

## **WELLNESS PROGRAM**

## **POLICY 2960**

The primary goals of the GCCS's wellness program are to promote student health, reduce student obesity, facilitate student learning of lifelong healthy habits and increase student achievement. The following procedures will guide the implementation of the GCCS wellness program.

### **Nutrition Guidelines**

GCCS is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages sold, provided or made available to students on school campuses during the school day support healthy eating and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits. For that reason, and as required by law, GCCS has set the following nutrition standards for its meal programs, competitive foods and beverages sold outside the meal programs, and other foods and beverages provided or made available to students during the school day.

For the purposes of this procedure, the school day is the time period from the midnight before to 30 minutes after the official school day. These meal standards do not apply to food sold at other times, such as evening or weekend events.

#### ***Nutrition Standards for Meal Programs***

The food sold to students as part of GCCS's meal programs will meet the requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

#### ***Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages***

The foods and beverages sold and served during the school day outside the reimbursable school meal programs (competitive foods and beverages) will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School (Smart Snacks) nutrition standards. These standards will apply in all locations any time foods and beverages are sold to students during the school day, which includes, but is not limited to, foods and beverages sold in vending machines, school stores, and snack or food carts; à la carte options in cafeterias; and food and beverages sold through GCCS-sponsored fundraising, including fundraising by student-initiated groups, unless an exemption applies, as described below.

#### ***Fundraising Exemption to Nutrition Guidelines***

Unless otherwise prohibited by Board policies or limitations on marketing, the following are exemptions to the rule requiring that foods sold as fundraisers meet USDA standards:

1. Foods sold off campus, outside the school day or to nonstudents do not have to meet the USDA standards.
2. Foods that do not meet USDA standards and are not intended for consumption at school may be delivered during the school day, and order forms for such food may be distributed during the school day, to the extent that these activities otherwise comply with GCCS policies and procedures.
3. Each school building within GCCS may hold up to five one-day fundraisers per school year on GCCS property during the school day that involve the sale of foods that do not meet USDA standards.

### ***Nutrition Standards for Foods and Beverages Provided to Students during the School Day***

All foods and beverages GCCS provides or makes available to students during the school day will meet or exceed the Smart Snacks nutrition standards. This includes, but is not limited to, foods and beverages provided or made available to students for celebrations, classroom parties and birthdays, regardless of the source of the food. GCCS will provide parents/guardians and GCCS employees a list of foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards and a list of healthy party ideas, including nonfood celebration ideas.

Foods and beverages should not be used as a reward or withheld as punishment.

### ***Water***

Students will have access to safe and unflavored drinking water throughout the school day in every GCCS facility used by students. Free, safe and unflavored drinking water will be available to students during mealtimes in the places where meals are served.

### **Nutrition Education**

GCCS's nutrition education goal is to integrate sequential nutrition education with the comprehensive health education program and, to the extent possible, the core curriculum taught at every grade level in order to provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills to make healthy nutrition decisions. In order to achieve the nutrition education goal, GCCS will:

1. Provide students at all grade levels with adequate nutrition knowledge including, but not limited to:
  - a. The benefits of healthy eating.
  - b. Essential nutrients.

- c. Nutritional deficiencies.
  - d. Principles of healthy weight management.
  - e. The use and misuse of dietary supplements.
  - f. Safe food preparation, handling and storage.
2. Provide students with nutrition-related skills that minimally include the ability to:
  - a. Plan healthy meals.
  - b. Understand and use food labels.
  - c. Apply the principles of the USDA's Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate.
  - d. Critically evaluate nutrition information, misinformation and commercial food advertising.
  - e. Assess personal eating habits, nutrition goal setting and achievement.
3. Provide instructional activities that stress the appealing aspects of healthy eating and are hands-on, behavior based, culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate and enjoyable. Examples of activities include, but are not limited to food preparation, contests, promotions, taste testings, farm visits and school gardens.
4. Encourage GCCS staff to cooperate with local agencies and community groups to provide students with opportunities for volunteer work related to nutrition, such as in food banks, soup kitchens or after-school programs.
5. Provide information to all GCCS staff about the symptoms of nutrition-related conditions such as unhealthy weight, eating disorders and other nutrition-related health problems. Staff members who identify students who may have nutrition-related conditions will notify GCCS counselors or student health services staff. When appropriate, GCCS counselors or student health services staff will provide information about these conditions, including available treatment options, to the student and student's parents or guardians.
6. Coordinate the food service program with nutrition instruction. Food service staff should also work closely with those responsible for other components of the GCCS health program to achieve common goals.

