

ANN JERKINS-HARRIS



WELLNESS POLICY

2024--2025

ANN JERKINS HARRIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE

Approved by AEE Governing Board—February 15th, 2020

Reviewed and Approved by Governing Authority of AJHAE—December 4th, 2021

Reviewed and Approved by Governing Authority of AJHAE—OCTOBER 21ST, 2023

Reviewed and Approved by Governing Authority of AJHAE—AUGUST 17TH, 2024



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AJHAE: WELLNESS POLICY

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Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive:

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

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;

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;

Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

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;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas; community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, the **ANN JERKINS HARRIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE** School District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the **ANN JERKINS HARRIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE** School District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service and 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-6th will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

- Foods and beverages 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, the **ANN JERKINS HARRIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE** will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including After-school snacks], Summer food Service Program, Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program [including suppers]).

- The school 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.

NON- DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

The Ann Jerkins Harris Academy of Excellence nutritional food program does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

SECTION 1

NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR FOODS PROVIDED ON SCHOOL MEALS

Meals served through the **ANN JERKINS HARRIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE** National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- Be appealing and attractive to children
- Be served in clean and pleasant surroundings
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables
- Serve reduced-fat (2%), low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA)
- Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain (Appendix A)

The **ANN JERKINS HARRIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE** will engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices.

In addition, **AJHAE** will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

FOODS OF MINIMAL NUTRITIONAL VALUE (FMNV)

AJHAE may not serve or provide access for students to FMNV and all other forms of candy at any time anywhere on school premises until the end of the last scheduled class.

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:

- **AJHAE** will arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that promote participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, “grab-and-go” breakfast, or breakfast during morning break or recess.
- **AJHAE** will serve breakfast to students and will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- **AJHAE** will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

FREE MEALS

AJHAE will work to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

MEAL TIMES & SCHEDULING

- **AJHAE** will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.
- **AJHAE** will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- **AJHAE** will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
- **AJHAE** will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary **AJHAE**).
- **AJHAE** will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks and
- **AJHAE** will 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 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, **AJHAE** will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in **AJHAE**.
- 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

- **AJHAE** should 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.
- **AJHAE** will NOT operate any vending machines on school premises.
- The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage provided to students in elementary **AJHAE**.
- Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary **AJHAE** should be provided as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages provided individually should be limited to reduced fat, low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.
- **AJHAE** 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.
- **AJHAE** will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other consideration. **AJHAE** will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.
- if eligible, **AJHAE** shall provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.
- **AJHAE** will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment for student misbehavior.

ACCOMODATING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

Special Needs Students whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan indicates the use of Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV) or candy for behavior modification (or other suitable needs) may be given FMNV or candy items. **AJHAE** encourages to use foods from Appendix B.

CELEBRATIONS

AJHAE will 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 provided individually (review Appendix B.).

AJHAE will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

School Sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances).

Foods and beverages offered at school-sponsored events outside the school day are encouraged to meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages provided individually.

SECTION 2

NUTRITION EDUCATION AND PROMOTION GOALS

AJHAE aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students.

NUTRITION PROMOTION

- *AJHAE* includes enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities such as contests, promotion and taste testing;
- *AJHAE* promotes the consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health enhancing nutrition practices;
- *AJHAE* district emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure, and encourages eating a healthy breakfast every day;
- *AJHAE* district links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community service.
- *AJHAE* teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing;
- *AJHAE* provides information to families that encourage them to teach their children about health and nutrition; Administration and Food Service will partner to promote healthy eating habits through education and advertisements.

NUTRITION EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM

- *AJHAE* will offer nutrition education at each grade level as a part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- *AJHAE* will ensure that nutrition education taught by qualified staff who are adequately prepared and participate regularly in professional development activities to effectively deliver an accurate nutrition education program;
- *AJHAE* will offer nutrition education not only in health education, but will integrate it across the curriculum.
- *AJHAE* will make training in nutrition education available for teachers and other staff.

SECTION 3

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ACTIVITY DAILY PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ACTIVITY

Elementary Students in **AJHAE** including those with disabilities, special healthcare needs and alternative educational settings will receive **150 minutes of physical activity per week.**

A minimum of 60 minutes of that time will be spent on physical education instruction.

Physical Education Instruction

- All physical education will be taught by certified physical education teachers that are hired by **AJHAE**, and the curriculum will be aligned with state/national standards for physical education and dance.
- Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic, intramurals, marching band) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.
- The teacher/student ratio in physical education classes will be consistent with that of other core content areas.
- Class space and size in physical education will be suitable for safe and appropriate instruction.

