

1.1 STAFF ROLE MODELING

ADMINISTRATOR

Creating Healthy Schools



Implementation for success

To support healthy practices modeled by staff, the district/schools will:

- Provide information on the impact of staff role modeling;
- Support a school wellness council which will address student and staff wellness priorities;
- Assess and solicit input on ways to support and encourage healthy practices among staff;
- Provide healthy snacks during staff and PTO meetings and in staff vending machines that meet the USDA's Smart Snacks guidelines; and
- Provide information and professional development about best practices and healthy lifestyles to staff implementing the policy.

Staff can model healthy eating and physical activity in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to:

- Select healthy options in the presence of students and limit or refrain from consuming unhealthy foods or beverages;
- Use only non-food incentives as a reward for behavior or academics;
- Participate in the school meal program and make healthy choices;
- Join with students during classroom-based physical activity;
- Talk about the physical activities they like to do outside of school; and
- Use only encouraging, positive words about healthy lifestyles and praise students' efforts in all physical activity opportunities.

Model Policy:

Our school district cares about the health and well-being of staff members and understands the influence that staff actions have on all student health behaviors. Given the significant impact on the development of students' health behaviors, all staff shall promote a school environment supportive of healthy behaviors.

All staff are expected to model healthy eating, physical activity, and other healthy lifestyle behaviors during the school day, especially on school property and at school-sponsored meetings and events.

Evaluation:

In order to meet the requirements of the Healthy Hunger Free Act of 2010, our district wellness council and school administrators will be jointly accountable for implementing, enforcing, and evaluating this policy. Each school will report annually to the district wellness council on the progress of policy implementation and will include recommendations where further district support may be beneficial. The district wellness council may also request select schools conduct student, family, and/or staff surveys as part of their evaluation process. At the end of each school year, the district wellness council leader will submit an annual report to the superintendent/board of education on the implementation and evaluation of this policy. This report shall be posted on the Internet for easy public access.

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Rationale:

Today, about 1 in 3 children is overweight or obese and studies show that overweight children are likely to become overweight and obese adults.¹ If obesity among children continues to increase at this rate, our current generation could become the first in American history to live shorter and sicker lives than their parents. During the school day, teachers, principals, and school staff teach and prepare our next generation to live productive lives. Therefore, school employee health matters and directly affects our students, especially in the form of role modeling.

Results of several studies support the idea that significant adults (i.e. teachers and childcare providers) influence children they interact with regularly through role modeling and social support.² Given the significant impact on the development of students' health behaviors, all staff have the opportunity to directly impact student health by setting an example of healthy lifestyle behaviors. Research shows that teachers and staff play an important role in children's lives.³ This is why healthy role modeling by teachers and staff is so important. Children are more likely to follow examples set by respected authority figures.³ Research also shows that students' attitudes toward the school food environment is significantly similar to their teachers.⁴

Two other versions of this policy item are available for both staff and family to assist with implementation and communication.

Resources:

- Smart Snacks in Schools USDA Standards handout explaining the new established standards can be found here:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>
- Action Guide for School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies, Connecticut State Department of Education, 2009, pg 51:
http://portal.ct.gov//media/SDE/Nutrition/SWP/Action_Guide.pdf
- National Association of State Boards of Education: Chapter E: Policies to Promote Healthy Eating, 2nd Ed. 2012:
<http://www.nasbe.org/project/center-for-safe-and-healthy-schools/>

¹ CDC Childhood Obesity Facts:
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/obesity/facts.htm>

² Hammons A.J. & Fiese B.H. (2001) Is frequency of shared family meals related to the nutritional health of children and adolescents? *Pediatrics*, 127 (6): 1565-1574.

³ Hartline-Grafton, H.L., Rose, D., Johnson, C.C., Rich, J.C., & Webber, L.S. (2009). Are school employees role models of healthful eating? Dietary intake results from the ACTION worksite wellness trial. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 109, 1548-155.

⁴ Kubik M.Y., Lytle L.A., Hannan P.J., Story M, Perry C.L.(2002) Food-related beliefs, eating behavior, and classroom food practices of middle school teachers. *J Sch Health*.72(8):339-345