

Mississippi National Guard Youth Challenge Program Wellness Policy

Rationale:

The link between nutrition, physical activity, and learning is well documented. Healthy eating and activity patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating and physical activity, essential for a healthy weight, are also linked to reduced risk for many chronic diseases, like Type 2 diabetes. Schools have a responsibility to help students learn, establish, and maintain lifelong, healthy eating and activity patterns. Well-planned and effectively implemented school nutrition and fitness programs have been shown to enhance students' overall health, as well as their behavior and academic achievement in school. Staff wellness also is an integral part of a healthy school environment, since school staff can be daily role models for healthy behaviors.

Goal:

All students in the Mississippi Youth Challenge Program shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices and enjoyable physical activity choices for a lifetime. All staff in the Mississippi Youth Challenge Program are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

To meet this goal, the Mississippi Youth Challenge Program adopts this school wellness policy with the following commitments to nutrition, physical activity, comprehensive health education, marketing, and implementation. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.

Commitment to Nutrition

The Mississippi Youth Challenge Program will:

- **Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.**
- **Offer school breakfast and snack programs (where approved and applicable) with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs, National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program.**
- **Encourage school staff and families to participate in school meal programs.**
- **Operate all Child Nutrition Programs with school foodservice staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EE-2E)**
- **Establish food safety as a key component of all school food operations and ensure that the food service permit is current for the Food Service school site.**

- **Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EEH).**
- **Establish guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.**

The Mississippi Youth Challenge Program will:

- Provide adequate time for students to eat and enjoy school meals (a minimum of 15-20 minutes at breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Encourage students to make food choices based on the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, by emphasizing menu options that feature baked (rather than fried foods), whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and reduced-fat dairy products.
- Establish a cafeteria environment conducive to a positive dining experience, with socializing among students and between students and adults; with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct and voice level; and with adults who model healthy habits by eating with the students.
- Make school meals accessible to all students with a variety of delivery strategies, such as grab-and-go lunches or alternate eating sites.
- Add nutritious and appealing options (such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, trail mix, beef jerky, reduced-fat milk, reduced fat-yogurt, reduced-fat cheese, 100% juice, and water) whenever foods/beverages are sold or otherwise offered at school, including vending machines, school stores, concessions stands at sporting and academic events, parties, celebrations, social events, and other school functions.
See Appendix A for example of guidelines and options.
- Eliminate use of foods as rewards for student accomplishment and the withholding of food as punishment (e.g., restricting a child's selection of flavored milk at mealtime due to behavior problems).
See Appendix B for non-food reward ideas.
- Encourage all school-based organizations to use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthful foods for fundraising programs. The sale of candy as a fund-raiser is strongly discouraged (or prohibited).
See Appendix C for alternative fundraising ideas.
- Provide nutrition information for parents, including nutrition analysis of school meals and resources to help parents to improve food that they serve at home.

Commitment to Physical Activity

The Mississippi Youth Challenge Program will:

- **Provide physical education for all students (In accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference 2004 Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards 32, Appendix B and 33.).**
- **Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities, which are student centered and taught in a positive environment.**
- **Implement the 2006 Mississippi Physical Education Framework.**

The Mississippi Youth Challenge Program will:

- Schedule breaks before lunch times in order to increase food consumed, decrease plate waste, and improve cafeteria behavior.
- Incorporate 5- to 10-minute physical activity sessions in classrooms to teach subject areas and to make transitions between different lessons (e.g., Take Ten!, Mind and Body, etc.).
- Students will participate in five President's Challenge fitness tests while attending the program.
- Establish or enhance physical activity opportunities (like walking clubs or fitness challenges) for staff.
- Provide staff-monitored recreational activities that promote moderate physical activity during all outdoor and indoor break times.
- Collaborate with local recreational departments and youth fitness programs to promote participation in lifelong physical activities.
- Create wider opportunities for students to voluntarily participate in physical activity programs like intramurals, and clubs.

