

# **Gause Independent School District's 2009-10 WELLNESS POLICY On Physical Activity and Nutrition**

## **Preamble**

1. Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;
2. Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;
3. Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;
4. Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;
5. Whereas, 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;
6. Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;
7. Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;
8. Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and
9. Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies.

Thus, the Gause Independent School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Gause 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.

All students in grades K-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

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 and the 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 with related community services.

## **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

### **I. School Health Councils**

The school district will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The councils also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.)

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

#### **School Meals - Meals served through the National School Lunch/Breakfast Programs will:**

- 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 (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

In addition, Gause ISD will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information is available through the school food service director.

**Breakfast** - To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn, Gause ISD will (to the extent possible):

- operate the School Breakfast Program
- bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation
- serve breakfast to students
- notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals** - Gause ISD will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Toward this end, Gause ISD may utilize electronic identification and payment systems.

**Meal Times and Scheduling** - Gause ISD:

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary schools);
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff** - Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages** - Gause ISD discourages 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.

**Gause Elementary Schools (PK to grade 5)** - The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools.

Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

**Gause Junior High (Grades 6-8)** - All foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

**Beverages Allowed:**

- water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners;
- unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA).

**Beverages NOT Allowed:**

soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

**Foods:**

A food item sold individually:

- will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
- will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars;
- will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items;
- will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.

A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

## **Portion Sizes**

Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:

- One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
- One ounce for cookies;
- Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and
- The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

**Fundraising Activities** - To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food to be consumed during the school day or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually if used during the school day. Gause ISD will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

**Snacks** - Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The district will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

**Rewards** - Schools will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

**Celebrations** - Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above). Gause ISD will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

### **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

**Nutrition Education and Promotion** - Gause Independent School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools 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;
- 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, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- 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.

**Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting** - For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.

Toward that end:

1. 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;
2. opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
3. classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

**Communications with Parents** - The district/school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Gause ISD 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. The district/school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the district/school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The district/school 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 a website or physical education homework.

**Food Marketing in Schools** - School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged. Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; and sales of fruit for fundraisers.

**Staff Wellness** - Gause Independent School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Each district/school should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, or other health professional, or recreation program representative. (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the school health council.) The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the school health council annually.

#### **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-8** - All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities, and special health-care needs, will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 135 minutes/week for the entire school year. All physical education will

be taught by a certified physical education teacher or by an aide under the certified classroom teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**Daily Recess** - All elementary school students will have at least 15 - 30 [30] minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity through the provision of space and equipment.

Schools should discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

**Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School** - Gause ISD will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or athletics. We will offer interscholastic sports programs at grades 6-8. Gause ISD will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

**Physical Activity and Punishment** - Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity outside of the physical education class (e.g., running laps, push-ups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment. Holding a child in during PE to finish an assignment is not considered punishment.

**Safe Routes to School** - The school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

## **V. Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring** - The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school district superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal). In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the district has not received a SMI review from the

state agency within the past five years, the district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report as needed on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel in the district.

**Policy Review** - Assessments will be repeated as necessary to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

**Footnotes** - To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week.

As recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005, a whole grain is one labeled as a "whole" grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include "whole" wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal. It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or "paid" meals. School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute. Surprisingly, seltzer water may not be sold during meal times in areas of the school where food is sold or eaten because it is considered a "Food of Minimal Nutritional Value" (Appendix B of 7 CFR Part 210). If a food manufacturer fails to provide the added sugars content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from total sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from added sugars), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods from this total sugars limit. Schools that have vending machines are encouraged to include refrigerated snack vending machines, which can accommodate fruits, vegetables, yogurts, and other perishable items. Unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP).

Advertising of low-nutrition foods and beverages is permitted in supplementary classroom and library materials, such as newspapers, magazines, the Internet, and similar media, when such materials are used in a class lesson or activity, or as a research tool. Schools should not permit general brand marketing for food brands under which more than half of the foods or beverages do not meet the nutrition standards for foods sold individually or the meals are not consistent with school meal nutrition standards. Useful self-assessment and planning tools include the School Health Index from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Changing the Scene from the Team Nutrition Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary.