

Union Ridge School/District 86 Wellness Policy -

Union Ridge School District 86 is committed to the optimal development of every student and believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

This wellness policy outlines Union Ridge School's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

1. Students have access to healthy foods throughout the school day through reimbursable school meals that are in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards
2. Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
3. Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during, and after school;
4. Union Ridge School engages in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
5. School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
6. A school wellness committee consisting of parents/guardians, teachers, physical education staff, school nurse, social worker and will continue to maintain and update measurable goals, and outcomes of this policy.

This wellness policy applies to all students and staff of Union Ridge School District 86.

II. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability & Community

Implementation Plan

The wellness committee coordinates implementation of the wellness policy plan. The plan sets actions and timelines regarding the need for changes to specific goals and objectives involving new standards for student nutrition, health education, physical education or other school-based activities that promote student wellness.

Recordkeeping

Union Ridge School retains records to document compliance with the requirements of this wellness policy at the District's administrative office. Documentation includes 1. A printed copy of the schools' wellness policy, 2. Documented efforts to review and update the schools' wellness policy; including persons involved. 3. Methods the school used to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the Wellness Committee, 4. Documentation demonstrating compliance with the annual public notification requirements; 5. A current assessment for implementation of the policy

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The Wellness Committee updates or modifies the policy based on the results of the annual *School Health Index*, triennial assessments, as student priorities change; and/or our community needs change. The Wellness Committee ensures goals meet new Federal or state guidelines as they become available.

Annual Notification of Policy

Union Ridge School informs its families and community members of information regarding the wellness policy, including content, updates, implementation status, triennial progress, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the school wellness committee. The policy will be available via the District website at www.urs86.org. A printed copy is available upon request at the Union Ridge School office.

Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications

Union Ridge School informs parents of improvements made to school meals, compliance with school meal standards, how to apply for child nutrition programs, a description of, and compliance with "Smart Snacks in School" nutrition standards.

Union Ridge School is committed to providing an environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity to ensure that Union Ridge School:

1. Engages students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies.
2. Meets or exceeds child nutrition standards set by the USDA for all foods and beverages sold or served at school
3. Provides students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet their health and nutrition needs; accommodates the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; provides clean, safe, pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
4. Provides nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and establishes links between health education, school lunch programs, and related community services.

III. Nutrition

School Meals

Union Ridge School meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of students, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating patterns that support the development of lifelong healthy nutrition choices, while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

Union Ridge School participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Special Milk Program (SMP). The School/ District offer reimbursable school meals that meet USDA guidelines through a licensed, contracted vendor, *FSP (Food Service Provider)* that:

- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- Promotes healthy food and beverage choices to students, by using the following "*Smarter Lunchroom*" techniques:
 1. Sliced or cut fruit is available daily,
 2. Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and within reach of students,
 3. All available vegetable options have descriptive names,
 4. Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab-and-go meals available to students,

5. All staff members, especially those serving politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal,
6. White milk is in front of other beverages in all coolers,
7. Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas,
8. Student surveys and taste testing opportunities to assist in monthly menu planning,
9. Lunchroom tables arranged to provide adequate, comfortable space for each student,
10. Student artwork is displayed in the dining area.

Free and Reduced Price Meals

Union Ridge School makes every effort to eliminate social stigma attached to the meal plan, and prevent the identification of students who are eligible free and reduced price school meals. Toward this end, the school promotes the availability of school meals to all students, regardless of income, and has an all-inclusive process for serving student meals.

Meal Times and Scheduling

Union Ridge School:

1. Provides students a minimum of 10 minutes for breakfast, and 20-minute lunch periods.
2. Schedules meal periods at appropriate times, breakfast is available from 8:10 a.m. through 9:00 a.m.
3. Schedules lunchtimes by grade level, beginning 11:00 a.m. through 1:00 p.m.
4. Does not schedule tutoring, clubs, organizational meetings, or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activity;
5. Does not schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods or vice versa;
6. Provides students access to hand washing before they eat meals or snacks; and
7. Takes reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs.

"Farm to School" activities

Union Ridge School implements nutritional lesson activities by:

1. Reinforcing messages about agriculture and nutrition throughout the learning environment;
2. Scheduling field trips to a local farm for kindergarten students,
3. Taking part in local promotions or special events that highlight the benefits of healthy eating and exercise, e.g. Robert Crown Theater
4. Scheduling field trips, for elementary students to Lincoln Park Zoo farm, and Museum of Science and Industry farm exhibit.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

Union Ridge School discourages students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Water

Union Ridge School promotes proper student hydration through filtered hydration stations available throughout the school building during the school day. Students may carry approved water containers or bottled water with them throughout the day.

