

Columbia Elementary School Wellness Policy/Plan

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! 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 Columbia Elementary School shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices that promote healthy lifestyles. All staff in Columbia Elementary School are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

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

Commitment to Nutrition

The Columbia Elementary School 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 food service staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EE-2E).
- Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EEH).
- 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)
- Serve healthy food and beverage choices;
- Observe healthy food preparation procedures;
- Market healthy food choices to students and staff;
- Monitor food preparation ingredients and products;

- Observe minimum/maximum time allotted for students and staff lunch and breakfast;
- Have sufficient food items available during the lunch and breakfast periods of the Child Nutrition Breakfast and Lunch Programs;
- Devise methods to increase participation in the Child Nutrition School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.
- Encourage students to make healthy food choices based on the Current Dietary Guidelines for Americans by emphasizing menu options that feature baked (rather than fried) foods, whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and reduced-fat dairy products.
- Establish a cafeteria environment conducive to a positive dining experience with socializing among and between students and adults; with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct and voice level; and with adults who model healthy habits by eating with the students.
- Encourage all school-based organizations to use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthful foods for fundraising programs.
- Provide nutrition information for parents, including nutrition analysis of school meals and resources to help parents to improve food that they serve at home.
- Establish 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.

Commitment of Food Safe Schools

The Columbia Elementary School will:

- Implement a food safety program based on HACCP principles for all school meals and ensure that the food service permit is current for the school site as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Develop a food safety education plan for all staff and students, consistent with Fight Bac (www.fightbac.org/) and other national standards for safe food handling at home and in school.
- Ensure that Food Service 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 Food Service Staff must complete and sign pre-test and post-test developed by the Office of Healthy Schools and maintain documentation of completion.
- Provide all school personnel access to the Local School Wellness Policy/Plan including food safety policies and procedures and relevant professional development.
- Provide adequate access to handwashing facilities and supplies whenever and wherever students, staff, and families prepare, handle, or consume food.
- Develop strategies that minimize risks for students and staff who have food allergies and intolerances.
- Provide parents, caregivers, vendors, and other community members who provide or are likely to provide foods prepared for consumption at school events with appropriate information about safe food preparation and storage.

Commitment to Physical Activity/Physical Education

The Columbia Elementary School 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 2004 Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards 32, Appendix B and 33).
- Provide kindergarten students with 40 minutes of physical activity per school day. The 40 minutes does not have to take place continuously. This time should be used to help the child increase the skills involved in physical coordination (Kindergarten Guidelines).
- 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 students.
- Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities that are student centered and taught in a positive environment.
- Base instruction on the Mississippi Physical Education Framework.
- Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007 (Senate Bill 2369).

Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education

The Columbia Elementary School will:

- 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.

Commitment to a Healthy School Environment

The Columbia Elementary School will:

- Ensure that there are no pad locks or chains on exit doors. Ensure that all exit signs are illuminated and clearly visible and that exits are not obstructed.
- Ensure that all chemicals are stored properly in accordance with the Material Safety Data Sheet www.msdssearch.com/.
- Refer to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook for Public Playground Safety (www.cpsc.com) for federal guidelines for playground safety.
- Ensure that fire extinguishers are inspected and properly tagged yearly.
- Complete yearly maintenance of the heating and cooling systems; check coils, filters, belts, etc. in order to maintain safe operation and healthy air quality.
- Conduct at least one emergency evacuation drill per month.
- 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.
- Prohibit use of 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's certificate and a commercial driver's license and operate 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 © (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 www.edi.msstate.edu).
- Provide air conditioning in all classrooms, Code 37-17-6(2) (2000).
- Maintain a comprehensive Crisis/Safety Response Team Manual 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 Crisis/Safety Response Team Manual and the MDE School Occupational Safety and Crisis Response Plan
- Conduct self-assessments of the school building(s), the school(s) bus transportation system and the school(s) safety and security annually prior to school opening (using the Bureau of Safe and Orderly Schools' Process Standards #35, #36 and #37 Monitoring Tool).
- Eliminate unnecessary school bus idling that causes pollution and creates health risk for children such as; asthma, allergies, and other respiratory problems.
- Hire a District Safety Officer or a School Resource Officer.

Commitment to Quality Health Services

The Columbia Elementary School will:

- Ensure all school nurses are working under the guidelines of the *Mississippi School Nurse Procedures and Standards of Care*.
- Collaborate with other school staff to provide health services as part of a Coordinated School Health Program.
- Promote healthy lifestyles through school and community events (PTA meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).
- Participate in administrative claiming for reimbursement of administrative cost associated with health and medical outreach.

Commitment to Providing Counseling, Psychological and Social Services

The Columbia Elementary School will:

- Adhere to the details outlined in the Licensure Guidelines (451) when hiring guidance counselors and psychologists.
- 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
 - ❖ Quality counseling, psychological and social services provided by professionals such as certified school counselors, psychologists, and social workers
 - ❖ Additional services to improve students' mental, emotional, and social health
 - ❖ Counseling, group assessments, interventions and other mental health services, as well as referrals to community health professionals
 - ❖ Assistance with the mental health, academic, and career needs of students in the school setting
 - ❖ Participation in administrative claiming for reimbursement of administrative cost associated with health and medical outreach

Commitment to Family and Community Involvement

The Columbia Elementary School will:

- Give parents and community the opportunity to serve on each School's Health Council (SHC).
- Invite family members to attend health and physical education classes.
- Invite family members to tour physical education facilities.
- Invite family members to a school meal.

Commitment to Implementing a Quality Staff Wellness Program

The Columbia Elementary School will:

- Promote health and reduce risk factors through professional and staff development programs, providing information flyers and newsletters.

- Provide health promotion programs for school staff to include opportunities for physical activity, health screenings and nutrition education.
- Develop relationships with community health providers, recreational facilities, voluntary health organizations and other community members who can provide resources for or support school employee wellness activities.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Mississippi State and School Employees' Health Insurance Plan that has been enhanced to include *Motivating Mississippi: Keys to Living Healthy*, a wellness and health promotion program designed to help individuals live a healthy lifestyle and increase their overall wellness benefit amount.

Commitment to Marketing a Healthy School Environment

The Columbia Elementary School will:

- Provide positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting.
- Involve students in planning for a healthy school environment.
- Promote healthful eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at school events (e.g., school registration, parent-teacher conferences, PTA meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).

Commitment to Implementation

The Columbia Elementary School will:

- Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.
- Designate one or more persons to insure that the school wellness policy/plan 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/plan (Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated, Section 37-13-134).
- Conduct a review of the progress toward school wellness policy/plan 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/plan and recommendations for any revisions to the policy/plan as necessary.