

## **SCHOOL WELLNESS**

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The Aurora Public Schools Board of Education promotes healthy schools by supporting student wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. Schools contribute to the basic health status of students by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of physical, mental, emotional and social health. Improved health optimizes student performance potential. Children who are physically active and who eat well-balanced meals are likely to learn more readily in the classroom. The board of education is committed to promoting physical activity and providing a healthy school nutrition environment. To further the principles stated above, the board adopts the following three goals:

Goal 1: The Aurora Public Schools support and promote a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors. The goal of the learning environment is to positively influence a student's understandings, beliefs, and habits as they relate to good health. Furthermore, this environment provides students with appropriate resources and tools to make informed and educated decisions about lifelong physical, mental, emotional and social health.

Goal 2: The Aurora Public Schools supports and promotes proper dietary habits contributing to students' health and academic performance. Food and beverages available on school grounds during the school day meet or exceed federal and state nutrition standards.

Goal 3: The Aurora Public Schools will provide students a variety of opportunities to engage in physical activity.

Goal 4: The Aurora Public Schools will support students' mental and behavioral health needs. APS will provide programs and collaborate with community partners to offer prevention, early intervention, crisis intervention and recovery to promote a positive and safe climate and culture for students and staff.

The chief academic officer, the healthy schools coordinator and the director of nutrition services develop regulations to ensure that the wellness policy is implemented in the schools. To best support this implementation, the district has in place a coordinated health team. The team:

- Serves as a resource to the schools.

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- Involves schools to develop a plan for district implementation.
- Develops a plan and regulations in conjunction with the director of assessment to annually measure the implementation of the district's wellness policy to ensure district compliance as applicable.

**LEGAL REFS:**

C.R.S. 22-32-134.5 (healthy beverage requirement)

C.R.S. 22-32-136.3 (trans fat ban)

1 CCR 301-79 (State Board of Education–healthy beverages rules)

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**Goal 1: The Aurora Public Schools will support and promote a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors. APS will participate in state funded needs assessments as opportunities arise. The goal of the learning environment will be to positively influence students and their families understandings, beliefs, and habits as they relate to good health. Furthermore, this environment will provide students with appropriate resources and tools to make informed and educated decisions about lifelong physical, mental, emotional and social health.**

- a. Continue to improve the implementation of health education, using the Colorado Comprehensive Health and Physical Education standards, to teach students about the positive effects of comprehensive health and wellness.
- b. Ensure that health instruction is age-appropriate and culturally sensitive.
- c. Make nutrition education available in the school cafeteria as well as the classroom, with coordination between the district's nutrition services staff and teachers.
- d. Recommend that all health education instructors meet the criteria of highly qualified.
- e. Encourage teachers to integrate health content into core curriculum areas as appropriate.
- f. Provide staff development focused on physical, mental, emotional and social health.
- g. Encourage community collaboration that supports Aurora Public Schools' efforts to improve the health of students, families and staff.
- h. Provide staff opportunities to engage in comprehensive wellness programs.
- i. District to conduct annual school climate surveys to students, parents and staff
- j. Establish a climate that prevents harassment, bullying and violence
- k. Provide students access to medical care through School Based Health Clinics

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1. Utilize a tracking system to recognize frequent student health issues and attendance issues and utilize data to develop interventions

**Goal 2: The Aurora Public Schools will support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health and academic performance. Food and beverages available on school grounds during the school day shall meet or exceed federal and state nutrition standards.**

- a. Ensure that Child Nutrition programs not be less restrictive than federal, state, and local requirements.
  - i. Smart Snacks - <http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutricompetitivefoods>
  - ii. Meal Patterns – Section 12 - <http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutriadministrators>
  - iii. Healthy Beverages - <http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutrlegislation>
- b. Establish that all foods and beverages sold on campus during the school day (including vending, á la carte, school stores, and fundraisers), at all grade levels, comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- c. All food and beverage marketing can only be for products in compliance with Smart Snack regulations
- d. Fundraisers, classroom parties and classroom rewards are to meet USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines. Encourage nonfood fundraisers, parties and rewards.
- e. Encourage principals to schedule lunch as close to the middle of the day as possible with younger children eating first. In all cases, lunch cannot be served before 10:00 a.m.
- f. Provide students with adequate time to eat lunch; at least 10 minutes for breakfast, and 15 minutes for lunch, from the time students are seated. Recess before lunch for elementary grades is strongly encouraged.
- g. Make water available for students throughout the day.

