour after the end of the official school day. RI General Law (16-21-7) (See Addendum #5)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and recommendations for all Pre-school - 12th grade students in the areas of physical education and physical activity, health education, and nutrition in part to align with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. (HHFKA)(See Addendum #1)

POLICY INTENT

Pathways Strategic Teaching Center (PSTC) is an independent school, which promotes healthy schools, by supporting wellness, respect, safety, good nutrition and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. PSTC supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. PSTC contributes to the basic health status of children by facilitating education through the support and promotion of good nutrition, physical activity, and overall wellness. Moreover, PSTC recognizes that improved health optimizes student and staff performance potential.

PSTC shall provide a comprehensive program that encompasses a combination of learning experiences and environmental supports designed to facilitate behavioral and environmental adaptations that are conducive to health.

PSTC Wellness Committee

RI General Law (RIGL §§16-2-9(a)(24) and 16-2-9(a)(25)) (See Addendum #4) requires the establishment of coordinated school health and wellness subcommittee chaired by a full member of the School faculty.

PSTC will establish and maintain a Wellness Committee, whose membership may include, but is not limited to:

- School personnel, including but not limited to:
 - School Nurse(s)
 - Staff member representative from each school
 - Physical Education teacher(s)
 - Health Education teacher(s)
 - Family and Consumer Science teachers
 - Other teachers
- School Administrators
- Food Service Director/Manager
- Students
- Parents and guardians

The members of the Health and Wellness Committee will

- Participate in the implementation of the wellness policy
- Collaborate and coordinate resources to drive school health objectives
- Conduct a quantitative assessment of policy implementation every three years using the Wellness Policy Implementation Checklist

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/16tZyhrumDiuYFu7e08CcSLIN1u9Czwm6vKtWKw59G4/edit#gid=0>

- - The triennial progress report will be posted on the district website. The report will include an assessment on compliance, the extent to which our wellness policy compares to model wellness policies, and progress made in achieving goals
- Make recommendations to the administration/school committee to:
 - Nutrition and physical activity policies to decrease obesity and enhance the health and well-being of the students and employees
 - Physical Education curriculum and instruction
 - Health education curriculum and instruction
 - Annually prepare all school, state and federal reports required of the Health and Wellness Committee
- meet quarterly.

A letter will be sent to the school community and will be posted in a central area in all school buildings inviting members of the community to join the wellness committee. Parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, PE teachers, school health professionals, school administrators, and the students' families will be included in the development, implementation, review and update of the wellness policy.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

PSTC will deliver a challenging, developmentally appropriate K-12 physical education curriculum, aligned with the Rhode Island Physical Education Framework, to develop physically educated individuals who have the knowledge, skill, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthy physical activity. Adapted Physical Education (APE) classes will be instructed by Rhode Island certified All Grades Adapted Physical Education Teachers, who receive annual professional development and training in PE standards, curriculum, and instruction.

Physical Education

- Instruction in health and physical education (PE) is provided during periods, which shall average at least twenty (20) minutes in each school day or 100 minutes per week (RIGL IHAMD 16-22.4).(See Addendum #5)
- Recess, free play, and other school activities shall not be construed as physical education.
- The physical education curriculum is required to be aligned, by September 2012, with the physical education standards of the [Rhode Island Physical Education Framework: Supporting Physically Active Lifestyles through Quality Physical Education](#). The curriculum should be sequential, developmentally appropriate and comprehensive.
- Waivers for physical education are only permitted for medical reasons. Physical activity offered through external or extra-curricular opportunities may not be used as a substitute for physical education.

Physical Activity

- PSTC will encourage an environment where students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through daily recess periods, PE classes, walking programs, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum.
- Recess
 - Students in grades K-5 are provided a minimum of 20 minutes of sustained free play recess every day (RIGL 16.22.4.2) (See Addendum #5), preferably outdoors.
 - Withholding recess and/or physical activity as a disciplinary strategy in the classroom or in the school environment is prohibited.
- PSTC encourages parents/guardians to support their children’s participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- Opportunities are provided for families to participate in physical activity with their children through such events as walks, 5Ks, obstacle courses, Special Olympics, and relays.

HEALTH EDUCATION

PSTC will deliver a challenging, sequential, and differentiated K-12 health curriculum that is aligned with the Rhode Island Physical Education Framework and Rhode Island Department of Education Comprehensive Health Instructional Outcomes, resulting in students who possess the knowledge and skills to live a healthy life.

