STUDENT WELLNESS

The Governing Board, in consultation with the Director of Food and Nutrition, school administrators and the public, adopts the following goals for student wellness:

Wellness Goals

1. The district’s food service program, operated by the Food and Nutrition Department, will provide all students access to nutritious foods to help them stay healthy and learn well. Nutritional standards for reimbursable meals sold or served in all schools will meet or exceed the Federal Breakfast and Lunch Program regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

2. The selection of student foods and beverages sold or served on school grounds during the normal school day will have as a primary goal the promotion of student health and lifelong wellness. In furtherance of this goal, food and beverages sold or served to students during the school day will conform with all applicable nutrition standards adopted by the Arizona Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (the “nutrition standards”).

3. The district will include nutrition and health education in physical education, science, and other courses as required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

4. The schools and school-sponsored organizations will provide opportunities for students to develop the knowledge and skills for various physical activities, participate regularly in physical activity, and learn the long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

5. Schools will maintain a school environment that is safe, comfortable and conducive to healthy eating and physical activity.

Evaluation

The Director of Food and Nutrition and Director of K-12 Physical Education, together with a committee of staff and citizens, will annually review the district’s progress toward the wellness goals.

The Superintendent will adopt administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Adopted: June 27, 2006
Revised: August 12, 2014

LEGAL REF.: A.R.S. §15-242
National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C §1751, et. seq.
STUDENT WELLNESS

Food Service Programs

The District will participate in the National School Lunch, National School Breakfast, and Summer Meals Programs in accordance with the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 as amended, and applicable laws and regulations of the state of Arizona. The food service program will provide free and reduced-price meals for students who qualify. The Director of Food and Nutrition will recommend meal prices for students and adults for approval by the Governing Board and establish procedures for serving students without meal money or an account in the district’s electronic meal payment system, subject to approval by the Superintendent.

The District will strive to offer to all students, in clean and pleasant settings, appealing school meals that meet or exceed the nutrition standards. In addition, the District will make reasonable efforts to avoid overt identification of students who participate in the free and reduced-price meal program.

The food service programs administered by the Food and Nutrition Department will be an integral part of the District’s educational program.

Students may bring lunches from home.

Food Service Program Management

Administration

The Director of Food and Nutrition, under the supervision of the Assistant Superintendent of Business and Support Services, will direct the District’s Food and Nutrition Department, including the assignment and supervision of its employees. The Director of Food and Nutrition may adopt procedures for the operation of the Food and Nutrition Department, subject to approval by the Superintendent.

Facilities

The District will maintain facilities and equipment for the preparation, service, and storage of food and supplies under sanitary and safe conditions for employees and students.

All plans and specifications for remodeling and new construction of Food and Nutrition facilities must be approved by the Director of Food and Nutrition.

The cafeteria laundry facilities will be operated by food service personnel and used only for food service purposes.

Food and Nutrition facilities used by school-related or private organizations or individuals to prepare or serve food must have approval from the facility administrator and the Director of Food and Nutrition. A Food and Nutrition staff member must be on duty during the event.
Food Safety, Sanitation, and Security

All food brought onto campus for classroom celebrations must originate from commercial grocery or food service stores or other commercial kitchens certified to comply with Maricopa County Environmental Services regulations.

The Food and Nutrition Department will implement Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines to prevent foodborne illness in schools.

All food service facilities and equipment will meet applicable local and state standards concerning health, safe food preparation, handling and storage, drinking water, sanitation, and workplace safety.

Access to school food service facilities, including cafeteria ice machines, will be limited to Food and Nutrition staff and authorized personnel. Cafeteria ice machines will be used for food service purposes only and will be the only ice machines used to dispense ice for student consumption.

All food service personnel must obtain a food handler’s card or applicable Maricopa County certification as required by the guidelines of the Arizona Department of Health Services.

All Food and Nutrition Department staff members will receive continuing education/training annually that meets or exceeds the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals.

