



Danvers Public Schools - School Wellness Policy
Approved by School Committee October 6, 2025

ADF - DANVERS PUBLIC SCHOOLS - SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Preamble

The Danvers Public Schools recognizes that a comprehensive School Wellness Policy contributes to the health and wellbeing of our students. This policy is available to the public on the school [district website](#), under “Policies.”

As a district, Danvers Public Schools is committed to encouraging and modeling healthy eating habits, behaviors, and lifestyles, as well as being a fair and equitable place for all students, regardless of socioeconomic status; food allergy, intolerance, or disability; and religious/cultural food practices. All food served during the school day will comply with federal, state, and local regulations. Danvers Public Schools will continue its commitment to promote and support the physical, social, emotional, and mental well-being of every student. Through a comprehensive K-12 Health and Physical Education Program, students will gain knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices contributing to a lifetime of good health. Danvers Public Schools also recognizes the importance of their own staff members’ health and well-being, and is committed to fostering a culture that promotes health, wellness, and balance for all employees.

The Danvers Public Schools’ Wellness Committee has divided its policy into five components: Wellness Education and Social Emotional Support, Foods and Beverages Served/Sold during the School Day, Food Service Operations, Physical Activity and Physical Education, and Staff Health and Wellness. Each of these components equally contributes to the health and well-being of the students, and are outlined as follows:

I. Wellness Education and Social Emotional Support

- Provide a sequential elementary and secondary Nutrition and Wellness Education at each grade level that emphasizes knowledge and skills that is consistent with the Massachusetts State and/or National Curriculum Frameworks for health K-12.
- Stress the importance of living a healthy lifestyle encouraging students to assess their

personal behaviors and habits, set goals for improvement and resist peer and wider social pressures.

- Maintain a safe and healthy school environment that promotes healthy decisions.
- Integrate Nutrition and Wellness Education within a School Health Education Program that is enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, and culturally-relevant to all students.
 - The Health Curriculum for grade K-12 is being reviewed throughout the 2025-2026 school year.
- Reinforce the importance of physical activity and the health risks associated with a sedentary lifestyle in the Nutrition and Wellness Education Program.
- Train staff primarily responsible for Nutrition and Wellness Education and have them regularly participate in Professional Development activities to effectively deliver quality Nutrition and Wellness Education.
- Engage family members as a critical part of the team responsible for teaching children about health and wellness.
- Foster a school culture of overall acceptance and respect for differences. It is important that mental health issues be de-stigmatized.
- Provide age-appropriate social and emotional literacy and education, teaching effective strategies and practices to support mental health, resilience, and well-being throughout all grade levels.
- Raise awareness among students, parents, school staff members, and members of the community about the signs and symptoms of mental health, social-emotional issues, and substance abuse, keeping in mind that many behavioral and academic struggles are often manifestations of compromised mental health or personal or family stresses.
- Ensure that in-school support services are accessible to all students.

II. Food Service Operation

- All Danvers schools will participate in the USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and will assure compliance with [USDA nutrition standards](#) for reimbursable school meals, inclusive of meal pattern requirements, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for grades served.
 - The School Breakfast Program will be made available at the middle and high school 20 minutes prior to the start of the school day, and at the elementary schools 30 minutes prior to the start of the school day.
- Provide as assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of sections 10 of the Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. 1779) and Section 9 (f91)

and 17 (a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 11758) (f) (1), 1766 (a), as those regulations apply to school.

- Serve foods to students that comply with all state and local food safety regulations and that Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Plans and Guidelines are implemented to prevent food borne illness in schools.
- Develop a pricing plan to ensure maximum participation in the School Meal Program, and ensure that all eligible children qualify and receive free and reduced price meals.
- Communicate information regarding income eligibility for the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program to parents/families. Information packets will be distributed at the beginning of the year and as students enroll.
- Ensure privacy for those students who qualify for free or reduced-priced meals and prevent the overt identification of students who are eligible for free or reduced-priced meals.
 - In order for a student's eligibility status to be shared with another department within DPS or an organization outside of DPS, parental/guardian consent must be given.
- Offer foods and beverages, over the course of a school week, that are nutrient-dense, including whole grain products and fiber-rich fruits and vegetables, to provide students a variety of choices to maintain a balanced diet.
- Make available foods and beverages during the school day that include a variety of health choices.
- Make food and beverage providers aware that they should offer modest portion sizes and age-appropriate to elementary, middle, and high school students, respectively.
- Include a variety of choices of nutritious foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grain, and low fat or nonfat dairy foods if a la carte foods are available.
- Employ a Food Services Director who is qualified to administer the School Food Service Program and satisfy district and state reporting requirements.
- Train all Food Service personnel and provide them ongoing Professional Development in accordance with USDA Professional Standards.
- Have School Food Service Providers adopt methods of cooking that decrease fat calorie, and sodium levels in food.
- Plan menus that will meet nutrition standards recommended in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Ensure that required and effective food safety practices are applied to all foods prepared, sold or served at school or school sponsored events.

