

**Pascagoula-Gautier School District**

**Child Nutrition Department**

**District Wellness Policy**

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**Pascagoula-Gautier School District**  
**Child Nutrition Department**  
**District Wellness Policy**

**Rationale**

The link between nutrition, physical activity, and learning is well documented. Healthy eating and activity patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating and physical activity are also linked to reduced risk for many chronic diseases like obesity, Type 2 Diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Schools have a responsibility to help students learn, establish, and maintain lifelong, healthy eating and activity patterns. Well-planned and effectively implemented school nutrition and fitness programs have been shown to enhance students' overall health, as well as their behavior and academic achievement in school. Staff wellness and family education is also an integral part of a healthy school environment, since families and school staff can be daily role models for healthy behaviors. A coordinated approach to school health improves kids' health and their capacity to learn through the support of families, schools, and communities working together. At its very core, a coordinated approach to school health is about keeping students healthy over time, reinforcing positive healthy behaviors throughout the school day, and making it clear that *good health and learning go hand in hand*.

**Mission**

*Our mission is to address the issues of student obesity and physical fitness by promoting healthier food and beverage options, increasing opportunities for physical education, encouraging nutritional education, and promoting coordinated school health.*

**Goal**

*All students in the Pascagoula-Gautier School District shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices and enjoyable physical activity choices for a lifetime. All staff members in the Pascagoula-Gautier School District shall possess the knowledge and skills to model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.*

*To meet these goals, the Pascagoula-Gautier School District adopts this school wellness policy with the following commitments to nutrition, physical activity, comprehensive health education, marketing a healthy school environment, and implementation. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.*

## **Commitment to Nutrition**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

### **School Foodservice Program**

- Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Healthier U.S. School Challenge and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Offer school breakfast and snack programs (where approved and applicable) with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Encourage school staff and families to participate in school meal programs. School staff is asked to not bring foods of minimal nutritional value in the cafeteria during meal periods. These foods include, but are not inclusive of, carbonated beverages, fast food, and frozen desserts that contain less than 100% fruit juice.
- Operate all Child Nutrition Programs with school foodservice staff who are properly qualified and trained according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EE-2E)
- Encourage students to make food choices based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, by emphasizing menu options that feature baked (rather than fried) foods, whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and low-fat or fat-free dairy products. All food items should be baked and fryers should be removed or not used at each school. Replace deep fat fryers in schools with combination oven steamers. We will only offer foods that are labeled “0” grams Trans-fat.
- Provide nutrition information for parents, including nutrition analysis of school meals and resources to help parents to improve food that they serve at home.
- Establish a cafeteria environment conducive to a positive dining experience, with socializing among students and between students and adults; with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct and voice level; and with adults who model healthy habits by eating with the students.
- All schools shall schedule a minimum of 24 minutes for lunchtime to ensure an adequate eating time for school lunch. The factors influencing the school lunch period are wait time, consumption time, standard deviation/variability, and social time.
- School breakfast is not factored into the regular school day, schools should take into consideration the recommended time of 10 minutes for a child to eat school breakfast after they have received the meal.
- Make school meals accessible to all students with a variety of delivery strategies, such as breakfast in the classroom, grab-and-go breakfast and/or lunches, or alternate eating sites.
- Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EEH) and Local Board Approved Competitive Food Sales Policy (Code EECA). Extra food sale items shall be limited to two (2) per student. This will exclude extra beverage purchases of milk, 100% juice, water, fruits and vegetables. Any extra sale items sold from the school meal shall not exceed the menu portion serving size. A double serving of a food

- item counts as one (1) meal component and one (1) extra food sale item.
- Eliminate use of foods as rewards for student accomplishment and the withholding of food as punishment (e.g., restricting a child’s selection of flavored milk or ice cream at mealtime due to behavior problems).
- Offer nutritious and appealing options (such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat and fat-free milk, low-fat yogurt, reduced-fat cheese, 100% juice, and water) whenever foods/beverages are sold or otherwise offered at after-hour school events such as:
  - The concessions stands
  - Parties
  - Celebrations
  - Social events
  - other school functions
- Requirements of Competitive Foods Sold on Campus during School Hours:
  - No food is to be sold on campus for one hour before breakfast or one hour before lunch and until the end of either serving period. Any food may be sold after breakfast, until one hour before lunch, and any time after the end of the last lunch period.
  - Any food sold on campus during school hours should be in compliance with federal and state guidelines, including “Smart Snacks” nutritional standards (see Table 1). They must also meet the Healthier US School Challenge criteria. The objective is to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.

**Table 1. Smart Snacks in School Requirements**

<i>Nutrient</i>	<i>Requirement</i>
Calories	≤ 200 calories per serving
Total Fat	≤ 35% per serving (excludes nuts, seeds, & reduced fat cheese)
-Saturated Fat	≤ 10% per serving (excludes reduced fat cheese)
-Trans Fat	≤ 0.5 grams/serving
Sugar	≤ 35% sugar by weight (excludes fruits, vegetables and milk)
Sodium	<u>Snack</u> : ≤ 230 mg/serving <u>Entrée</u> : ≤ 480 mg/serving

- Require all foods and beverages (including school vending and school stores) sold or otherwise made available to students on any school campus during school hours provide the optimal nutrition that students need for growth, development, and academic achievement and support the development of healthful eating behaviors in students.
- Require all school-based organizations to use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthful foods for fundraising programs.
  - The sale of candy as a fundraiser is prohibited during school hours.

