

Graham Elementary & Middle School Wellness Policy

Amended and Approved by the GEMS Board 8-19-24

Nutrition

“High quality food service supports improvements in academic performance and behavior. Nutrition affects students’ physical well-being, growth and development, readiness to learn and risk of disease. Children tend to develop unhealthy eating habits early in life and then maintain those habits as they age. . . . Improvements in nutrition positively affect academic performance and improve students’ behavior. . . . Inadequate nutrition is a major cause of impaired cognitive development and is associated with increased educational failure among children.” (www.ebasedprevention.org/school_climate)

The links between nutrition, physical activity and learning is well documented. GEMS supports the health and wellness of all its students. Section 204 of Public Law 108-265, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, requires schools participating in the National School Lunch Program to develop a local wellness policy that addresses student wellness and childhood obesity by the first day of the 2010-2011 school year. The school will coordinate the wellness policy with other aspects of school management, including the School Improvement Plan, when appropriate.

Good nutrition and fitness improves academic performance:

1. Reduces apathy
2. Reduces absences
3. Improves participation
4. Improves test scores
5. Improves academic achievement

Good nutrition and physical activity enhances positive behavior:

1. Reduces irritability
 2. Reduces anxiety
 3. Reduces depression
 4. Improves attendance
 5. Improves energy levels
- GEMS promotes and encourages students to make healthy food choices and doesn’t allow advertising that promotes less nutritious food choices.
 - The school encourages all students to participate in school meal programs, i.e. the National School Lunch and the School Breakfast program.
 - Food served at GEMS meets or exceeds nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal regulations.
 - Snack and other a-la-carte food sales are limited to areas of the school separate from the lunchroom. Snack sales are not to be in direct competition with the school lunch program. All a-la-carte food and beverage items offered for sale during the regular school day will follow the minimum standards as set forth in ORC 3313.816. Drinking fountains are available for students to get water at meals and throughout the day.
 - Foods and beverages served at school sponsored parties, celebrations and social events will follow the school nutritional standards.

- GEMS considers students' needs in planning for a healthy school nutritional environment. We ask for student input and feedback, and listen to what they have to say.

The opportunity for a free or reduced meal plan is available to every student who qualifies. We use an accounting system that protects the identity of students who eat free and reduced price school meals. Information about other food sources such as WIC, Food Stamp Program and Second Harvest is available for parents through contact with the parent liaison. GEMS encourages parents to provide a variety of nutritious foods if students bring meals or snacks from home.

Menus will be posted on the school website and will include nutrient content and ingredients.

Menus will be created/reviewed by a Registered Dietitian or other certified nutrition professional.

School meals are administered by a team of child nutrition professionals.

The school child nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs.

Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.

Participation in Federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.

The school will provide opportunities for on-going professional training and development for food service staff and teachers in the areas of nutrition and physical education.

School staff does not use food as a reward or punishment for students. For example: they don't give coupons for fast food meals as a reward for an "A" on a class project or withhold snacks as punishment for misbehaving. Health/nutrition education is offered as part of health and wellness class required of all students prior to graduation and is integrated into the core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts). The health class meets Federal standards for health education and provides students with knowledge and skills necessary to make positive life choices.

The school will not deny student participation in recess or other physical activities as a form of discipline or for classroom make-up time.

Physical education classes are required prior to graduation. Students participate in a variety of rigorous and lifelong physical education activities including but not limited to basketball, running, and walking. Additional opportunities will be added as student interest increases.

Measurable goals for nutrition education and physical activity are included in the curriculum for both health and PE classes.

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. The school will provide teachers and other school staff with a [list of ideas](#) for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, the school will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The school will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Students receive positive, motivating messages about healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school setting. Administrators support the development of healthy lifestyles for students, and establish and enforce policies that improve the school's nutritional environment. They

address issues such as the kinds of foods available on the school campus; mealtime schedules; dining space and atmosphere; nutrition education; and physical activity.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards such that only those foods that comply with or exceed those nutrition standards are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students.

School staff, students, and parents are a part of the policy-making process and support a healthy school nutrition environment. Menus are planned with input from students and include local, cultural and ethnic favorites of the students. GEMS provides a positive dining environment that encourages a pleasant eating experience. The school encourages socializing among students and between students and adults. Adults properly supervise dining rooms and serve as role models to students. GEMS also provides a clean and attractive environment with access to and education about hand washing and other sanitation methods.

The school provides enough space and serving areas to ensure all students have access to school meals with minimum wait time.

The school will schedule lunch time as near the middle of the school day as possible.

The school will schedule recess for elementary students before lunch so that children will come to lunch less distracted and ready to eat.

Wellness Committee

The school will convene a representative wellness committee (hereto referred to as the SWC) that meets at least four times per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of this wellness policy.

The SWC membership will represent all school levels (elementary and secondary schools) and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals and mental health and social services staff [e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators (e.g., superintendent, principal, vice principal), school board members; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. When possible, membership will also include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education coordinators (SNAP-EDEDSNAP-Ed). To the extent possible, the SWC will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community.

