

TrekNorth High School Wellness Policies on Physical Activity, Nutrition, Health and Safety

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Purpose of Policies

TrekNorth High School recognizes that a student who feels safe and connected to their school and is properly nourished and healthy has a greater chance of attending school on a regular basis, performing better in the classroom, and becoming a functioning member of the school-community. The school is therefore committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects student's health, safety and ability to learn.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

TrekNorth Wellness Council

The school will establish a Wellness Council to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise the Wellness Policies. The Council shall include to the extent possible representatives from the following groups: parents, students, food service, school board, administrators, teachers and health professionals.

Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served

School Meals

The food services program will aim to be financially self-supporting. However, the program is an essential educational support activity. Budget neutrality or profit generation will not take precedence over the nutritional needs of the students. Food Services will ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need.

In an effort to encourage healthy eating, the following strategies will be explored beginning Fall 2006, with regards to meals served through the National School Lunch Program:

- ◆ Place fruit and vegetable selections at the front of the line.
- ◆ The Wellness Council and/or Student Council will seek feedback from students on meal preferences and will communicate that input to Food Services.
- ◆ Explore the feasibility of including more fresh fruit and vegetable options – both for those going through the lunch line and those that may just want to purchase fruit and/or vegetables ala carte.

School Breakfast

Studies show that students who eat breakfast have more energy, are more alert, behave more appropriately and generally perform better in school than those who don't eat breakfast. Breakfast eaters learn better and are more likely to be calm, less anxious and more focused.

Also, serving the Federal Breakfast Program is mandated for schools having more than 33% of their students eligible for free and reduced lunch unless it can be demonstrated that not many students will participate in the program.

Letters were sent to parents in the fall of 2005 asking if their student would participate in a breakfast program and only 2 positive responses were received. This issue could be reviewed for the 2007/2008 school year to determine if there would be sufficient interest to offer breakfast at school.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals TrekNorth 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.

Meal Times and Scheduling TrekNorth will provide students with at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch and will not schedule meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities. Students will have time and access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

Food and Beverages Sold Individually

All foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

Beverages

- **Allowed:** water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages;
- **Not allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine.

Foods

A food item sold individually:

- will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
- will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.

Snacks Most snacks served during the school day or in after-school programs will make a positive contribution to student's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage.

Rewards The school will not use foods or beverages, especially those that are not nutritious as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations Celebrations that involve food during the school day will be encouraged to include some healthy foods or beverages.

Health Education

Intent

Minnesota requires that each school district develop standards and assessments in health education by 2008. Therefore, a comprehensive program of health education that is designed to promote healthful living and discourage health-risk behaviors shall be explored. The following strategies will be conducted over the 2006/2007 school year:

- ◆ Assess what teachers may already be doing in relation to health education.
- ◆ Figure out ways to include health education in science, art class and other curriculums.

By the end of 12th grade, students should be able to:

- comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention;
- access valid health information and health-promoting products and services;
- practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks;
- analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health;
- use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health;
- use goal-setting, decision-making, and self-management skills to enhance health; and
- advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Instructional Program Design

The health education program shall be consistent with Minnesota's Standards and will be periodically reviewed by the Wellness Council. It shall:

1. utilize educational theories and methods that have credible evidence of effectiveness;
2. emphasize learning and practicing the skills students need for healthful living;
3. include accurate and up-to-date information;
4. use active, participatory instructional strategies and techniques;
5. focus on the behaviors that have the greatest effect on a person's health and emphasize the short-term and long-term consequences of personal health behaviors;
6. encourage students to assess their personal behaviors and habits, set goals for improvement, and resist peer and wider social pressures to make unhealthy choices;
7. stress the appealing aspects of living a healthy lifestyle;
8. address students' health-related concerns;

Nutrition Education During the summer or fall of 2006, staff members will receive in-service training on nutrition so they may impart a common understanding of good eating habits to students. This will include a component on good nutrition on the trail.

Staff Wellness TrekNorth 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. By SY 2007-2008, the Wellness Council shall develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan will outline ways to promote and support staff mental, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical health.

Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Daily Physical Education (P.E.) The trips that students are required to take generally average recommended hours for weekly physical activity. However, recognizing that mental focus and concentration levels in students improve significantly after engaging in physical activity, it would be beneficial to encourage students to engage in some type of physical activity each day. During the 2006/ 2007 school year, TrekNorth will explore the possibility of offering once per week activities during quiet study classes (e.g. walking, snow shoeing, ultimate Frisbee, yoga, Frisbee golf).