School-sponsored functions, such as barbeques, pancake breakfasts and carnivals, must comply with Maricopa County Environmental Service regulations. A county special events permit must be obtained to operate public functions where food is served. In addition, all persons serving food at the event must obtain a Maricopa County food handler’s card or certificate. Alternatively, schools may contract the services of an outside vendor or caterer that has obtained all required permits.

Nutrition Guidelines

The sale or service of food or beverages to students at school during the school day will comply with the following guidelines:

- Food and beverages sold or served to elementary and junior high school students at school during the school day will comply with the Nutrition Standards, unless exempt from the Nutrition Standards by an exemption stated in these guidelines.
- Food and beverages sold to high school students at school during the school day will comply with the Nutrition Standards, unless exempt from the Nutrition Standards by an exemption stated in these guidelines.
- Vending machines for students on elementary school campuses are not permitted.
- Vending machines for students on junior high and high school campuses may dispense only food and beverages that comply with the Nutrition Standards.
- Food and beverages sold to students from a student store during the school day must meet the Nutrition Standards.
- Carbonated beverages, with the exception of sparkling water and 100% fruit juice without added sweeteners, may not be sold or served to students at school during the school day.
Students, employees, and school visitors may not privately sell food or beverages to students on school grounds unless (i) the food or beverages comply with the nutrition guidelines and (ii) prior approval of the sale has been obtained from the school principal.

**Exempt Food and Beverages**

Sale or service of the following food or beverages are exempt from the nutritional guidelines:

- Food and beverages sold or served to students after the school day or days school is not in session
- Food or beverages brought to school by a student for consumption by the student only
- Food and beverages served at classroom parties or activities
- Food and beverages sold as an exempt fundraiser
- Food or beverages sold, served, or dispensed from vending machines restricted to school staff

Exempt fundraisers must be infrequent and must be a single event of duration not exceeding one week. Exempt fundraiser foods or beverages may not be sold in competition with school meals in the food service area during the meal service.

**Nutrition Education**

Schools will support nutrition education by sharing of information with families and the community in menus, newsletters, the Food and Nutrition Department website, parent meetings, and other school-based wellness activities. Messages that encourage healthy eating and physical activity may be linked to the school meal program and school community.

**Physical Activity**

The District will promote and encourage student participation in physical activity and recognizes that all physical activity contributes to a healthy lifestyle.

Schools will provide students with a variety of options for participation in developmentally appropriate physical activity:

- Grades K-6 will receive two 30-minute physical education lessons to equal 60 minutes of developmentally appropriate physical education instruction per week.
- Grades 7-8 will receive one semester of physical education lessons to equal one class period of developmentally appropriate physical education instruction five times per week.
- Grades 9-12 will receive two semesters over the four years of physical education lessons to equal one class period of developmentally appropriate physical education instruction five times per week.

Activities will include physical education classes, elective physical education courses, and the integration of developmentally appropriate physical activity into the academic curriculum. The District discourages student exemptions from physical education classes. Physical education programs will provide adequate space and equipment to meet applicable safety standards.

Physical education instruction and curriculum are aligned with national and state standards. The District will provide professional development to physical education teachers annually.
Elementary schools will provide at least 15 minutes of recess before or after lunch. Elementary schools may offer an additional 15 minutes of recess either in the morning or afternoon. Periods of inactivity exceeding 55 minutes are discouraged.

Teachers and other staff members will not deny a student the opportunity to participate in recess or other physical activity unless:

- The student has engaged in unsafe or inappropriate behavior.
- Time is needed to provide the student with an academic intervention.

**Nutrition Promotion and Marketing**

**Participation in School Meal Programs**

School meals will be made attractive to students to the extent possible. School and transportation schedules shall be designed to encourage participation in school meal programs.

**Eating Environment**

Mealtime schedules will be based on enrollment, cafeteria serving and seating capacity to minimize wait time and allow sufficient time to eat. Schools will schedule at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch, from the time the student is seated.