RECESS

- **AJHAE** will provide at least 15 minutes per day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which moderate to vigorous physical activity is encouraged.
- **This time will be included in the over all 150 minutes of activity per week. If at all possible, it is recommended that students have recess prior to lunch.**
- This can be done in the classroom. **AJHAE** should discourage extended periods (i.e. period 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, **AJHAE** should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

- **AJHAE** will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs.
- **AJHAE** will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interest, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs. After school child care programs should offer physical activities that are moderate to vigorous in nature.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND PUNISHMENT

- Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g. running laps, pushups) and will not withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g. recess, physical education) as punishment. Interscholastic sports will be exempt from this provision.
- Children who compromise the safety of themselves and others will be removed from that class period.

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS

- To the extent possible, school spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before and after the school day.
- These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs.
- School policies concerning safety and use of equipment will apply at all times.

SECTION 4

OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO PROMOTE STUDENT AND STAFF WELLNESS

The policies established under this category create a school environment that provide consistent wellness messages and includes goals for other school-based activities that are designed to promote student and staff wellness.

COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH APPROACH:

A model to guide school decision-making related to physical activity and nutrition that encompasses all aspects of the school from education to staff wellness. The coordinated school health program model involves and coordinates the efforts of eight interactive components to maintain well-being. These components are:

- (1) health education,
- (2) physical education,
- (3) health services,
- (4) nutrition services,
- (5) counseling, psychological and social services,
- (6) health school environment,
- (7) health promotion for staff, and
- (8) family and community involvement.

The model utilizes community partnerships and school resources to coordinate services, encourage collaboration, and avoid duplication of services. The individual school health advisory councils and **AJHAE** school health advisory board are the vehicles through which **AJHAE** will coordinate the efforts of these components.

School Health Advisory Councils

- **AJHAE** will create school health advisory councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and revise when necessary school nutrition and physical activity policies.
- School health advisory councils consists of groups of individuals representing the **AJHAE** and the community and should include parents, students, administrators, teachers, food service personnel, school nurses, and other community members.

District Health Advisory Board

AJHAE will create a district school health advisory board to monitor individual school health advisory councils, create policies, and define and interpret **AJHAE** policies regarding school nutrition and physical activity.

AJHAE health advisory board consists of school board members, the health services director, food services director, teachers, school nurses, physicians, and community health agency representatives, and parents.

Community / Family Involvement

- **AJHAE** will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
- **AJHAE**/school will offer healthy eating information to parents, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus.
- **AJHAE** should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet nutrition standards.
- **AJHAE**/school will provide parents a list of foods that meet **AJHAE**'s snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.
- **AJHAE**/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, newsletter, or other take-home materials.

STAFF WELLNESS

AJHAE 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.

AJHAE will establish and maintain a staff wellness committee. (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the school health advisory 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 advisory council annually.

A staff wellness plan could include the components listed below. **AJHAE** should not be expected to implement all these elements at once. Starting with just a few of the elements listed below can provide the foundation for evolution to a more comprehensive program.

- Educational activities for school staff members on healthy lifestyle behaviors, eating, physical activity, and injury prevention.
- Application of nutritional standards for foods and beverages in vending machines available to staff members.
- Policies to prohibit all tobacco use on school grounds by students, staff members, and school visitors.
- Establishment of peer support groups for weight management, stress management, tobacco-use cessation, family guidance, and other identified issues.
- Time during the school day, such as “release time,” during which teachers and other staff members can participate in health-promoting activities.
- Administration of flu shots at school.
- Periodic screening at school for blood pressure, blood cholesterol, body mass index, and other health indicators.
- Encouragement of staff members to set medical appointments for screening for cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and other diseases. • Linkages to established Employee Assistance Programs.
- An ongoing assessment process to update and improve the effectiveness of the staff wellness plan.

SERVICES FOR NUTRITION-RELATED HEALTH PROBLEMS

AJHAE School Counselors and school health services staff shall consistently promote healthy eating to students and other staff. These professionals shall be prepared to recognize conditions such as obesity, eating disorders, and other nutrition-related health problems among students and staff and be able to refer them to appropriate services.

SECTION 5

MONITORING THE AJHAE WELLNESS POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MENTORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Under the direction of the **AJHAE** Governing Board, the superintendent and School Leader will ensure that the directives of **AJHAE**'s wellness policy are fulfilled.