## **Nutrition Promotion**

Nutrition promotion that uses evidence-based techniques to encourage healthy nutrition choices and participation in school meal programs positively influences lifelong eating

behaviors. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout GCCS facilities. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently by GCCS staff, parents and guardians and the community. GCCS will promote the importance of good nutrition in its schools and in the community through one or more of the following activities:

1. Offering healthy eating seminars for parents/guardians.
2. Providing nutrition information to parents/guardians via newsletters, handouts, presentations or other appropriate means.
3. Posting nutrition tips on GCCS websites.
4. Offering appropriate, participatory activities, such as cooking lessons or demonstrations, taste testings, farm visits and school gardens.
5. Disseminating information about community programs that offer nutrition assistance to families.
6. Posting links on GCCS websites to research and articles explaining the connections between good nutrition and academic performance.
7. Providing school meals that meet a variety of cultural preferences with a special emphasis on the populations served by GCCS.
8. Posting menus, including nutrient contents and ingredients, on GCCS and school websites.

GCCS will provide information in English and Spanish to the parents and guardians.

### ***Marketing and Advertising***

Marketing in GCCS facilities will be consistent with the goals of GCCS's wellness program and comply with Board policy. GCCS will strive to promote the wellness program and educate parents and guardians regarding the quality of GCCS foods.

Food and beverage marketing will be limited to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards. Other examples of marketing and advertising GCCS will scrutinize include, but are not limited to, pricing strategies that promote healthy food choices; audiovisual programming; educational incentive programs; scoreboards; book covers; GCCS transportation; and vending machine displays.

## **Physical Activity**

*Moderate Physical Activity* – Low-impact to medium-impact physical exertion designed to increase an individual's heart rate to rise to at least 75 percent of his or her maximum heart rate. Examples of moderate physical activity include, but are not limited to, running, calisthenics or aerobic exercise. Time spent in recess and physical education counts as moderate physical activity.

*Recess* – A structured play environment outside of regular classroom instructional activities that allows students to engage in safe and active free play.

GCCS's physical activity goal is to assist students in learning to value and enjoy physical activity as an ongoing part of a healthy lifestyle by ensuring that every student has the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and desire to perform a variety of physical activities, maintain physical fitness and regularly participate in physical activity. In order to achieve the physical activity goal, GCCS will:

1. Develop a sequential program of appropriate physical education aligned with Missouri Learning Standards for every student. The elementary program will provide for:

At Least 30 minutes of recess per day. Recess may be incorporated into the lunch period but will be scheduled before lunch and held outdoors when possible.

An average of 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each five-day school week or an average of 30 minutes per school day. The program will also provide for 50 minutes per week of physical education under the supervision of a certified physical education instructor.

The middle school program will provide for 225 minutes of moderate physical activity during each school week and at least 3500 minutes of physical education per year.

The high school program will provide for at least one unit of physical education prior to graduation.

All activity will:

- a. Emphasize knowledge and skills for a lifetime of regular physical activity.

- b. Meet the needs of all students, especially those who are not physically skilled or who have special needs.
  - c. Provide a variety of activity choices, feature cooperative as well as competitive activities, and account for gender and cultural differences in students' interests.
  - d. Prohibit exemptions from physical education courses on the basis of participation in an athletic team, community recreation program, ROTC, marching band or other school or community activity.
  - e. Contribute to achieving the goals established in GCCS's wellness policy and be closely coordinated with the other components of the overall school health program.
2. Provide opportunities and encouragement for students to voluntarily participate in before and after-school physical activity programs designed to supplement, not replace, GCCS's physical education offerings, such as intramural activities, interscholastic athletics and clubs by:
- a. Providing a diverse selection of competitive and noncompetitive, as well as structured and unstructured, activities to the extent that staffing and GCCS and community facilities permit.
  - b. Offering intramural physical activity programs that feature a broad range of competitive and cooperative activities for all students.
  - c. Encouraging partnerships between schools and businesses. Promotion of such partnerships must be appropriate and in accordance with Board policy and applicable procedures.
3. Strive to provide joint school and community recreational activities by:
- a. Actively engaging families as partners in their children's education and collaborating with community agencies and organizations to provide ample opportunities for students to participate in physical activity beyond the school day.
  - b. Working with recreation agencies and other community organizations to coordinate and enhance opportunities available to students for physical activity during their out-of-school time.

