

WELLNESS GUIDELINES FOR THE ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Nutritional Guidelines for Food Served and Sold by School Nutrition Services

1. 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.
2. Nutritional value of meals may be evaluated over a period of days rather than judged on a single meal or food item.
3. 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.
4. Students must be provided adequate time to eat meals. This requires for students to be seated with their meal for a minimum of 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch.
5. 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.
6. Nutrient and ingredient information for all products served during the school day shall be available to school communities.
7. All foods made available during the school day will comply with local food safety and sanitation regulations.
8. All School Nutrition Services managers will hold a current Northern Virginia sanitation certification.
9. All School Nutrition Services staff members shall have professional development opportunities.
10. The School Nutrition Services director will be properly qualified according to current professional standards to administer school nutrition programs.

Nutritional Guidelines for Vending Machines, Concessions, Celebrations, School-sponsored Fundraising Activities, and Sporting Events

1. Parents are encouraged to provide healthy snacks for their own students/athletes at practice and athletic competitions.
2. Healthy food choices will be available at extracurricular activities when food is sold. See attachment A.
3. Consumption of food in the classroom is to be discouraged due to allergy and sanitation concerns. An exception would be a child on an individual medical health plan.
4. Celebrations with food are to be limited and discouraged pursuant to the ACPS Food Allergy Guidelines. See attachment B for nonfood celebration ideas.
5. All school-sponsored fund-raising groups are to be encouraged to choose non-food items to sell. See attachment C.
6. If fund raising activities include the sale of food for consumption on school property, the purchase of healthy food options must also be available.
7. Drinking water will be available and accessible to students throughout the school day.
8. School administrators will provide staff development opportunities that include "active learning" strategies.
9. 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.

10. 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.
11. Elementary school principals are encouraged to modify physical education schedules in an effort to maximize the amount of time and number of classes available and to provide additional PE.

Physical Activity and Physical Education Guidelines

1. 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.
2. “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.
3. 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.
4. Physical activity-related clubs are to be encouraged.
5. All physical education classes will be taught by teachers endorsed in health/physical education, including certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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. Parents may not waive, or be asked to waive, this regulation.
9. Administrators may hold indoor recess during National Weather Service-issued wind-chill advisories, wind-chill warnings, 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. Indoor activities must provide opportunities for movement. 9. Students enrolled in high school health/physical education classes will receive a minimum of 225 minutes of instruction per week.
10. Middle school students will receive a minimum of 210 minutes per week of health/physical education instruction.
11. Elementary school students will receive a minimum of 60 minutes per week of physical education instruction, in addition to daily recess and active classroom learning.
12. PE teachers will use instructional practices that provide for maximum participation for every student in all physical activities.
13. Every ACPS school will form a Wellness Committee for the purpose of evaluating the school’s Wellness Plan. All schools are encouraged to apply annually for the [VA Governor’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Award](#).

14. 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.

15. The school division encourages a limitation of weight in student backpacks. (Note: the State recommends that backpacks not exceed 15% of a student's body weight.) The use of assigned student textbooks to be left at home and the use of class sets of textbooks for in-school use are strongly recommended. The school nurse will provide to all students information regarding the correct size, weight, method of loading, and carrying a backpack.

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.

Approved: May, 2007
Amended: November, 2013
Amended: June 11, 2015

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.