- Instruction in health and physical education is provided during periods, which shall average at least thirty (30) minutes per week.
- Health education will include instruction in the following content areas appropriate to grade or developmental level:
 - Advocating for self and others
 - Goal Setting
 - Growth, Puberty, and Human Development
 - Sexuality and Relationships
 - Reproductive Health and Sexual Behavior
 - Mental and Emotional health
 - Community Helpers, Etiquette, and Safety
 - Injury Prevention
 - Body Health and Nutrition
 - Hygiene and Disease Prevention
 - Substance Use and Abuse
 - Body Systems

NUTRITION EDUCATION AND WELLNESS PROMOTION

Student Nutrition Education and Wellness Promotion

- Students in grades K-12 will receive nutrition promotion initiatives that are interactive, aligned with State and national standards, and that teach the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors.
- Students receive consistent nutrition messages throughout school (integrated into cooking lessons), classrooms, and to homes, community and media.
- The entire school environment, not just the classroom. Will be aligned with health school goals to positively influence a student’s understanding, belief, and habits as they relate to good nutrition, and regular physical activity
- Nutrition education will provide the knowledge and skills to promote healthy lifestyle
- Nutrition promotion will be offered with coordination between the foodservice staff and teachers.
- Nutrition lessons/topics are integrated within the comprehensive health education curriculum and taught at every grade level.
- The nutrition education program shall work with the related services team to develop school gardens and healthy recipes for cooking groups. Groups will include fresh, locally grown foods from farms engaged in sustainable practices whenever possible.
- Schools are enrolled as USDA Team Nutrition Schools, and they conduct nutrition promotion activities that involve parents, students, and the community.
- The advertising of foods and beverages that are not available for sale in district schools will not be provided on any school property. ([RIGL 16-21-7.1 Food/Bev Marketing & Advertising](#)) (See Addendum #8)
- Criteria for selecting educational materials for the classroom shall be expanded to include review of advertising content. Every effort will be made to select materials free of brand names, logos, and illustrations of unhealthy foods.
- We will not expose students to food marketing of any kind. All advertising in school publications and school media outlets must be approved by the Special Education director of the school
- Students will receive education about agriculture and the food system through activities such as but not limited to; planting, harvesting, weeding, as well as food preparation, cooking, serving, and tasking foods.

Staff Nutrition Education and Wellness Promotion

- Staff voluntary wellness programs encourage individuals to take measures to prevent the onset or worsening of a disease or illness and to lead lifestyles that are healthy. PSTC will collaborate with teachers and staff to determine needs and interests.
- PSTC will offer opportunities for staff to participate in wellness promotion activities such as nutrition programs and physical activities.
- School staff members shall be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors.
- The purpose of staff nutrition and physical activity education will be to:
 - Encourage all school staff to improve their own personal health and wellness to Improve staff morale
 - Create positive role-modeling
 - Build the commitment of staff to promote the health of students

- Build the commitment of staff to help improve the school nutrition and physical activity environment

NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR ALL FOODS AVAILABLE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

USDA Meals Program

- The schools will provide students with access to both a breakfast and lunch meal program. The school breakfast and lunch programs will comply with the United States Department of Agriculture National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and the Rhode Island Department of Education Rhode Island Nutrition Program (RINR). (See Addendum #3)
- Applications for free/reduced priced meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year.
- Eligible students may receive their breakfast and lunch at free or reduced prices following current federal regulations, Eligibility Manual for School Meals Guidelines and district policy, Free and Reduced-Price Meals and/or Free Milk Policy. The district will follow strict protocols to ensure confidentiality and adherence to the guidelines of free and reduced regulations. Documentation for free and reduced lunch will be maintained as a confidential document and will only be used for the purposes of determining free and reduced lunch status.
- It is prohibited for students with unpaid balances to be shamed in anyway, including by announcing their names, using hand stamps to identify them, or sending home clearly marked notices that they have an unpaid balance.
- Innovative strategies to increase student participation in the programs include but are not limited to offering student samples, providing opportunities for students to prepare foods, creating unique menus that are thematic, and celebrating the use of local produce. (IHAMD)
- The food service provider and all staff receive training on an annual basis in accordance to USDA Professional Standards.
- Meals served through the districts food service program shall comply with the national school lunch and or breakfast standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels and calories requirements for all ages/group levels served, as specified in 7 CFR 210.10 or 220.8 (See Addendum #9) as applicable.
- The food service director will work closely with the district-wide coordinated Health and Wellness Subcommittee. The Health and Wellness Subcommittee will periodically receive menu updates to ensure consistency with NSLP and Rhode Island Nutrition Regulations guidelines (RINR). All nutrition information will be posted on the district website link to the food service provider's website.

