

District Wellness Policy

Preamble

Old Colony (hereto referred to as the District) is committed to the optimal development of every student. The District believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

Good nutrition and physical activity before, during, and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive students' outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism, and better performance on cognitive tasks. Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students. In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, classroom walk breaks, high-quality physical education, and extracurricular activities - do better academically.

This policy outlines the District's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the District have access to healthy foods throughout the school day - both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus - in accordance with Federal and State nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active, during and after school;
- Old Colony will engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the District in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits;
- The District establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students and staff in the District.

I. School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

The District will convene a representative District Wellness Committee (hereto referred to as the DWC) that meets at least four times per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this district-level wellness policy (heretofore referred as “Wellness Policy”).

The DWC membership will represent the District and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (ex. school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (ex. health education teachers, school health services staff (i.e., nurse, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services) and mental health and social services staff (i.e., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists), health professionals (ex., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. To the extent possible, the DWC will include representatives and administrators from the District and reflect the diversity of the community.

Individuals can visit the District’s website to learn about how to become a member of the wellness committee.

Leadership

The Principal is the school wellness policy coordinator, who will ensure compliance with the policy. Refer to Appendix A for a list of school level wellness policy coordinators.

II. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

The District will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines specific to Old Colony, and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where, and when as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. It is recommended that the school use the [Healthy Schools Program online tools](#) to complete a school level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation, and generate an annual progress report.

This wellness policy and the progress reports can be found at:
www.oldcolony.us.

Recordkeeping

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy on the District's website. The Wellness Policy will also be available in printed form through requests made to the District office. Notification of DWC meetings and updates will be shared using the Principal's newsletter.

Documentation maintained on the District's website will include, but not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including (1) Efforts to actively solicit DWC membership from the required stakeholder groups; and (2) These groups' participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy;
- Documentation of annual policy progress report, and
- Documentation of the triennial assessment
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with public notification requirements, including: (1) Methods by which the wellness policy, annual progress reports, and triennial assessments are made available to the public; and (2) Efforts to actively notify families about the availability of wellness policy.

Annual Progress Reports

Every school year, the DWC will meet at least quarterly where an agenda will be set and minutes will be taken. The committee member list will be reviewed and updated as needed. The wellness policy will be reviewed for progress toward goals or necessary changes/updates in the policy.

The annual progress report will include, but is not limited to:

- The website address for the wellness policy and/or how the public can receive/access a copy of the wellness policy;
- A description of the school's progress in meeting the wellness policy goals;
- A summary of the school's events or activities related to the wellness policy implementation;
- The name, position title, and contact information of the designated District policy leader(s); and
- Information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the DWC.

The annual report will be available in appropriate language(s) spoken in District.

Triennial Progress Assessments

The District shall conduct a quantitative assessment of policy implementation every three years using a school wellness assessment tool or the school health index. The DWC will evaluate the following:

- The extent to which the District is in compliance with the wellness policy
- The extent to which the District's wellness policy complies with the latest national recommendations pertaining to school health and will recommend updates the wellness policy accordingly
- A description of the progress made in achieving the goals of the District's wellness policy

The triennial progress assessment will be available in appropriate language(s) spoken in District.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is the Principal. The District will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The DWC will recommend updates to the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or as District priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.

Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communication

The District is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The District will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the DWC and others can participate in the development, implementation, periodic review and update of the wellness policy. Meals served through the District's food service program will comply with the National School Lunch and Breakfast standards for meal patterns. The cafeteria is cashless - all students, regardless of the type of payment they make for school meals, or the food being purchased (meal or a la carte) are given a code to enter at the cash register. We will always offer a reimbursable meal, regardless of whether the student has money to pay or owes money to the cafeteria. Applications for free/reduced priced meals are sent home to all families by request. The application is always available on the District's website to print or fill out in an on-line version.

The District has a wellness page on the District's website that contains information about our wellness committee, wellness policy, and how families and stakeholders can support the policy. The District will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community.

