

Herron High School Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Whereas, children need access to healthful food and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, 33% of high school students (based on national average) do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students (based on national average) do not attend daily physical education classes;

Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid (based on national average);

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school store, and snack bars include low-nutrition food and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, Herron High School, is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of Herron High School that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community member in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *US Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning, and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant setting and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, our school will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program & National School Lunch Program)
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

FOOD ENVIRONMENT:

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- Be appealing and attractive to children;
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes, regulations;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetable;
- Serve liquid milk in a variety of fat-contents and flavors

Breakfast:

- School will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

At this time, Herron High School does not serve breakfast due to limited facilities space. However, when we are able to move forward with our breakfast program, here is the additional policy that we will adopt:

To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- Schools will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals. Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Toward this end, schools will utilize electronic identification and payment systems and promote the availability of school meals to all students.

Meal Times and Scheduling. Schools:

- Should schedule meal periods at appropriate times
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. Schools should discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT:

Nutrition Education and Promotion. Herron High School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based corporate health curriculum designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);

Integrating Physical Activity into the School Day. For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e, at least 60 minutes pre day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.

Toward that end:

- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-watching television;
- Opportunities for physical activity may be incorporated into other subject lessons; and

Communications with Parents. The School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will provide nutrients analysis of school menus.

The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parent' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.