III. Other Competitive Foods Served/Sold during the School Day

- To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold or provided to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the [Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Standards](#) and/or the [USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards](#), whichever is stricter. The USDA defines the school day as midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the instructional day ends. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, and snack or food carts.
- Effective for SY 2023-2024 and beyond, food-related fundraisers will not be allowed during the school day unless the food meets or exceeds [Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Standards](#) and/or the [USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards](#), whichever is stricter, or is after the academic time of the school day. Any other food-related fundraising will be allowed after the school day has ended. Non-food-related fundraisers are allowed during or after the school day, and are encouraged as alternative [healthy school fundraising](#) options.
- Offer nutrition information for products in snack bars, a la carte, vending and school stores, and make them readily available at the product display.
- Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the [Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Standards](#) and/or the [USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards](#), whichever is stricter, such that only these foods and beverages are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students.
- Reinforce the importance of healthy choices in classroom snacks.
- Schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP), and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.
 - Celebrations: No food items are allowed to be sent in from home for any classroom celebrations. Danvers Public Schools has a no-food policy for birthdays and holiday celebrations. All food used for a classroom celebration must be reviewed with the school nurse and purchased through the Food Service Director.
- Students have access to free potable water during the school day, including during meals, as mandated by federal rules under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA).
 - The quality of the water available during the school day will be maintained regularly to ensure adherence to health and safety standards.

IV. Physical Activity and Physical Education

- Provide a sequential Physical Education Program K-12 that emphasizes knowledge and skills leading to a lifetime of regular physical activity consistent with the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks for Physical Education and Health K-12.
- Ensure that every student K-12 receives regular, age appropriate quality physical education.
- Ensure that Certified Physical Education Teachers teach all physical education classes.
- Provide safe and satisfying physical activity for all students during their physical education classes.
- Physical activity and/or recess will not be used or withheld as a consequence. If a student requires a pause from physical activity and/or recess, the student will have an opportunity at another time during the day for physical activity and/or recess.
- Encourage students to participate in After-School Programs that promote physical activity.
- Ensure that students have adequate space and equipment to participate in structured physical activity.
- Ensure that physical activity facilities on school grounds are kept safe and well maintained. Ensure that the DPS Concussion Policy is enforced and followed, which utilizes information from the latest in medical research to prevent and treat head injuries. It is in compliance with MIAA Policy and with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 111: Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities. (The complete policy can be viewed at danvers.mec.edu.)

V. Staff Health and Wellness

- Staff members are encouraged to model healthy eating habits as well as exercise and physical activity behaviors.
- Value the health and well-being of every staff member through planning and implementing activities that support efforts to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Provide access to a variety of programming and resources on topics including nutrition, exercise, emotional wellness, and self-care through a partnership with MIIA and additional resources, including confidential counseling from the Employees Assistance Program.

Wellness Committee: Monitoring and Policy Review

The Superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with and be responsible for implementation of the established Wellness Policy. In each school, the Principal or designee will ensure compliance with and be responsible for implementation of those policies as outlined in the Wellness Policy and will report on the school's compliance to the school district Superintendent or designee. School food service staff, at the school district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Superintendent or designee.

A district-wide Danvers Public Schools Wellness Committee will continue to be formed annually to assist in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the Wellness Policy. The Wellness Committee will include representatives from each school and may be composed of parents, students, representatives of the Danvers Food Services department, members of the schools committee, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public. Members of the Wellness Committee will be appointed by the Superintendent or designee.

The Wellness Committee will meet at least four times a year and official minutes of each meeting will be kept. Meeting minutes are made available to the public on the [Food Services website](#), under “Wellness Policy.” Members of the Wellness Committee will report to the School Committee on the progress being made at a public meeting at least annually, as well as communicate updates to families more regularly.

The Wellness Policy will be reviewed every three (3) years in accordance with [state guidelines](#) through implementation of the WellSAT:3.0 tool or other equivalent assessment. The School Wellness Policy Triennial assessment was last conducted on (insert date here). The assessment results can be found on the [Food Services website](#), under “Wellness Policy.” Based on the results of the assessment, the district’s Wellness Policy will be presented to the public at a School Committee meeting and reviewed by the School Committee every three (3) years.

Context

In recognition of the declining nutritional intake and increasing obesity in children, Congress passed the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, which requires, by law, that by the first day of school year in 2006, each school district participating in the National School Lunch Program adopt local school wellness policies that address healthy eating and physical

activity. The Act aims to improve children's health by expanding the availability of nutritious meals and snacks to more children in schools while also promoting increased activity. The law places the responsibility of developing a Wellness Policy at the local level so the individual needs of each School District can be addressed.

As such, Danvers Public Schools must set a policy for Nutrition Education, Physical Activity, Concussion Regulations, and other School-based activities designed to promote student wellness. Danvers Public Schools must also establish nutrition standards for all foods that are available on each school campus during the school day, with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.

UPDATED BY WELLNESS COMMITTEE: September 2, 2025

UPDATED: October 6, 2025