The District will notify the public via the Principal's newsletter about the content of, or any updates to, the wellness policy annually, as well as the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

III. Nutrition

Lunchroom techniques:

- Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans)
- The District will source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers where practicable
- Sliced or cut fruit is available daily
- Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students
- Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab and go meals available to students
- All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal
- White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers
- Alternative entree options (e.g. salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas
- A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students
- Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor, and promotional ideas
- Menus will be posted on the District website.
- Menus will be created/reviewed by a Registered Dietitian or other certified nutrition professional.
- School menus are administered by a team of nutrition professionals.
- The District nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs.
- Students will be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch. Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.

Breakfast techniques:

- Grab n' Go Breakfast.

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the [USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals](#). These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day. Currently, filtered water bottle filling stations are accessible throughout the building.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

The District is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus, during the school day, support healthy eating. To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus, during the school day, (from the midnight prior, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day) will meet all federal, state, and local standards for all nutrient and competitive food guidelines. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, and snack or food carts. Beverages containing caffeine will not be sold on the high school campus.

A summary of the Massachusetts and USDA Competitive Foods and Beverage Nutrition Standards “At-a-Glance”, are available [here](#).

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks and MA Nutritional Standards of Competitive Foods & Beverages. The link is available [here](#).

Celebrations and Rewards

The District strongly recommends staff use physical activity as a reward when feasible.

Food rewards or incentives shall not be used in classrooms to encourage student achievement or desirable behavior. The district prohibits the use of food as a reward with the exception of Individual(ized) Academic Plans (IAP) or Individual(ized) Education Plans (IEP). All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks and MA Nutritional Standards of Competitive Foods & Beverages in School nutrition standards (or, if the state policy is stronger, “will meet or exceed state nutrition standards”), including through:

- Celebrations and Parties. The District will provide to parents a guide on celebrations that support child health.
- Healthy Snacks and Beverages. The District will provide a list of healthy snack and beverage ideas to parents or teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.

For more information on celebrations in schools, visit the [take action](#) section of Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

Fundraising

There will be no food-related fundraisers held during the school day (from the midnight prior, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day) for events where the food is designed to be consumed at the time of the fundraiser.

If a fundraiser is done for a pre-ordered food item, the items may be distributed at the end of the school day for future consumption.

The District will provide parents and teachers a list of [healthy fundraising ideas](#).

The District will avoid participation in fundraising or corporate incentive programs that promote a message inconsistent with our goals for a healthy school community.

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff and teachers, parents, students, and the community.

The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- Implementing evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#)
- Promoting foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks and MA Nutritional Standards of Competitive Foods & Beverages in School nutrition standards
- Healthy food options will be comparably priced
- Additional possible promotion techniques that the District and individual schools may use are available at [Alliance For A Healthier Generation](#)

Nutrition Education

Nutrition lessons are integrated into the curriculum and the health education program. Old Colony will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.
- The Districts Culinary Arts and Health Careers vocational programs integrate nutritional education into the curriculum.

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs, and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

The District will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from MyPlate
- Reading and using USDA's food labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain trans fat
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
- Accepting body size differences
- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Eating disorders
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Reducing sodium intake

- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

[USDA's Team Nutrition](#) provides free nutrition education and promotion materials, including standards-based nutrition education curricula and lesson plans, posters, interactive games, menu graphics, and more.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

It is the intent of the District to protect and promote students' health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with the District's wellness policy.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus, during the school day, will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks and MA Nutritional Standards of Competitive Foods & Beverages in School nutrition standards (or, if stronger, "state nutrition standards"), such that only those foods that comply with or exceed those nutrition standards are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students

The advertising of foods and beverages that are not available for sale in district schools will not be advertised on any school property. Advertising of any brand on containers used to serve food or in areas where food is purchased is prohibited. The District will attempt to limit advertising of unhealthy products in school publications.

Criteria for selecting educational materials for the classroom shall be expanded to include review of advertising content. Every effort will be made to select materials free of brand names/logos and illustrations of unhealthy foods.

IV. Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should try to participate in physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a Comprehensive School-Based Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) that includes these components: physical education, classroom-based physical activity, walking breaks, and out-of-school time activities and the District is committed to providing these opportunities. Old Colony will ensure that these varied opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in "Physical Education" subsection). There will be no substitutions allowed for the physical education time requirement. The District will not allow students to be exempt for required physical education class time or credit.

Physical activity, during the school day, (including, but not limited to walking breaks, physical activity breaks, or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. This does not include participation on sports teams that have specific academic requirements. Physical activity may not be assigned to students as a consequence of poor behavior or punishment for any reason.

