

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The North Reading Public Schools recognize the importance of creating a school environment and culture that promotes health and wellness in students and staff. The overall health and wellness of students and staff contribute to the general well-being, mental and physical capacity and learning ability of each student and allows them to fully participate in the educational process. The School Department has the responsibility to equip students with the knowledge, skills and habits that will contribute to life-long health and wellness.

The North Reading Public Schools will develop, adopt and implement a broad plan for a comprehensive school wellness program. The wellness program for students will be designed to respond to demonstrated needs and support child and adolescent development. The plan will include specific learning goals and objectives for health, nutrition and physical education and include activities and programs designed to promote student and staff health and wellness. The plan will also establish nutrition guidelines and regulations that are consistent with the Child Nutrition Act, the National School Lunch Act, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, and comply with the current U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines for Americans.

The comprehensive school wellness program will incorporate the following components:

Health Education: A comprehensive and sequential program of health education that is designed to promote healthful living, wellness and safety and teach positive decision making will be offered in all grades K-12. The health education program will be an integral part of a coordinated school health program and be consistent with the Massachusetts State Frameworks.

Physical Education: A sequential, developmentally appropriate physical education curriculum will be offered to all students in grades K-12. Consistent with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, the program will help to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to foster a life-long respect for the importance of physical activity. Physical education will be taught by well-prepared specialists who are certified by the state to teach physical education and offered to students on a regular basis.

Nutrition and Food Services: Students will be provided with the knowledge and skills to make healthy choices about nutrition. The School Lunch Program will comply with the standards set by the Child Nutrition Act, the National School Lunch Act, and the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Additionally, the schools will aim to comply with the current US. Dept. of Agriculture guidelines for Americans including vending machines, a la carte, beverage contracts, fund-raisers, concession stands, student stores and other activities that involve food. The School Lunch Program will ensure that profit generation will not take precedence over the nutritional needs of students and will aim to be self-supporting.

School Health Services: The programs, policies, protocols and services to appraise, protect and promote health and wellness are provided to all students and staff and coordinated by the school nurses, physician and Office of Pupil Personnel Services.

Counseling and Psychological Services: Coordinated by the Office of Pupil Personnel Services, ongoing assessment of psychological / counseling needs of the school community will be conducted through a variety of means including at-risk surveys, collaboration with community agencies and appropriate staffing.

Healthy School Environment: School facilities and environment are designed to promote health and wellness of students and staff through a variety of programs, practices and policies and are managed through a systematic, environmental management system. Programs designed to build a positive school environment and support student and staff safety will be offered.

Health Promotion for Staff: Programs on health and wellness are offered to staff on an ongoing basis. Programs will include professional development and employee assistance and wellness programs.

Family and Community Involvement: Frequent communication is made to parents on topics related to student health and wellness. Community forums on health-related topics and parent education are offered on a regular basis. Support is provided to students and staff through formal and informal networks and partnerships between the school and various community and regional agencies.

The Superintendent will organize a Comprehensive School Health and Wellness Advisory Committee that will oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of the comprehensive school wellness program. Membership on the School Health and Wellness Advisory Committee will be drawn from the School Department, parents, students and community. Furthermore, the Superintendent will report on benchmark indicators of health and wellness on an annual basis.

Legal References:

Child Nutrition Act

National School Lunch Act

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

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