

WELLNESS GUIDELINES FOR THE ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

I. Nutritional Guidelines for Food Served and Sold by School Nutrition Services

- A. All foods and beverages available during the school day, including vending and à la carte, shall reflect the current US Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Code of Virginia.
- B. Nutritional value of meals may be evaluated over a period of days rather than judged on a single meal or food item.
- C. Students should be encouraged by the school division and by their families to eat a healthy breakfast, and breakfast is to be available daily in all schools.
- D. Students must be provided adequate time to eat meals. This requires students to be seated with their meal for a minimum of 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch.
- E. To meet children's needs for nutrition when school is not in session, School Nutrition Services will provide lunch for children who are eligible for federal program support during the summer break.
- F. Nutrient and ingredient information for all products served during the school day shall be available to school communities.
- G. All foods made available during the school day will comply with local food safety and sanitation regulations.
- H. All School Nutrition Services managers will hold a current Northern Virginia sanitation certification.
- I. All School Nutrition Services staff members shall have professional development opportunities.
- J. The Director of School Nutrition Services will be properly qualified according to current professional standards to administer school nutrition programs.

II. Nutritional Guidelines for Vending Machines, Concessions, Celebrations, School-Sponsored Fundraising Activities, and Sporting Events

- A. Parents are encouraged to provide healthy snacks for their own students/athletes at practice and athletic competitions.
- B. Healthy food choices will be available at extracurricular activities when food is sold. See Attachment A.
- C. Due to allergy and sanitation concerns, consumption of food in the classroom and throughout school facilities is to be discouraged unless part of a school-sponsored meal

program, in which case it will be monitored. In accordance with Regulation JHCF-R2: Food Allergy Guidelines, eating surfaces must be cleaned after consumption.

- D. Celebrations with food are to be limited and discouraged pursuant to the ACPS Food Allergy Guidelines. See Attachment B for nonfood celebration ideas.
- E. All school-sponsored fundraising groups are to be encouraged to choose non-food items to sell. See Attachment C.
- F. If fundraising activities include the sale of food for consumption on school property, the purchase of healthy food options must also be available. In addition, such fundraisers must comply with the “Competitive Foods” requirements in Regulation JHCH-R, and must follow food safety handling and storage guidelines.
- G. Drinking water will be available and accessible to students throughout the school day.
- H. School administrators will provide staff development opportunities that include “active learning” strategies.
- I. Kindergarten snacks will make a positive contribution to children’s diets and health, with fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage.
- J. In compliance with federal guidelines, no food other than that provided by the School Nutrition Services program will be sold to students during the school day.

III. Physical Education, Recess and Physical Activity: General Guidelines

- A. All students, including those with special needs, are to be given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education classes, daily recess periods for elementary students, and the integration of movement activities and “active learning” into the academic curriculum for elementary, middle, and high school students.
- B. Elementary school students will receive 60-90 minutes per week of physical education instruction, in addition to daily recess and active classroom learning.
- C. Middle school students will receive a minimum of 210 minutes per week of health/physical education instruction.
- D. Students enrolled in high school health/physical education classes will receive an average of 180 minutes of instruction per week.
- E. All physical education classes will be taught by teachers certified in health/physical education, including certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid. PE teachers will use instructional practices that provide for maximum participation for every student in all physical activities.