- c. Negotiating mutually acceptable, fiscally responsible arrangements with community agencies and organizations to keep GCCS-owned facilities open for use by students, staff and community members during nonschool hours and vacations.
  - d. Working with local public works, public safety, police departments and/or other appropriate state and federal authorities in efforts to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school.
4. Prohibit the use of physical activity as a form of discipline or punishment and ensure that physical education and recess will not be withheld as punishment.
5. Discourage periods of inactivity that exceed two or more hours. When activities such as mandatory schoolwide testing make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, staff should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.
6. Provide and encourage—verbally and through the provision of space, equipment and activities—daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants in onsite after-school childcare and enrichment programs sponsored by GCCS.
7. Provide opportunities and encouragement for staff to be physically active by:
  - a. Planning, establishing and implementing activities to promote physical activity among staff and providing opportunities for staff to conveniently engage in regular physical activity.
  - b. Working with recreation agencies and other community organizations to coordinate and enhance opportunities available to staff for physical activity during their out-of-school time.

### **Other School-Based Activities**

GCCS's goal for other school-based activities is to ensure an integrated whole-school approach to GCCS's wellness program. GCCS will achieve this goal by addressing the areas itemized below.

## ***Community Involvement***

Staff will collaborate with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families. A list of foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards and ideas for healthy celebrations, rewards and nonfood fundraising activities will be provided to community organizations that serve youth. Guest speakers invited to address students will receive appropriate orientation to the relevant policies of GCCS.

The wellness program shall make effective use of GCCS and community resources and equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences of gender, cultural norms, physical and cognitive abilities and fitness level.

## ***Family Involvement***

GCCS will strive to engage families as partners in their children's education by supporting parental efforts to motivate and help their children with maintaining and improving their health, preventing disease and avoiding health-related risk behaviors. GCCS may implement to achieve family involvement may include, but are not limited to:

1. Providing nutrient analyses of GCCS menus.
2. Providing parents and guardians a list of appropriate foods that meet GCCS's nutrition standards for snacks.
3. Providing parents and guardians with ideas for nonfood rewards and healthy celebrations, parties and fundraising activities.
4. Encouraging parents and guardians to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet GCCS's nutrition standards.
5. Designing curricular nutrition education activities and promotions to involve parents and guardians and the community.
6. Supporting efforts of parents and guardians to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.
7. Providing information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities available to students before, during and after the school day.

8. Sharing information about physical activity and physical education via GCCS's website, newsletter, other take-home materials, special events or physical education homework.
9. Working with families to provide consistent sun safety information that includes an overview of GCCS's sun safety program, an explanation of how parents and guardians can reinforce the program at home and how they can become involved with and support GCCS's program.
10. Encouraging parents and guardians to volunteer time in the classroom, cafeteria or at special events that promote student health.
11. Providing opportunities for parent and guardian involvement with GCCS wellness committee.

If practical, GCCS will provide information in English and Spanish to parents and guardians.

### ***Indoor Air Quality***

GCCS employees will refrain from using candles, oils, sprays, plug-ins and other sources of fragrance. Pesticides and cleaning products will be used only in accordance with GCCS policies and procedures.

### ***Mealtimes***

Students are not permitted to leave school campus during the school day to purchase food or beverages. Mealtimes will comply with the following guidelines:

1. Mealtimes will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.
2. Activities such as tutoring, or meetings will not be held during mealtimes unless students may eat during such activities.
3. At the elementary level, lunch periods will follow recess periods.
4. Free, safe and unflavored drinking water will be available to students during meals in the meal service area.
5. Students will have access to hand-washing facilities before they eat meals or snacks.

6. GCCS will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth brushing regimens of students.
7. Students will be allowed to converse during meals.
8. The cafeteria will be clean, orderly and inviting.
9. Adequate seating and supervision will be provided during mealtimes.