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- h. Food is not to be used as a reward or a punishment for student behaviors. In the rare instance when such behavior modification is necessary food will meet the USDA Child Nutrition guidelines
- i. Ensure that snacks served during the school day or in district administered after-school care or enrichment programs make a positive contribution to children's diets and health. Emphasize fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage.
- j. Encourage schools and students to participate in USDA child nutrition programs.
- k. Annually review student menu preferences.
- l. Collaborate with community agencies to provide nutrition education, and assess food insecurity to address food gaps where applicable.
- m. Provide students with clean, safe and pleasant cafeterias.
- n. Provide parents the opportunity to experience meals at school to gather feedback about climate and food provided
- o. Provide food assistance and affordable food access information for families
- p. Collaborate with community partners and provide support for school gardens. Collaborate to expand the "Garden to Cafeteria" program and Youth Farmer's Markets

**Goal 3: The Aurora Public Schools will provide students a variety of opportunities to engage in physical activity.**

- a. Schools are encouraged to work toward meeting the national recommendations for physical education and fitness, developed by the Society of Health and Physical Educators and the Centers for Disease Control.

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- b. The district shall include no less than the minimum required amount of physical activity in the schedules of students attending elementary schools, as such minimums are set forth in state law.
  - i. LEGAL REFS.: C.R.S. 22-32-136
  - ii. C.R.S. 22-32-136.5(3)(a)
- c. Recommend that school-aged youth should participate daily in moderate to vigorous physical activity that is developmentally appropriate, enjoyable, and involves a variety of activities.
- d. Recommend optimizing the physical education schedule for the entire school year that includes the following five fitness components: muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, cardio-respiratory endurance, and body composition.
  - i. Implementation of the physical education curriculum at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels
- e. Promote intramural and interscholastic athletics and physical activities.
- f. Recommend that all physical education instructors meet the criteria of highly qualified.
- g. Encourage health-promotion activities and incentives for students, parents, and staff that promote regular physical activity.
- h. Encourage staff and families to incorporate physical activity into students' lives at school, after school, at home, and in the community.
- i. Recommend a minimum of 15 minutes of recess to be provided at lunch time for elementary and middle school students.
- j. Expect that all academic classes in elementary school include structured movement/physical activity. For example: Brain Gym.
- k. Recommend that exclusion from physical activity is not used as a disciplinary measure.

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- l. Recommend that excessive physical activity is not used as a form of discipline.
- m. Encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- n. Encourage parents and guardians to model and support sun-safe behavior.
- o. Recommend students not be removed from physical education for other educational needs.
- p. Recommend that a variety of activities are offered to meet the needs of all students. For students with special health care needs, staff to collaborate and support students to be physically active.
- q. Ensure school buildings, playgrounds, grounds and equipment are secure and meet all established safety and environmental standards.

**Goal 4: The Aurora Public Schools will support students' mental and behavioral health needs. APS will provide programs and collaborate with community partners to offer prevention, early intervention, crisis intervention and recovery to promote a positive and safe climate and culture for students and staff.**

- a. District behavioral health employees (School Social Workers, School Psychologists, and School Counselors) who work with students shall receive suicide prevention training.
  - i. To the extent practicable, suicide prevention training shall be offered to other District staff, students and parents.
- b. School Behavioral Health Team (i.e. counselors, psychologists, social workers) and other trained school staff shall provide social/emotional learning opportunities for students at their school sites.
- c. District mental health team members shall collaborate with school counselors to identify students with emotional and behavioral health needs and provide a variety of interventions to address those needs.

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- d. District behavioral health team members shall provide support for students in times of crisis and to prevent, assist, and support them in the recovery process after a trauma.
- e. The District, and each of its schools, shall establish and maintain strong relationships with community support agencies to address students' mental health needs.
- f. District behavioral health team members shall collaborate to provide school sites with professional development opportunities that increase the understanding of students' issues related to mental health and trauma.
- g. District behavioral health team members shall support the use of Mental Health First Aid for Youth at all school sites.
- h. The District will collaborate with behavioral health team members to analyze data to inform interventions and other mental health support for students.
- i. Each school will have behavioral health support from an assigned behavioral health staff member.
- j. Designate a school health office, or counselor's office as a safe place for students.
- k. Partner with parents to develop management plans for students with emotional, behavioral and mental health needs.

**The chief academic officer, the healthy schools coordinator and the director of nutrition services will ensure that the school wellness policy is implemented in the schools. To best support this implementation, the district has in place a Coordinated Health Team. The team will:**

- a. Serve as a resource to the schools.
- b. Involve schools to develop a plan for district implementation.



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- c. Develop a plan in conjunction with the chief accountability and research officer to annually measure the implementation of the district's school wellness policy to ensure district compliance. Revise plan as necessary.
- d. Establish a professional learning plan for Aurora Public Schools staff to support students in the development of their understanding of lifetime wellness behaviors.
- e. Develop a communication plan to ensure awareness of the Aurora Public Schools wellness policy and regulations among the schools and greater community. Provide stakeholders and opportunity to participate in development, updates, implementation
- f. Encourage participation in local, state and national wellness initiatives.