

Policy Intent/Rationale:

The East Providence School Department promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, health, good nutrition, physical activity, and health education awareness as part of its total learning environment. In our Vision of a Graduate, "students seek to maintain physical, mental, and social emotional wellness while pursuing their goals." The district supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices and aims to encourage the same healthy environments exist in the homes of our students with support from our families. Because of the critical role health plays in academic success and attendance, the intent of the Health and Wellness Policy is to encourage wellness, proper nutrition and physical fitness for all students and staff.

Goals for Promoting Student Health and Wellness:

- The district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades Pre-K through 12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet and/or exceed USDA and **RI** state laws and regulations as well as the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, appealing foods, and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools will participate in the available Federal School Meals Programs (including School Breakfast Programs, National School Lunch Program (including after-school snacks CACFP), the district will promote (Summer Food Service Program administered by the Parks & Recreation Department).
- Schools 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.

East Providence Schools will use the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Coordinated School Health approach to comprehensive school wellness.

The Coordinated School Health model includes the following 8 areas of school health:

1. Safe EnvironmentPhysical Education
2. Health Education
3. Staff Wellness
4. Health Services
5. Mental and Social Health
6. Nutrition Services
7. Family Involvement

This policy will provide East Providence Schools with guidelines, goals and information that will help the district maintain Federal, State and District Regulations.

District Health and Wellness Sub-Committee:

RI General Law (16-21-28) requires the establishment of a district-wide, coordinated school health and wellness sub-committee chaired by a member of a full School Committee. The School Committee shall establish a Wellness Sub-Committee that will be composed of, at a minimum, a School Committee member, a School Administrator, a School Food Authority representative, a parent or guardian, a representative of the Special Education Advisory Committee, a school nurse, a student, and a member of the physical education department. The Health and Wellness Sub Committee Chairperson will be a member of the School Committee charged with the primary responsibility for coordinating committee activities related to health and wellness goals established by the committee, policy implementation and monitoring, and reporting to the East Providence School Committee. The District's Health and Wellness Committee will be responsible for establishing and measuring the implementation of the District's Health and Wellness Policy. Committee members work collaboratively to offer recommendations that are in-line with the District's educational and budgetary goals.

The District's Health and Wellness Committee's Mission serves the following purposes:

- Recommends goals for student nutrition, education, physical activity, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness;
- Develops guidance and serves as a resource to school sites for Health and Wellness Policy implementation;
- Establishes a plan for monitoring, measuring, and evaluating Health and Wellness Policy implementation;
- Reviews and evaluates the Health and Wellness Policy standards and implementation; and
- Recommends all policy related standards for final approval, and reports findings of policy implementation to the East Providence School Committee on a yearly basis and makes this information available to parents, staff, and the public through school websites, newsletters, or other means.

DISTRICT NUTRITION GUIDELINES

School Meals

RI General Law (16-21-7) At minimum, reimbursable meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs must meet USDA nutritional requirements and RI Nutrition Requirements.

- The East Providence school meals program will operate in accordance with the National School Lunch Program and National School Breakfast Program (current) standards and applicable laws of the Rhode Island Nutrition Requirements and of the current USDA regulations. All food service personnel will be provided with adequate training in food service operations through our current food service provider.
- Schools will offer varied and nutritious food choices that are consistent with the federal government's current Dietary Guidelines for Americans. In addition, the school food management company will adhere to the RI Nutrition Requirements. Food Services will host student advisory meetings with Elementary Level and Secondary Level for feedback on menu options and input on an annual basis.
- School meals will be prepared in a way that maximizes nutrient density and will include produce, whenever feasible, from participation in the Farm-to-School program and by purchasing locally grown produce.
- All a-la-carte snacks and beverages offered for sale as part of the program will comply with the RI School Health Law 16-21-7, as amended from time to time, and USDA Competitive Foods Nutrition Standards.
- Nutritionals are located on the nutrislice app where an electronic version of the breakfast & lunch menus is posted.
- Attractive and current nutrition education materials will be prominently displayed in the cafeteria areas.
- School meals will be marketed to appeal to all students to encourage them to take the entire meal.
- Students and staff will have access to free, safe, and fresh potable drinking water throughout the day.

School Food Service Provider Operations

The purpose of the National Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program, operated by the district or the contracted service provider, is to safeguard the health of our children. To achieve this purpose, the Food Service Provider must provide students with adequate and high-quality nutrition during the school day. Menus will comply with all federal, state, and local operations.

Food service providers will work collaboratively within the community to provide information, to provide locally grown foods in a cooperative effort with area farms, and to work with the Health and Wellness Committee to maintain standards and provide updates as to regulation changes.

School meals served through the National School Lunch/ Breakfast Program will:

- Be appealing and attractive to students;
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- Serve only low fat and fat free milk and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives to be defined by the USDA; and
- Ensure that served grains are whole grain.

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, Schools:

- Will operate the School Breakfast Program;
- Will notify parents/guardians and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program;
- Will utilize methods to serve breakfast that encourages participation, including but not limited to breakfast before school, grab-n-go style breakfast, etc.
- Will provide menus as well as any available nutritional information.

