

# Forrest County School District Wellness Policy

## **Rationale:**

The link between health of students and learning is well documented. If children are to be successful in school they cannot be tired, hungry, sick, suffering from drug abuse, or worried that school is an unsafe environment in which they could become a victim of a violent act. It has become apparent that problems such as poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, substance abuse, depression, teen pregnancy, obesity, bullying, and more – can adversely affect not only a child’s health, but also his or her *ability to learn!* And that is precisely why a coordinated approach to school health can make a difference! A coordinated approach to school health improves students’ health and their capacity to learn through the support of families, schools, and communities working together. At its very core, a coordinated approach to school health is about keeping students healthy over time, reinforcing positive healthy behaviors throughout the school day, and making it clear that *good health and learning go hand in hand.*

## **Goal:**

All students in the Forrest County School District shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices that promote healthy lifestyles. All staff in the Forrest County School District are encouraged to model a lifestyle of healthy eating patterns and moderate physical activity as a valuable part of their daily lives.

To meet this goal, the Forrest County School District adopts this school wellness policy with the following commitments to implementing a coordinated approach to school health. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.

## **Commitment to Nutrition**

**The Forrest County School District will:**

- **Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.**
- **Offer school breakfast and snack programs (where approved and applicable) with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.**
- **Promote participation in school meal programs to families and staff.**
- **Operate all Child Nutrition Programs with school foodservice staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code 2001).**

- **Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code 2002).**
- **Include goals for nutrition promotion, nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities to promote student wellness.**
- **Implement Nutrition Standards as adopted by the State Board of Education in accordance with the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4011),**
  - Healthy food and beverage choices;
  - Healthy food preparation;
  - Marketing of healthy food choices to students and staff;
  - Food preparation ingredients and products;
  - Minimum/maximum time allotted for students and staff at lunch and breakfast;
  - Availability of food items during the lunch and breakfast periods of the Child Nutrition Breakfast and Lunch Programs;
  - Methods to increase participation in the Child Nutrition School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.

**Follow the established guidelines in accordance with the Mississippi Beverage and Snack Regulations for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.**

- Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code 2002).
- Follow established guidelines provided by the State School Board for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.
- Encourage offering only nutritious and appealing options as choices whenever foods/beverages are sold or otherwise offered at school, including vending machines, school stores, parties, and concession stands during the school day. We strongly encourage our concession stands at sporting and academic events and other school functions to follow these guidelines for all after school activities.
- Encourage only the use of healthy foods, or “nutrient dense” foods (foods high in nutrient content) or non-food items as rewards for student accomplishment.
- Encourage school-based organizations to use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthy foods for fundraising programs.
- Limit the number of extra sale items that may be purchased with a reimbursable meal. **This policy will exclude extra purchases of milk products, juice, and/or water.**
  - o Grades K-6: 2 extra food sale items other than the above
  - o Grades 7-12: 3 extra food sale items other than the above

## **Commitment to Food Safe Schools**

The Forrest County School District will:

- Implement a food safety program based on HACCP principles for all school meals, as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs and ensure that the food service permit is current for the school site. HACCP Principles for K-12 schools can be downloaded at:  
<http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourcesOverview.aspx?ID=151>
- Develop a food safety education plan for all staff and students, consistent with Fight Bac® ([www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org)) and other national standards for safe food handling at home and in school.
- Ensure that all staff have viewed the video developed by the Office of Healthy Schools to support food safety on the school campus. For compliance with the Nutrition Standards all staff must complete and sign pre and post test developed by the Office of Healthy Schools and maintain documentation of completion. The video and Pre/Post Test can be downloaded at:  
[http://healthyschoolsms.org/ohs\\_main/instructionalvideo.htm](http://healthyschoolsms.org/ohs_main/instructionalvideo.htm).
- All school personnel (school board members, administrators, teachers, school nurses, instructional and health services paraprofessionals, foodservice staff, custodians and facilities managers, and administrative support staff) will receive copies of the Local School Wellness Policy to include food safety policies and procedures and relevant professional development. Examples of professional development include, but are not limited to, the video developed by the Office of Healthy Schools and *Eating Safely at School*, (<http://schoolhealth.nsba.org/site/docs/42400/42324.pdf>) developed by the National School Boards Association.
- Adequate access to handwashing facilities and supplies will be available whenever and wherever students, staff, and families prepare, handle, or consume food.
- The food safety assurance plan must address strategies that minimize risks for students and staff who have food allergies and intolerances.