- F. If a student is unable to participate fully in physical education class on a particular day due to illness, injury, or religious practices, he or she must bring a written note signed and dated by a parent or guardian. This note will be accepted for medically related exemptions up to three (3) consecutive days, and in the case of observance of a religious holiday. A medical excuse from total participation of any duration or restrictive participation beyond three (3) consecutive days shall be confirmed by a physician's statement specifying the type of illness or injury and the nature and duration of the restriction. The statement should include the types of activities to be avoided in order to allow the physical educator to modify instruction for the student. When a student is unable to fully participate, daily activities will be modified accordingly under the direction of the physical educator.
- G. Elementary recess periods will be given prior to lunch time whenever possible. Elementary recess must be at least 20 minutes in length. Another 15 minutes each day should include "active learning" time where movement enhances academic learning in the classroom.
- H. Physical activity, including but not limited to walking, lap running, or push-ups, may not be assigned as punishment for behavioral or academic concerns to an individual student or any group of students. Additional or targeted physical activity is a reasonable assignment for correction or motivation on a case-by-case basis within physical education classes or other school-sponsored physical activities.
- I. Outdoor recess is mandatory. Recess may not be withheld from an individual student or any group of students as punishment, or to conduct academic or extracurricular activities. Parent requests for exclusion from recess based on a unique circumstance will be considered on a case by case basis.
- J. ~~Administrators may hold indoor recess during National Weather Service issued weather advisories, or when the air quality index is at "red" or higher.~~ Students with asthma and other respiratory conditions will be provided the option for indoor recess as recommended by health officials. ~~When such recommendations are made, weather conditions prohibit outdoor recess,~~ indoor activities should provide opportunities for movement.
- K. Physical activity-related clubs are to be encouraged through various partners, including PTAs.
- L. "Lifetime activity" is to be encouraged for the entire school community. Schools provide information to families to help them incorporate physical activity into their children's lives. See attachment E.
- M. The school community promotes education and encourages walking and biking to school and to work, with City of Alexandria staff to develop safe routes to school.

- N. All physical education facilities, both indoors and outside the school building, are to be safe, clean, and accessible for students. All middle school and high school facilities will include a safe and appropriate area for walking and jogging activities.
- O. Secondary school health and physical education teachers will receive regular substance abuse training.
- P. From kindergarten through grade 12, students will receive consistent substance abuse prevention programming.

IV. Physical Education, Recess and Outdoor Activities: Weather Guidelines

Outdoor experiences for children are important for many reasons, such as more space for large motor activities, fresh air, and exposure to sunlight. As it is the School Board's intention to continue to hold outdoor recess during cold spells, parents should have their children prepared with jackets, gloves, and hats. Schools will work with families to ensure that children have adequate clothing. In addition, ACPS welcomes and supports partnership and grant opportunities that help provide such items for students who may not have appropriate apparel.

However, there are times when weather conditions limit exposure to outdoor activities. Deciding when students may play outdoors remains the responsibility of the principal or principal's designee based on his/her professional judgment. **The principal's or designee's decision to stay inside or go outdoors may change as conditions change.** Decisions regarding field trips during inclement weather are made on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with the Office of Pupil Transportation, and are at the discretion of the principal or designee.

The following guidelines should be consulted when making weather-related decisions regarding recess and other outdoor activities:

A. National Weather Service Wind-Chill Advisories and Warnings

During National Weather Service (NWS) Wind-Chill Advisories and Warnings, outdoor activities will not be held. Principals and designees will be notified by the Director of Health, Safety and Risk Management when the NWS has issued such advisories or warnings. **Outdoor activity includes general and physical education classes, recess, and scheduled fire drills. This does not include students walking to and from school, students waiting at bus stops, or student patrols.** When weather conditions prohibit outdoor recess, indoor recess should provide opportunities for large motor activities.

1. **NWS Wind-Chill Advisory:** Issued when cold wind-chill values are expected to fall/are occurring between -5°F and -20°F. Such Advisories are issued when cold and breezy conditions could cause frostbite or hypothermia if precautions, such as dressing in layers and covering exposed skin, aren't taken.
2. **NWS Wind-Chill Warning:** Issued when dangerously cold wind-chill values are expected to fall /are occurring at or below -20°F (for 3 hours). Such Warnings are issued when very cold air and strong winds could cause frostbite or hypothermia

in a matter of minutes. During such Warnings, time outside should be limited, individuals should be dressed in layers, and exposed skin should be covered.