Free and Reduced Priced Meals

Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of students who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

East Providence Schools will ensure that all children eligible for free/reduced meals will have the opportunity to participate in the National School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

A well-designed and pleasant eating environment is important to the promotion of students' healthy eating habits. Schools need to assess traffic flows, time allotted for school meals, and cafeteria layout to ensure that students are encouraged to eat.

All schools will strive toward providing:

- Adequate space to eat in clean, pleasant surroundings;
- Adequate time to eat meals;
- Convenient access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before meals;
- Scheduled lunch periods at appropriate times;
- Potable water that will be made available to students in the cafeteria; and
- Strategies to minimize the time students spend waiting in lines in collaboration with school lunch providers.

Food Safety and Security

The food offered to students in the schools must not only be nutritious, but must also comply with state and local safety and sanitation regulations. The quality of the food is determined by both the nutrient value and by the standards by which it is prepared.

- All foods made available to students will comply with state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.
- Sharing of food by students is prohibited both in the cafeteria and at snack time in elementary schools.
- Guidelines shall be implemented by the Food Service Provider to avoid food illness in schools.
- Access to food service operations is limited to Food Service staff and personnel authorized by the Superintendent or designee.

Food Marketing in Schools

RI General Law (16-21-7) requires that elementary, middle, high school sell only competitive foods and beverages, except when items are sold by students away from the premises of school, by students one hour or more after the end of the school day, or during a school sponsored activity after the end of the school day.

- In accordance with RI General Law (16-21-7.1), school-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education, and health and wellness promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutritional standards for meals and for foods and beverages sold individually.
- School-based marketing or promoting of predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited.

A La Carte, Vending Machines Sales and School Store Beverage and Snacks

- All beverages and snacks served through the Food Service Program, including any vending machine follow [RI General Law \(16-21-7\)](#) (referenced above) and [Smart Snack Standards](#) for the sale of only healthier items before, during and one hour after the school day.
- Portion sizes will be age appropriate and specified by cafeteria guidelines by level.
- A la Carte items shall contain no more than 35% of calories from total fat and no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat, no more than 35% of calories from sugar by weight and no added trans fats. Individual portions shall contain no more than 200 calories.
- Vending machines will not be accessible to students at any elementary school.
- Elementary schools will not have stores that sell food to students.
- Vending machines in middle or high schools may only sell low-fat 1% or non-fat plain or flavored milk, water, 100% juice with no added sweeteners (12 oz. maximum serving size).

School and District Fundraising

- Food may not be sold or distributed before, during and up to one hour after school hours.
- Food sold from fundraisers must be picked up before or after school hours.
- Schools are highly encouraged to consider non-food items or activities for fundraisers. A list of healthy school fundraising ideas can be found at www.actionforhealthvkids.org.
- All foods sold before, during or one hour after school must comply with State Law as well as USDA, RINER and district nutritional standards.
- Any food sold for profit outside the regulatory time periods must comply with [USDA Smart Snacks in School](#) and [RI state law for the sale of Healthier Snacks and Beverages and district nutritional standards](#).
- Any school that wishes to sell food for profit outside the regulatory time periods may purchase their items through the school Food Services Provider. The provider will provide a price list for any item on the approved lists. The organization or individual may purchase their own items if they meet the standards.
- Culinary Programs at the EP Career and Technical Education Center or any Life Skills programs are exempt from these criteria after school hours due to the curricular nature of their food sales.

Teacher to Students Acknowledgements and Incentives

It is the intent of the school department that acknowledgements and incentives do not undermine efforts put forth in this policy. Therefore, the use of food as a reward, acknowledgement, or incentive in the classroom or in the school environment is highly discouraged.

Note: *The Superintendent or designee has the authority to override the wellness policy for the purpose of Teacher-to-Student Acknowledgments and Incentives at his/her discretion.*

After School Program Snacks

After school program snacks provided by the teachers and/or afterschool personnel must adhere to the Healthier Snacks and Beverage requirements as outlined in [RI School Health Law 16-21-7](#) (as amended from time to time). Healthier Beverages are defined as water, including carbonated water, flavored or sweetened with 100% fruit juice and containing no added sweetener, low fat 1 % or non- fat plain or flavored milk. Healthier snacks include individually sold portions of cheese packaged for individual sale, fruit, vegetables, low fat yogurt, fortified grain, or grain products. For a complete list, visit [Rhode Island Nutrition Guidelines for School Vending and A La Carte Foods](#).

Celebrations and Events

The East Providence School Department recognizes that birthdays and celebrated holidays are special days for our students. Foods, such as cookies, cupcakes and other sweets are not allowed to be brought into school during school hours by students and families. Additionally, a number of students throughout our district have health concerns related to food, including allergies, diabetes, and other diseases causing this to become a safety issue as well. See Food allergy policy regarding students with life-threatening food allergies. Therefore, in-school celebrations/events will not include food. While celebrations are not prohibited, events should be planned to discourage the consumption of unhealthy food items.

