

# MARICOPA COUNTY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Maricopa County Regional School District Wellness Guidelines

### Introduction

The Maricopa County Regional School District (MCRSD) is committed to every student's well-being, healthy development, and positive educational outcomes. The district believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and healthy learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

### I. District Wellness Policy Goals

Pursuant to the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (“HHFKA 2010”), the following goals shall be set forth in policy:

- A. *Nutrition Guidelines*: All foods available in each school during the day will have as a primary goal the promotion of student health and the reduction of childhood obesity. All guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture, as those regulations and guidance apply to schools.
- B. *Nutrition Education*: The goal is to influence students' eating behaviors by providing nutrition education that is appropriate for students' ages; reflects students' cultures; is integrated into health education or core curricula; and provides opportunities for students to practice skills and have fun.
- C. *Nutritional Promotion Marketing and Advertising*: The District goal is to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity, and will encourage healthy nutrition messages within schools, classrooms and gymnasiums. The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs.
  - 1. Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will align with HHFKA 2010, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Smart Snacks, and District Wellness Guidelines.
  - 2. Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotion in schools.
- D. *Physical Activity*: The District goal for physical activity is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, to maintain students' physical fitness, to ensure students' regular participation in physical activity, and to teach students the short- and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthful lifestyle.
 

"*Recess*," as defined in statute A.R.S. [§15-118](#), means a period of time during the regular school day, including time during a scheduled lunch period, during which a pupil is able to engage in physical activity or social interaction with other pupils.

  - 1. The District shall provide at least two (2) recess periods during the school day for pupils in kindergarten programs and grades one (1) through five (5).

2. A school that offers a half-day kindergarten program is required to provide at least one (1) recess period during the school day for pupils in that kindergarten program.
3. The school District may count a pupil's participation in a physical education course during a school day as one (1) of that day's recess periods.
4. The District is not required to extend the school day to meet this recess requirement.
5. This recess requirement does not apply to middle schools, junior high schools, high schools, Arizona online instruction or schools in which the lowest grade of instruction offered is grade five (5).

E. *Sunscreen*: The goal is to emphasize skin health and promote the application of sunscreen products and to inform students that a student who attends school in this District may possess and use a topical sunscreen product while on school property or at a school-sponsored event without a note or prescription from a licensed health care professional.

F. *Other School-Based Activities*: The goal is to create a total school environment that is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity.

G. *Evaluation/Implementation*: The goal is to (annually) evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and report progress to the Governing Board. This will be accomplished by:

1. An annual report of the Wellness Committee's activity will be made to the Governing Board at a duly noticed public meeting; and
2. At least a tri-annual (every three years) assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of the policy.
3. *The results of each assessment will determine:*
  - a. Compliance with this Policy JL, Student Wellness;
  - b. How Policy JL compares to model policies; and
  - c. Progress made in attaining the goals of Policy JL.

*The assessment shall be made available to the public on the District's website.*

## **II. District Wellness Committee**

### ***Committee Role and Membership***

The District will convene a representative District Wellness Committee (DWC) that meets quarterly to review and update these district-level wellness guidelines.

The DWC membership will represent all school levels and include, to the extent possible: parents and caregivers, students, school staff, district staff, community partners, and the general public. The DWC will include representatives that reflect the community's diversity to the extent possible.

### ***Leadership***

The designated administrators to lead the DWS are the Assistant Superintendent and the Director of Nutrition Services.

## **III. Wellness Guideline Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement**

### ***Implementation Plan***

The Wellness Guidelines and annual progress reports concerning the implementation of the guidelines can be

found on the Maricopa County Regional School District website at: <https://www.mcrsd.org/food-services>

### ***Recordkeeping***

The District will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness guidelines on the Nutrition Services website. Documentation will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness guidelines;
- Documentation demonstrating that the guideline has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the wellness guidelines; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the district uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the DWC;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness guidelines;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on implementing the wellness guidelines has been made available to the public.

### ***Annual Notification of Guidelines***

The District will inform families and the public each year of basic information about these guidelines, including its content, any updates to the guidelines, and implementation status. The District will make this information available via the district website and/or district-wide communications. The District will summarize District and school events or activities related to wellness guideline implementation. Annually, the District will also publicize the name and contact information of the District officials leading and coordinating the committee and information on how the public can get involved with the District Wellness Committee.

### ***Triennial Progress Assessments***

At least once every three years, the District will evaluate compliance with the wellness guidelines to assess the implementation of the guidelines and include:

- the extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the District are in compliance with the guidelines;
- the extent to which the District's wellness guidelines compare to model wellness guidelines;
- a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the District's wellness guidelines.

The District will notify the community of the availability of the triennial progress report.

### ***Revisions and Updating the Guideline***

The DWC will update or modify the guidelines based on data that may be provided by the different data sources and the triennial assessments as District priorities change; community needs change; new health science information and technology; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued.

### ***Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications***

The District is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness guidelines. The District will communicate how representatives of the DWC and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness guideline through various means appropriate for MCRSD. The District will also inform parents of the improvements made to school meals, compliance with school meal standards, and availability of child nutrition programs. The District will use communicate electronically using email and the district's website and send information home to parents to ensure that all families are notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness guidelines as well as how to get involved and support the guidelines. The District will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community.