Student Lunch Area Environment:

- The lunch area environment is a place where students have:
 - adequate space to eat in a clean, pleasant surrounding;
 - adequate time to eat meals, 20 minutes or more for lunch; and
 - convenient access to hand washing or hand sanitizing facilities before meals

- School administrators will consider strategies to maximize eating/recess time. Recess before lunch is an example of one strategy to achieve this goal.

Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods/Beverages: Only snacks and beverages identified within the law may be sold or distributed on school grounds both prior to and throughout the school day, including vending machines, fundraisers, school stores, or anywhere where food/beverages are sold in school in accordance with the USDA Competitive Foods/Beverages Nutrition Standards – Smart Snacks in Schools and RIGL 16.21.7(See Addendum #5) effective in all Rhode Island elementary, middle, and senior high schools. These regulations (found at https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/USDA_SmartSnacks_508_62019.pdf) are in effect before, during and up to one hour after the instructional day.

- The school foodservice program including vending, a la carte and foods sold on school grounds will follow the USDA Competitive Foods/Beverages Nutrition Standards – Smart Snacks in Schools, when determining the items offered in the cafeteria as a la carte and for competitive food offerings.
- Encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e. whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables and dairy products as outlined in the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Free drinking water is available for self-service in the schools. Water filling stations and cups are available through the school and supervisory staff will allow students to access the water, students are allowed to bring in bottled water from home.
- If food items are not allowable for sale under state and federal regulation or school policy, they may not be marketed.
- Only water, milk, 100% juice shall be sold to students during the school day.

Fundraising:

- There will be no food-related fundraisers held during the school day.
- All food fundraisers that do not meet the Healthy Snacks and Beverage Law, USDA Competitive Foods/Beverages Nutrition Standards – Smart Snacks in Schools and RIGL §§ 16-21-7(See Addendum #5), must be sold off school grounds;
- Fundraisers that include the sale of food may not occur during the instructional day, before school and must be at least one hour after the school day;
- Given concerns about student exposure to marketing, district schools will no longer participate in incentive programs that promote brands or provide children with free or discounted foods or beverages.
- If food items are not allowable for sale under state and federal regulation or school policy, they may not be marketed and
- Fundraisers that promote physical activity are strongly encouraged.

Teacher-to-Student Acknowledgements and Incentives:

- The use of food as a reward, acknowledgement or incentive in the classroom or in the school environment is prohibited, except when recommended by a physician or an evaluation team.
- The use of physical activity as an incentive is highly encouraged.

- Recess may not be removed as a punishment, as physical activity is essential to the physical and social-emotional well-being of students.
- Teachers are encouraged to model healthy choices in nutrition, beverage and physical activity in their classrooms. Teachers and staff are required to adhere to the Health and Wellness Policy.

Shared Snacks:

PSTC teachers and/or PSTC personnel will discourage the sharing of snacks during the school day, as well as during before and after school programs to limit exposure to food allergens.

Celebrations/Events During School Day:

Although non-food celebrations are strongly encouraged, the school may choose to handle celebrations in a variety of ways:

- Non-food celebrations only
- Utilize PSTC's foodservice provider to ensure food safety standards are met and to reduce the risk of food borne illness and allergies.
- Celebrations must comply with USDA Competitive Foods/Beverages Nutrition Standards – Smart Snacks in Schools., the PSTC Food Allergies Policy, and the IHCPs as it pertains to food present in the class/school.

School Stores and After School Events:

School stores that sell food during the school day should comply with the Healthy Snacks and Beverage Law, USDA Competitive Foods/Beverages Nutrition Standards – Smart Snacks in Schools and RIGL §§ 16-21. (See Addendum #5)

Any school sponsored events occurring after school and using PSTC property will offer foods that comply with Healthy Snacks and Beverage Law, USDA Competitive Foods/Beverages Nutrition Standards – Smart Snacks in Schools and §§RIGL 16-21-7(See Addendum #5), and the Current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Concessions:

Operators of school concessions are strongly encouraged to offer foods and beverages that comply with the Healthy Snacks and Beverage Law, USDA Competitive Foods/Beverages Nutrition Standards – Smart Snacks in Schools and RIGL §§ 16-21-7(See Addendum #5), and/or the Current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Peanut and Tree Nut Allergy

R.I. General Law §§ 16-21-31 & 16-21-32(See Addendum #5)

Depending on the nature and extent of the student's allergy, the measures listed in the IHCP may include, but are not limited to:

- Posting additional signs (e.g., in classroom entryways).
- Prohibiting the sale of particular food items in the school.
- Designating special tables in the cafeteria.
- Prohibiting particular food items from certain classrooms and/or the cafeteria.