See Appendix D for physical activity resources.

Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education

The Mississippi Youth Challenge Program will:

- **Implement the 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework for grades 9-12 (2004 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).**

The Mississippi Youth Challenge Program will:

- Offer comprehensive health education (2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework).
- Implement the nutrition strand of 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework.
- Emphasize the disease and prevention strand in the 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework.
- Participate in USDA nutrition programs such as *Team Nutrition Schools* and the *Healthier US School Challenge*. The school will conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents, and the community. The school team responsible for planning nutrition activities will include school foodservice staff, school nurse, health and PE teachers, coaches, and additional staff, as appropriate.

Commitment to Marketing a Healthy School Environment

The Mississippi Youth Challenge Program will:

- Provide positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting. All school personnel will help reinforce these positive messages.

- Involve students in planning for a healthy school environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys, and attention will be given to their comments.
- Promote healthful eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at school events (e.g., school registration, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).
- Eliminate advertising and other materials on the school campus that promote foods of minimal nutrition value.

See Appendix E for marketing resources.

Commitment to Implementation

The Mississippi Youth Challenge Program will:

- **Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.**
- **Designate one or more persons to insure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written.**

Wellness Policy Committee Members include, Director, Deputy Director, Program Coordinator, and Admin Resource Manager.

A copy of this Wellness Policy will be placed on MSYCA website for public notification and addressed in the Directors brief to parents at each class orientation. Changes for the wellness policy based on Healthy, Hunger Free Kids act of 2010 will be announced,

Appendix A: Nutrition Guidelines

GOAL: The goal of establishing guidelines for all foods and beverages served or sold during the school day (outside of Child Nutrition Programs that follow USDA guidelines) is to improve the nutritional intake of Mississippi children. This can be done with a combination of two strategies.

- 1. Adding more nutrient-rich, appealing options** whenever foods and beverages are sold (or otherwise offered), including vending machines, school stores, parties, celebrations, social events, concessions stands at sporting and academic events, , and other school functions. Possible options include fruits and vegetables (fresh, canned, and dried); nuts, seeds, and trail mix; beef jerky and peanut butter; reduced-fat dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt, frozen yogurt, and smoothies); 100% juice, and water.
- 2. Limiting intake of discretionary calories** (in the venues described above). These are calories from fat and added sugar that provide few if any important nutrients (like protein, vitamins, minerals, fiber, etc.). As described in the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, discretionary calories **include intrinsic fats in the basic food groups** (like the fat in whole milk versus low-fat milk), **most solid fats** (like butter and margarine), and **all added sugars**. Limiting intake of discretionary calories can be done both by limiting portion size of and access to regular soft drinks, sweetened tea, candy, cookies, and high-fat snacks (regular potato chips, corn chips, crackers, sausage sticks, etc.).

MARKETING:

The goal of improving nutritional intake can also be accomplished by applying basic marketing strategies to sales of healthful options. Schools can consider the four P's when establishing guidelines for foods and beverages served or sold during the school day:

- **Product:** Vendors and companies have increasing numbers of products available – many with a more healthful profile than traditional snack foods and beverages.
- **Placement:** The sales of more nutrient-rich foods and beverages can be increased by placing them in “prime” locations –like at students’ eye level in a vending machine.
- **Price:** Another way to increase the sales of healthful items is to offer them at a lower cost. For example, water can be sold for \$.25 to .50 less than regular soft drinks.
- **Promotion:** There are many creative ways to promote healthy options – like offering samples of new healthful products or giving discount coupons during the introductory period.

For more information on these strategies and schools that have successfully increased healthful food and beverage options, read: **Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories**

www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/makingithappen.html

EXAMPLES: The following two sets of guidelines are for discussion purposes only. Schools can use these guidelines and others from the sources listed below to begin the discussion on what is appropriate for the health of students, based on the community input mandated by **PL # 108-265**.

