**Oshki Ogimaag Community School Wellness Policy**

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**Oshki Ogimaag Community School Wellness Policy**

**Preamble**

Oshki Ogimaag Community School (hereto referred to as the District) is committed to the optimal development of every student. The District 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. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism and better performance on cognitive tasks.[[1]](#endnote-2),[[2]](#endnote-3),[[3]](#endnote-4),[[4]](#endnote-5),[[5]](#endnote-6),[[6]](#endnote-7),[[7]](#endnote-8) Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.[[8]](#endnote-9),[[9]](#endnote-10),[[10]](#endnote-11) In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education and extracurricular activities – do better academically.[[11]](#endnote-12),[[12]](#endnote-13),[[13]](#endnote-14),[[14]](#endnote-15). Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.15,16,17

This policy outlines the District’s 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. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

* Students in the District have access to healthy foods throughout the school day ‒ both through reimbursable school meals and afternoon snack;
* Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
* Students have opportunities to be physically active during school;
* Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
* School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
* The community is engaged in supporting the work of the District in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
* The District establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students, staff and schools in the District. Specific measureable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

**School Wellness Committee**

***Committee Role and Membership***

The Director at OOCS will lead the wellness committee in monitoring, reviewing and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The membership could consist of individuals representing the school, parents, students, members of the school board, health professionals, and individuals representing the community. When possible could also include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education coordinators.

**Nutrition**

***School Meals***

Our school district is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams *trans* fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer’s specification); and to meeting the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

OOCS participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the (SNP) School Nutrition Program, Kindergarten Milk Program and (FFVP) Fresh, Fruits and Vegetables Program.

* Are accessible to all students;
* Are appealing and attractive to children;
* Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
* Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal statutes and regulations;
* Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
* Serve only low- fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives.

***Free and Reduced Price Meals***

OOCS will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. OOCS promotes the availability of school meals to all students and encourages adults to eat with students to help foster conversation, manners and a pleasant atmosphere.

***Meal times and Scheduling*** OOCS will provide

* 20 to 30 minutes for students to eat their meals;
* Breakfast will be upon arrival at 8:00, Lunch will be at 12:00 noon and a snack in the afternoon;
* Provide students access to handwashing before they eat meals and snacks.

***Staff Qualifications and Professional Development***

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the district’s responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs according to levels of responsibility.

***Water***

Students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

***Snacks, Rewards and Celebrations***

Snacks are offered daily free to all students; these snacks will make a positive contribution to student’s diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables (vegetables from our garden when possible).

OOCS does not withhold food or beverages as a punishment. Healthy foods and beverages are encouraged for celebrations and for rewards for academic performance and good behavior.

***Nutrition Promotion and Education***

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs.

The District will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

* Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
* Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
* Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens;
* Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
* Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
* Links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services; and
* Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

***Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools***

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or foods and beverages sold individually. School-based marketing of brands promoting predominately low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products is encouraged. In the event that OOCS obtains any vending type products or ‘ala-carte’ the foods and beverages would be items that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

**Physical Activity**

***Physical Education***

The District will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the “*Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education*” subsection). The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. The District will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

All District **elementary students** in each grade will receive physical education for at least 60-89 minutes per week throughout the school year.

***Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education***

Health education will be offered in all grades. Some of the topics may include the following essential topics on physical activity:

* The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
* How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
* Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
* Differences between physical activity, exercise and fitness
* Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout and cool down
* Overcoming barriers to physical activity
* Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
* Opportunities for physical activity in the community
* Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while being physically active
* How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity
* Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
* Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture
* How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
* How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity.

***Recess (Elementary)***

OOCS classes have at least **20 minutes of recess** on all days during the school year. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

**Outdoor recess** will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play.

In the event that the school or district must conduct **indoor recess,** teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. In door recess is held in the gym when possible.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

***Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)***

The District recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **Brain Breaks periodically** to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. The District recommends teachers provide short (3-5-minute) physical activity breaks to students during classroom time at least three days per week. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class or recess.

The District will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for classroom physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through [USDA](http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/resource-library/physical-activity-school-aged-children/activities-and-tools) and the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/physical_activity/physical_activities/).

***Active Academics***

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

The District will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

**Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness**

The District will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. The District 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.

Schools in the District are encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or the District’s curriculum experts.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the DWC/SWC.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy guidelines. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

***Community Partnerships***

The District will continue their relationships with community partners Grand Portage Health Clinic, local businesses, SNAP-Ed/Nutrition Coordinator in support of this wellness policy’s implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

***Community Health Promotion and Family Engagement***

The District will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

As described in the “Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications” subsection***,*** the District will use electronic mechanisms (e.g., email or displaying notices on the district’s website), as well as non-electronic mechanisms, (e.g., newsletters, presentations to parents or sending information home to parents), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

***Staff Wellness and Health Promotion***

OOCS will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. The District promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost, it is also encouraged that staff take advantage of using the equipment at the Community Center free of charge.

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