B. Wind-Chill Factor and Heat Index

When the weather is cold or hot but no NWS Advisories or Warnings have been issued, principals and designees should consult the nationally recognized, *Child Care Weather Watch* wind-chill and heat index chart below, developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health through the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

Current weather factors, including the charts below, are found on the ACPS website at <https://www.acps.k12.va.us/weather>.

1. **Wind-chill** is how cold it “feels” outside (apparent temperature). **Wind-chill** is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin caused by the effects of wind and cold. As the wind increases, it draws heat from the body, driving down skin temperature and eventually the internal body temperature.
2. Heat **index** is a measurement of the air temperature in relation to the relative humidity. The heat index is based on studies of skin cooling caused by the evaporation of sweat as an indicator of discomfort. The heat index is higher when high air temperatures occur with high humidity, and lower when they occur with low humidity.
3. When either the **wind-chill factor** or the **heat index** is in the **danger zone (RED)**, outdoor activities will not be held.
4. When either the **wind-chill factor** or the **heat index** is in the **caution zone (YELLOW)**, the determination to hold outdoor activities is at the principal’s or designee’s discretion based on his/her professional judgment.
- 4.5. When either the **wind-chill factor** or the **heat index** is in the **comfortable zone (GREEN)**, outdoor activities will be held.

Understand the Weather

Wind-Chill



- 30° is **chilly** and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is **cold**
- 0° to 15° is **very cold**
- -20° to 0° is **bitter cold** with significant risk of **frostbite**
- -20° to -60° is **extreme cold** and **frostbite** is likely
- -60° is **frigid** and exposed **skin will freeze** in 1 minute

Heat Index



- 80° or below is considered **comfortable**
- 90° beginning to feel **uncomfortable**
- 100° **uncomfortable** and may be **hazardous**
- 110° considered **dangerous**

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

Child Care Weather Watch

		Wind-Speed Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)								
		Wind Speed in mph								
Air Temperature		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
	40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27
	30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13
	20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1
	10	10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-16
0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29	
-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43	

■ Comfortable for outdoor play
 ■ Caution
 ■ Danger

		Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)												
		Relative Humidity (Percent)												
Air Temperature (F)		40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
	80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87
	84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103
	90	91	93	95	97	100	103	105	109	113	117	122	127	132
	94	97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135			
	100	109	114	118	124	129	130							
104	119	124	131	137										

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Child Care Weather Watch

Watching the weather is part of a child care provider's job. Planning for playtime, field trips, or weather safety is part of the daily routine. The changes in weather require the child care provider to monitor the health and safety of children. What clothing, beverages, and protections are appropriate? **Clothe** children to maintain a comfortable body temperature (warmer months - lightweight cotton, colder months - wear layers of clothing). **Beverages** help the body maintain a comfortable temperature. Water or fruit juices are best. Avoid high-sugar content beverages and soda pop. **Sunscreen** may be used year around. Use a sunscreen labeled as SPF-15 or higher. Read and follow all label instructions for the sunscreen product. Look for sunscreen with UVB and UVA ray protection. **Shaded** play areas protect children from the sun.

Condition GREEN - Children may play outdoors and be comfortable. Watch for signs of children becoming uncomfortable while playing. Use precautions regarding clothing, sunscreen, and beverages for all child age groups. INFANTS AND TODDLERS are unable to tell the child care provider if they are too hot or cold. Children become fussy when uncomfortable. Infants/toddlers will tolerate shorter periods of outdoor play. Dress infants/toddlers in lightweight cotton or cotton-like fabrics during the warmer months. In cooler or cold months dress infants in layers to keep them warm. Protect infants from the sun by limiting the amount of time outdoors and playing in shaded areas. Give beverages when playing outdoors. YOUNG CHILDREN remind children to stop playing, drink a beverage, and apply more sunscreen. OLDER CHILDREN need a firm approach to wearing proper clothing for the weather (they may want to play without coats, hats or mittens). They may resist applying sunscreen and drinking beverages while outdoors.

