

## **Henniker Community School Wellness Action Plan**

### **Vision Statement**

The Henniker Community School strives to promote a safe and healthy place for students and employees to learn and work. All students shall be taught the essential knowledge and skills they need to become “health literate”. The school will provide a climate that encourages healthful choices and discourages behaviors that can damage health and well-being. Henniker Community School promotes a healthy school by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. We support an environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of children. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and facilitates the development of lifelong healthy habits.

### **Healthy Environment**

1. Our school will provide an environment that is safe, pleasing, and allows ample time and space for eating meals.
  
2. Nutritious and appealing foods, such as fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy foods and whole grain products, shall be available wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at school. We will make efforts to encourage students to make healthy food choices.
  
3. Snacks served during the school day, after school, 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. Our school will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children’s nutritional needs, children’s ages and other considerations.
  
4. Our school will discourage the use of food or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.
  
5. Celebrations. Our school will encourage limiting celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. We also encourage each party to include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutritional standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above). Our school will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.
  
6. We 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, as well as the potential for cross-contamination.

7. We will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
8. We will promote staff health by providing opportunities for staff to improve their health status through activities such as health assessments (e.g. blood pressure checks), health education, and other health related activities.
9. We will consider the feasibility of lunch periods following recess periods (in elementary grades).

### **Food Services**

1. Henniker Community School acknowledges that the feeding of children is primarily a family responsibility. To supplement their efforts, our school shall operate a food service program to ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn well.
2. The food service program shall aim to be financially self-supporting. However, the program is an essential educational and support activity and budget neutrality or profit generation must not take precedence over the nutritional needs of students.
3. Our child Nutrition Program will comply with federal, state and local requirements, including the latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Child Nutrition Programs are accessible to all children.
4. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal program. As part of our school's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for nutrition professional in our school. Staff development should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.
5. We will strive to adhere to AFHK/NH Healthy School Coalition guidelines for vending and other food sold at school.
6. We encourage offering nutrition education in the school dining room as well as in the classroom, with coordination between foodservice staff and teachers.

### **Nutrition Education**

The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students' actual eating behaviors and not just to teach facts about foods. Nutrition education topics shall be integrated within a sequential, comprehensive health education program taught at every grade level, pre-kindergarten through eighth. The nutrition education program shall focus on students' eating behaviors, be based on theories and methods proven effective by published research and be consistent with the state's health education

standards/guidelines/framework. Nutrition education shall be designed to help students learn:

- Nutritional knowledge, including but not limited to the benefits of healthy eating, essential nutrients, nutritional deficiencies, principles of healthy weight management, the use and misuse of dietary supplements, and safe food preparation, handling, and storage;
- Nutrition-related skills, including but not limited to planning a healthy meal, understanding and using food labels, and critical evaluation of nutrition information, misinformation, and commercial food advertising; and
- How to assess one's personal eating habits, set goals for improvement, and achieve those goals.

Nutrition education instructional activities shall stress the appealing aspects of healthy eating and be participatory, developmentally appropriate, and enjoyable. The program shall engage families as partners in their children's education.

**Staff Qualifications:** Staff responsible for nutrition education shall be adequately prepared and regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned. Preparation and professional development activities shall provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with skill practice in activities and instruction designed to promote healthy eating habits.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

1. Henniker Community School will have a diverse wellness committee comprised of parents, teachers, food service staff, school administrators, students, school board members and others to create policies and routinely evaluate, modify and improve their effectiveness using BMI, school nurse statistics and specific documentation and fitness tests carried from year to year.

The school health curriculum committee, which includes administration, teachers, guidance and nurse, shall assess all nutrition education curricula and materials for accuracy, completeness, balance, and consistency with the state's educational goals and standards. Materials developed by food marketing boards or food corporations shall be examined for inappropriate commercial messages but should be utilized as appropriate.

2. We will designate one or more persons with operational responsibility to ensure that our school is evaluating our progress in achieving these goals.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GOALS

### The primary goals and strategies for HCS's Physical Activity Wellness components:

1. To provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities.
  - Classroom health education will reinforce the knowledge and skills needed to maintain a physically active life style and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities such as watching television.
  - Professional development will be made available to all staff on best practices and strategies to enhance physical activities and physical education.
2. To maintain student's physical fitness.
  - Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before and/or after school programs including but not limited to, intramural, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
  - Physical education personnel will ensure the implementation of the Physical Best Fitness testing to monitor fitness growth and obesity rates.
3. To ensure students' daily participation in physical activity.
  - All students shall be given opportunities for physical activity during the school through physical education classes, daily recess periods, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum.
  - When circumstances make it necessary for students to remain indoors or inactive for two or more hours, students will be given periodic breaks during which they will be encouraged to stand up and be moderately active.
  - Guidelines from NASPE accepted. Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes and up to several hours of age appropriate physical activity on all most days of the week. Children should participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day. Extended periods (periods of two hours or more) of inactivity are discouraged for children especially during the daytime hours.
4. To teach all students the short and long term benefits of a physically active and healthful lifestyle.
  - A certified physical education specialist shall teach the Physical Education program.
  - The physical education program shall be designed to stress physical fitness and encourage healthy active lifestyles. The physical education program shall consist of physical activities of at least moderate intensity and for a duration that is sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to the differing abilities of students.
  - NASPE recommendations for physical education are 150 minutes per week for elementary students and 225 minutes per week for middle and high school students.