

## MONTECITO UNION SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

*The Montecito Union Board of Trustees recognizes the link between nutrition education, the food served in schools, physical activity, and environmental education, and that wellness is affected by all of these. The Board also recognizes the important connection between a healthy diet and a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school.*

### Establishment of goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness

#### **Nutrition Education**

To help ensure the health and well being of each student attending Montecito Union School, and to provide guidance to school personnel in the areas of nutrition, health, and physical activity, the Governing Board encourages all staff to recognize the lunch period as an integral part of the educational program of the District, and work to implement the goals of this policy. The Governing Board will ensure that:

- The school provides an economically sustainable lunch program and makes available a healthy and nutritious meal to every student;
- The school lunch program promotes the consistent inclusion of locally grown organic fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health enhancing nutrition practices;
- The school promotes the establishment of an instructional garden, as well as visits to local farms, to provide students with experiences in planting, harvesting, preparation, tasting foods so that students begin to understand how food reaches the table and the implications that has for their health and their future;
- The school provides nutrition education at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- The nutrition education program emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity and exercise);
- Instructional staff are provided with adequate and ongoing nutrition education training that focuses on teaching strategies that assess health knowledge and skills, and promote healthy behaviors;
- The school promotes the inclusion of outside experts in ongoing nutrition education;
- Nutrition education opportunities are provided to parents.

#### **Physical Education**

The Governing Board recognizes the positive benefits of physical activity for student health and academic achievement. Recognizing that physical education is a crucial and integral part of a child's education, the district will provide opportunities to ensure that students engage in a healthful level of vigorous physical activity to promote and develop the student's physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. Besides promoting high levels of personal achievement

and a positive self-image, physical education activities should teach students how to cooperate in the achievement of common goals. The Governing Board will ensure that:

- The physical education program shall develop and implement a curriculum that connects and demonstrates the interrelationship between physical activity, good nutrition, personal health and sportsmanship;
- Instruction in physical education will be based on the Physical Education Model Content Standards for California Public Schools;
- The physical education program will include instruction in a variety of motor skills designed to enhance the physical and social development of every child;
- The District will administer a physical fitness test annually to all students in grade five during the spring of each school year;
- In addition to the required physical fitness test, assessment of student learning and accurate reporting of progress should be an ongoing process in physical education;
- The District shall enhance the quality of physical education curricula and increase the training of physical education teachers through staff development opportunities;
- The District shall promote opportunities for physical activity as part of the after-school enrichment programs;
- The District shall promote physical activity among staff and provide staff with convenient opportunities to engage in regular physical activity;
- A parent education program will promote the importance of physical activity and sun safety for student health and academic achievement.
- Students will be educated regarding the harmful effects of the sun and the school will attempt to minimize student exposure to the sun whenever possible.

### **School-Based Learning Experiences**

The Governing Board recognizes that experiential learning activities that assist students to make connections between diet, health, and the environment are critical to the formation of student understanding of personal wellness within a larger context of environmental health. Schools play a crucial role in educating students on environmental issues and preparing them to be the stewards of their natural resources. The quality of life in future generations will depend upon our students' willingness and ability to solve today's environmental problems and prevent new ones from developing.

The governing Board desires to offer environmental education that fosters attitudes of personal responsibility toward the environment and provides students with the concepts, knowledge and skills needed to contribute meaningfully to decisions involving the environment and its resources. The Board will ensure that:

- The staff will integrate garden, nutrition education, cooking and eating experiences, and energy and renewable energy experiences into the curriculum at all grade levels;
- Students will understand and demonstrate behaviors that prevent disease and speed recovery from illness, based on concepts and self-management skills related to diet, physical activity, safe food handling, and personal hygiene.

- Students are taught and expected to recycle, conserve materials, water, and energy, use biodegradable materials when possible, and dispose of wastes in an environmentally sound way.

Establish nutrition guidelines for all foods available on campus during the school day.

Part of the educational mission of the Montecito Union School District is to improve the health of the entire community by teaching students and families ways to establish and maintain life-long healthy eating habits. The mission shall be accomplished through nutrition education, physical education, garden-based learning experiences, environmental restoration, core academic content in the classroom and the food served in schools. The Governing Board will ensure that:

- In accordance with law, the district shall provide a healthy and nutritious meal for all students.
- Students eligible to receive a free or reduced price meal will not be treated differently from other students.
- Students are provided with adequate space and time to eat meals
- The Hot Lunch Program will improve upon nutritional standards specified in law and administrative regulation. To accomplish this objective, meals will:
  - Offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables;
  - Reflect seasonality and local agriculture;
  - Include only low-fat and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives;
  - Include non-genetically grown whole grain products
  - Integrate organic foods, as defined by the USDA National Organic Program, based on economic feasibility, availability, and acceptability;
- Meals are prepared in ways that will appeal to students, retain nutritive quality and foster lifelong healthful eating habits;
- Meals are served in age-appropriate quantities and at reasonable prices;
- The school will provide sufficient nutrition information to allow parents and students to make informed dietary choices.
- The exposure of children to potentially harmful residues of toxic agricultural chemicals including but not limited to pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, waxes, and fungicides will be reduced and/or eliminated by increasing the purchase of foods that are grown sustainably, without the use of toxic chemicals;
- Foods exposed to potentially harmful food additives and processes, including but not limited to bovine growth hormone, irradiation, high fructose corn syrup, excessive salt, artificial flavors and colors, hydrogenated oils (transfats), preservatives, and genetic modification, shall be reduced and/or eliminated;
- The school will develop a “Healthy Snacks” and “Healthy Parties” policy;
- The school shall not have vending machines accessible by students.

Assure that guidelines for school meals are not less restrictive than those set at the federal level by the Secretary of Agriculture

- The Superintendent will review this policy and ensure that the policies are not less restrictive than those set by Secretary of Agriculture or state law.

Establish a plan for measuring the impact and implementation of the school wellness policy

In conjunction with adoption of a district Wellness Policy, the Superintendent or Principal shall establish a standing Wellness Committee to remain actively engaged in monitoring the implementation of the Wellness Policy and in presenting recommendations to the Governing Board. The following guidelines pertain to the duties and responsibilities of the standing Wellness Committee.

The standing Wellness Committee shall present to the Governing Board an Annual Report on the status of meeting the Wellness Policy goals. The report shall:

- Contain a current and future budget for the food services program;
- Contain recommendations for improving the delivery of food services;
- Report on the nutritional content of meals served and the student participation rates in the school lunch program. The report shall include the percentage of foods purchased from local sources and the cost of those foods;
- Recommend to the Governing Board strategies to decrease or eliminate potentially harmful food additives and processes, and to increase the amount of fresh, local produce offered through the School Lunch Program;
- Solicit student preferences through taste tests, surveys, and interviews, and through student participation on the district Wellness Committee;
- Report the scores students achieve on the Physical Fitness Test;
- Report on the ways in which students and staff are engaged in vigorous physical activity;
- Contain an outline of the nutrition education program offered to students at each grade level;
- Report on the staff development opportunities provided to staff and education programs provided to parents.

Involve parents, teachers, students, classified staff, administrators, Board representatives, and community members on the Wellness Committee

With regard to the Wellness Committee created by the Superintendent or Principal, it is critically important that all sectors of the learning community that will be charged with implementing the policy are represented. The committee shall involve parents, teachers, students classified staff, administrators, Board representatives, and community members. Shared leadership creates the conditions for real and lasting change.

Developing a school district Wellness Policy is a practical way to create a shared vision and language about needed change. When the Board of Trustees adopts a district Wellness Policy, the entire community knows the district is committed to improving the school environment for children, particularly the school food system.