## **Commitment to Food Safe Schools**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- Ensure the food service permit is current for the Food Service school site. Implement a food safety program based on HACCP principles for all school meals, as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs and ensure that the food service permit is current for the school site.
- Develop a food safety education plan for all staff and students, consistent with Fight Bac® and other national standards for safe food handling at home and in school.
- Document that all staff has viewed the video developed by the Office of Healthy Schools to support food safety on the school campus prior the start of a new school year and/or with onboarding procedure. Proof of compliance will be maintained by. For compliance with the Nutrition Standards, all staff must complete and sign pre- and post-test developed by the Office of Healthy Schools.
- All school personnel (school board members, administrators, teachers, school nurses, instructional and health services paraprofessionals, foodservice staff, custodians and facilities managers, and administrative support staff) will receive copies of the Pascagoula-Gautier School District Wellness Policy to include food safety policies and procedures and relevant professional development.
- Adequate access to handwashing facilities and supplies will be available whenever and wherever students, staff, and families prepare, handle, or consume food.
- The food safety assurance plan must address strategies that minimize risks for students and staff who have food allergies and intolerances.

## **Commitment to Physical Activity**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- Provide daily physical education for all students (In accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference Mississippi Public Schools Accountability).
- Provide ½ Carnegie unit of physical education for graduation (In accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards Standard 20).
- Require physical education be offered on an elective basis in grades 9-12 (In accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards Standard 32).
- Require daily physical education for 30 minutes be a part of the basic curriculum in any configuration of grades K-8 (In accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards Standard 33).
- Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities, which are student-centered and taught in a positive environment.
- Implement the Mississippi Physical Education Framework within
- Require the scheduling of recess or physical education before lunch times when

possible in order to increase food consumed, decrease plate waste, and improve cafeteria behavior.

- Require Elementary and Middle School teachers to incorporate at least one 5- to 10-minute physical activity sessions in classrooms to teach subject areas and to make transitions between different lessons daily (e.g., Take Ten!, Mind and Body, etc.).
- Implement 150 minutes per week of instruction in grades K-8 through a combination of physical education, physical activity, and activity based instruction
- After school athletics, performing band, and performing choir is not counted as physical education credits.
- Require Elementary and Middle students to participate in a yearly fitness test for students (e.g., Fitness Gram, etc.). This assessment must be conducted in grade 5 and the grade in which the student will earn the ½ Carnegie unit requirements for graduation. The results should be placed in student’s cumulative folders.
- Require the establishment of a heart wellness program within the physical education classes in middle and high schools.
- Physical Education classes will be taught using a Health-Related Fitness Approach (e.g. Physical Best) while keeping within the Mississippi Physical Education Framework.
- Establishment of physical activity opportunities (like walking clubs or fitness challenges) for staff and/or parents within the next school year.
- Require staff-monitored recreational activities that promote moderate physical activity during all outdoor and indoor recess times.
- Require active transportation to/from schools by assessing the safest routes for students to walk or bike to school, and by installing bike racks at school buildings.
- Collaborate with local recreational departments and youth fitness programs to promote participation in lifelong physical activities.
- The use of denying of physical education will not a form of punishment for students. Activities will be used as a reward for good behavior instead. The approval of the building principal is needed for teachers to pull students from physical education class.

School Wide Health Fitness Activities may include:

- Heart Healthy Class Holiday Parties
- School Wide Exercise Afternoons
- Game Day Afternoons
- Heart Healthy Guest Speakers
- Jump Rope for Heart
- American Heart Association Heart Walk
- Hoops for Heart

## **Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- Provide ½ Carnegie unit of comprehensive health education for graduation (Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20).
- Require comprehensive health education be a part of the basic curriculum in any configuration of grades K-8 (In accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards Standard 33).
- Implement the Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework for grades 9-12 (2004 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard (20)
- Offer 45 minutes of comprehensive health education instruction per week in grades K-8 (Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework)
- Implement the nutrition strand of Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework.
- Emphasize the disease and prevention strand in the Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework.
- Create curriculum to discuss the dangers of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drug use as prevention and cessation.
- Participate in USDA nutrition programs such as *Team Nutrition Schools* and the *Healthier US School Challenge*.
- Conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents, and the community. Since family education is the key to building a healthy future for all Mississippians, it is important that families embrace nutrition and wellness. The Pascagoula School District will provide resources, facilities, and structure to promote family nutrition education through our Parent Center.

## **Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- Provide ½ Carnegie unit of health education for graduation (2012 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20).
- Instruction must be based on the Mississippi Contemporary Health for grades 9-12 (2012 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20).
- Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007, which requires 45 minutes per week of health education instruction as defined by the State Board of Education for grades K through 8.
- Instruction must be based on the Mississippi Contemporary Health for grades K-8.
- Implement the requirements of MS Code 37-13-171, which requires the development of a sex related education policy and instruction on medically accurate or evidenced based abstinence-only or abstinence-plus curricula.