Colorado Department of Education:

www.cde.state.co.us/cdenutritran/nutriSB04-103.htm

Philadelphia Public Schools:

www.philsch.k12.pa.us/offices/foodservices/bevpol04.pdf

South Carolina Department of Education:

www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/SC_report.pdf

Texas Department of Agriculture School Nutrition Policy:

www.squaremeals.org/

NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR VENDING

Nutrition Standards Intent/Rationale:

The Mississippi Youth Challenge Program strongly encourages the sale or distribution of nutrient dense foods for all school functions and activities. Nutrient dense foods are those foods that provide students with calories rich in the nutrient content needed to be healthy. In an effort to support the consumption of nutrient dense foods in the school setting, the school has adopted the following nutrition standards governing the sale of food, beverage, and candy on school grounds. Schools are encouraged to study these standards and develop building policy using the following Nutrition Standards as minimal guidelines.

Food:

- Encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e. WHOLE GRAINS, FRESH FRUITS, VEGETABLES, and REDUCED-FAT DAIRY PRODUCTS.
- Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day, will have no more than 30% of its total calories derived from fat.
- Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day, will have no more that 10% of its total calories derived from saturated fat.
- Nuts and seeds with minimal added fat in processing (no more than 3 grams of added fat per 1.75 ounce or less package size) and reduced-fat dairy products are exempt from these standards because they are nutrient dense and contain high levels of monounsaturated fat.
- It is recognized that there may be rare occasions when the Program Director may allow a school group to deviate from these Standards, but those special occasions must be recorded and included in the Nutrition & Physical Activity Advisory Council Annual Report.

Beverages:

- ONLY reduced-fat milks (including flavored milk), water, and beverages containing 50-100% fruit juices with no added artificial or natural sweeteners may be sold on school grounds immediately prior to and throughout the instructional day. This standard will be phased-in over the next three school years in the following way:
- 2005-2006 School Year: Add reduced-fat milks (including flavored milk), bottled water, 50-100% fruit juices with no added artificial or natural sweeteners to beverages sold on school grounds.
- 2006-2007 School Year: ONLY reduced-fat milks (including flavored milk), bottled water, and beverages containing 50-100% fruit juices with no added artificial or natural sweeteners, may be sold or distributed on school grounds prior to and during the instructional day in elementary and middle schools, except in areas where students do not have access (e.g., teacher lounge).
- 2007-2008 School Year: ONLY reduced-fat milks (including flavored milk), bottled water, and beverages containing 50-100% fruit juices with no added artificial or natural sweeteners, may be sold or distributed on school grounds prior to and during the instructional day in elementary, middle, and high schools, except in areas where students do not have access (e.g., teacher lounge).

Candy:

- Candy is defined as any processed food item that has:
 1. sugar (including brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, fructose, glucose (dextrose), high fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, table sugar (sucrose), syrup) is listed as one of the first two ingredients
AND
 2. sugar is more than 25% of the item by weight.
- Vending sales of candy will not be permitted on school grounds.
- Non-vending sales of candy will be permitted ONLY at the conclusion of the instructional school day.

NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR VENDING

Suggested Items for Vending Machines and Concession Stands

Organizations operating concessions at school functions should include at least some healthy food choices in their offerings. It is recommended that groups market these healthy options at a lower profit margin to encourage selection by students.

SNACKS

Best	Acceptable	Limited
Animal crackers, graham crackers, whole grain crackers	Granola bars, whole-grain fruit bars	Cookies (including lowfat)
		Candy, candy bars, chocolate bars, toaster pastries, marshmallow/cereal treats
Pretzels	Baked chips, corn nuts, rice cakes, cereal/nut mix	Regular chips, cheese-flavored crackers, cracker sandwiches
Nuts and seeds- plain or with spices	Nuts with light sugar covering; honey coated	Candy-or-yogurt-coated nuts
Trail mix (plain)	Popcorn/nut mix	Trail mix with chocolate, yogurt, or candy
Fresh vegetables and fruit, single-serve canned fruit, dried fruit	Fruit-flavored snacks, fruit leathers	Candy- or sugar-coated dried fruit
Fat-free popcorn	Light popcorn	Buttered popcorn
Beef jerky 95% fat free		Sausage, pork rinds
Yogurt, preferably non-fat, low-fat or light		
	Sugar-free gelatin, fat-free pudding	