### ***Outdoor Air Quality***

The principal or designee of each school will be responsible for daily monitoring of Air Quality Index (AQI) information provided by local authorities.

1. When the AQI is "code orange" (unhealthy for sensitive groups of people), students with a history of reactions to ozone exposure will be permitted to reduce their outdoor exertion level or time spent outdoors, and the staff will arrange alternative indoor physical activities. Appropriately trained staff responsible for student supervision will monitor such students for symptoms of respiratory distress.
2. When the AQI is "code red" (unhealthy), students with a history of reactions to ozone exposure will remain indoors and participate in indoor physical activities. Appropriately trained staff responsible for student supervision will monitor such students for symptoms of respiratory distress. All other students will be allowed to engage in no more than one hour of heavy exertion (i.e., activities that involve high-intensity exercise such as basketball, soccer and running) while outdoors.
3. When the AQI is "code purple" (very unhealthy) or "code maroon" (hazardous), all students will be kept indoors and participate in indoor physical activities. Appropriately trained staff responsible for student supervision will monitor all students for symptoms of respiratory distress.

### ***Staff Development and Training***

All staff will be provided with ongoing training and professional development related to all areas of student wellness. The pre-service and ongoing in-service training will include teaching strategies for behavior change and will focus on giving teachers the skills they need to use non-lecture, active learning methods. Staff responsible for nutrition education will be adequately prepared and regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned. Staff responsible for

implementing the physical education program will be properly certified and regularly participate in area-specific professional development activities.

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer GCCS meal programs and will receive ongoing, area-specific professional development. GCCS will provide continuing professional development for all GCCS nutrition professionals. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers and cafeteria workers according to their levels of responsibility.

### ***Staff Wellness***

GCCS highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. GCCS will offer staff wellness programs that include education on nutrition, healthy eating behaviors and maintaining a healthy weight for optimal health. GCCS will establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member; wellness committee member; registered dietitian, school nurse or other health professional; employee benefits specialist; and other appropriate personnel. The staff wellness committee will serve as a subcommittee of GCCS wellness committee. The staff wellness committee will develop, promote and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan will be based on input solicited from GCCS staff and will outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, sun safety and other elements of a healthy lifestyle. The staff wellness committee will provide a copy of its plan to the wellness program committee.

### ***Sun Safety***

"Sun safety" describes a range of behaviors that include wearing appropriate clothing, applying sunscreen and limiting sun exposure. The sun safety program will focus on outdoor behavior and will be developmentally appropriate, active, engaging and taught in lessons that emphasize the benefits of sun safety. Sun safety education will be designed to assist students with:

1. Knowledge about the harmful effects of the sun and ways to protect skin.
2. Sun-safe skills, including the correct use of protective clothing, hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and lip balm as well as seeking shade and limiting sun exposure when possible and practical during the hours of peak sun intensity.
3. Knowledge about how to assess personal sun safety habits, set goals for improvement and achieve these goals.

## ***Tobacco***

Tobacco use prevention education will focus on all grades with particular emphasis on middle school and reinforcement in all later grades. Instructional activities will be participatory and developmentally appropriate. Tobacco use prevention education programs will be implemented in accordance with Board policy, relevant administrative procedures and law.

## **Oversight and Assessment**

The wellness program coordinators are responsible for monitoring implementation and assessing the effectiveness of the GCCS wellness program by:

1. Completing the required triennial assessment.
2. Prioritizing wellness goals and writing work plans for each goal.
3. Measuring implementation of GCCS's wellness policy and procedure.
4. Ensuring that GCCS meets the goals of the wellness policy and procedure.
5. Reporting to the Board on compliance and progress.

## ***Compliance Indicators***

The program coordinators will use the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) School Health Index as a measure of the overall effectiveness of the local wellness program. In addition, the wellness program coordinators will identify at least one other assessment tool, including those available through the USDA or CDC that provides measures not covered by the School Health Index. Assessment tools may be locally created.

## ***Policy Review***

The wellness program coordinators will provide policy revision recommendations to the Board as part of the periodic report. The recommendations will be based on analysis of the compliance indicators and comparison of GCCS's policy to model policies provided, recommended or referenced by the USDA. The Board will revise the wellness program as it deems necessary.