Note: *The Superintendent or designee has the authority to override the Health and Wellness Policy for the purpose of Celebrations/Events at their discretion.*

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to support a healthy school environment by providing their children with a variety of nutritious foods and meals when they are brought in from home and to provide for and encourage their children to start their days with breakfast.

Nutrition education may be provided to parents through the school and district website, in school newsletter and/or through presentations/workshops that focus on nutrition and healthy lifestyles and through any other appropriate means available to reach parents.

The district/school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.

The district/school will:

- Inform parents and community groups of this Health and Wellness Policy;
- Post lunch menus on school website and in school newsletters; and
- Support approved community organizations in providing information to students about opportunities for physical activities outside of the school day and other wellness related information.

HEALTH EDUCATION

The East Providence School Department aims to teach, encourage and support healthy eating. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but is also incorporated into regular classroom instruction and cafeteria when appropriate and feasible;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat *free* dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure; and
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing.

Nutrition education is necessary for students to understand what constitutes healthy eating to adopt lifelong healthy eating behaviors. To be effective, nutrition education for children should be appropriate for the students' ages, reflect their cultures, and provide opportunities for them to practice nutrition skills and have fun.

Student Physical Education

Physical education is required for all students in grades 1-12 according to [RI General Law \(16-22-4\)](#) and Section 3.5 of the Rules and Regulations for School Health Programs. Students should receive an average of 100 minutes per week of health/physical education taught by a certified Physical Education teacher who is given professional development opportunities yearly for physical education. The physical education program shall be provided safe and adequate space and equipment that conforms to all safety standards. Recess, free play and after school activities are not counted as physical education.

The East Providence School District shall provide a Physical Education program aligned with the Rhode Island Physical Education Framework to all students K-12. This Framework provides students with the knowledge and skills to lead a physically active lifestyle.

Student Physical Activity

The East Providence School Department supports opportunities for students to be physically active before, during and after the school day.

[The National Association of Sport and Physical Education \(NASPE\)](#) recommends that school leaders of physical activity and physical education shall guide students through a process that will enable them to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness. When available, students and staff are encouraged to use the high school's fitness centers during non-school hours.

The Wellness Committee recommends use of the Current [Guidelines from National Association for Sports and Physical Education \(NASPE\) for physical activity which recommends*](#).

- Children should accumulate at least **60** minutes, and up to several hours, of age-appropriate physical activity on all, or most days of the week;
- Children should participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day; and
- Children should participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical activities designed to achieve optimal health, wellness, and fitness and performance benefits.

Recess

In accordance with RI Recess LAW RI Gen Law 16-22-4.2, all elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors (weather permitting) during which schools should encourage moderate physical activity if there is appropriate space and equipment.

- Schools should discourage extended periods (i.e., 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, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active. The district will provide instruction to staff members on how to model these breaks.
- To the extent possible, teachers and other school and community personnel should refrain from withholding opportunities for physical activities (i.e., recess, physical education) as punishment.

STAFF WELLNESS

The District recognizes the importance of staff wellness and the positive effect of role modeling by staff and employees. The District encourages all staff to access local and district wellness/nutrition programs and appropriate physical activities to achieve the following benefits:

- Improved staff health and wellness
- Improved staff morale
- A committed staff to promote the health of students

Staff members are encouraged to create a login using the link below on the Health Matters Portal to see all health and wellness programs offered through the Rhode Island Interlocal Risk Management Trust.

<https://ritrust.medkeeper.com/accounts/v8/ritrust/login>

Staff members can refer to the Employee Assistance Program offered through the district by AllOne Health for other wellness needs.

<https://allonehealthheap.com>

Implementation, Measurement and Evaluation

This policy and any proposed updates will be posted and accessible on the school district website. To ensure compliance with this policy by members of the Health and Wellness Committee and the Superintendent, updated information will be provided to each principal building wellness representative so that they may distribute necessary information to staff, parents/guardians and students. An assessment of the district to determine policy compliance will be done every two years. This review will be done via survey at the school level with surveying of parents, staff, students, and food service providers. Review and reporting of the survey results will be submitted by the Health and Wellness Committee to the School Committee. The district will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

References

[RI Gen Law 16-21-7](#)

[RI Gen Law 16-21-7.1](#)

[RI Gen Law 16-21-29](#)

[RI General Law 16-21.28](#)

[Federal Government Dietary Guidelines for Americans Healthy Humer-Free Act of 2010 \(Public Law 111-296\) Section204](#)

[National School Breakfast Program](#)

[National School Lunch Program](#)

[USDA Smart Snacks in School](#)

[RI state law for the sale of Healthier Snacks and Beverages and district nutritional standards](#)

[Rhode Island Nutrition Guidelines for School Vending and A La Carte Foods.](#)

[RI General Law 16-22-4](#)

[RI General Law 16-22-4.2](#)

<https://www.pgpedia.com/n/national-association-sport-and-physical-education>

<https://www.shapeamerica.org/MemberPortal/standards/pe/default.aspx>

<https://ritrust.medkeeper.com/accounts/v8/ritrust/login>

<https://allonehealthheap.com>

East Providence School Committee

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