Condition YELLOW - use caution and closely observe the children for signs of being too hot or cold while outdoors. Clothing, sunscreen, and beverages are important. Shorten the length of outdoor time. INFANTS AND TODDLERS use precautions outlined in Condition Green. Clothing, sunscreen, and beverages are important. Shorten the length of time for outdoor play. YOUNG CHILDREN may insist they are not too hot or cold because they are enjoying playtime. Child care providers need to structure the length of time for outdoor play for the young child. OLDER CHILDREN need a firm approach to wearing proper clothing for the weather (they may want to play without coats, hats or mittens), applying sunscreen and drinking liquids while playing outdoors.

Condition RED - most children should not play outdoors due to the health risk. INFANTS/TODDLERS should play indoors and have ample space for large motor play. YOUNG CHILDREN may ask to play outside and do not understand the potential danger of weather conditions. OLDER CHILDREN may play outdoors for very short periods of time if they are properly dressed, have plenty of fluids. Child care providers must be vigilant about maximum protection of children.

Understand the Weather

The weather forecast may be confusing unless you know the meaning of the words.

Blizzard Warning: There will be snow and strong winds that produce a blinding snow, deep drifts, and life threatening wind chills. Seek shelter immediately.

Heat Index Warning: How hot it feels to the body when the air temperature (in Fahrenheit) and relative humidity are combined.

Relative Humidity: The percent of moisture in the air.

Temperature: The temperature of the air in degrees Fahrenheit.

Wind: The speed of the wind in miles per hour.

Wind Chill Warning: There will be sub-zero temperatures with moderate to strong winds expected which may cause hypothermia and great danger to people, pets and livestock.

Winter Weather Advisory: Weather conditions may cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. If caution is exercised, these situations should not become life threatening.

Winter Storm Warning: Severe winter conditions have begun in your area.

Winter Storm Watch: Severe winter conditions, like heavy snow and ice are possible within the next day or two.

Child Care Weather Watch, Iowa Department Public Health, Healthy Child Care Iowa. Produced through federal grant (MCJ19T029 & MCJ19KCC7) funds from the US Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources & Services Administration, Maternal & Child Health Bureau. Wind-Chill and Heat Index information is from the National Weather Service.

A.C. Air Quality Index

Principals and designees will be notified by the Director of Health, Safety and Risk Management when the Air Quality Index is at “ORANGE” or higher. Planning ahead for Code Orange, Red and Purple Days is the best way to help students avoid problems associated with high ozone.

1. When the Air Quality Index is at “ORANGE,” principals and designees should consult the chart below.
2. When the Air Quality Index is at “RED” or higher, outdoor activities will not be held for elementary students. Principals and designees should consult the chart below regarding middle and high school students.
3. School administrators should develop an action plan that:
 - a) Makes arrangements in advance for students to have adequate indoor space when necessary; and
 - b) Plans appropriate indoor activities if a Code Orange, Red or Purple day forces students inside.

Alert	Elementary School Students	Middle School Students	High School Students
NWS Wind-Chill Advisory/Warning	Refrain from all outdoor activities	Refrain from all outdoor activities	Refrain from all outdoor activities
Wind-Chill / Heat Index Chart: GREEN	Outdoor activities held	Outdoor activities held	Outdoor activities held
Wind-Chill / Heat Index Chart: YELLOW	Outdoor activities held at principal's discretion	Outdoor activities held at principal's discretion	Outdoor activities held at principal's discretion
Wind-Chill / Heat Index Chart: RED	Refrain from all outdoor activities	Refrain from all outdoor activities	Refrain from all outdoor activities
Air Quality: Code Orange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with asthma and respiratory conditions refrain from all outdoor activities • Reduce time spent outdoors • Limit time outdoors to morning hours when possible • Decrease vigorous physical activity while outdoors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with asthma and respiratory conditions refrain from all outdoor activities • Reduce time spent outdoors • Limit time outdoors to morning hours when possible • Decrease vigorous physical activity while outdoors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with asthma and respiratory conditions refrain from all outdoor activities • Reduce time spent outdoors • Limit time outdoors to morning hours when possible • Decrease vigorous physical activity while outdoors
Air Quality: Code Red	Refrain from all outdoor activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with asthma and respiratory conditions refrain from all outdoor activities • Healthy students may participate in leisurely walking • Refrain from outdoor band activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with asthma and respiratory conditions refrain from all outdoor activities • Healthy students may participate in leisurely walking • Refrain from outdoor band activity • High School Athletes with current health (physical) examinations on file in school may participate in no more than 1 hour of outdoor activity, which does not include prolonged exertion, and have breaks every 15 to 20 minutes. These activities are equivalent to a "walk-through" practice with no moderate-high intensity drills/activities such as contact, scrimmages, etc.
Air Quality: Code Purple	Refrain from all outdoor activities	Refrain from all outdoor activities	Refrain from all outdoor activities

