



Federal Child Nutrition Act Wellness Policy

Purpose This Policy complies with requirements of the Federal [Healthy and Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010](#), and the [Vermont School Wellness Policy Guidelines \(2015\)](#), including nutrition guidelines. In accordance with those requirements, this Policy has been developed in consultation with parents, students, the school food services authority, school administrators, teachers and the public. The Policy encourages life-long patterns of healthy eating and regular physical exercise among all students.

Policy Statement Grace Christian School (herein after “GCS”) is committed to school environments that promote and protect children’s health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating, physical activity, and a healthy school environment. This policy is designed to articulate the spirit of health and wellness at GCS and deviates from normal policy protocols in its specificity of actions and goals in order to meet state and federal standards. We believe the identified goals are intended to articulate the high ideals of health and wellness and are attained and implemented at the discretion of the school principal under direction of the Administrator.

Goals for Overall School Wellness - *As identified in the Vermont School Wellness Policy Guidelines, a goal is an overarching principle that guides decision making. Objectives are specific, measurable steps that can be taken to meet the goal.*

- A. GCS shall incorporate components of the [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child \(WSCC\)](#) in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing The GCS nutrition, physical activity, and other health service policies.
- B. All students in grades K-12 shall have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- C. GCS shall provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and shall establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.
- D. GCS shall encourage a culture of wellness throughout the school, which includes, but is not limited to a clean and safe building and a positive psychosocial climate.
- E. To the extent feasible, staff are encouraged to role model healthy behaviors, including drinking water, healthy eating and physical activity. Nutrition, physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices will be incorporated into family events throughout the school year.
- F. It is recommended that GCS avoids participation in fundraising that promotes a message inconsistent with our goals for a healthy school community.
- G. GCS will promote staff wellness issues, identify and disseminate wellness resources, and perform other functions that support staff wellness.
- H. GCS will encourage students and their families to establish and access their medical and dental providers to receive age-specific health supervision visits (well care visits) annually and oral health exams as recommended.



Basic Requirements for the Wellness Policy

This policy will follow the sequence provided by the [Vermont School Wellness Guidelines \(revised Nov. 2015\)](#). This will ensure the Wellness Policy health related goals and objectives are included in the required School Effectiveness Plan (Vermont Education Quality Standards EQS rule 2125). Hereinafter, Vermont Education Quality Standards will be referred as EQS.

Goals for the Food Service Program ([The Healthy Hunger Free Kid's Act 2010 \(HHFKA\)](#))

- A. Ensure that all reimbursable school meals meet current USDA nutrition standards.
- B. Plan menus that conform to [The Healthy Hunger Free Kid's Act 2010 \(HHFKA\)](#). See CFR201.11 or the most current federal standard.
- C. Make free potable water available to students in the meal service areas.
- D. Have adequate space for students and staff to eat meals in pleasant surroundings and adequate time to eat and relax. Students shall have access and time to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks. The cafeteria will be clean and appropriate supervision shall be provided.
- E. Discourage 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;
- F. Provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and snacks, and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch; meal periods at appropriate times, (e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.); and sufficient transition time is also provided.
- G. To the extent possible, schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods.
- H. Refrain from scheduling tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
- I. As a District, discourage consumption of competitive foods in place of school meals by limiting competitive food choices during mealtimes in the cafeteria.
- J. Make available to all families, at the beginning of each school year, the applications for free/reduced priced meals Also place the application on the District website(s).
- K. To the extent practical, the District shall utilize programs and practices to ensure that students qualifying for free or reduced priced meals are not overtly identified in any way.
- L. The District shall provide breakfast through the USDA School Breakfast Program.
Useful Information: [USDA School Breakfast Program \(NSBP\)](#)
Useful Information: [USDA School Lunch Program\(NSLP\)](#)
- M. The District shall ensure that professional development in the areas of food and nutrition is provided for food service managers and staff: and that the [USDA Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition Programs](#) or that the most current standards are followed.
- N. Compatible with federal regulations for such purchase, the food service program will establish procedures to include locally grown foods and beverages in the development of purchasing bids or procedures following the Roza McLaughlin Farm to School Program ([6 VSA§4721](#)). Procedures to promote the purchase of locally grown products may include:
 - 1. Purchasing partnerships with local farms and farmers, manufacturers, and small processors;
 - 2. Taking advantage, where possible, of local products that are already available through distribution channels in the state such as eggs, milk and dairy products, apples and other produce;
 - 3. Asking local distributors to carry Vermont products in their inventory to allow for easier availability to schools;