Competitive Foods and Beverages Sold on School Premises

Union Ridge School does not allow the sale or distribution of competitive foods or beverages during the school day.

School-sponsored Events

Food and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day meet USDA "Smart Snacks in School" nutrition standards.

Snacks/Celebrations

All foods offered on school premises outside the food service area will make a positive contribution to children's diet and health, with the emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Classroom snacks brought by parents must meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School Nutrition Standards. Parents/guardians will follow Smart Snacks nutrition standards for birthday celebrations treats. Students are not provided food and/or beverages as incentives.

Fundraising Activities

Union Ridge School fundraisers do not involve the sale of any food during the school day. Students participate in physical fundraising activities such as Hoops/Jump Rope for Hearts, fun runs, and "Boosterthon" activities arranged by the school PTA.

Fundraising outside school hours consist only of non-food items or foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These fundraisers may include but are not limited to, donation nights at restaurants, cookie dough, candy and pizza sales, etc.

Nutrition Education

Union Ridge School teaches, models, encourages, and supports healthy eating through nutrition education and engaging in nutrition promotion that:

1. Is offered at each grade level as part of a comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
2. Is integrated into other classroom instruction, other than Physical Education, through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects,
3. Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods; and health-enhancing nutrition practices.
4. Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
5. Links school meal programs, with nutrition promotion activities, and related community services; and:
6. Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; including nutrition education training for teachers and support staff

Health Education Curriculum

Union Ridge School Health Education includes, but is not limited to, such essential topics on healthy eating:

1. The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
2. Reading and using FDA's nutrition fact labels
3. Balancing food intake and physical activity
4. Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grain products
5. Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol
6. Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
7. Eating more calcium-rich foods
8. Preparing healthy meals and snacks
9. Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
10. Food safety
11. Importance of water consumption
12. Importance of eating breakfast

Communication with Parents/Guardians:

As part of Union Ridge Schools' comprehensive healthy nutrition and physical wellness programs, it is important to communicate with parents/guardians to assist us in promoting a consistent message to our students by:

1. Supporting parents/guardians efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
2. Encouraging parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet nutrition standards.
3. Providing information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such support includes sharing information about physical activity and physical education through the school website, take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

IV. Physical Activity

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 minutes a day) students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end, Union Ridge School ensures that:

1. Classroom health education complements physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle.
2. Physical activities are appropriated incorporated into other subject lessons; and

3. Classroom teachers provide short physical activity break between lessons or classes as appropriate
4. Physical activity during the school day is not withheld as punishment for any reason. [This does not include participation on sports teams that have specific academic requirements]

Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Union Ridge School provides students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts. The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education by ensuring:

1. All physical education classes are taught by licensed, highly qualified teachers
2. Students, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, have equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes.
3. All elementary and middle school students in each grade receive age appropriate physical education classes for at least 60-149 minutes per week throughout the school year.
4. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) is not a substitute for meeting the physical education requirement.
5. Students will spend at least 50 % of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
6. The physical education program promotes student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments via the *Presidential Youth Fitness Program* or other appropriate assessment tool, and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.
7. Union Ridge School maintains a subscription to the "GoNoodle Fitness Program" which incorporates student physical movement, mindfulness, and learning.

Daily Recess

Union Ridge School provides students at least 20 minutes of supervised recess, preferably outdoor (weather permitting) on all days during the school year.

If recess takes place before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located near the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating. Students are required to wash or sanitize their hands before eating.

In the event that the school or district must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable.

Essential Physical Activity Topics

Union Ridge School requires physical education in all grades. Our physical health education curriculum includes, but is not limited to the following essential topics on physical activity:

1. The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
2. How physical activity contributes to a healthy weight
3. How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
4. Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition

5. Differences between physical activity, exercise and fitness
6. Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout and cool down
7. Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
8. Preventing injury during physical activity
9. Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while being physically active
10. How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity
11. Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
12. Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids

Active Academics

Union Ridge School supports classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement.

Before and After School Activities

Union Ridge School offers extracurricular physical activity programs, such as a Running Club, Girls-on-the-Run Program, and a range of intramural sports programs available to all students. The school offers activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

Active Transport

Union Ridge School encourages active student transport (walking or biking) to and from school through:

1. Promotional activities such as participation in National Walk and Bike to School week
2. Student instruction on safely biking and walking to school
3. The use of crossing guards
4. Clearly marked crosswalks on streets leading to schools
5. Documentation of the number of children walking and or biking to and from school

Staff Wellness

Union Ridge School District 86 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. Staff members can participate in an annual Wellness Screening and/or receive flu shots on a voluntary basis. The school nurse is available to staff members during regular school hours for blood pressure screening, basic first aid, and health counseling.