Implementation

To assess the progress made toward realizing the goals of Policy JHCF and this regulation, the Wellness Team, as outlined in Policy JHCF, will assist every ACPS school to form a Wellness Committee to evaluate the school’s implementation of these guidelines.

Video Usage

Video can play a constructive and creative role in deepening understanding and supplementing lessons. It should be limited in its use and should always have pedagogical underpinnings.

Distribution of Regulations on Student Wellness

These regulations shall be communicated in writing to all ACPS administrators, teachers, classroom aides, school support teams, and parents / guardians.

Established: May, 2007
 Revised: November, 2013
 Revised: June 11, 2015
 Revised: August 7, 2017

[Revised:](#)

Legal Refs: 42 U.S.C. § 1758b
 7 C.F.R. 210.31.E3
 Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, [§ 22.1-253.13:1](#)

Cross Refs: EFB Free and Reduced Price Food Services
 IGAE/IGAF Health Education/Physical Education
 JHCF Student Wellness
 JHCH School Meals and Snacks
 JL Fund Raising and Solicitation
 KQ Commercial, Promotional, and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships

Attachment A
Healthy Food and Beverage Options for School Functions*

At any school function where food is sold, healthful food options should be made available to promote student, staff, and community wellness. Examples of nutritious food and beverages that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are listed below:

- Fresh fruit
- Dried fruit
- Single serving applesauce or canned fruit in juice
- Pretzels or reduced fat crackers
- Baked chips
- Low-fat muffins
- Fat-free or low fat flavored yogurt
- Water.

**This list is not all-inclusive and is meant only to provide families and school staffers with guidance for healthier food and beverage choices. All items in the list are believed to be consistent with the intent of the wellness policy to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.*

Attachment B Non-food Celebration Ideas

Zero-cost Alternatives:

- Sit by friends
- Read outdoors
- Teach the class
- Have extra art time
- Enjoy class outdoors
- Have an extra recess
- Read to a younger class
- Get a no-homework pass
- Make deliveries to the office
- Listen to music while working
- Play a favorite game or puzzle
- Earn play-money for privileges
- Walk with a teacher during lunch
- Eat lunch with a teacher or principal
- Dance to favorite music in the classroom
- Get “free choice” time at the end of the day
- Listen with a headset to a book on audiotape
- Have a teacher perform special skills (i.e., sing)
- Have a teacher read a special book to the class

Low-cost Alternatives:

- Select a paperback book
- Enter a drawing for donated prizes
- Take a trip to the treasure box (non-food items)
- Get stickers, pencils, and other school supplies
- Receive a video store/movie theatre coupon
- Get a set of flash cards printed from a computer
- Receive a “mystery pack” (notepad, sports cards)

Attachment C Non-food Fundraising Ideas

- Candles
- Book sale
- Cookbook
- Walkathon*
- Student artwork
- Stuffed animals
- Stadium pillows
- School photo ID
- Educational games
- Holiday decorations
- Shopping donation programs
- School mascot temporary tattoos
- Faculty and/or student talent show*
- Teacher/student sports competition
- Auction of donated goods and services
- Balloon bouquets for special occasions
- Bottled water with the schools own label
- Refillable water bottle with the schools logo
- Glow in the dark novelties (popular at dances)
- Greeting cards especially designed by students
- School calendars with all the important school dates on them
- Party bags for kids' birthday parties filled with non-food novelties
- Sale of flowers and balloons for the family to purchase for student graduates
- School spirit items – tee-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, lanyards, pennants, bracelets and caps
- Growing and/or selling flowers and plants for holidays such as Valentine's Day

