

Wellness Policy

Mission Statement

Pepin Academies, Inc. (hereto referred to as Pepin) is committed to the optimal development of every student. Pepin believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social success, we need to create positive, safe and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

This policy outlines Pepin's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in Pepin have access to healthy foods throughout the school day – both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus– in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school;
- Pepin engages in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- Pepin staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;

Nutrition Education Goals

School Meals

Pepin is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty 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 Pepin schools participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP). All campuses 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 pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (Pepin offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using Smarter Lunchroom techniques:
 - Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans).

- Sliced or cut fruit is available daily.
- Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.
- All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal.
- White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers.
- Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
- Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options.

A la carte

- Food providers will be sensitive to the school environment.
- Pepin determines competitive food selections.
- Nutrition information for products offered is readily available near the point of purchase.
- All items made available meet and/or exceed NSLP Healthy Snack Guidelines.

Vending machines

- All items in the vending/snack machines available to students meet the Healthy Snack guidelines.

Fund raisers

- Food and beverages sold at fundraisers during school include healthy choices and provide age appropriate selections for all school levels.

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 throughout every school campus. Pepin will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

- 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 (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

Physical Education Goals

Children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Schools will ensure that varied physical activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education. All campuses will be encouraged to participate in *Let's Move!* Active Schools (www.letsmoveschools.org) in order to successfully address all physical areas.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason [*This does not include participation on sports teams that have specific academic requirements*].

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes.

All elementary students in each grade will receive physical education for at least 60-89 minutes per week throughout the school year. All secondary students (middle and high school) are required to take the equivalent of one academic year of physical education. Accommodations will be made for students with disabilities and other limitations.

Health Education

Health education will be required in grades 3-5 and middle and high school students are required to take and pass at least one health education course. Pepin will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on physical activity:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
- Differences between physical activity, exercise and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during physical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity
- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity.

Recess (Elementary)

All elementary schools will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all days during the school year (*This policy may be waived on early dismissal or late arrival days*). If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event that the school or district must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Other School Related Activities

Pepin integrates wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. Pepin will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

Campuses are encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy guidelines. School-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

Health Fair

Each campus hosts a Health Fair for students in the spring. The event includes guest speakers that discuss and promote healthy eating and stress the importance of active lifestyles. Students rotate to various “booths” around campus that incorporate physical activity such as yoga, relay races, water balloon toss, etc.

Blues & BBQ

This is a fun family event for all of our schools held in late April each year. Some of the special features include: Student Performances, Carnival Games, Inflatable obstacle course, Relays, a Water Zone, and More.

Wellness Policy Compliance

The Wellness Policy compliance will be overseen by the school's Executive Director/Principal. Parents, Students, the School Nurse, Physical Ed teacher(s), Directors and Staff will be able to participate in the update and/or changes to the Wellness Policy.