

Mill Pond School Wellness Policy

Federal Law (PL 108.265, Section 204) requires all schools participating in the Federal School Meal programs to develop a local wellness policy and establish a plan for measuring the implementation of the policy. The school will establish a wellness policy committee that consists of at least one parent, student, nurse, school food service representative, school committee member, school administrator, member of the public and other community members as appropriate.

Policy Intent and Rationale

Mill Pond School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and safeguards children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Positive dietary and activity patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, physical and emotional growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Mill Pond School shares with the community and the student's home environment the responsibility for physical, emotional, and social well-being of its students. Mill Pond School strives to provide a healthy and consistent message about nutrition and physical activity. We support our students and staff in developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.

I. Nutrition Education, Physical Activity, Physical Education, and Wellness Promotion

A. Nutrition Education

Mill Pond School has a comprehensive curriculum approach to nutrition in elementary through 12th grade. Good nutrition and healthy choices are emphasized. We strive to teach healthy choices at every opportunity. At the elementary, middle and high school level students have health and life skills that are integrated into the physical education program.

If the sending district requires a health class for graduation students take a health class elective for half a year to achieve the required graduation credit.

The Cafeteria maintains postings inside the cafeteria with health and nutrition information. The nurse maintains a bulletin board with a variety of health and wellness information. The school nurse maintains an educational bulletin board outside of the nursing office highlighting health, physical activity, and nutrition related information. The school nurse supports parents and guardians in their efforts to improve the health of their children with information mailings that accompany report cards.



B. Physical Activity

At the elementary and middle school level students have daily gym and recess and each classroom integrates movement into the day as appropriate for individual students.

At the high school level those students with enough credits to graduate do not have to take a full year gym class. Those high school students who must take gym and refuse to participate can engage in a walking program and/or a fitness program with weights.

C. Physical Education

It is the mission of the Physical Education Program at Mill Pond School to teach students about physical health/fitness in order for them to understand and experience the benefits of living a physically healthy lifestyle. We believe that physical education should be a positive learning experience that fosters self-confidence and self-esteem. We are committed to educating and inspiring students to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives.

Physical activity during the school day will not be used as punishment nor shall physical activity be restricted for disciplinary reasons unless related to behaviors that endanger either other students or the student who chose to behave inappropriately.

The Physical Education Program at Mill Pond School uses the NASPE standards, also known as the National Association for Sport Physical Education standards, as the umbrella of the program. These standards provide basic language summarizing what the physical education staff at Mill Pond School desires in a physically educated student:

- Standard 1: Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
- Standard 2: Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.
- Standard 3: Participates regularly in physical activity.
- Standard 4: Achieves and maintains a health enhancing level of physical fitness.
- Standard 5: Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.
- Standard 6: Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

The physical education program at Mill Pond School plans and coordinates their classes in accordance with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Frameworks provided by the Department of Education. All types of classes including physical education, health, and life skills provided by the staff address these goals and standards.

Fitness of the students is measured through a variety of methods at Mill Pond School. Every day throughout the year the staff observes the student's fitness both in the physical education class and the overall fitness of students during class period. The intensity of the lessons will be increased or decreased depending on these observations. The goal of physical education

is to increase the intensity as the year progresses. Formal observation of fitness is measured throughout multiple fitness units created by staff during the school year.

During most class periods students will be offered alternative activities to the regularly scheduled physical education classes. Classes such as yoga, abdominal work, aerobics, and cardiovascular activities are offered to students who express an interest. Academic assignments tied into the physical education curriculum are also extended to students who are seeking alternatives, but still wish to gain a passing grade in the class. The academic assignments given to the student vary depending on grade level and level of the student but are challenging and based on issues dealing with physical education and behavioral reflection. Students are urged daily to help with reinforcing the rules of the activity, such as helping to referee a basketball game, or learning and understanding how to score an activity.

All Elementary students have physical education daily in the gymnasium or outdoors depending on the weather. The middle and high school students have Physical Education for a minimum of a half year to ensure the earning of graduation credits.

D. Wellness Promotion

1. Nursing Services

The school nurse maintains an educational bulletin board outside of the Nursing Office designed to highlight current issues relating to health. The school nurse develops educational mailings for parents and guardians to be mailed with report cards. Health screenings that include hearing, vision, height, weight, and BMI are provided on a yearly basis and parent/guardian notification of results is in compliance with Massachusetts DPH and DESE guidelines. The school nurse is available upon request for in class presentations that coincide with curriculum or current health issues.

2. Parent/Guardian Nutrition Education

The school nurse will increase the level of nutrition information available to parents and guardians through mailings accompanying the beginning of the school year paperwork and report cards. School Open House includes a Wellness Education Table to gather input from parents and guardians and encourage their participation over the course of the school year.

3. Staff Nutrition and Physical Activity

Mill Pond School values the health and well-being of every member of the school community and will support personal efforts by staff and students to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

- Yearly training for staff and students on wellness, self-care and stress reduction are provided by the clinical team.
- A fitness room is available to staff and students with weights for strength training and mats for flexibility through yoga.

II. Food Available on School Grounds

Mill Pond School believes that as an educational setting we have a responsibility to teach healthy choices at every opportunity. We have a special responsibility to ensure the health, safety and inclusion of our students with food allergies so that they may participate fully and without stigma in all events that involve food.



