WELLNESS POLICY FOR AUBURN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WELLNESS GUIDELINES IN SUPPORT OF FEDERAL

LAW PL 108.265 SECTION 204

MISSION:

TO ADVANCE GOOD NUTRITION AND HEALTHY ACTIVITY

FOR ALL CHILDREN

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in the United States 25% of children and teens are overweight and obese while, 64% of adults are considered overweight and obese. These Americans are at increased risk of developing diabetes, cardiovascular disease and hypertension (high blood pressure). Diet and activity-level related diseases place a huge burden on our healthcare system. But perhaps more poignant, these diseases negatively impact individual and family well-being. The January 2004 issue of the American School Board Journal stated that the medical community is calling childhood obesity the nation's "largest emerging issue" and a "national epidemic" that demands urgent attention. Healthy diet and daily exercise habits that are begun at an early age and continued throughout life optimize health and well-being. With this information in the forefront, the Auburn Public School System pledges to educate our children in wellness.

Our Mission:

The Auburn Public School System is committed to providing a healthful school environment where students have access to high-quality foods and nutrition and physical activity education that promote lifelong wellness practices.

Our Goal:

Our goal is to increase the school community's awareness of the importance of healthy food choices and participation in daily physical activity, enabling students to make informed decisions with regard to their health and well-being.

The Auburn Public School System, in accordance with the above statute, has established a district-wide wellness team to create, implement and promote a wellness policy through school and community involvement.

Objectives:

The district-wide Wellness Team will develop guidance to expand this policy and periodically monitor its progress, making revisions as necessary during its semi-annual meetings.

- The Child Nutrition Program complies with federal, state and local requirements and is accessible to all children. This program will be monitored by the Food Services Department of the Auburn Public Schools.

- A public awareness campaign that highlights research demonstrating the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and capacity of students to develop and learn will be implemented.

- Sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education is provided and promoted. The entire school, including the classroom, will provide a healthy environment to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and well-being.

- Patterns of meaningful physical activity connect to students' lives outside of physical education in school. A quality physical education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity at school, at home, and in the community. This activity will be in accordance with the Massachusetts Health Curriculum Framework and the National Standards for Physical Education (INASPE).

- All school-based activities are consistent with the Auburn Public School System's wellness policy goals.

- All foods and beverages made available on school grounds (including vending, concessions, al la carte, student stores, parties, and fundraising) during the school day are consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Emphasis will be placed on high-quality, nutrient dense foods. In addition, all foods made available on school grounds adhere to food safety and security guidelines.

- The schools provide a safe and comfortable environment in which there is ample time to consume and enjoy meals.

- Food and/or physical activity are not used as a reward or as a punishment.

Education Guidelines: The primary goal of nutrition education is to positively influence eating behaviors. The American Dietetic Association, in 1996,defined nutrition education as any set of learning experiences designed to facilitate the adoption of healthy eating and other nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well being. Nutrition education activities should stress the appealing aspects of healthy eating. Positive messages motivate students to make a change in their eating habits. Nutrition education is integrated into the curriculum throughout the Auburn School System to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to support a lifetime of healthy eating.

Nutrition Education Standards

Integration Into Curriculum – Nutrition education will be delivered as part of a comprehensive school health education curriculum. Nutrition topics will be integrated into other subject areas such as Math, Science, English Language Arts, Fine Arts and Social Studies. Emphasis should be placed on long term benefits from optimal nutrition and the consequences both of long and short-term non-compliance. Healthy weight, fitness, and the prevention of chronic diseases should be the message that students receive from the integrated curriculum studies.

- **Professional Development –** Professional development opportunities focusing on nutrition education will be made available for staff. Preparation and professional development activities will provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with skill practice in program-specific activities and instructional techniques to promote healthy eating habits. Staff should be made aware of the growing trend of childhood obesity and the key role they can play in forming attitudes that change the tide of this epidemic.