To the extent practicable, the District will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active.

Physical Education

The District's comprehensive, standards-based physical education curriculum identifies the progression of skill development in grades 9-12. Physical education curriculum revision will follow a formally established periodic review cycle congruent to other academic subjects. The physical education curriculum for grades 9-12 will be aligned with established state physical education standard. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong physical fitness, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the "Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education" subsection).

Physical education for grades 9-12 is required to be taught by a certified/licensed physical education teacher. The school district shall provide all physical education teachers with annual professional development opportunities that are focused on physical education/physical activity topics and competencies specifically for physical education teachers.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and are required to take the equivalent of one academic year of physical education. The District will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

The District physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments, or other appropriate assessment tool and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

The District will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on physical activity when students are enrolled in health or physical education.

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic diseases

- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
- Differences between physical activity, exercise, and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout, and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during physical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia, and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time, and type of physical activity
- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activities

Physical Activity Breaks

The District recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **periodic opportunities** to be active or to stretch throughout the day, on all or most days, during a typical school week. The District recommends teachers provide short physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class and class transition periods.

The District will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through [USDA](#) and the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#).

Active Academics

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies, and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

The District will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background

material on the connections between learning and movement. Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Before and After School Activities

The District offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods. The District will encourage students to be physically active before and after school by allowing all students to walk inside and outside the building before school starts, as well as offering after school sports and clubs, and school dances. Students are also encouraged to join other health & wellness related clubs.

Active Transport

The District will support active transport to and from school and will encourage this behavior by engaging in the activities below, including but not limited to:

- Promote use of Snipatuit Estates and the cross-country trail to walk and bike to school.
- Give access to electronic maps of the Town of Rochester's walking trails using the District's website for walking, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing uses.

V. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The District will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity facilities. The District will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

The District is encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, with consultation provided by the District's curriculum experts.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state, or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the DWC.

Community Partnerships

The District will develop, enhance, or continue relationships with community partners (i.e. hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

Community Health Promotion and Engagement

The District will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts. Annually, Old Colony hosts the Frosty Runner Road Race, Family Fall Festival, and Scholarship Golf Tournament.

As described in the "Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications" subsection, the District will use electronic mechanisms (such as email or displaying notices on the district's website), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

The District identifies and disseminates wellness resources, and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with our health insurance provider.

The District will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating, mental health, and physical activity in partnership with MIIA, the District's benefit provider. Physical and mental health and wellness programs are offered to staff monthly using MIIA Virtual Wellness. MIIA's wellness grant will be used to support staff physical and/or mental health, annually. The District staff have access to the equipment in the gym's weight lifting room. The District promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Appendix A – District Wellness Contacts

Name	Title	Email Address	Phone	Role
J. Michael Parker	Principal	jmparker@oldcolony.us	508-763-8011	DWC Coordinator
Sarah Griffith	Business Manager	sgriffith@oldcolony.us	508-763-8011	DWC Member
Crystal Andrade	Nutrition Director	candrade@oldcolony.us	508-763-8011	DWC Member
Catherine Norton	School Nurse	ccrosbynorton@oldcolony.us	508-763-8011	DWC Member
Eugene Busa	PE/Health Instructor	ebusa@oldcolony.us	508-763-8011	DWC Member
Kathryn Cawley	PE/Health Instructor	kcawley@oldcolony.us	508-763-8011	DWC Member

Appendix B

Wellness URL Links:

[Nutritional Standards in school](#)

[National School Lunch & Breakfast Program Guidelines](#)

[A-List](#) – guide of approved snacks – Includes MassNet Tool

At-a-Glance: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-competitive-foods-and-beverages-at-a-glance-chart/download>

Alliance for a Healthier Generation: [Smart Snacks | Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#)
[Celebrations -Healthy Snack and Beverage Ideas](#)

[MyPlate](#)

[Team Nutrition](#)

Legal References:

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section 204,
P.L. 108 265

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1751 -1769

The Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1771 - 1789

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

Alliance for a Healthier Generation Healthy Schools Program 2015

Adopted: September 20, 2006

Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School

District Rev. March 16, 2016

Updated: February 2, 2024 15

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