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4. Writing bid contracts that allow The Districts to buy local products “off bid” if primary vendors cannot or will not sell them;
 5. The nutrition education program shall work with school meal programs to develop school gardens and use the cafeteria as a learning lab.
 6. The healthiest choices, such as salads and fruit, will be prominently displayed and comparably priced to encourage students to make healthy choices.
- O. The school food service program will maintain a good standing with all USDA meal program regulations, such as nutrition specifications, civil rights and food safety. (7 CFR 210, 220, and 245)

Nutrition Guidelines

- A. Food shall not be used in schools as a reward or punishment
- B. Healthy food options will be competitively priced.
- C. Candy or soda will never be offered for sale to students during the school day.
- D. All food and beverages sold in vending machines and school stores will support healthy eating and comply with [USDA’s Smart Snacks in Schools](#)
- E. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys.
- F. Food that is served as part of Breakfast and Lunch School meals shall follow nutrition guidelines established by the Healthy Hunger Free Kid Act (herein after HHFKA) of 2010, and subsequent regulatory guidance. These guidelines include:
 - a. For school lunches, a specified meal pattern, weekly average calorie content requirements, average saturated fat requirements, and average sodium content requirements
- G. Beverages shall follow USDA “[Smart Snacks in Schools](#)” Guidelines as part of the [HHFKA of 2010](#). These guidelines include:
 - a. Schools shall make free, potable water available throughout the school day at no cost to students.
 - b. All schools may sell:
 - i. Plain water (with or without carbonation)
 - ii. Unflavored low fat milk
 - iii. Unflavored or flavored fat free milk and milk alternatives permitted by NSLP/SBP (National School Lunch Program/School Breakfast Program)
 - iv. 100% fruit or vegetable juice and 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners.
 - c. Elementary schools may sell up to 8-ounce portions, while middle schools and high schools may sell up to 12-ounce portions of milk and juice. There is no portion size limit for plain water.
 - d. Beyond this, the standards allow additional “no calorie” and “lower calorie” beverage options for high school students:
 - i. No more than 20-ounce portions of Calorie-free, flavored water (with or without carbonation);
 - ii. Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain < 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces or ≤ 10 calories per 20 fluid ounces;
 - iii. No more than 12-ounce portions of Beverages with ≤ 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces, or ≤60 calories per 12 fluid ounces
- H. Foods served at other times besides Breakfast and Lunch shall follow USDA “[Smart Snacks in Schools](#)” Guidelines as part of the HHFKA of 2010 during the school day (12:00 am to 30 minutes after the official end of the day) [HHFK Act of 2010](#) states any food sold in schools must:
 - a. Be a “whole grain-rich” grain product;
 - b. Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food;
 - c. Be a combination food that contains at least 1/4 cup of fruit and/or vegetable; or



- d. Contains 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of one of the nutrients of public health concern in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber).
- I. Foods must also meet several nutrient requirements:
 - a. Calorie limits: Snack items: ≤ 200 calories Entrée items: ≤ 350 calories
 - b. Sodium limits: Snack items: ≤ 230 mg** Entrée items: ≤ 480 mg
 - c. Fat limits: Total fat: $\leq 35\%$ of calories Saturated fat: $< 10\%$ of calories Trans fat: zero grams
 - d. Sugar limit: $\leq 35\%$ of weight from total sugars in foods
- J. Beverages served to students/children participating in afterschool programs (before/after school programs, clubs, teams) will meet USA Smart Snack nutrition standards.
- K. All snacks sold in vending machines, school stores, and a la carte will be fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat dairy or protein foods that contain < 200 calories, $< 35\%$ sugar by weight, $< 35\%$ calories from total fat, $< 10\%$ of calories from saturated fat, zero trans fat and < 200 mg of sodium
- L. Beverages sold in vending machines and school stores will contain only beverages that meet Smart Snack standards including plain or carbonated water in any portion size, and 100% juice and low-fat unflavored milk or fat-free or unflavored milk in portion sizes up to 8 oz for elementary schools and 12 oz for middle and high schools.