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

Dining facilities will be maintained for safety, cleanliness, and comfort and provide adequate seating. Access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene will be available during all meal periods.

**Advertising and Marketing**

The District will promote healthy choices by prominently displaying healthy foods in the cafeteria, using posters or bulletin boards, and offering food tastings.

Foods and beverages that do not comply with the Nutrition Standards, with the exception of food or beverages sold as an exempt fundraiser, will not be marketed and advertised on school grounds.

**Food Allergies and Special Dietary Needs**

The District will comply with special dietary needs for students as required by the Arizona Department of Education Special Dietary Needs Manual.

**Activities to Promote Student Wellness**

**Role Models**

Parents, teachers, administrators, food service personnel, and community members are important role models and will be encouraged to practice healthy eating behaviors and be physically active. Employees
will have access to resources through the Employee Benefits Department that will help to support a healthy lifestyle.

School Health Advisory Council

All schools within the district will have a school health advisory council (SHAC) that meets at least four times a year with the goal of improving the school health environment. The SHAC may be part of an existing committee such as the school improvement advisory council (SIAC) or the safety committee.

Other School-Based Activities

Schools will review the practice of providing snacks and using food as a reward for academic performance, good behavior, or celebrations. When incentives are used, items other than food are encouraged. Food and beverages provided at school-sponsored events and celebrations will support the goals of a healthy school.

Program Implementation and Evaluation

The Governing Board will establish a plan for measuring implementation of the policy.

The Superintendent, through the Director of Food and Nutrition and the Director of K-12 Physical Education, will oversee the implementation and evaluation of the wellness policy. School principals, with assistance from school staff and parents, are responsible for implementation of the District’s wellness policy at their schools.

The Superintendent, through the Director of Food and Nutrition and the Director of K-12 Physical Education, will develop a list of specific quality indicators that will be used to measure the implementation of the policy District-wide and at each school. These measures will include physical education and activity requirements and current practices; nutrition education, and physical activity in and out of the classroom; compliance with National School Lunch and National School Breakfast Program regulations; participation rates in school meal programs; information regarding the sales of food in fundraisers or other venues outside the District’s meal programs; and feedback from food service personnel, school administrators, District health professionals, parents, students, and other appropriate persons.

The Superintendent will report to the Governing Board at least each year on the implementation of this policy and any other Board policies related to nutrition and physical activity.

Posting Requirements

Wellness policy communications will be posted on the Mesa Public Schools District website and made available to the public at each school.

Definitions

For the purpose of this regulation,

- “Food and nutrition facilities” means all District facilities used for the preparation, handling, and storage of food that is prepared or dispensed by the Food and Nutrition Department, including school kitchens and cafeterias.
• “Exempt fundraiser” means food and beverages sold as a fundraiser in support of the school or a school-related activity that are restricted to items intended to be consumed outside of the school day or that has received a waiver from the Arizona Department of Education as requested by a school principal or designated representative of the school.


• “School food sales” means food sold to students from the school cafeteria, snack bar, vending machines, and student store.

• “School campus” means all facilities and grounds under the control of the school that are accessible by students during the school day.

• “School day” means the period from the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

• “School-sponsored event” means an event that occurs outside of the enrolled single classroom and involves several members of the student body under the supervision of one or more teachers or other staff members. Examples of school-sponsored events include field days, spirit days, pep rallies, socials, or other school celebrations.

• “Classroom party” means a celebration supervised by a teacher that occurs within a given classroom (or respective instructional area) and is limited to only those students enrolled in that one classroom. Examples of classroom parties are holiday parties and birthday parties that occur in the classroom limited to only those enrolled students.

Adopted: August 31, 2006
Revised: August 12, 2014
October 14, 2014
May 20, 2015
September 13, 2017

Michael B. Cowan
Superintendent

LEGAL REF.: A.R.S. §15-242

CROSS REF.: EF – Food Services Management
EFB – Free and Reduced-Price Food Services
EFC – Vending Machines
EFD – Food Sanitation Program