**These fundraisers have the added benefit of promoting physical activity for students.*

Attachment D
Healthy Food and Beverage Options for Kindergarten Snacks*

- Fresh fruit
- Raw vegetable sticks/slices with low-fat dressing or yogurt dip
- Fresh fruit wedges – cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon, pineapple, oranges, tangelos
- Sliced fruit – nectarines, peaches, kiwi, star fruit, plums, pears, mangos, apples, etc.
- Fruit salad
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- Dried fruit – raisins, cranberries, apples, apricots
- Single serving applesauce or canned fruit in juice
- Fruit smoothies made with fat-free or low-fat milk
- Lean meats and reduced fat cheese sandwiches (use light or reduced fat mayonnaise in chicken/tuna salads)
- Mini bagels with whipped light or fat-free cream cheese
- Bread sticks; Low-fat muffins
- Pretzels or reduced fat crackers
- Baked chips
- Fat-free or low fat flavored yogurt, pudding cups, milk products (string cheese, single-serving cottage cheese, cheese cubes)
- Flavored soy milk fortified with calcium
- Water

**This list is not all inclusive and is meant only to provide parents and school staff with guidance for healthier food and beverage choices. Not all food and beverage items on this list will necessarily meet division nutrient standards (Attachment A), since items vary in sugar, fat, and calorie content from brand to brand. However, all of the items in the list are believed to be consistent with the intent of the wellness policy to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.*

Appendix E

Physical Activity Outside the School Day = Happy Kids and Fit Kids = Higher Test Scores

Note: A recent study showed that students with the highest fitness scores also had the highest test scores.

1. Turn off the computer and the TV and take a walk around the block. Adults should set the example for students by eating healthy and exercising on a regular basis.
2. Borrow a pedometer from your school to see how many steps you are taking during activities outside of school.
3. Walk or bike to school.
4. Parents--play with your children every day. Children are encouraged to get at least one hour of physical activity each day. Adults and children will benefit from daily physical activity. This should be fun for adults and children.
5. Do indoor activities that include stretching, lifting light weights, and walking/jogging up and down the stairs, or exercising to a DVD or exercise channel on TV.
6. Play outdoors. Children and adults can walk, jog, bike, and jump rope to promote cardiovascular fitness. Other outdoor activities include flying kites, throwing or kicking a ball, playing frisbee, using a hula hoop, playing hopscotch, and tag games.
7. Swim at a local pool. Chinquapin Park Recreation Center and the Y.M.C.A. provide an opportunity to swim year-round.
8. Contact the Alexandria Parks and Recreation (<http://alexandriava.gov/recreation/>) at 703.746.5500 to obtain a schedule of classes and activities. The City provides a wide range of activities that includes swimming, tennis, football, soccer, basketball, baseball, lacrosse, rugby, softball, track and field, dance, cheerleading, walleyball, racquetball, and boxing. The Youth Sports office can be contacted at 703.746.5414. Most activities are inexpensive and a great way to make new friends and learn new skills. Flag football, volleyball, softball, and soccer are among the adult sports offered to residents of the City of Alexandria.
9. Play at the school playground or at area parks.
10. Go fishing within and outside of the City of Alexandria.
11. Do chores to help stay fit. Some chores might include sweeping the floor, pulling weeds, trimming hedges, mowing the grass, wiping down the counter tops and mirrors, dusting furniture or the walls, vacuuming, and going up or down the stairs to do the laundry.
12. Shoot baskets or play a game on one of the many basketball courts around town.
13. Practice your serve or play a game at one of the many tennis courts around town.