The school food service director will ensure compliance with the nutrition standards within **AJHAE**.

PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Determination of **AJHAE**'s Adherence to its Policy will Include:

- An assessment of each school's compliance with the categories that are outlined in the wellness policy.
- Compliance will be based on fulfilling a continuous quality improvement plan that outlines one year and three-year goals as well as action plans that have been drafted to achieve them.
- Outcome measures for success will be based on:
- Documented observations Student interviews and focus groups Surveys and questionnaires within the school.

DISTRICT HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

- A revised continuous improvement plan will be drafted by the **AJHAE** District School Health Advisory Council and submitted for the Governing Board's approval annually.
- Every three years, a formal reassessment of the wellness policy will be undertaken.
- **AJHAE** Health Advisory Council will publish a summary report on **AJHAE**'s progress toward its school wellness policy,
- Hold open discussions about the direction of health and wellness in **AJHAE**, and submit a new draft wellness policy for the Board's review.
- The use of outside consultation may be utilized to benchmark **AJHAE** against state and national standards and best practices.

APPENDIX A

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Grains:

- **Enriched Grains:** Grains to which iron, folic acid and other B vitamins, including niacin, thiamin, and riboflavin are added back to the grain mixture after milling. Over the years, enrichment has helped eliminate many nutrition-related diseases.
- **Whole Grains:** Whole grains contain the entire edible part of any grain: wheat, corn, rice, oats, etc. Whole grain foods are important sources of vitamins, minerals and fiber.
- **Juice 100%:** Undiluted liquid fraction of whole vegetable, fruit or fruit blends without added sweeteners.
- **Juice Drinks:** Diluted, sweetened fruit or vegetable juice, or fruit and vegetable juice blend.

Milk:

- **Fat free milk:** Pasteurized, homogenized fluid cow's milk containing less than ½% milk fat by weight.
- **Low fat milk:** Pasteurized, homogenized fluid cow's milk containing ½% or 1% milk fat by weight.
- **Reduced fat milk:** Pasteurized, homogenized fluid cow's milk containing 2% milk fat by weight (contains at least 25% less fat compared to whole milk).
- **Whole milk:** Pasteurized, homogenized fluid cow's milk containing 3.25% milk fat by weight. Nutrient density: Foods or beverages that provide substantial amounts of vitamins and minerals in relation to their calories are nutrient dense.

Policy: A course of action to guide and determine present and future decisions.

Pouring Rights: A contract with a vendor for the sale of one brand, also known as an exclusive beverage contract.

Regulation: Rules that implement laws.

Water: Carbonated and non-carbonated water, with no added sweeteners and zero calories.

APPENDIX B

SUGGESTED NUTRITION EATING GUIDELINES FOR AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SNACKS

BEST CHOICE	ACCEPTABLE CHOICE
Crackers –animal, graham, whole grain	Granola Bars, whole grain fruit bars
Bagels	Muffins, fruit or whole grain
Pretzels, soft and regular	Baked chips, rice cakes, cereal/nut mix
Nuts and seeds	Nuts with light sugar or honey coating
Trail mix	Popcorn/nut mix
Fresh fruit and vegetables, canned fruit, dried fruit	Fruit flavored snacks
Fat free popcorn	Light pop corn
Yogurt, low fat or non-fat	Yogurt, reduced fat or less
Pudding, low fat or non-fat	Pudding, reduced fat or less
Cheeses, low fat or non-fat	Cheese, reduced fat or less

BEVERAGES

BEST CHOICE	ACCEPTABLE CHOICE
Milk; any flavor, low fat or non-fat	Milk; any flavor, reduced fat or less
Juice—fruit or vegetable that is 100% juice	Juice—fruit or vegetable that is 50% juice
Water	

Single serving snacks not listed above should meet three of the following five criteria:

- 6 grams of total fat or fewer per serving (nuts, seeds and cheeses exempt)
- Sugar not the first ingredient
- 300 or fewer calories (except nuts, seed and cheese)
- 1 or more grams of fiber • at least 10% of calcium, iron, vitamin A or vitamin C

MAXIMUM PORTION SIZES

Snacks Chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit	1.25 ounces
Bakery Items Cereal bars, granola bars, muffins, bagels, other healthy bakery items	3 ounces
Frozen desserts, Ice cream	4 ounces
Yogurt	6-8 ounces
Cheese	1-1.5 ounces
Beverages Juice	4-6 ounces
Milk	8-12 ounces
Water	No limit