Classroom Parties and Celebrations

- A. To the extent practical, schools will limit celebrations that do not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages and should recommend celebrations meet the guidelines set forth by the [Smart Snacks in Schools](#) standards. (VT Wellness Guideline recommendation)
- B. To the extent practical, the Whole Wellness Team shall disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers. (VT Guideline recommendation also)

School-sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances)

- A. The choice of different foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day shall include healthy options. Some of the food offered and/or sold at these events must be a healthy option (i.e. fresh fruit and vegetables). These healthy options will be competitively priced.

Pertaining to Foods Sold or Offered to Students as Part of Class or Advisory Activities

- A. Food or beverages offered during the school day as part of class/advisory activities (including incentives), shall conform to USDA Smart Snacks Guidelines.
- B. Fundraisers during school hours must meet nutritional requirements mandated by the USDA and VT Agency of Education "Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010." ([Smart Snacks in School](#))
- C. Schools shall ensure that foods offered at school other than through the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, including foods sold through vending machines, shall comply with the [Smart Snacks in Schools](#) standards.
- D. Smart Snacks in School also supports efforts by school food service staff, school administrators, teachers, parents, and the school community, all working hard to instill healthy habits in students.
- E. To the extent possible, all school lunch programs and classroom activities shall refrain from providing any food product to any student for which he or she is known to have a food allergy.

School Based Activities – Nutrition and Health (Rozo McLaughlin Farm to School Program [6.VSA§4721](#))

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- A. **Gardens:** GCS believes that visible, interesting and productive gardens established and maintained at school, can create lasting ties between students, their families, staff and others in the community. Related activities may include but not be limited to cooking programs, school garden space for families, and CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture) for families and staff with school site drop-offs.
- B. **Experiential Education:** Staff shall integrate, where possible, experiential education activities such as gardening, cooking demonstrations and farm and farmers' market tours into existing curricula at all grade levels.
- C. **Promotion:** To the extent practical, school food service, in partnership with other school departments and community organizations, shall work to creatively market and promote locally produced food to students through activities such as:
 - a. Featuring food grown in the school garden in the cafeteria through sampling and inclusion in school meals based upon availability and acceptability.
 - b. Developing cafeteria themes relating to local farmers and products grown in the region such as the Vermont Harvest of the Month campaign.

Goals for Health and Nutrition Education

- A. Nutrition education is integrated within the comprehensive health education curriculum, which is a developmentally appropriate health and nutrition curriculum that aligns with State standards. This extensive elementary and secondary educational program is designed to provide a variety of learning experiences based upon knowledge of the human organism as it functions within its environment, including nutrition education (16 V.S.A. § 131, 16 V.S.A. § 906)
- B. To the extent practical, schools will follow the curriculum sequence including, but not limited to the [National Health Education Standards](#) or the current standards adopted by the Vermont Department of Education.
- C. Health education curriculum shall be proficiency-based for development and assessment of knowledge and skills for student health literacy.
- D. The curriculum equips students with opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong health and nutrition education and which aligns with the VT Education Quality Standards. (16 V.S.A. § 131, 16 V.S.A. § 906, EQS 2120.5)
- E. Flexible, alternative pathways for proficiency-based learning in health education shall be made equally accessible for all students. (Act 77 §941).
- F. The District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools shall provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that ([National Health Education Standards](#)):
 - a. Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
 - b. To the extent practical, is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
 - c. Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;

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- d. Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
 - e. Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
 - f. Links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
 - g. Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing;
 - h. Helps students acquire skills for: reading food labels, menu planning, and cover topics such as reading Nutrition Facts labels.
- G. Nutrition education focuses on developing healthy eating behaviors, is based on theories and methods proven effective by research, and is consistent with National Health Education Standards, and Education Quality Standards, State Board Rule 2000, 16 V.S.A. § 164-165
- H. Teacher Licensure: For grades 7 – 12, health is taught by a licensed health educator. For grades k – 6, the classroom teacher’s endorsement allows them to teach health within their class (EQS rule 2121.2)
 - I. Teacher Professional Development: GCS shall develop and implement a system of appropriate needs based professional learning for all professional staff (EQS rule 2121.3) and other staff as deemed necessary by administration.
 - J. The District shall ensure teacher ongoing needs-based professional development is provided and program evaluation for continuous improvement of health education.

