

Child Nutrition Services

Christina School District

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All About the School Wellness Policy

The prevalence of child obesity has tripled for children ages 6-11 and has doubled for children ages 12-19. With childhood obesity on the rise, it is crucial to implement a wellness policy within the curriculum. Students spend the majority of their time within a school environment, so implementation of a wellness program that focuses on nutrition and physical activity would have a strong impact on decreasing this epidemic of childhood obesity. In addition, many other factors are associated with good nutrition such as, proper mental and physical growth and development, decreased risk of developing chronic



diseases, increased academic achievement, and development of lifelong healthy habits. At Christina, we plan to provide an environment that encourages healthy lifestyles through nutrition and physical activity education, providing healthy school meals, and involvement of parents to ensure these healthy habits are instilled not only in school, but also within the home. With the help of students, parents, teachers, district staff and community members, the Christina Wellness Policy Committee incorporated 8 components from the Coordinated School Health Model to create a complete wellness policy for the district. The Christina Child Nutrition Services Department believes the wellness policy will raise awareness about health eating and physical activity throughout our community both in and outside of school.

Our Current Wellness Goals

Our first question was “Where do we even begin??” As a wellness committee, made up of parents, child nutrition service employees, district office staff, and more we came up with the five goals that present themselves with priority. These goals are listed below:

- Nutrition Education
- Physical Activity/Physical Education
- Celebratory Events
- Fundraisers
- Use of food for reward or punishment

To learn more about how we are planning to address these goals, continue reading.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why does the Christina School District have a wellness policy?

The U.S. Congress established a requirement that all schools participating in federally funded school meals programs develop and implement a wellness policy by the beginning of the school year 2006-2007.

What changes can I expect to see?

The District plans on making some changes in the upcoming school year that promote good health and nutrition by encouraging all members of the school community to think about healthy eating throughout the school day. These changes will include recommended foods for classroom parties, fundraising activities, and the availability of sweets and candy during school.

How can parents help?

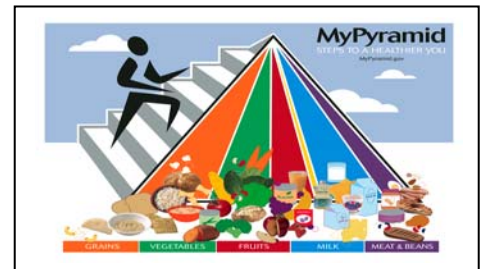
We will need the participation and support of all members of the school community to raise awareness about the benefits of good nutrition. We ask for your cooperation in helping to implement our new policy, and also welcome your suggestions for making our schools healthier, more active environments for all students.

Please contact Child Nutrition Services if you have a question or suggestion. If we all work together, we can make our schools places where health, nutrition, and wellness matter.

Nutrition Education

Have you ever used the phrase, “*If only I knew then, what I know now?*” Nutrition education is usually something we do not learn much about, until we take the initiative as adults. By then we have established our dietary habits and many of us struggle to try and change those habits to live healthier lifestyles. With children however, they are young enough to establish healthy habits, rather than change their current dietary habits, which always seems to be more difficult. If we were to educate our students about good nutrition throughout grades k-12, they would learn the importance of nutrition and establish healthy habits in adolescence and continue these habits throughout adulthood, reducing their risk for developing many chronic diseases while also maintaining a healthy body weight.

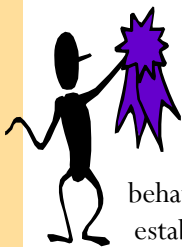
The wellness policy will ensure nutrition education is made a part of the curriculum and it will be age appropriate, reflect cultural diversity, while also providing opportunities for students to practice skills learned. The following topics will be covered throughout the curriculum: diet & disease, healthy snacks & diet, major nutrients, knowledge of the MyPyramid (pictured above), serving sizes, limiting foods of low nutrients density, healthy heart choices, Dietary Guidelines for Americans, understanding calories, food labels, multicultural differences, proper food safety/sanitation, and the importance of eating breakfast.



Nutrition education will be provided by credentialed health educators and nutrition professionals and the teachers, as well as district staff will encourage model principles of good nutrition and provide further learning opportunities whenever possible. From the cafeteria to the classroom, promotion of good nutrition will be made school wide.

Constructive Rewards

In order to promote a healthy environment at home and in school, non-food rewards should be used for positive reinforcement for a child’s behavior and/or academic performance. When providing a child with food in response to good behavior or performance, it establishes a link between food and emotion, which can then lead to eating when not hungry and/or connecting those “reward foods” which tend to be not so healthy, to happiness. However, we are all aware that providing rewards for good behavior or achievement can be extremely effective. So we have provided some ideas for non-food rewards that can be used to motivate children to accomplish a task:



Social Rewards → praise, thanks, verbal praise, pat on the shoulder, smiles, nods, etc.

Privileges → Helping the teacher, being the leader, “no homework” pass, few extra recess minutes, etc.

School Supplies → pencils, pens, erasers, bookmarks, markers, stencils, etc.

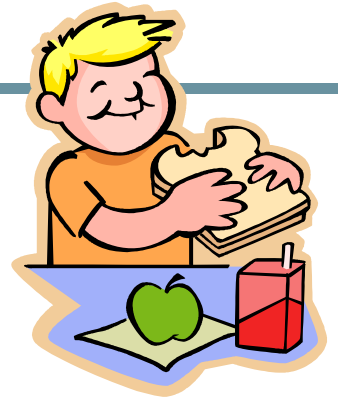
Recognition → Ribbon, certificate, or a sticker with an affirming message, Phone call or E-mail home to parents or guardian recognizing achievement, recognition on school announcements, etc.