## **A. Nutrition Environment and Services**

### ***School Meals***

Maricopa County Regional School District is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams trans-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meeting the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All schools within the District participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and may operate other child nutrition programs such as the Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP), Special Milk Program (SMP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), supper programs, or others, where appropriate. The District may also operate additional nutrition-related programs and activities, including Farm to School programs, school gardens, Breakfast in the Classroom, Mobile Breakfast carts, Grab 'n' Go Breakfast or others. All schools within the District are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and healthy settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (The District offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards. For more information go to: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals>)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using marketing and merchandising techniques as referred to in the Smarter Lunchroom Movement (SLM):
- Menus will be posted on the District website or individual school websites, and will include nutrient content and ingredients.
- Menus will be created/reviewed by a Registered Dietitian or other certified nutrition professional.
- School meals are administered by a team of child nutrition professionals.
- The District child nutrition program will strive to accommodate students with special dietary needs.
- Participation in Federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.

### ***Breakfast and Lunch Environment and Schedules - Best Practices***

- Meals are served in pleasant settings
- An afternoon nutritional break may be provided to students (district will not provide nutritional items).
- A morning nutritional break may be provided to students (district will not provide nutritional items).
- Students should be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated (meets Healthy Schools Program Gold-level criteria). Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.

### ***Staff Qualifications and Professional Development***

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

## ***Water***

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and in every school campus.

The District will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes:

- Water cups/jugs will be available in the cafeteria if a drinking fountain is not present.
- All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene and health safety standards. Such sources and containers may include drinking fountains, water jugs, hydration stations, water jets and other methods for delivering drinking water.
- Students will be allowed to bring and carry water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.
- Schools are highly encouraged to work towards providing at least one filtered water station per school.

## ***Celebrations and Rewards***

The District recognizes that classroom parties and celebrations are a tradition at school. School staff and parents are encouraged to provide healthy food offerings at school parties and events to support a healthy environment throughout the district. Foods served at any celebration in the classroom must be purchased from a commercial vendor, which can include the school's food service program. No home-baked/prepared products are allowed.

1. Classroom celebrations and parties (i.e. , seasonal celebrations) - The district will provide parents and teachers a list of healthy party ideas, including non-food celebration ideas. Here are some additional resources: .
  - <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/classroom-challenges/1209-healthy-active-non-food-rewards>
  - [https://www.healthiergeneration.org/sites/default/files/documents/20190328/1c6d1ac9/13-6163\\_HealthySnackBevIdeas.pdf](https://www.healthiergeneration.org/sites/default/files/documents/20190328/1c6d1ac9/13-6163_HealthySnackBevIdeas.pdf)
  - <https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take-action/schools/wellness-topics/smart-snacks/celebrations>
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents (i.e. birthdays) - Check these resources for alternative, non-food celebration ideas.
  - <https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take-action/schools/wellness-topics/nutrition-services/non-food-rewards>
  - <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/1209>
3. Rewards and incentives - The District will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Rewards will focus on positive behavior intervention strategies. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward or withheld as punishment for any reason. Here are some additional resources:
  - <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/1209>
  - <https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take-action/schools/wellness-topics/nutrition-services/non-food-rewards>

## ***Fundraising***

On-campus fundraisers outside of school hours will be encouraged to include equal parts healthy and non-nutritious foods. The district encourages selling non-food items as part of school-sponsored fund-raising activities. No foods of minimal nutritional value (as defined by the USDA) will be sold on the school campus during the school day. These additional guidelines must be followed if food items are sold as a fundraiser during the school day (the USDA defines a school day as beginning at midnight and ending 30 minutes after the last class):

- Foods must be USDA Smart Snack Compliant
- Foods must be compliant with the district's Nutrition Initiative Standards
- Foods must not compete with student meal service

- All food items must be pre-approved for sale by the Director of Nutrition Services to assure compliance to the above

### ***Nutrition Promotion***

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages within cafeterias twice each year. The district will encourage nutrition messages within schools, classrooms and gymnasiums. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to be Smart Snack Compliant to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

The District will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- implementing at least ten or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using marketing and merchandising techniques;
- ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

### ***Nutrition Education***

The District will encourage nutrition education that will promote optimal health and that will correlate with state nutrition education standards. MCRSD provides nutrition education at all grades. MCRSD integrates nutritional education into the instructional program for all students.

### ***Farm to School Activities-Best Practices***

The District encourages Farm to School activities:

- Local and/or regional products are incorporated into the school meal program;
- Messages about agriculture and nutrition are reinforced throughout the learning environment;
- Schools are encouraged to host a school garden;
- Schools are encouraged to host field trips to local farms; and
- Schools are encouraged to utilize promotions or special events, such as tastings, that highlight the local/regional products.

### ***Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education***

To the extent possible, the District will partner with community organizations to provide Nutrition/Health Education.

### ***Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools***

The District is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. The District strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will align with USDA Smart Snacks and MCRSD Wellness Guidelines.

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes oral, written, or graphic statements made for promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors.
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards or backboards (Note: immediate replacement of these items are not required; however, districts will replace or update scoreboards or other durable equipment when existing contracts are up for renewal or to the extent that is in financially possible over time so that items are in compliance with the marketing guideline.)
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered or sold by the District.
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

As the District/School Nutrition Services Department reviews existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment and product purchasing (and replacement) decisions should reflect the applicable marketing guidelines established by the District wellness guidelines, policies and regulations of this District, and the procedure shall not apply to any matter for which the method of review is prescribed by law, or the Governing Board is without authority to act. Students may file a complaint/grievance regarding one or more of the following:

- Violation of the student's constitutional rights.
- Denial of an equal opportunity to participate in any program or activity for which the student qualifies not related to the student's individual capabilities.
- Discriminatory treatment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability.
- Harassment of the student by another person.
- Intimidation by another student.
- Bullying by another student (see link to Bully Reporting Form above)
- Concern for the student's personal safety.

If necessary, students can complete a “Student Concerns, Complaints and Grievances Form.” students shall file complaints on their own behalf. The form can be found at the district office.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;  
fax: (202) 690-7442; or  
email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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