- **Collaboration with the School Nutrition Program-** The Food Service Director and Cafeteria Staff will encourage activities and programs in each school to promote healthy eating habits. They will enlist the help of staff and parents in an effort to approach nutrition education on many fronts and to reinforce these messages in many areas of the educational setting.

- **Community Involvement –** Nutrition education will involve sharing information with the community and encouraging activities that develop consistent messages both at home and in school. The overall health of the community begins with its youngest members and their attitudes are formed from many influence areas. Media messages are everywhere in our world. It is to the greater benefit of the community that we make sure the messages that students hear on a consistent basis promote a healthful way of life beginning with nutritionally sound eating practices and maintaining a physically active lifestyle.

Physical Activity Guideline: The Auburn Public School System will provide its students the opportunity to participate in activities that will promote physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle.

Physical Activity Standard

- The Auburn Public Schools will provide a physical and a social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activities that will sustain life long physical activities. They will communicate the schools' physical activities program to parents and the community.

- The school system will encourage staff to include physical activities throughout the day such as stretching and simple classroom exercises. Recess will be offered when weather permits and children will not be kept out of activities for discipline or to make up work.

- In order to increase and promote physical activities for staff, students and families, positive life choices will be encouraged such as walking rather than riding. If positive health initiatives are promoted within the school setting, they are likely to remain as motivators throughout life.

- The Auburn Public Schools will offer health classes within the physical education structure that will reinforce a healthy lifestyle and educate students about the importance of physical fitness.

- In addition to the physical education program, the school environment offers areas to further engage students in activities that promote health. Some of the ideas that will be promoted at the school level will be walking clubs during and after school hours, intramural sports and activities to involve the community and parents in the overall pursuit of a healthier, happier student.

Other School Based Activities Guidelines: All community and before and after school

programs must comply with the Auburn Public Schools Wellness Policy.

Other School Based Activities Standards

- Food or snacks provided by food services will be in compliance with the Dietary Guidelines for American
- All members of the school community will be encouraged to supply either healthy food items or non-food alternatives for parties and/or incentives
- Community members using school facilities will acknowledge and promote the Wellness Policy as mandated by the Auburn Public Schools and Federal Public Law (PL 108.265 Section 204)

Nutrition Guidelines For All Foods On Auburn School Campuses: The Wellness Policy endorses the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and will be the goal for healthy eating within our school system. It will be modified, as needed, based on future pending state legislation and local review.

Nutrition Standards

- The quality of the school nutrition environment depends on the quality of all foods and beverages sold or served at school. Foods that provide little nutrition compete with healthy school meals and send mixed messages to students. All food and beverage sales on all school campuses must comply with current Dietary Guidelines for Americans. School meals follow the USDA regulation and use the new menu system of nutrient analysis. Those guidelines reinforce the consumption of lower fats, more whole grains, and limit refined sugar and white flour.

- Schools are encouraged to have 25-30 minutes for lunch. This would give students at least 20 minutes from the time they are seated. Good nutrition goes hand-in-hand with improved behavior and learning.

- Elementary schools will consider having recess before lunch. This would allow children to have a nutritious lunch in a relaxed environment.

- In all schools in the Auburn Public School District, eliminate the sales of all carbonated beverages and make an effort to replace current food choices with healthier options in all vending machines, school stores, before and after school

programs and activities. We suggest choices according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

- School staff will not use food as a reward or punishment for students.

- Organizations are encouraged to sell non-food items for fundraisers. There are a variety of options available in print and on the web.

- All food and beverages sold outside the school meal program should contain nutrition information.

- Foods and beverages brought to classrooms for celebrations should include a variety of healthy choices and limit the number of baked goods per event. Reference the Dietary Guidelines for Americans for choice options.

- School meals should be a healthy, happy experience. There are a wide variety of choices daily. Only food purchased from the school cafeteria or bag lunch brought from home is permitted in the school cafeteria.