Sports Equipment → Frisbees, water bottles, hula hoops, jump ropes, balls, water bottles (this will also encourage activity)

Nick-Nacks → key chains, magnets, cups, fun straws, balloons, playing cards, Yo-yos, silly putty, etc.

Token or point system → The child earns points that can be exchanged for prizes or privileges.

Promoting Healthy Snacks & Meals



To promote healthy eating school-wide, we took a closer look at the foods associated with fundraisers, celebratory events, after school activities, and school meals. Our new wellness goal is to encourage the sale or distribution of nutrient

Healthy Snack Ideas

- Fresh or dried fruit-
- Baked tortilla chips & salsa-
- Pita bread with bean dip-
- Whole grain crackers with reduced fat cheese-
- Graham crackers & peanut butter-
- Pretzels-
- High fiber/low sugar cereal with 1% or skim milk-
- Raw vegetables with low fat dip-

dense foods not just for school meals, but for ALL school functions and activities.

These nutrient dense foods will provide “a lot of bang for your buck” (they provide a lot of nutrients for minimal calories).

Some examples of these snacks are listed under *Healthy Snack Ideas*.

Those foods that are not considered nutrient dense are certain candies, cakes, high sugar drinks, water ice, chewing gum, etc. These non-nutrient dense foods are not to be served, sold, or given out within the cafeteria school meal program.

In a further effort to support healthy eating, the following is also prohibited with implementation of the new wellness policy: food cannot be used as a reward or punishment, school fundraisers will promote positive health habits,

celebratory events (birthday parties, etc) and back to school events will be encouraged to provide healthy food options, cafeteria vended products shall be consistent with established nutrition standards and these machines should also be time controlled to avoid competition with the school lunch program.

~Fun Facts & Recipes~

Calories burned per 1-hour activity

Walking (3.5 mph) → 280 calories

Walking (4.5 mph) → 460 calories

Hiking → 370 calories

Weight lifting → 220 calories

Running/jogging (5mph) → 590 calories

Basketball (vigorous) → 440 calories

Bicycling (>10 mph) → 590 calories

Dancing → 330 calories

Recipe: Strawberry Fruit Dip

2 cups strawberries (fresh or frozen, defrosted)

1 cup vanilla yogurt

¼ cup low-fat cream cheese

Method: Defrost frozen strawberries or, if using fresh strawberries, wash thoroughly. Combine all ingredients in blender or food processor and mix until smooth.

Strawberries are a good source of fiber and vitamin C.

Recipe: Low-Fat Hummus

1 can (15oz) Garbanzo Beans

½ tsp garlic powder

1 tsp Cumin

1 tbsp Olive Oil

2 tbsp lemon juice (fresh squeezed)

¼ tsp sea salt

Method: Saving the liquid, drain beans. In blender or food processor, combine beans, garlic powder, cumin, olive oil, lemon juice and salt. Blend on low speed. Gradually add reserved bean liquid until dip reaches desired consistency.

Hummus Dip Options:

This hummus dip is great served with vegetable sticks, string beans, asparagus tips, crackers, bagel, tortilla chips or pita chips.

Hummus is a good source of fiber, protein, folate, iron and magnesium,

Making Fitness Fun for Kids

The importance of good nutrition can be stressed until we are blue in the face. But when encouraging healthy lifestyles, we cannot forget the extremely important role of physical activity. Participation in regular physical activity is inevitable for people who want to maintain and improve physical and mental health, and overall well being. The recommendation for all students is 30 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous activity. With the wellness policy, physical activity can be incorporated throughout the school day in various settings, such as Physical Education, classroom activity breaks, structured and freestyle recess, after-school programs, and organized athletic events. The Christina School District will ensure the knowledge, motivation, skills, as well as opportunities needed for lifelong physical activity are given to all students. A quality physical education program will be provided to students in grades K-12 that is age appropriate and taught by a certified physical education teacher.



We realize the importance of activity and therefore will be putting a major emphasis on activity for our students. The activity requirements will vary depending on the grade level and will be supervised by trained staff to ensure proper form. This experience will also be shared with parents and community members through health fairs, physical activity seminars, fitness brochures that will be sent home, and much more!

The Parents Role

Have you ever heard the phrase “Do as I do”? As a parent, you are a role model for your child. So take a look at your exercise and eating habits, do they resemble those habits you are trying to instill in your child? If not make adjustments! Children are much more likely to adopt healthy habits if they see and experience these habits at home, as well as in school. Below are a few ideas of things you can do to make home a “healthy place”

Exercise with your children

- Play games outside (kick ball, have a catch)
- Take family walks
- Join a gym as a family

Cook Healthy

Prepare meals using healthy ingredients and make healthy substitutions wherever possible (buy baked chips, substitute applesauce for butter/oil when baking, use whole grain products, limit added butter, oil or salt to meals)

Teach your children & yourself

- Become familiar with how to read a food label
- Recognize that some items that you think are single servings are not (snack items & sodas)

Cook with your kids

- Make meal time a family time
- Involve your children in meal planning & preparation

Try new things!

- Introduce a variety of fruits and vegetables to your children
- Make the switch to low-fat dairy products and whole grains, if you haven't already

