



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS WELLNESS POLICY

**Established By Board Action May 10, 2006
Revised by Board Action October 17, 2007**

Preamble

The Miami-Dade County Public School District (M-DCPS) is committed to providing a healthy environment for students and adults within the school environment, recognizing that people must be physically healthy in order to achieve academic success.

M-DCPS also recognizes that there is a link between academic performance and the food served in schools, health literacy and nutrition education, physical education and physical activity, and environmental awareness.

The District will focus on achieving four goals:

- Nutrition – all students will have access to and take advantage of high-nutrient food options
- Physical Activity – all students will engage in the daily recommended levels of physical activity
- Health Literacy – all students will be educated on how to make ‘health-enhancing’ choices
- School-based Healthcare – all students will have access to physical and mental healthcare

Together, these objectives set the foundation for a coordinated, comprehensive wellness program that enables students to succeed academically.

Introduction

To promote wellness and address current health issues facing our students, including childhood overweight and obesity, the M-DCPS will provide:

1. Nutritious foods, available on campus during the school day, to promote student health;
2. Physical education and physical activity, to enable students to develop healthy lifetime habits conducive to cardiovascular conditioning, flexibility, coordination, balance and physical strength;

3. Health literacy and nutrition education to equip students to make the most health-enhancing decisions about the food choices available to them, and to understand health-related influences in the environment; and
4. School-based healthcare to protect students' physical, mental, social and emotional health.

The M-DCPS Wellness Policy establishes objectives in each of these areas, and sets guidelines for how to meet them successfully in a coordinated, comprehensive wellness program that enables students to succeed academically.

Policies

1. **Nutrition Goal:** All students will have access to and take advantage of high-nutrient food options.

M-DCPS Policy: The M-DCPS will provide nutritious foods, available on campus during the school day, to promote student health.

The Department of Food and Nutrition will serve food that is high in fiber, free of added trans fat, low in added fats, sugar, and sodium, respectful of cultural diversity and served in appropriate portion sizes consistent with USDA standards with adequate time allotted for meal consumption and in an environment conducive to making nutritional choices.

2. **Physical Education and Physical Activity Goal:** All students will engage in daily recommended levels of physical activity.

M-DCPS Policy: The M-DCPS will provide physical education and physical activity, to enable students to develop healthy lifetime habits conducive to cardiovascular conditioning, flexibility, coordination, balance and physical strength.

- (2a) Elementary Physical Education, grades K–1: 150 minutes of weekly instruction of physical education provided by the homeroom teacher is required.
- (2b) Elementary Physical Education, grades 2-5 150 minutes of weekly instruction in physical education by a physical education teacher is required.
- (2c) Secondary Physical Education, grades 6–12: Recommended 225 minutes per week, preferably at least 50 minutes daily.

If additional periods are added to the current six-period day in middle and senior high schools, then physical education requirements may be increased.

- (2d) Recess for students in grades PK – 5 is required to take place either three times a week for 15 minutes each time or two times a week for 20 minutes each time in all

grades. Recess is defined as unstructured playtime that is supervised by adults, but not directed by adults.

(2e) Physical education will be taught by a certified specialist and be an essential part of every school's instructional program, subject to differing abilities of students. The program will stress the importance of physical fitness and encourage healthy lifestyles.

(2f) Physical education will include training in skills needed for enhancing health, such as:

- Comprehension of concepts related to health promotion, disease prevention, and reduction of health risk
- Ability to access valid health information
- Ability to analyze the influences of culture and technology on health
- Effective interpersonal communication skills
- Setting goals and making decisions
- Advocacy skills for personal, family and community health.

3. Health Literacy Policy: In addition to health and fitness taught in physical education programs, all students will be taught comprehensive principles of nutrition and health implications, media literacy, an appreciation of healthy food and other competencies essential to making health-enhancing choices. Strategies employed will include, but not be limited to:

(3a) Incorporating health literacy education into classroom instruction in all core curriculum areas including comprehensive concepts on health enhancing behaviors and risk factor reduction for lifestyle disease prevention.

(3b) Providing nutrition education at all grade levels which includes lessons and experiential learning opportunities that enhance health:

- Emphasize the importance of goal-setting and positive decision-making strategies that enhance health including those related to food intake and energy expenditure.
- Analyze the influence of culture, media and other factors on food choices and preferences in personal health practices including food preparation methods that enrich and challenge healthy living.

(3c) Training students to differentiate between marketing messages and substantive health information.

(3d) Promoting healthy food choices on school premises by making relevant nutrition information available as close as possible to the point of choice.

4. School-based Healthcare Goal: All students will have access to physical and mental healthcare.

M-DCPS Policy: All students have access to physical, mental, social and emotional healthcare.

- (4a)** By 2010, Health Connect in our Schools will provide every school with a school-based health team to ensure that a coordinated level of healthcare is consistently available at every school, including but not limited to:
- Link to medical home
 - Mandated screenings and assessments with appropriate follow-up
 - System for dealing with crisis medical situations
 - Appropriate administration of medications
 - Social histories
 - Mental health counseling and primary care as appropriate
- (4b)** Each team will be composed of a school nurse, school social worker, and two health technicians. Currently, it is estimated that each team will serve two schools. Each team will be associated with one or more community health providers, who will provide health services to students and/or link students to medical homes.
- (4c)** Staff Wellness
- Information on health literacy, nutrition and physical activity will be provided to all school district staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Superintendent's Wellness Advisory Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring the District's Wellness Policy in accordance with the District's goals and initiatives to ensure high academic achievement through enhanced wellness curriculum and programs to improve the health of all students.

The goals, objectives and guidelines of the M-DCPS Wellness Policy will be reviewed annually. Recommendations to the Superintendent by the Wellness Advisory Committee will address responses to changing conditions, more effective techniques and proven strategies, incorporate new objectives if needed, and ensure that the guidelines reflect emerging scientific knowledge relevant to our children's health.

To view the M-DCPS Wellness Policy Agenda Items please go to:

<http://pdfs.dadeschools.net/Bdarch/2006/Bd051006/agenda/e37.pdf>

<http://pdfs.dadeschools.net/Bdarch/2005/Bd111605/agenda/A3rev2.pdf>