

# **South Pontotoc Elementary School Wellness Policy**

*Health is Academic*



**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 kids’ 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 Pontotoc County Schools shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices that promote healthy lifestyles. All staff in Pontotoc County Schools are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

To meet this goal, South Pontotoc Elementary 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 South Pontotoc 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),**  
[www.healthyschoolsms.org/MSHealthyStudentsAct.htm](http://www.healthyschoolsms.org/MSHealthyStudentsAct.htm)
- 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 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.
- **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.**
- Limit the extra food sales during lunch. Only one extra food sale can be purchased with a reimbursable meal per student, excluding liquids (milk, water, juice, slush, etc.).

## Commitment to Food Safe Schools

South Pontotoc Elementary School 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
- 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, food service 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 South Pontotoc Elementary School will:

- Provide 150 minutes per week of activity-based instruction for all students in grades K-5
- Kindergarten students will participate in physical activity for a minimum of 40 minutes 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.
- 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
- Require fitness testing for all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students
- 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 2006 Mississippi Physical Education Framework
- Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007

**Physical activity resources can be downloaded at**  
**[www.healthyschools.ms.org/ohs\\_main/initiatives/school\\_wellness\\_policy.htm](http://www.healthyschools.ms.org/ohs_main/initiatives/school_wellness_policy.htm)**

## Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education

The South Pontotoc 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 5

## Commitment to a Healthy School Environment

The South Pontotoc Elementary School will:

- Ensure that there are no pad locks or chains on exit doors; exits should never be obstructed (in accordance with the Mississippi State Fire Code) Ensure that all exit signs are illuminated and clearly visible
- Ensure that all chemicals are stored properly
- Refer to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Handbook for Public Playground Safety 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
- 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**

- Inspect all buses on a quarterly basis and ensure that they are well maintained and clean
- Require all bus drivers to 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
- 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

### **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
- Provide air conditioning in all classrooms

### **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
- State Board Policy EBB (1990) prohibits the possession of pistols, firearms, or weapons by any person on school premises or at school functions. 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 is 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 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 South Pontotoc Elementary School will:

- Ensure all school nurses are working under the guidelines of the *Mississippi School Nurse Procedures and Standards of Care*
- Optimize the provision of health services with a school nurse-to-student ratio of 1:750 for students in the general population.
- Work with students, parents, and local healthcare providers to effectively manage and treat chronic diseases.
- Promote healthy lifestyles through school and community events (PTO meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).

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

The South Pontotoc Elementary will:

- Adhere to the details outlined in the Licensure Guidelines 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 or Southern Association of Colleges and Schools 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

- 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

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

The South Pontotoc Elementary School will:

- **Give parents and community the opportunity to serve on the School Health Council**

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

The South Pontotoc Elementary School will:

- Provide health promotion programs for school staff to include opportunities for physical activity, health screenings, nutrition education, weight management, smoking cessation, and stress reduction and management.
- Encourage after school health and fitness sessions for school staff.
- 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 new 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 South Pontotoc Elementary School will:

- Provide positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting. All school personnel will help reinforce these positive messages.
- 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, PTO meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).
- Eliminate advertising and other materials on the school campus that promote foods of minimal nutrition value.

## Commitment to Implementation

The South Pontotoc 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 is implemented as written
- Establish and support a School Health Council that addresses all aspects of a coordinated school health program, including a school wellness policy
- 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

Discrimination is prohibited on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.



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