## Commitment to a Healthy School Environment

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- Confirm that there are no pad locks or chains on exit doors; exits should never be obstructed (in accordance with Mississippi State Fire Code). Ensure that all exit signs are illuminated and clearly visible.
- Require all chemicals are stored properly (in accordance with the Material Safety Data Sheet).
- Refer to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook for Public Playground Safety for federal guidelines for playground safety.
- Confirm that fire extinguishers are inspected each year and properly tagged.
- Complete yearly maintenance of the heating and cooling system in your school; check coils, filters, belts, etc. in order to maintain safe operation and healthy air quality.
- Conduct at least one emergency evacuation drill per month.
- Every school will have an anti-bullying policy that outlines procedures for dealing with bullying situations in the school.
- Confirm that two means of egress are available in each classroom in case of an emergency; if there is only one door, designate a window (properly sized) as a means of egress. Documentation of exits are to be posted in the room.
- Never use extension cords as a permanent source of electricity anywhere on a school campus.
- Comply with the applicable rules and regulations of the State Board of Education in the operation of its transportation program (in accordance with the MS Code 37-41-53; State Board of Education Policies 7903, 7904, and 7909; and Accreditation Standard #35).
  - Inspect all buses on a quarterly basis and ensure that they are well maintained and clean.
  - Require that all bus drivers have a valid bus driver certificate and a commercial driver's license and operates the bus according to all specified safety procedures. Maintain a record of yearly motor vehicle reports on each bus driver and evidence that each driver has received two hours of in-service training per semester. (SB Policy 7903)
  - Ensure arrival of all buses at their designated school sites prior to the start of the instructional day.
  - Conduct bus evacuation drills at least two times each year. (SB Policy 7904)
- Provide facilities that meet the criteria of: (MS Code 37-7-301 (c) (d) (j); 37-11-5, 49 and 45-11-101; and Accreditation Standard #36).
  - Provide facilities that are clean.
  - Provide facilities that are safe.
  - Provide proper signage that explains tobacco, weapons, and drugs are prohibited on the school campus and at school functions.
  - Provide operational facilities that are equipped and functional to meet the instructional needs of students and staff (in accordance with the Mississippi School Design Guidelines.
  - Provide air conditioning in all classrooms, Code §37-17-6(2) (2000).

- Safe and Healthy Schools of Mississippi:
  - <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/ohs/home>

### **Commitment to Quality Health Services**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- Confirm all school nurses are working under the guidelines of the 2013 *Mississippi School Nurse Procedures and Standards of Care*.
- Provide for teachers and staff training regarding signs and symptoms of asthma. (SB 2393)
- Action plans will be in place for children with chronic illnesses such as:
  - Asthma
  - Analylaxis
  - Allergies

### **Commitment to Providing Counseling, Psychological and Social Services**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- Adhere to the details outlined by the Mississippi Department of Education
  - <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OHS/CPSS>

### **Commitment to Family and Community Involvement**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- Outreach parents/caregivers, families, and community members to participate in school health planning by serving on the local School Health Council.
  - Create strategic planning teams
- Families will be informed and invited to participate in school sponsored activities
- Families will receive information about health promotion efforts
  - Utilize electronic and non-electronic means to reach families in a timely manner

### **Commitment to Marketing a Healthy School Environment**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- Provide positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting. All school personnel will help reinforce these positive messages by following the district Wellness Policy.
- Involve students in planning for a healthy school environment by working with the student councils. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys, and attention will be given to their comments.
- Promote healthful eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at school events (e.g., school registration, parent-teacher conferences, PTA meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).
- Eliminate advertising and other materials on the school campus that promote foods of minimal nutrition value. Vending machines should promote their water or juice product on the outside of the vending machine.

- Work with local media, like newspaper, TV and radio, to inform the community about the health problems facing Mississippi children, as well as the need for and benefits of healthy school environments.

### **Commitment to Implementation**

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District will:

- With board approval, implement this policy at all school sites within the Pascagoula School District.
- Designate the *CN* at the district level and the principal at the site level to insure the school wellness policy is implemented as written
- Establish and support the establishment and efforts of a School Health Council (SHC) and school wellness policy in all elementary schools. The duties of the SHC are to address all aspects of a coordinated school health program in compliance with Section 204 of Public Law 108-265 and to market a healthy school environment.
- Conduct a review of the progress toward school wellness policy goals each year to identify areas for improvement.
- Require building principals to submit revision recommendations to the wellness policy if necessary.
- Documentation of individuals severing on the wellness committee each school year
- Record action planning tools being utilized by each school to be given to the district at the end of the school year
- Assess progress every three years

**District Wellness Policy Adopted 2006**

**District Wellness Policy Revised 2008**

**District Wellness Policy Revised 2012**

**District Wellness Policy Revised 2014**

**District Wellness Policy Revised 2015**

**District Wellness Policy Revised 2018**

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