Certified Personnel

The School Health Index indicates the school should have a certified physical education teacher. Because much of the physical education curriculum at TrekNorth is outdoor programming, it seems more important to assure that instructors are equipped to teach these skills safely. TrekNorth will thus explore further development of the requirements for trip leaders. This may be a rubric that includes:

- ◆ physical capability
- ◆ WOFR, WAFA, and/or WFA credentials
- ◆ number of trips lead
- ◆ indication that trip leader has been supervised by trained TN staff to assure trip-leading capability.
- ◆ assure risk management plan is periodically reviewed and is followed on each trip.

Instructional Program Design

TrekNorth has specific learning goals and objectives for the Outdoor Adventure Program to help students develop the knowledge, motor skills, self-management skills, attitudes, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physical activity throughout their lives. The program shall:

1. emphasize knowledge and skills for a lifetime of regular physical activity;
2. provide many different physical activity choices;
3. meet the needs of all students, especially those who are not athletically gifted;
4. take into account gender and cultural differences in students' interests;
5. teach self-management skills as well as movement skills;
6. actively teach cooperation, fair play, and responsible participation in physical activity; and
7. be an enjoyable experience for students.

Teachers shall aim to develop students' self-confidence and maintain a safe psychological environment free of embarrassment, humiliation, shaming, taunting, or harassment of any kind.

Suitably adapted physical education shall be included as part of individual education plans for students with chronic health problems, other disabling conditions, or other special needs that preclude such students' participation in regular physical education instruction or activities.

Integrating Physical Activity into Other Curricular Areas

Physical education topics shall be integrated within other curricular areas; e.g. the benefits of being physically active can be linked with instruction in science classes.

Physical Activity Opportunities After School TrekNorth will explore how to offer at least one extracurricular physical activity programs each season that provide moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

Physical Activity and Punishment Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity as punishment.

Currently, students must meet certain behavioral and assignment requirements to participate in outdoor adventure trips. It is reasonable that behaviors that pose a safety risk would result in prohibiting students from trips. However, if outdoor activities are being used to satisfy physical education requirements, the school should explore allowing all students to participate in trips and/or offering alternative opportunities for physical education. This issue should be addressed during the 2006/ 2007 school year.

Parental Partnership Policy

TrekNorth recognizes that parents and families are a student's first and most important teachers. The responsibility for the student's learning is shared by the schools, families, communities, and the student. The school believes that family-school-community collaboration and partnerships benefit all students.

It is the goal of TrekNorth to "develop strong partnerships with the home". Parents and schools working as partners increase student achievement, promote health, and develop positive attitudes about self and school. The key factor in the home-school partnership is the relationship between the teacher and the parent. Organizational support from the board and administration enables teachers to effectively develop the partnership. The intent of this policy is to result in consciously doing those things already in practice in a more efficient, consistent, and effective manner as well as generating new ways of strengthening the partnership.

The partnership between home and school will be supported by the development of a committee of parents and staff that will continually assess, plan and implement strategies that build the home and school partnership including:

1. assuring that the infrastructure supports teacher's efforts to communicate with parents.
2. assessing parental involvement practices using the following six basic principles considered essential to home-school partnerships.
 - a. Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.
 - b. Responsible parenting, quality teaching, and caring communities are promoted and supported.
 - c. Families and the community play a key role in helping students learn.
 - d. School staff members provide a welcoming environment for parents and other community members and seek their support.
 - e. Parents participate in advocacy and decisions, including budget and curriculum that affect children and families at the local and state levels.
 - f. Community resources are made available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning, and community partners participate in helping schools meet their learning goals.
3. providing resources to staff and parents that aid in parent-teacher communication and collaboration.

TrekNorth will provide leadership in the development of clear avenues of parental involvement. Full realization of the partnership will be achieved through the on-going commitment and active participation by both home and school.

School Safety and Risk Management

Policies promoting a healthy school environment are currently being developed and will be included in this section when complete. A formal procedure for report of injuries on the trail or within the school should be established by fall 2006. Also, the medication policy will be included in the Family Handbook by fall 2006.

Implementation and Monitoring of Wellness Policies

The person who assumes School Nurse responsibilities will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

The CDC's School Health Index will be used to assess the nutrition, physical activity and health and safety needs of students. Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement.

The Wellness Council will meet twice per year to monitor progress on these policies. An annual report of compliance with the policy will be given to the Director and the School Board.