A. Celebrations that involve food

They should be limited in frequency. The amount of food present should be in proportion to the number of people eating, fruit and vegetables should be amply supplied, and consideration should be given to the healthfulness of the main meal/main dessert. As evidence of our commitment to providing a healthy and consistent message about nutrition and physical activity, Mill Pond School has adopted the following policies.

1. **Vending Services:** Mill Pond School does not provide any vending services.
2. **Food in the Classroom:** Food is not to be used as reward, incentive, or punishment for academic, athletic, or behavioral performance. Classrooms are encouraged to use non-food rewards (see Reference Section) Food in the classroom, other than what is provided the school for breakfast and lunch, *may be present* under the following circumstances:
3. **Caffeinated** beverages and foods with caffeine are not to be consumed by students during the school day. Any foods or beverages of this nature will be confiscated
4. **Birthdays:** Classroom staff can, at times, provide a cake or cupcakes to celebrate a student's birthday. The cake is provided in appropriate portions at the end of the lunch period in the cafeteria.

B. School Meals

The Mill Pond School provides breakfast and lunch daily to our school population based on the traditional food based menu planning/meal approach with the recommended daily amounts listed for Group V as set forth under the 7 CFR Part 210 and Part 220.

The Mill Pond School can serve children between Kindergarten and age 22. Due to our diverse age/grade range we utilize the modification to age/grade groups (7CFR Ch.11, iii) Modification for the Majority of Children “under the traditional or enhanced food-based menu planning approaches, if only one age or grade is outside the established levels, schools may follow the levels for the majority of children for both quantities...”

The Food Service Program was grounded upon and remains committed to the production of foods that provide variety through whole, fresh foods to our students through lean meats, skinless poultry, fresh vegetables/salads, homemade soups and the introduction of whole

grain breads and rice. Providing healthy choices that are colorful and appealing is as important as the provision of low-fat mild, fat free dressings, limited processed foods and fat conscious food preparation. When serving “favorite foods” we, for example, purchase all beef franks and all white meat chicken nuggets. Fresh fruit is offered daily and canned fruits are purchased in juice when available. Dessert portions are limited when served.

C. Breakfast Program

A nutritionally balanced breakfast is served free of charge to all non-residential students and residential students who do not eat breakfast in the residence.

D. Snacks

Students can have appropriate snacks mid-morning.

III. Evaluation of the Wellness Policy

The current Goals are:

- 1) To develop a method of surveying our students to identify their interest and needs,
- 2) To identify how those needs would be best met (classroom, workshop, bulletin board, community resources, family education, different offerings in physical education, greater integration of physical activity into the classroom),
- 3) To develop a method of assessing how effective our efforts are. Currently we track height, weight, and BMI, and will begin tracking physical fitness testing results for comparison on a yearly basis,
- 4) To implement parent/guardian and teacher representation on our Wellness Committee.

IV. HEALTH AND SAFETY OF STUDENTS

The school maintains a comprehensive Manual of Health Care Policies which is kept in the front office and is available to all parents and personnel. Although the school employs a school Nurse, your child's physician is his/her primary health care provider and it is important that we have that physician's name, address, and phone number in our files in case of emergency.

In addition, every child at Mill Pond School **must receive a comprehensive physical and dental examination annually** and the school must receive a written report of such examination and any recommendations and/or directions for the modification of the student's program. As part of the admissions process, the school must receive appropriate immunization information from the parents or sending school district. Failure to obtain these records could result in the student's termination. The appropriate forms for this information are sent to the child's parent(s)/guardian at the beginning of each year or at the time of enrollment. If these forms are not returned to the school within a reasonable period, the child may be prevented from returning to school until such time as the forms are received. Screening for vision and hearing is done annually at Mill Pond School and any problems noted are reported to the child's parent(s)/guardian. As per state regulations, growth screenings are completed on all 4th and 7th graders and postural screenings on all 5th and 8th graders.

All personnel are trained annually in the application of emergency first aid. A poster noting emergency first aid is kept available and easily accessible to all personnel. In addition, the school maintains a complete first-aid kit consisting of those items necessary to deal with most minor medical problems. The telephone numbers of the fire department, police station, poison prevention center, hospital emergency room and ambulance service are clearly posted in the front office.

The phone number and an emergency number of each child's parent(s)/guardian are kept on file and used in case of a medical emergency. The student's parent(s)/guardian would be phoned and asked to provide transportation for the sick or injured child if that is possible. If not, an ambulance service would be used. Written permission for the provision of emergency medical care is kept on file for each student in the event a parent cannot be reached.

Medication Administration

Dispensing of medication during school hours is carefully regulated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The school uses the forms and guidelines of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for the medication administration by non-medical personnel, as specified in 105 CMR 21.00. The nurse is responsible for overseeing the administration of all medication. All medication is administered in the Nurses Station.

The parent(s)/guardian of any child who is to receive prescribed or over the counter medications during school hours will receive the appropriate paperwork and detailed instructions at the beginning of the school year or whenever a medication is ordered. Briefly, the school must have the written permission of the parent(s)/guardian as well as the prescribing physician. Information regarding dosage, method of administration, etc. is required and medication must be transported to the school by a parent/guardian or other designated adult. Medication is kept in a locked cabinet inaccessible to students and any unused portion is disposed of or returned to the parent(s)/guardian.

As a part of their annual training appropriate staff receive information on the effects of the medications commonly used by our students.