

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind School Nutrition and Wellness Policy and Procedures

The AIDB Board recognizes that childhood obesity has reached critical levels in Alabama and throughout the country. Overweight children are at a higher risk for developing severe long-term health problems. Overweight children are affected by discrimination, psychological stress, and low self-esteem. However, research indicated that obesity and subsequent diseases are largely preventable through diet and regular activity. Research also indicates that becoming physically active and maintaining a regular physical activity program significantly reduces the risk of obesity and some cancers, diabetes and other chronic diseases.

Children who eat well-balanced meals and are healthy are more likely to learn in the classroom. The board supports increased emphasis on nutrition as well as physical activity at all grade levels to enhance the well being of our youth.

1. It is the policy of the board to establish a “School Nutrition and Wellness Policy” that at a minimum shall include:
 - Goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness and model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns.
 - Nutrition guidelines for all foods made available to the student, whether given away, earned, or sold, on the school campus during the school day.
 - Food choices that are low in saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium and contain zero grams trans fat.

2. Additionally, in a positive progression to a healthier school environment, food selections on all campuses shall incorporate the following guidelines:
 - USDA guidelines (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn>)
 - Increase whole grain options.
 - Having 1 % or less fat milk as the standard beverage.
 - Increase fruit and vegetable consumption.
 - Preparation of foods in the cafeteria during the school day shall use cooking techniques to reduce fat, sugar and sodium in school meals.
 - During the school day fried foods will be eliminated with baking the cooking method of choice.
 - Drinking fountains are available in all schools, so that students can get water at meals and throughout the day.

3. Foods of minimal nutritional value will not be given away, sold, or used as incentives for students or student activities during the school day. The foods that are restricted from sale or “give away” to students are classified within four categories:
 - Smart Snack guidelines (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school>)
 - Soda Water – any carbonated beverage.
 - Water Ices – any frozen sweetened water. Such as “...sicles” and flavored ice with the exception of products that contain fruit or juice.
 - Chewing gum.
 - Certain candies – any processed foods made predominantly from sweeteners or artificial sweeteners with a variety of minor ingredients that characterize the following types: hard candy, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, spun candy, and candy coated popcorn.

4. Student will not have access to vending machines until 30 minutes after the school day is complete.
5. AIDB will establish a policy that allows exemptions for foods that exceed the established nutrition parameters as follows:
 - School approved field trips/ special events are exempt from the Nutrition and Wellness Policy. A school official must approve the date and purpose of the field trip/ special event.
 - In observance of State or National holidays.
 - For established religious holidays.
 - As part of a learning experience related to the reinforcement of established lesson plans in the classroom; this exemption, however, does not allow for an exemption toward the sale of foods as part of a business enterprise or fundraising activity.
6. All food made available for student consumption will comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented for the safety and security of the food and facility. Access to the Food Service operations are limited to Food Service Staff and authorized personnel.
7. All fund raising activities that involve the selling of food should reinforce food choices that promote good health. All events outside the school day are not affected by this recommendation and booster clubs, etc., are free to select items for sale for specific fundraising and concession sales. However, it is the goal of AIDB that every school campus should reflect healthy nutrition environments.
8. Allowable fundraisers on school campus:
 - Foods that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School standards. Example: Fruit
 - Foods that do not meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School standards but are not consumed at school.
Example: Cookie Dough Sales, Pizza Kits
 - Non-food items.
Example: School Supplies, Car Wash, Lawn Sale
9. Beginning with the school year 2006/2007. Each AIDB campus shall:
 - Designate at least 15 minutes for students to consume the breakfast meal.
 - Designate at least 20 minutes for students to consume the lunch meal.
 - Designate at least 20 minutes for students to consume the evening meal.
 - Designate at least 30 minutes of time daily, for physical activity.

10. Physical education at AIDB includes the instruction of individual activities, as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage life-long physical activity. Because AIDB is a residential school, we recognize that our schools play a critical role in providing a healthy environment for the prevention of childhood obesity. Physical activity will not only be part of the school day but extend after school hours.

Physical activity during the school day will not be withheld as punishment for any reason. Teachers and staff will use alternative ways to discipline students.

11. Nutrition education shall focus on students' eating behaviors, be based on theories and methods proven effective by research and be consistent with state health education standards. Nutrition education at all levels shall include, but not be limited to, the following essential components designed to help students learn:

- Age-appropriate nutritional knowledge, including the benefits of healthy eating, essential nutrients, nutritional deficiencies, principles of healthy weight management, The use and misuse of dietary supplements, safe food preparation, handling, and storage and cultural diversity related to food and eating.
- Age-appropriate nutrition-related skills, including, but not limited to, planning a healthy meal, understanding and using food labels and critically evaluating nutrition information, misinformation and commercial food advertising.
- How to assess one's personal eating habits, set goals for improvement and achieve these goals.

In order to reinforce and support AIDB nutrition education efforts, the AIDB Registered Dietitian is responsible for ensuring:

- All cafeterias display menu boards, posters and bulletin boards that promote good nutrition and healthy food choices.
- Nutrition instruction is closely coordinated with school's nutrition and food service operation and other components of the school health program to reinforce messages on healthy eating. To maximize classroom time, nutrition concepts shall be integrated into the instruction of other subjects where possible.
- In keeping with AIDB's nutrition program goals, all classroom reward or incentive programs involving food items will meet the requirements of AIDB's nutrition and wellness policy.
- Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.
- The AIDB Registered Dietitian, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. (<https://professionalstandards.fns.usda.gov/>)

12. Evaluation of the local Nutrition and Wellness Policy

The AIDB Registered Dietitian will review and update this policy on a periodic basis. Additionally, when possible, input from parents, students, teachers, school board members and school administrators will be considered. In an effort to measure the implementation of this policy the School Health Index developed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention may be used. This national survey tool will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the AIDB Policies and Programs for promoting health and wellness. Program changes will be made as necessary to increase the effectiveness of the policy.

13. Participating in Wellness Committee

If someone would like to participate in the wellness committee or have suggestions they would like to share please contact:

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1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
Program.Intake@usda.gov

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