The Superintendent or designee(s) will convene the SWC and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure the school's compliance with the policy.

The designated official for oversight is Cathy Baney, Director of Business and Personnel.

Diabetes Care

The School shall ensure that each student enrolled who has diabetes receives appropriate and needed diabetes care in accordance with an order signed by the student's treating practitioner. The diabetes care to be provided includes any of the following:

- (a) Checking and recording blood glucose levels and ketone levels or assisting the student with checking and recording these levels;
- (b) Responding to blood glucose levels that are outside of the student's target range;
- (c) In the case of severe hypoglycemia, administering glucagon and other emergency treatments as prescribed. It is understood that any glucagon that the school may administer will be with the use of a prescription from the student as the school will not be purchasing glucagon to keep on hand;
- (d) Administering insulin or assisting the student in self-administering insulin through the insulin delivery system the student uses;
- (e) Providing oral diabetes medications;
- (f) Understanding recommended schedules and food intake for meals and snacks in order to calculate medication dosages pursuant to the order of the student's treating practitioner;
- (g) Following the treating practitioner's instructions regarding meals, snacks, and physical activity.

Not later than fourteen days after receipt of an order signed by the treating practitioner of a student with diabetes, the governing authority, or its designee, shall inform the student's parent, guardian, or other person having care or charge of the student that the student may be entitled to a 504 plan regarding the student's diabetes. Diabetes medication may be administered by a school nurse or, in the absence of a school nurse, a school employee who is trained in diabetes care.

To ensure that a student with diabetes receives the diabetes care needed, the school may provide training to a school employee at each school attended by a student with diabetes. With respect to any training provided, all of the following apply:

(a) The training shall be coordinated by a school nurse or, if the school does not employ a school nurse, a licensed health care professional with expertise in diabetes who is approved by the school to provide the training.

(b) The training shall take place prior to the beginning of each school year or, as needed, not later than fourteen days after receipt by the governing authority, or its designee, of an order signed by the treating practitioner of a student with diabetes.

(c) On completion of the training, the governing authority, or its designee, in a manner it determines, shall determine whether each employee trained is competent to provide diabetes care.

(d) The school nurse or approved licensed health care professional with expertise in diabetes care shall promptly provide all necessary follow-up training and supervision to an employee who receives training.

(2) The dean of the school attended by a student with diabetes or another school official authorized to act on behalf of the dean may distribute a written notice to each employee containing all of the following:

(a) A statement that the school is required to provide diabetes care to a student with diabetes and is seeking employees who are willing to be trained to provide that care;

(b) A description of the tasks to be performed;

(c) A statement that participation is voluntary and that the school or governing authority will not take action against an employee who does not agree to provide diabetes care;

(d) A statement that training will be provided by a licensed health care professional to an employee who agrees to provide care;

(e) A statement that a trained employee is immune from liability;

(f) The name of the individual who should be contacted if an employee is interested in providing diabetes care.

(3) No employee of a governing authority shall be subject to a penalty or disciplinary action under school policies for refusing to volunteer to be trained in diabetes care.

(4) No governing authority shall discourage employees from agreeing to provide diabetes care under this section.

Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

The school will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines; and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where and when; as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. It is recommended that the school use the [Healthy Schools Program online tools](#) to complete a school-level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation and generate an annual progress report.

This wellness policy and the progress reports can be found at: www.gemsschool.org

Recordkeeping

The school will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at school's business office. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Local Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the school uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the SWC;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

The school will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. The school will make this information available via the school website and/or school-wide communications. The school will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of the school's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation. Annually, the school will also publicize the name and contact information of the school officials leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the school wellness committee.

Progress Assessments

At least bi-annually, the school will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which the school's wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the school's wellness policy.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is Cathy Baney, Director of Business and Personnel, baney.1@gemsschool.org.

The SWC will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness policy.

The school will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The SWC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as school priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed and updated at least bi-annually, following the triennial assessment.

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

The school is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The school will actively communicate ways in which representatives of SWC and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for the school. The school will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. The school will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the school's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy. The school will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and

accomplished through means similar to other ways that the school is communicating important school information with parents.

The school will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. The school will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus during the school day. The school will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas

Schools will encourage those promoting physical activity (such as walk-a-thons, Jump Rope for Heart, fun runs, etc.).

Fundraising during and outside school hours will sell only non-food items or foods and beverages that meet or exceed the Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These fundraisers may include but are not limited to, donation nights at restaurants, cookie dough, candy and pizza sales, market days, etc.

Professional Development

When feasible, the school will offer annual professional development opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional development will help school staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing school reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

Meal Charging Policy

All students eat for free for both breakfast and lunch. Students will receive one free meal for breakfast and one free meal for lunch. Students may purchase a second meal at full price if so desired. There is no charging allowed for the 24-25 school year when purchasing a second meal. Students must have cash on hand or money on the student's account in order to purchase a second meal. Money left on a student's lunch account can be refunded at any time with permission from the parent/guardian.