

Marion Central School District

Health and Wellness Plan

Purpose:

The link between health and learning is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Schools have a responsibility to help students and staff establishes and maintains lifelong, healthy choices.

To this end, the committee articulated the following Philosophical Framework that will ground this policy and future decision making and planning.

Philosophical Framework:

Vision:

We are looking to create.....

- Partnerships that promote a lifelong commitment to health and wellness
- A positive impact on personal attitudes and choices by creating a community of people who are passionate about modeling and sending consistent messages

We believe:

- Healthy people are better learners and performers
- Knowledge and attitude drive behavior
- Modeling sends powerful messages
- That it is our responsibility to be responsive to individual needs

Goals:

Goal #1 – Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs, and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity. A healthy school environment should not be dependent on revenue from high-fat, low nutrient foods to support school programs.

- Each building team will assess annually the extent of nutrition education. Based on that analysis, the team will create a plan to continue and/or expand efforts to promote nutrition education. This plan will be completed by October 1st of each school year.

Goal #2 – Support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students’ health status and academic performance.

All foods available on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the District Nutrition Standards. Emphasis should be placed on foods that are nutrient dense per calorie. Foods should be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging to ensure high quality meals.

- School meals will:
 - Be appealing and attractive to children
 - Be served in a clean and pleasant setting
 - Served between the hours of 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM, to the extent possible
 - Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal statutes and regulations
 - Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables
 - Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free mild and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives
 - Make an effort to serve whole grain products
 - Snack choices will meet the CHOOSE SENSIBLY guidelines established by New York State School Nutrition Association

Free and reduced meals:

- 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 meals.
- Vending machines will be stocked with healthy snack choices, including dairy, 100% fruit juices etc.
- During the school day, all foods need to be from approved sources, pre-packed, from a store, or prepared by a health department approved facility.
- The use of non-food items for celebrations and rewards is encouraged. (Pencils, stickers etc.) If food items are used, healthy choices are encouraged, such as fruits and vegetables.

Goal #3 – Increase the amount of time students are engaged in physical activity.

A quality physical education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity. Physical activity should be included in a school’s daily education program from grades K – 12. Physical activity should include regular instructional physical education, co-curricular activities, and recess.

- For students to fully embrace regular physical activity beyond physical education class. We encourage;
 - Classroom health education will compliment physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activity, such as watching TV.
 - Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons
 - Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

(Some examples, intra-murals, student walking program, use of the fitness center, athletic program, Big Loser competition for staff)

Goal #4 – Promote collaborative efforts and initiatives between school and community related to health and wellness.

Parents, community members, educators and administrators acknowledge the critical role student health plays in academic performance. The school and community environment should work to ensure that nutrition and physical activity needs are met.

- Community groups and school clubs are encouraged to provide healthy eating choices and to look for alternative fundraisers that are nutritionally sound.
- The District Health, Safety and Wellness Committee will support the engagement of the students, families and staff in community health enhancing activities and events at school or throughout the community. (Walking in the school building, volunteer to walk with students, exercise buddies etc.)
- School staff is encouraged to engage in daily physical activity
- In the near future, Marion Central School will be putting more focus on student's whose health is at risk due to being severely overweight. We will be making steps towards developing an individual plan for these students, helping them receive additional cardiovascular workouts, nutritional education and just overall support to help them make better choices.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Health and Wellness Policy

The Health and Wellness Policy will be monitored and evaluated annually to ensure proper implementation by the District Health, Safety and Wellness Committee.