- Completely prohibiting particular food items from the school or school grounds.
- Educating school personnel, students, and families about food allergies; and/or
- Implementing particular protocols around cleaning surfaces touched by food products, washing of hands after eating, etc.
- The measures shall be taken in conjunction with the Pathways Strategic Teaching Center's Health and wellness policy and food safety policy.
- A plan may also be developed for each staff member with a serious food allergy.

Implementation, Evaluation and Reporting

Implementation and Monitoring

- Every two-three years, the wellness committee will review the latest national recommendations pertaining to school health and will update the wellness policy accordingly.
- The Health and Wellness Subcommittee will include, an administrator, nurse, classroom teacher, health teacher, physical education teacher, representation from the food service program, and representation from parents and community members.
- The Health and Wellness Subcommittee will act in an advisory capacity to the school.
- The Health and Wellness Subcommittee will amend the policy, as needed.

Compliance and Evaluation

- In accordance with RIGL 16.21.28(See Addendum #5), PSTC will maintain a Health and Wellness Subcommittee, to review the effectiveness and implementation of the policy. An annual will provide a summary to the school with regards to policy implementation including fundraising, concessions, incentives and celebrations.
- The Director of Special Education or designee shall ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity policies.
- Pathways Administration will be responsible for providing the leadership necessary to be in compliance with the Wellness Policy.
- We shall conduct quantitative assessment of policy implementation every three years using the wellness school assessment tool implementation.
- All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutrition Professionals(<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/professional-standards>). These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs found here <https://professionalstandards.fns.usda.gov/>

Reporting and Communication

- On an annual basis, the PSTC will reach out to interested community members participants.

- The Health and Wellness policy will be shared annually to parents, with encouragement and opportunity to understand and ask questions relative to the policy. Parents will be updated on their role in supporting the successful implementation of the policy. Parents will be provided newsletters which include contact information for the Health and Wellness leadership and information on how to join the committee. The contact information and updated reports will be available on school websites.
- Best Practices that promote the goals outlined in this policy will be shared by the PSTC staff semi-annually.
- The triennial progress report will be posted on the school website. The report will include an assessment on compliance, the extent to which our wellness policy compares to model wellness policies, and progress made in achieving goals. RIDE findings are available to the public at: <https://www.ride.ri.gov/CNP/NutritionPrograms/NationalSchoolLunchProgram.aspx#21381347-administrative-review-summaries>

AREAS OF IMPORTANCE OUTSIDE OF NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ACTIVITY

The Health and Wellness Subcommittee recognizes that additional topics pertaining to health and wellness, including but not limited to personal health, mental and emotional health, injury prevention, nutrition, sexuality and family life, disease control and prevention, and substance abuse and abuse prevention may be reviewed by the Health and Wellness Subcommittee and recommendations will be forwarded to school administration for policy review.

Due to the location of our school and obvious safety concerns, students are not permitted to walk or ride bikes to school.

Covid-19 / Coronavirus

The Health and Wellness Subcommittee strives to keep our students and community healthy and safe during the Covid-19 pandemic. We will follow all recommendations and guidelines put forth by the Rhode Island Department of Education and the RI Department of Health. All of the guidelines and protocols can be found here: <https://www.back2schoolri.com/outbreak-response-protocols/>

Addendum

1. Public Law (111-296, Section 204) Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>
2. USDA Smart Snacks in Schools: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>
3. Rhode Island Nutrition Requirements (RINR):
http://www.thriveri.org/documents/RINR2009_%20BOR_%20Mandated%2011%205%2009.pdf
4. Rhode Island General Laws §§16-2-9(a)(24) and 16-2-9(a)(25)
<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/title16/16-2/16-2-9.HTM>
5. Rhode Island General Laws 16-21-4,7,28,31,32,
<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-21/INDEX.HTM>
6. 7 CFR 210.10 or 220.8 <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/7/210.10>
7. Rhode Island General Laws 16-22 <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-22/INDEX.HTM>
8. Rhode Island General Laws [RIGL 16-21-7.1 Food/Bev Marketing & Advertising](#)