

2.1 FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

ADMINISTRATOR



Creating Healthy Schools

Implementation for success

To increase parental engagement, the district/schools will use the following actions:

- Invite parents to participate in orientation prior to the beginning of the school year, where they will be informed of the school wellness policy guidelines.
- Collaborate with local business to provide healthy food options at school sporting events, birthdays, and classroom celebrations. (Example: Partnering with local grocery stores to provide healthy sport packs).
- Provide parents with age-appropriate educational materials regarding how to create a home environment that supports physical activity, nutrition, and healthy behaviors. This can be shared through a variety of communication tools, including handouts, school website, district/school newsletters, and presentations that focus on nutrition and healthy lifestyles or any other effective way to reach parents.
- Provide parents with a clear understanding of what their children will learn (know and be able to demonstrate) at each grade level.
- Engage parents and staff to be equal and active partners, in the best interest of students, within a culture of mutual respect and support.
- Provide parent involvement strategies that are coordinated and aligned across grade levels, buildings and various programs.
- Ask for parent input prior to developing nutrition and physical activity programs and materials that will increase family member involvement in programs.

Model Policy:

Our school believes that parental and family involvement is a vital part of our educational program. A healthy mind houses a healthy body, and school wellness policies have the potential to have a strong impact on student health and academic performance. Given the significant impact on the development of students' health behaviors, staff shall work with parents to promote a school environment supportive of healthy behaviors.

Parents will be:

- Invited to join their School Wellness Advisory Committee.
- Notified of School Wellness Advisory Committee and PTO/PTA meetings.
- Informed annually regarding school wellness policies.
- Invited to review, implement, and enforce school wellness policies.

Evaluation:

The district wellness council and school administrators are jointly accountable for implementing, enforcing, and evaluating this policy. Each school will report annually to the district wellness council on the progress of policy implementation and will include recommendations where further district support may be beneficial. The district wellness council may also request select schools conduct student, family, and/or staff surveys as part of their evaluation process. At the end of each school year, the district wellness council leader will submit an annual report to the superintendent/board of education on the implementation and evaluation of this policy. This report shall be posted on the Internet for easy public access.

- The board, with the involvement of parents, will conduct an annual evaluation of the content and the effectiveness of the parent involvement policy. Evaluation findings will be used to design strategies for more effective parent involvement.
- The superintendent is responsible for notifying parents of this policy annually or within a reasonable time after it has been amended during the school year.
- Membership and parental attendance to School Wellness Committee and/or PTO/PTA meetings will be evaluated and compared annually.
- Staff overseeing school wellness policy work will assess adequacy of parental handouts for cultural competency, grade level, and clarity of message.

Implementation (cont.)

- Provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day. Support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. The school may offer opportunities for physical activity that involve the whole family, e.g., family sports night, dances, games that involve physical activity or walk-a-thons. Sharing information about physical activity and physical education will be achieved through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.
- Present information to parents regarding their School's Wellness Policies and their role in helping to implement.
- Compile a School Wellness PowerPoint for use with parent groups or incorporated as part of your resources available for parents.
- Include a school wellness orientation section in your parent/family handbook that provides an overview of school wellness policies or practices.

Rationale:

Parents have the potential to play a critical role in the quality of and extent to which Local School Wellness Policies (LSWP) are implemented. The importance of engaging parents in school activities was recognized in law as early as 1994 through the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) and in 2004, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. Increasingly, parent involvement/engagement in schools is shifting from that of the traditional role of volunteer, fundraiser and/or participant in parent groups to a more active role of advocate for the improvement in quality of education and school environments. Local findings indicate that parents are more likely to support policies when they are invited to be partners in the implementation process. Therefore, school personnel have stated that they want easy ways to consistently communicate policies and their purpose with parents. Parent involvement in LSWP implementation provides an important opportunity for parents to promote both the academic achievement and health and wellness of their own children and all those children attending the school.



Two other versions of this policy item are available for both staff and family to assist with implementation and communication.

Resources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention handout on parental engagement strategies can be found here: http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parent_engagement_strategies.pdf
Also: https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/pdf/parentengagement_administrators.pdf
- Local School Wellness Policies Resources for implementation strategies can be found here: <http://schoolnutrition.org/Resources/Administration/>
- National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity Wellness Policies resources can be found here: www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org
- National School Boards Association: Sample Family Engagement Policies: <http://www.nsba.org/resource-library/board-leadership?page=1>
<https://www.nsba.org/services/school-board-leadership-services/food-allergieschool-health>