## **Commitment to Physical Activity/Physical Education**

The Forrest County School District will:

- Provide 150 minutes per week of activity-based instruction for all students in grades K-8 (in accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference 2012 Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards 32, Appendix B and 33).
- Provide Physical Education/Activity in accordance with the Physical Education Rules and Regulations as approved by the State Board of Education in compliance with the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4012).
- Require fitness testing for all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

- **Require fitness testing for high school students; during the year they acquire the ½ Carnegie unit in physical education as required for graduation by the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4012).**
- **Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities, which are student centered and taught in a positive environment.**
- **Instruction must be based on the 2013-2014 Mississippi Physical Education Framework.**
- **Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007 (Senate Bill 2369).**
- **Graduation requirements for 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students shall include ½ Carnegie unit in physical education.**

### **Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education**

The Forrest County School District will:

- **Provide ½ Carnegie unit of comprehensive health education for graduation (2012 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).**
- **Instruction must be based on the 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework for grades 9-12 (2012 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).**
- **Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007, which requires 45 minutes per week of health education instruction as defined by the State Board of Education for grades K through 8.**
- **Instruction must be based on the Mississippi Contemporary Health for grades K-8.**
- **Implement the requirements of MS Code 37-13-171, which requires the development of a sex related education policy and instruction on medically accurate or evidenced based abstinence-only or abstinence-plus curricula.**

### **Commitment to a Healthy School Environment**

The Forrest County School District will:

- **Ensure that there are no pad locks or chains on exit doors; exits should never be obstructed (in accordance with Mississippi State Fire Code). Ensure that all exit signs are illuminated and clearly visible.**
- **Ensure that all chemicals are stored properly (in accordance with the Material Safety Data Sheet [www.msdssearch.com](http://www.msdssearch.com)).**
- **Refer to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook for Public Playground Safety ([www.cpsc.com](http://www.cpsc.com)); for federal guidelines for playground safety.**
- **Ensure that fire extinguishers are inspected each year and properly tagged.**
- **Complete yearly maintenance of the heating and cooling system in your school; check coils, filters, belts, etc. in order to maintain safe operation and healthy air quality.**

- Conduct at least one emergency evacuation drill per month.
- Every school will have an anti-bullying policy that outlines procedures for dealing with bullying situations in the school.
- Ensure that two means of egress are available in each classroom in case of an emergency; if there is only one door, designate a window (properly sized) as a means of egress.
- Never use extension cords as a permanent source of electricity anywhere on a school campus.

Comply with the applicable rules and regulations of the State Board of Education in the operation of its transportation program (in accordance with the MS Code 37-41-53; State Board of Education Policies 7903, 7904, and 7909; and Accreditation Standard #35).

- Inspect all buses on a quarterly basis and ensure that they are well maintained and clean.
- Require that all bus drivers have a valid bus driver certificate and a commercial driver's license and operates the bus according to all specified safety procedures. Maintain a record of yearly motor vehicle reports on each bus driver and evidence that each driver has received two hours of in-service training per semester. (SB Policy 7903)
- Ensure arrival of all buses at their designated school sites prior to the start of the instructional day.
- Conduct bus evacuation drills at least two times each year. (SB Policy 7904)

Provide facilities that meet the criteria of: (MS Code 37-7-301 (c) (d) (j); 37-11-5, 49 and 45-11-101; and Accreditation Standard #36).

- Provide facilities that are clean.
- Provide facilities that are safe.
- Provide proper signage that explains tobacco, weapons, and drugs are prohibited on the school campus and at school functions.
- Provide operational facilities that are equipped and functional to meet the instructional needs of students and staff (in accordance with the Mississippi School Design Guidelines at <http://www.edi.msstate.edu/guidelines/design.php>).
- Provide air conditioning in all classrooms, Code §37-17-6(2) (2000).

Comply with the requirements for Safe and Healthy Schools:

- Maintain a comprehensive School Safety Plan on file that has been approved annually by the local school board. (MS Code 37-3-81 and 37-3-82(2); and Accreditation Standard #37.1); see the School Safety Manual and the MDE School Occupational Safety and Crisis Response Plan at: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/safe-and-orderly-schools/school-safety>
- State Board Policy EBB (1990) prohibits the possession of pistols, firearms or weapons by any person on school premises or at school functions. Code §37-11-18 (1996) requires any student who possesses a knife, a handgun, other firearm or any other instrument considered to be dangerous and capable of causing bodily harm or who commit a violent act on educational property be subject to automatic expulsion for one calendar year. The superintendent of the school is authorized to modify the period of time for expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

- Prohibits students from possessing tobacco on any educational property, Criminal Code §97-32-9 (2000). Code §97-32-29 (2000) further prohibits the use of tobacco on any educational property for adults who, if in violation, would be subject to a fine and issued a citation by a law enforcement officer. Educational property is defined as any public school building or bus, campus, grounds, athletic field, or other property used or operated during a school-related activity.