Goals for Physical Education

GCS will offer a comprehensive, standards-based physical education curriculum and identify the progression of skill development in grades K-12 for all students.

Physical Education Curriculum/Instructional program

- A. The K-12 physical education program is sequential, developmentally appropriate and in alignment with the National Association for Sports and Physical Education.
- B. All students in grades K-12 shall be required to take physical education class.
- C. Physical education curriculum shall be proficiency-based for development and assessment of knowledge and skills for student physical literacy.
- D. The curriculum equips students with opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong physical activity and which aligns with the VT Education Quality Standards. (EQS Rule 2120.5)
- E. Flexible, alternative pathways for proficiency-based learning in physical education shall be made equally accessible for all students. (Act 77 §941)
- F. Each school shall provide students in grades K-8 with at least two physical education classes per week. Each school shall provide students in grades 9-12 with one and one half years of physical education or the equivalent thereof (EQS Rule 2120.5)
- G. All physical education classes, grades K-12 will be taught, assessed and credit awarded by a properly licensed educator. (16 V.S.A. §2902)
- H. Adapted physical education shall be designed, delivered, and assessed by a licensed physical education teacher in consultation with other colleagues (e.g. special educator, occupational therapist), student, and parents. (16 V.S.A. §2902)
- I. Suitable adapted physical education is included as part of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students with chronic health problems, other disabling conditions and other special needs that preclude participation in regular physical education instruction or activities (16 V.S.A. §2902)

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- J. Physical education teachers shall receive annual professional development opportunities focused on physical education/physical activity topics based on identified needs and align with other district-wide continuous improvement priorities. (EQS 2121.3)
- K. The District discourages students from substituting other school and community activities not related to physical activity for physical education class time or credit.
- L. Physical education class size is consistent with those of other subject areas. (Vermont State Board of Education adopted the [2014 SHAPE America National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes for Physical Education](#))
- M. Physical educators organize their classes to maximize opportunities for all students to learn and be physically active. Enough equipment is provided so that students spend virtually no time waiting for turns or standing in lines. At least half of class time is spent in moderate-to-vigorous activity. ([2014 SHAPE America](#))
- N. To the extent practical, physical education topics are integrated with other curricular areas. (2014 SHAPE America)
- O. To the extent practical, the physical education program is closely coordinated with the overall health program. (2014 SHAPE America)
- P. Physical Education time shall not be used for Health Education instruction.

Facilities and Equipment ([2014 SHAPE America](#))

- A. Teachers make every effort possible to create a safe learning environment for students (e.g., emergency action plans are posted and practiced)
- B. Activities are selected carefully to ensure that they match students' ability levels and are safe for all students, regardless of ability level.
- C. Facilities and equipment are maintained and inspected regularly for safety hazards.
- D. Outdoor and indoor facilities are clean, safe and free of hazards; are of developmentally appropriate size (110 to 150 square feet per student (AAPAR, 2005); are heated and cooled; and are conducive to moderate and vigorous activity, so that students can participate safely in physical education.
- E. Once reported, hazardous conditions are repaired or otherwise remedied in a timely manner. Reports are recorded, and maintenance and safety-check records are kept.
- F. Physical education space and equipment are secured (off-limits) during all other times of the school day, unless appropriate supervision is provided.
- G. Storing nonphysical education items in the gym in the area where class is held (e.g., pianos, chairs, desks and books) is not allowed.
- H. Teachers continually monitor environmental conditions (e.g., sun exposure, thunder/lightning, heat/humidity, smog, cold and inclement weather) to ensure safety for all students.
- I. Teaching stations are inspected each period before activity begins to ensure that the space and equipment are safe. Equipment is used for its intended purpose.
- J. Written emergency plans outline the protocol for emergency responses to injuries and other health-related incidents in physical education.
- K. Accident-reporting protocol and procedures for notifying parents and administration are in place and are practiced.
- L. Teachers maintain certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid from a reputable agency (e.g., American Red Cross, American Heart Association), serve as a resource to the school community and advocate for a healthy, active lifestyle.
- M. First aid supplies are readily available to physical education teachers.
- N. Adequate, easily accessible restroom facilities and drinking fountains are available before, during and after physical education class.

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- O. The school minimizes interruptions to scheduled physical education classes. This includes interruptions due to scheduling non-physical education activities in physical education facilities.