BEVERAGES

Best	Acceptable	Limited
Milk, any flavor- preferably non-fat or low fat (1%)	Milk, 2%, whole	
Juice- fruit and vegetable that contains 100% juice	Juice- fruit or vegetable that contains at least 50% juice	
Water, pure	Flavored or vitamin-enhanced fitness water, sparkling water	
	Low-calorie, diet sodas, low-calorie iced tea, low-calorie coffee	Regular soft drinks, sports drinks, sweetened tea



Adapted from Mississippi Action for Healthy Kids
 Action for Healthy Kids at: www.actionforhealthykids.org

Appendix B: Non-Food Rewards

Kids naturally enjoy eating nourishing foods and being physically active. Schools and teachers can provide them with an environment that supports these healthy behaviors by using non-food rewards. Here are effective alternatives – from outstanding educators across the country – to offering food as a reward to individual students or entire classes.

Read a book.
Sit by friends.
Read outdoors.
Teach the class.
Have extra art time.
Enjoy class outdoors.
Have an extra recess.
Play a computer game.
Read to a younger class.
Get a no homework pass.
Sing a silly song together.
Make deliveries to the office.
Listen to music while working.
Play a favorite game or puzzle.
Earn play money for privileges.
Walk with a teacher or principal.
Eat lunch outdoors with the class.
Be a helper in another classroom.
Eat lunch with a teacher or principal.
Start and maintain a vegetable garden.
Dance to favorite music in the classroom.
Get a “free choice” time at the end of the day.
Listen with a headset to a book on audiotape.
Have a teacher perform special skills (i.e. sing).
Be first in line when the class leaves the room.
Have a teacher read a special book to the class.
Take a trip to the treasure box (filled with stickers, pencils, erasers, bookmarks, etc.).

Additional online resources for non-food reward ideas:

Connecticut Team Nutrition

www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/Student/NutritionEd/Food_As_Reward_HO1.pdf

Michigan Team Nutrition

www.tn.fcs.msue.msu.edu/foodrewards.pdf

New England Food and Dairy Council

www.newenglanddairyCouncil.org/PDF/alternativefoodrewards.pdf

Texas Department of Agriculture

www.squaremeals.org/vgn/tda/files/983/1034_NonFoodRewards.pdf

Appendix C: Healthy Fundraising

Fundraising Alternatives

Many new school fundraising strategies are being developed with school financial needs and concerns about student nutrition in mind. Instead of candy, schools are selling:

- Fresh and exotic fruit, like cases of citrus fruit
- High quality potatoes, onions, or other produce items
- Nuts and trail mix
- Popcorn

Schools are also selling an ever-expanding variety of non-food items such as:

- Gift wrap
- Magazine subscriptions
- Garden seeds
- Candles
- Discount coupon books
- Raffles of gift baskets
- Plants and flowers
- School spirit items

Schools are also utilizing a wide variety of traditional and non-traditional fundraising events such as:

- Car washes
- Walk-a-thons, bike-a-thons, jog-a-thons, skate-a-thons, etc.
- Family game nights
- “Hire a student day” for odd jobs (with proceeds going to the school)
- 3-on-3 basketball tournaments
- Silent auctions
- Talent shows

Additional online resources for healthy fundraising ideas:

Connecticut Team Nutrition

www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/Student/NutritionEd/Healthy_Fundraising_Color.pdf

Montana Office of Public Instruction

www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/MBI/fundraiser.pdf

Parents Advocating School Accountability

http://pasaorg.tripod.com/nonfood_fundraising.pdf

Appendix D: Physical Activity Resources

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance

<http://www.aahperd.org/>

The latest resources for health, physical activity, recreation, and dance professionals, including presentations from February 2005 conference on relationship of physical activity in relationship to *No Child Left Behind*.

