

# Meridian ISD

## Wellness Policy

## Meridian ISD's Wellness Policy

**Mission Statement:** Meridian Independent School District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects our children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of Meridian Independent School District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and the *Texas Public Schools Nutrition Policy*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program).
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and related community services.

### **Nutrition Education Goals**

Meridian Independent School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Our school should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered 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 such as the Health and Wellness curriculum;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, and taste testing;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

## **Physical Education Goals**

- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television and playing video games;
- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons;
- All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 135 minutes/week for elementary school students and 225 minutes/week for middle and high school students) for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher when possible. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

## **Nutrition Standards**

- Meridian ISD will comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Texas Public Schools Nutrition Policy. *Refer to Appendix A – Texas Public Schools Nutrition Policy*

## **Other School Related Activities**

- Meridian ISD will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. Our school will send home nutrition information, post nutrition information tips in the cafeteria, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus upon request. We will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages.
- Meridian ISD will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through handouts, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

## **Monitoring and Policy Review**

- The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The principal will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school district superintendent.
- School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent. In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes if requested.

- The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every three years on district wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to the school health council (SHAC).

Wellness Policy Committee

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Approved by Meridian ISD Board of Education on June 21, 2012