### **Commitment to Quality Health Services**

The Forrest County School District will:

- Ensure all school nurses are working under the guidelines of the 2013 *Mississippi School Nurse Procedures and Standards of Care*.
- Provide for teachers and staff training regarding signs and symptoms of asthma. (SB 2393)
- Every child who has been diagnosed with asthma must have an asthma action plan on file in the school office.

### **Commitment to Providing Counseling, Psychological and Social Services**

The Forrest County School District will:

- Adhere to the details outlined in the Licensure Guidelines (451) when hiring guidance counselors and psychologists. The state does not have a policy specifically outlining the requirements for a school social worker. For licensure as a social worker in the state of Mississippi, a candidate must: provide verification of a baccalaureate degree in social work from a college or university accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and scores a minimum of 70 on the ASWB basic exam.
- Provide at a minimum, a ½ time licensed guidance counselor for high school and ensure that all elementary school students have access to qualified student support personnel such as: guidance counselors, social workers, nurses, psychologists, psychometrists, and others (as required by the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, Process Standards 6.1 and 6.2).
- Hire school guidance counselors with a minimum of a Master's Degree in Guidance and Counseling, or in an emergency situation, an appropriate certification as determined by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development.
- Hire school counselors who agree to abide by the American School Counselor Association Code of Ethics.
- Ensure that all school guidance counselors provide comprehensive counseling

**services such as:**

- ❑ Academic and personal/social counseling
- ❑ Student assessment and assessment counseling
- ❑ Career and educational counseling
- ❑ Individual and group counseling
- ❑ Crisis intervention and preventive counseling
- ❑ Referrals to community agencies
- ❑ Educational consultations and collaborations with teachers, administrators, parents and community leaders
- ❑ Education and career placement services
- ❑ Follow-up counseling services
- ❑ Conflict resolution
- ❑ Other counseling duties or other duties as assigned by the school principal
- ❑ Provide teachers and administrators with health education on the topic of suicide prevention according to SB 2770.

### **Commitment to Family and Community Involvement**

**The Forrest County School District will:**

- **Invite parents and community members to participate in school health planning by serving on the School Health Council.**

### **Commitment to Implementing a Quality Staff Wellness Program**

**The Forrest County School District will:**

- **Make as a requirement that all staff are aware of the Mississippi State and School Employees' Health Insurance Plan that has been enhanced to include WebMD, a wellness and health promotion program designed to help individuals live a healthy lifestyle and increase their overall wellness benefit.**

### **Commitment to Marketing a Healthy School Environment**

**The Forrest County School District will:**

- **Use the school announcement system to promote health messages to students, teachers, and staff.**

### **Commitment to Implementation**

**The Forrest County School District will:**

- **Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.**

- **Designate one or more persons to insure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written.**
- **Establish and support a School Health Council (SHC) that addresses all aspects of a coordinated school health program, including a school wellness policy (Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated, Section 37-13-134).**
- **Conduct a review of the progress toward school wellness policy goals each year to identify areas for improvement.**
- **Prepare and submit a yearly report to the school board regarding the progress toward implementation of the school wellness policy and recommendations for any revisions to the policy as necessary.**

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This school district affirms its commitment to providing a healthy environment for students and staff. The board directs the superintendent to coordinate the components of the district’s wellness policy. The wellness policy shall be developed with the involvement of the district’s “Healthy and Fit School Advisory Committee” with the representation from the local school board, school administrators, school food service personnel, students, parents and the public.

As required under Section 204 of public Law 108-265, at a minimum, the wellness policy will

1. Include goals for nutrition education, physical education and other school-based activities that are designated to promote student wellness in a manner that the local school district determines is appropriate;
2. Include nutrition guidelines selected by the school district for all foods available on each school campus in the district during the school day, with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;
3. Provide an assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, as applicable to schools; and
4. Establish a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy, including designation of one or more persons within the district at each school, as appropriate, charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the district’s wellness policy.

NOTE: Please refer to the [Mississippi Local School Wellness Policy – Guide for Development](http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/HealthySchools/Initiatives.html), available from the Mississippi Department of Education at their Web Site: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/HealthySchools/Initiatives.html>  
 The Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard for this policy is standard 37.

CROSS REF.: Policies ICI – Health and Physical Education  
 JGC – Student Health Services

LEGAL CODE: Section 204 of Public Law 108-265 (2004); MS Code § 37-13-134