California Dept. of Education: Academic Achievement and Physical Fitness

www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr02/yr02rel37.asp

This study, released in December 2002, supports the connection between physical fitness levels of students in grades 5, 7, and 9 – and student performance of CA Department of Education Achievement Tests.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/

The CDC site is an essential resource for nutrition and activity issues. Search for surveillance data (including maps of obesity prevalence); pediatric growth charts; and several national activity campaigns, like *Kids Walk-to-School* and *Turn Off Your TV*.

Montana Team Nutrition Resources

www.opi.state.mt.us/

Search on-site for PDF of physical activity resources from Big Sky country, including *Mind and Body: Activities for the Elementary Classroom*, and *Recess Before Lunch: A Guide for Success*.

PE4life

<http://pe4life.org/>

This organization inspires active, healthy living by advancing the development of quality, daily physical education programs for all children. The site features a free newsletter and action kit, as well as information about PEP grants and National PE Day.

President's Challenge ~ You're It. Get Fit!

www.presidentschallenge.org/

Physical activity and awards program for Americans of ALL ages. Site offers activity logs for kids, teens, and adults (you can register you whole school), as well as cool online tools and ways to win awards for activity.

Take 10!

www.take10.net/

Take 10 is a classroom-based physical activity program for kindergarten to fifth grade students, which is linked to academic learning objectives. The goal is to get American kids moving more – ten minutes at a time.

Appendix E: Marketing

Promoting Healthy School Meals: Marketing strategies that work

There are many reasons to do promotions for school food and nutrition programs. First and foremost, the students, faculty, and staff are customers. They have choices to make in deciding what to purchase and what not to purchase. Promotions are powerful marketing tools that have a direct, meaningful impact on customers and their purchasing decisions.

Promotions do not necessarily have to promote one particular product or event. After all, nutrition is something to promote all of the time. Some effects promotions might have:

- Show customers that the school food and nutrition department cares about them.
- Get customers excited or interested in the programs so that they keep participating
- Highlight specific services or products.
- Introduce new items on a continual basis, for instance to highlight a new recipe on the menu. Perhaps one new item might be featured each month.
- Introduce or reinforce an identity or a marketing theme, such as National School Lunch Week or School Breakfast Week.
- Celebrate a nutrition and health awareness event, such as National 5 A Day Month or National Diabetes Month.
- Establish a distinctive image or “brand” for the school food and nutrition department.
- Reinforce the school food and nutrition departments’ role in the total school environment through promotions around special school activities and events.

Keep in mind that promotions do not make a poorly run operation better. If promotions are poorly planned or done at the wrong time, they may create problems or make problems worse.

Measure Your Promotion Success

Promotions are designed to cause **action**. Ultimately, a promotion is designed to change some attitude or belief and/or cause customers to buy something. For instance, a promotion may be designed to convince students that the fruits and vegetables on the school salad bar are good for them or just that they want to eat breakfast at school. National School Lunch Week and School Breakfast Week, for example, are designed around annual themes to promote the value of school meals to the entire school community. A promotion may strive to influence students to buy the reimbursable meal in general or to try a new product in particular.

Because promotions are supposed to change attitudes or behaviors, the effect of promotions should be evaluated -- that means that they need to be measured. How might a promotion be measured? That depends on what the goals of the promotion are. In general, the school nutrition department might measure:

- Sales, overall or of a particular product
- Participation
- Customer satisfaction
- Customer attitudes or customer perceptions

Reference: www.asfsa.org/newsroom/sfsnews/promotemeals.asp

Additional Marketing Resources

<http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/Training/lesson10.pdf>

