

**STUDENT WELLNESS POLICY FOR THE SPECIAL SCHOOLS**

**RATIONALE**

The link between nutrition, physical activity, and learning is well documented. Healthy eating and activity patterns are essential for students to achieve their academic potential, physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating and physical activity, essential for a healthy weight, are also linked to reduced risk for many chronic diseases, such as Type 2 Diabetes. Schools have a responsibility to help students learn, establish, and maintain lifelong, healthy eating and activity patterns. Well-planned and effectively implemented school nutrition and fitness programs can enhance students' overall health, as well as their behavior and academic achievement in school. Staff wellness also is an integral part of a healthy school environment; school staff can be daily role models for healthy behaviors.

**POLICY**

Students at the Iowa School for the Deaf and the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (IESBVI) shall possess the knowledge and skills, to the best of their ability, necessary to make nutritious food choices and enjoyable physical activity choices for a lifetime. Staff members at the special schools are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

To meet this goal the Iowa School for the Deaf and the IESBVI shall adopt this student wellness policy with the following commitments to nutrition, physical activity, comprehensive health education, and implementation. This policy is designed to utilize school and community resources effectively and to serve the needs and interests of all students and staff equitably, taking into consideration differences in culture.

- A. The Iowa School for the deaf and the IESBVI shall engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity procedures.
- B. All students in grades K-12 shall have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- C. Foods and beverages sold or served at the special schools shall meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. dietary Guidelines for Americans published jointly by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Agriculture.
- D. Qualified child nutrition professionals shall assist food service personnel with providing students access to a variety of nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; shall accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and shall provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

- E. The Iowa School for the Deaf and the IESBVI shall provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and shall establish linkages between health education and school meal programs and related community services.

## **IOWA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF STUDENT WELLNESS IMPLEMENTATION POLICY**

### ***School Health Councils***

The Iowa School for the Deaf shall work with the existing school health council to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The council shall also serve as a resource to the school for implementing these policies. The Iowa School for the Deaf school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, including parents, students, school administrators, teachers, and health professionals.

### ***Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus***

#### **School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs shall:

- ✓ Be appealing and attractive to children;
- ✓ Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- ✓ Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- ✓ Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- ✓ Serve only low-fat (1% and fat-free milk and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives);
- ✓ Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

The Iowa School for the Deaf shall engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods offered through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. The school may share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

ISD shall establish a cafeteria environment conducive to a positive dining experience, with socializing among students and between students and adults with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct, and with adults who model healthy habits by eating with students.

**Breakfast.** To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, to meet their nutritional needs, and to enhance their ability to learn:

- ✓ The Iowa School for the Deaf shall, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program,
- ✓ The Iowa School for the Deaf shall encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children

**Meal Times and Scheduling.** The Iowa School for the Deaf:

- ✓ Shall provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes to eat after sitting down for lunch.
- ✓ Shall schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- ✓ Shall not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.** In keeping with the Iowa School for the Deaf's responsibility to operate a food service program, the School shall provide continuing professional development for all food service staff. The staff development programs shall include appropriate certification and/or training programs for cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages.** The Iowa School for the Deaf shall discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

**Elementary School.** The Iowa School for the Deaf food service program shall provide all food and beverages to students in lower school.

**Fundraising Activities.** The Iowa School for the Deaf shall encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The Iowa School for the Deaf shall make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

**Snacks.** Snacks served during the school day or in the after-school enrichment programs shall make a positive contribution to the children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. The Iowa School for the Deaf shall disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

**Rewards.** The Iowa School for the Deaf shall not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a negative consequence.

**School-sponsored Events** (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances or performances). Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day shall meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

**Food Safety.** All foods made available on campus shall adhere to food safety and security guidelines.

- ✓ All foods made available on campus shall comply with federal, state, and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illness in schools.
- ✓ For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the food service operations shall be limited to food service personnel.

***Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing***

**Nutrition Education and Promotion.**

The Iowa School for the Deaf shall provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion. To accomplish this goal:

- ✓ Sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education shall be provided and promoted. This education may be integrated into other areas of the curriculum, such as, math, science, language arts, and social studies.
- ✓ The staff responsible for nutrition education shall be adequately prepared and participate in professional development activities to deliver an accurate nutrition education program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
- ✓ The school lunch program/cafeteria shall serve as a "learning laboratory" to allow students to apply classroom nutrition education.
- ✓ The school lunch program, in compliance with federal, state, and local requirements, shall promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods and health enhancing nutrition practices.

**Physical Activity**

The Iowa School for the Deaf shall provide physical education that:

- ✓ Shall be taught by a licenses physical education teacher;
- ✓ Shall be taught in grades one through eight a minimum of twice per week;
- ✓ Ensures that students in grades nine through twelve shall earn four credits.

**Staff Wellness.** The Iowa School for the Deaf highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and shall plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The Staff Wellness Committee shall develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan shall be based on input solicited from school staff members and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The Staff Wellness Committee shall distribute its plan to the School health Council annually.

***PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION***

**Daily Recess.** All elementary school students shall be provided recess periods during the school day, and preferably be outdoors.

**Physical Activity and Punishment.** Teachers and other school and community personnel shall not use physical activity (ex: running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as a negative consequence.

**Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours.** School spaces and facilities shall be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day.

**Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring.** The Dean of Students shall have responsibility for the federal school lunch and wellness program and shall ensure compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

- ✓ The principal shall ensure compliance with those policies in the school and shall report on the school's compliance to the Assistant Administrator or the Dean of Students.
- ✓ The school food service staff shall ensure compliance with the nutrition policies within the school food service areas and shall report on this matter to the Dean of Students who shall report to the Assistant Administrator.

The Iowa School for the Deaf shall:

- ✓ Establish and support a School Health Council that addresses all aspects of a coordinated school health program, including a school wellness policy.
- ✓ Conduct a review of the progress toward school wellness policy goals each year to identify areas of improvement.
- ✓ Prepare and submit a yearly report to the Board of Regents regarding the progress toward implementation of the school wellness policy and recommendations for any revisions to the policy as necessary.

Assessments shall be repeated yearly to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of the review, the Iowa School for the Deaf shall review current Nutritional and Activity Goals determining progress toward these goals and shall establish goals for the next school year.