Goals for Physical Activity

- A. GCS should develop a culture of physical activity and encourage small bouts of activity throughout the day for students and staff.
- B. All staff should be provided with and encouraged to receive opportunities for professional development of physical activity that is focused on integration of physical activity into classroom academic content and schedule throughout the day.
- C. All students in grades K-12 will be engaged in at least 30 minutes of physical activity during each school day. (EQS Rule 2120.5)
- D. Physical activity may include recess and movement built into the curriculum, but does not replace physical education classes. (EQS Rule 2120.5)
- E. Recess - Supervised unstructured active play should be offered daily for all students. ([Vermont Healthy Schools Resource- VT DOH](#))
 - a. Proper equipment and a safe area are designated for recess.
 - b. Recess and other physical activity shall not be taken away as a form of discipline unless doing so is directly related to a student's behavior during recess.
 - c. Recess is in addition to a student's physical education class and not substituted for physical education class.
 - d. During days of inclement weather, **indoor recess should include physical activity** (yoga poses, stretching, jogging in place, etc...) and, to the extent practical, limit time spent on technology.
- F. GCS should discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, GCS should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.
- G. Other Physical Activities
 - a. All elementary, middle, and high schools shall offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. These programs can be provided by the town or the designated after-school programs sponsored by GCS and offered before and after-school hours.
 - b. All high schools and middle schools, as appropriate, shall offer interscholastic sports programs.
- H. GCS shall offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.
- I. GCS shall support the utilization of school gardens and farm visits which offer physical activity opportunities, as well as agricultural education.
- J. Instruction/coaching utilize a variety of teaching strategies, positive motivation and constructive feedback, to improve athletic development.

Goals for Other School-based Activities to Promote Wellness

Staff Wellness

- A. GCS highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and shall plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

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- B. GCS shall establish and maintain a staff wellness committee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources, and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff.
- C. The staff wellness committee shall be involved with the Whole Wellness Team and report on activities to the group on a regular basis.
- D. To the extent feasible, staff should model healthy behaviors for students, including healthy eating and physical activity.

Counseling, Psychological and Social Services

- A. GCS shall continue to recognize the need for counseling, psychological, and social services for all students and shall make available the information necessary for families of students to seek the proper assistance.
- B. GCS shall meet all training requirements for all faculty and staff in accordance with [Vermont Act 1: An Act Relating to Improving Vermont's Sexual Abuse Response System](#).

Healthy and Safe School Environment

- A. GCS shall maintain and implement a preK-12 anti-bullying curriculum.
- B. GCS shall encourage a culture of wellness throughout the school, which includes, but is not limited to, clean and safe buildings and a positive psychosocial climate.
- C. Physical conditions such as temperature, noise and lighting shall be conducive to a positive learning and eating environment.
- D. Cleaning and building maintenance products used on facilities shall meet criteria set forth in VT Dept. of Health Envision: "Green Cleaning Basics" pursuant to [Act 62 of 2012, 18 V.S.A Ch 39 "Cleaning Products in Schools."](#)
- E. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) shall be kept organized in a central location at each school and exhibit compliance with VOSHA rules.
- F. GCS shall enforce the no idling policies for buses pursuant to [Act 48 of 2007, 23 V.S.A. §1282\(f\)](#).
- G. GCS shall comply with [VT Act 68: An act relating to health and schools \(S.4\)](#) which includes regulations on:
 - a. Concussions
 - b. Epinephrine Administration
 - c. Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- H. Shall develop and implement procedures to ensure a safe environment for students with allergies and sensitivities that may inhibit learning and duties (i.e. Nut Free School/Zones, Fragrance Free School/Zones, etc.).

Policy Implementation.

- A. The Administrator or designee shall monitor GCS's programs and curriculum to ensure compliance with this policy and any administrative procedures established to carry out the requirements of this policy.

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B. The Administrator or designee shall report at least annually to the Board on GCS's compliance with law and policies related to student wellness. The report shall include an assurance that school guidelines for reimbursable meals are not less restrictive than regulations and guidelines issued for schools in accordance with federal law.

C. GCS shall periodically inform and update the public about the content and implementation of this policy, including the extent to which GCS is in compliance with this policy, the extent to which this policy compares to model school policies, and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of this policy.

D. GCS shall permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this policy

This policy and its procedures may be modified subsequent to federal and state legislative and regulatory standards.