

Wellness Program

The Towns County Board of Education recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects student wellness, nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement.

To the extent practicable, all schools in the district shall participate in available federal school meal programs. All foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day shall be consistent with the minimum requirements of federal law and regulations and state requirements. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, as those regulations and guidance apply to schools.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a wellness committee consisting of school system and community representatives from areas designated in federal law to participate in the development, implementation and periodic review of school wellness policies. Such policies shall contain, at a minimum:

- 1. Policies & Practices** – Use a coordinated approach to develop, implement, update and evaluate healthy eating and physical activity policies and practices.
 - a. The district Wellness Committee will consist of staff members in physical education, the school nurses, school nutrition, parents, administrators, and teachers. School level wellness input and evaluation will be conducted via school governing councils.
 - b. A triennial assessment/ evaluation will be conducted to determine if the goals and guidelines have been met.
 - c. The evaluation summary report shall be provided to the Superintendent and be posted on the district website.
- 2. School Environment** – Establish school environments that support healthy eating and physical activity.
 - a. The school environment provides for safe activity for all students.
 - b. To encourage physical activity, school facilities are available outside the school day for school sponsored activities and recreational department activities.
 - c. Students have 30-minute lunch periods with adequate time to eat school meals after being seated.

- d. When using food as part of class or student incentive programs, staff and students are encouraged to utilize healthy, nutritious food choices. In elementary school, all foods provided to students from outside must be commercially packaged. Food should not be used as punishment in any way.
 - e. All foods and beverages available on campus and sold as fundraisers are to adhere to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. See Regulation EEE-R(1)
 - f. Schools should not establish policies, class schedules, bus schedules, or other barriers that directly or indirectly restrict the students' access to and compete with scheduled meals.
- 3. Nutrition Services** – Provide a quality school meal program and ensure that students have appealing healthy food and beverage choices offered outside of the school meal program.
- a. School Nutrition Programs comply with federal, state, and local requirements. Nutrition Programs are available to all students. Students at all grade levels shall have daily choices of menus or choices within food items represented on the day's menu.
 - b. Drinking water is available free of charge to students at meals and throughout the day. If a student does not have a water bottle a cup will be provided free of charge to students. Water bottle stations are located in the cafeteria and hallways.
 - c. Student participation in the school breakfast program is encouraged through scheduling. The high school has a second chance breakfast option as well.
 - d. Each cafeteria is represented by at least one person credentialed in food safety.
 - e. A la Carte foods and beverages sold adhere to the HHFKA 2010 sale of competitive foods standards. See regulation EEE-R (1).
 - f. All foods and food handlers adhere to food safety standards. Towns County Schools implement a HACCP-based (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) food safety program. A food safety review is conducted monthly, according to the HACCP standards, in each school. A review of the HACCP plan is conducted annually.
 - g. All food service equipment and facilities must meet applicable local and state standards concerning health; safe food preparation, handling, and storage; drinking water; sanitation; and workplace safety.
 - h. Substitutions are available to students with special dietary needs. The Towns County School Nutrition Program complies with USDA disability requirements for modified diets. Students who have special dietary needs and require a modified diet must have a completed diet prescription from their physician on file with the School Nutrition Program.
 - i. Locally grown produce will be the produce of choice for Towns County Schools. Locally grown ground beef will be the protein choice for Towns County Schools when feasible. Towns County School Nutrition Department participates in the Georgia Department of Agriculture's 20/20 Vision; Harvest of the Month

Program; Farm to School Program; and Culinary Support Program all sponsored by the Georgia Department of Education, School Nutrition Department.

- 4. Physical Education and Physical Activity** – Implement a comprehensive physical activity program with quality physical education as the cornerstone. These programs should offer quality physical education, offer daily recess for elementary students, offer an interscholastic sports program, offer an intramural program and physical activity clubs, and offer classroom based physical activity.
 - a. Physical education classes provide the environment where students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, knowledge and personal fitness.
 - b. Time allotted physical education is consistent with research, national and state standards.
 - c. Credentialed physical education instructors teach physical education classes.
 - d. A recess period/unstructured break is allowed in grades K-5, per state regulation.
 - e. Physical education includes instruction in individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports.
 - f. A variety of extracurricular programs are provided that promote physical activity.
- 5. Health Education** –Implement health education that provides students with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and experiences needed for healthy eating and physical activity.
 - a. Health Education is required in ninth grade for all students.
 - b. Schools follow the Georgia health education curriculum.
 - c. Nutrition education is integrated into the curriculum.
 - d. The school cafeteria serves as a learning laboratory to support classroom instruction through menu offerings, point-of-sale information, signage, bulletin boards, and social media platforms.
- 6. School Health Services** – Provide students with health, mental health, and social services to address healthy eating, physical activity and related chronic disease prevention.
 - a. School nurses will serve as a liaison to the student, parent, and health care provider by promoting wellness and improving the health status of students.
 - b. Additional nutrition education will be available to students with medical needs through the school nurse program.
- 7. School Employee Wellness** – Provide for a school employee wellness program that includes healthy eating and physical activity services for all school staff members.
 - a. Annual health screening is made available to all staff.
 - b. Flu immunizations will be/are offered to faculty and staff members in conjunction with the county health department based on immunization supply.

- c. Staff have access to the school track after school hours and during off season sports for personal use. The local recreation department offers free use of their weight rooms, treadmill, elliptical for personal fitness.
- 8. **Professional Development** – Employ qualified persons and provide professional development opportunities for physical educators, health educators, nutrition staff, bus drivers, custodians, maintenance staff.
 - a. All school staff are trained annually on how to recognize and handle many situations that are encountered during a typical school day/year. These trainings include bullying, abuse, suicide prevention along with other situations that may arise.
 - b. All School Nutrition Staff are trained annually in proper nutrition standards for all age groups, Civil Rights training, and food safety are the main topics. Training for nutrition staff is annually and as needed throughout the school year.

Towns County Schools

Date Adopted: 10/16/2008

Last Revised 6/3/2025

Rule 160-5-6-.01

Statewide School Nutritional Program

Federal Reference

Description

42 USC 1758

Program requirements- School Lunch Program

42 USC 1758b

Local School Wellness Policy

These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.