

## **School District Profile**

**School District:** Bridgeport Public Schools

**Number of Schools:** 37 Schools    Elementary – 34 High Schools - 3

**Enrollment:** 21,935

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

### **Policy Intent**

The Bridgeport School District is committed to promoting clear and consistent messages that explain and reinforce healthy eating and physical activity habits. The Bridgeport School District will engage students, families, the community and the media in promoting a healthier school environment

The promotion of consistent messages in the school environment reinforces the district's commitment to student's health. Marketing materials in the cafeteria shall support the concepts and practice in the district's nutrition and physical activity policies. Families have a significant influence on student's eating and physical activity habits. Parents and Guardians must be engaged to spread the message of wellness into their households.

The Board of Education expects that all students possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices for a lifetime. The Bridgeport School District will provide nutrition experiences that positively influence student's behaviors and help develop lifelong healthy habits.

As recommended by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, school leaders of physical activity and physical education shall guide students through a process that will enable them to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness.

### **School Foods and Beverage Component:**

All Bridgeport school breakfast, lunch and snack food and beverage selections will comply with the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the State of Connecticut Child Nutrition Regulations. Bridgeport Food & Nutrition Services will strive to offer the students a diversified menu reflecting the cultural and ethnic food preferences of the Bridgeport Community.

Bridgeport Food & Nutrition Services menus will strive to offer healthy nutritious and appealing food selections that meet the student's health and nutritional needs.

## **School Meals**

- All school meals will offer a variety of fruits and vegetables and 100% fruit juices. Whenever possible, students will be offered locally grown, seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Only Low-Fat milk products will be served with school meals.
- Whole grain bread products will be served periodical in the school meals.
- Breakfast will be offered in every school before the start of the school day.
- Food & Nutrition Services will strive to create innovative ways of encouraging students to participate in the breakfast program before the start of the school day. One such program is “Breakfast on the Playground”.
- School Meals shall be planned to incorporate the basic menu concepts of balance, variety, contrast, color and eye appeal.

## **Policy Recommendation for Other Foods and Beverages**

- All a la carte selections offered in the high school snack kiosks will reflect healthy snacks and beverages that have been selected and listed by the [Snacks Meeting Connecticut's Healthy Snack Standards](#) published by the State of Connecticut Child Nutrition Offices.
- All beverages, except water, will have portion sizes of no larger those 12 ounces.
- Students will be offered single-serving portion size or portions.
- Snacks made of whole grains and food-containing fiber will be offered.
- All beverages and foods sold in school vending machines or school stores or school sponsored stores or school sponsored events during the school day shall follow the State of Connecticut general statutes.
- School Fund Raising Activities are encouraged to use non-food and beverage items or foods and beverages that meet the Connecticut’s Healthy Snack Standards.
- It is encouraged that classroom and school celebration snacks be selected from Connecticut’s Healthy Snack Standards.

## **Activities to Promote Student Wellness**

- The cafeteria staff will strive to maintain a pleasant dining environment for all students.
- Schools are encouraged to permit all full day students a daily lunch period of not less than (20) twenty minutes.
- A Qualified Food Operator (QFO) shall be assigned to each school cafeteria as required by state health regulations.
- Food & Nutrition Services shall comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.

- Bridgeport schools will continue to participate in the Provision II universal meal program offering every student breakfast, lunch and snack at no cost.
- Schools in which Summer School is conducted shall sponsor the Summer Feeding Program.

### **Communication of Wellness**

- Students shall receive positive, motivational messages, both verbal and nonverbal about healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school environment.
- Families are encouraged to support and promote healthy eating and physical activity at home.
- Schools shall partner with community organizations to provide ongoing health messages to students, parents and faculty.
- Monthly school menus will include nutritional information on a range of topics.

### **Social and Emotional Wellness**

- Mental health counseling services shall be available for all students.
- Confidential Employee Assistance Programs will be available to all employees.
- Confidential screening for stress, depression and other mental health conditions shall be available to all students.

### **Physical Activity Component**

- All schools will provide all full day students in grades kindergarten to six grade a 30-minute period of physical exercise each week.
- All schools will provide all full day students in grades seventh and eighth a 40-minute period of physical education twice a week.
- All elementary school students are encourage to participate in at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors. This period shall not be viewed as a reward or punishment.
- Supervising adults will encourage students to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity during recess. Supervising adults shall strive to monitor student's activates in the playground to encourage individual student physical activity.
- The school is encouraged to provide the space, equipment and an environment that is conducive to safe and enjoyable activity.
- The schools will discourage extended periods of inactivity (periods of three or more hours.) Schools are encouraged to provide students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to get up from their chairs and be moderately active.

- It is recommended that children 5 to 12 years of age have 60 minutes of daily physical activity, especially during daytime hours.
- The District shall strive to offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests and abilities of all students, including boys, girls and students with physical and cognitive disabilities and students with special health care needs.

### **School Based Activities**

- Extracurricular physical activity programs shall be encouraged at the middle school level.
- After school and enrichment programs shall encourage a daily period of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all after school participants.
- Classrooms shall complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle.
- Health education shall encourage students to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television or playing video games.
- Schools will encourage students to participate in physical education classes.
- The Bridgeport school district will adhere to the Connecticut Physical Fitness Education Framework.
- The District will strive to assign only a certified Physical Education teacher for physical education instruction.
- The District will strive to maintain an adequate teacher/student ratio in all physical education classes.
- The district will promote lifelong physical activity.
- The District will strive to provide professional development for physical education teachers.

### **Nutrition Education and Promotion**

The District will strive to implement a comprehensive health education program to insure that nutrition education is taught at all grade levels in an appropriate manner. Key concepts will be taught to empower students with the skills necessary to develop individual physical and nutritional choices for life.

The Administration will strive to pursue a plan for all students to receive adequate instruction and training in nutrition education. The goal of the schools will be to teach healthy and safe food choices. Schools shall strive to plan an interdisciplinary instruction, with the goal of increasing nutrition education instruction in all course study.

- The core subjects such as math, science, social studies, language arts, and consumer and family sciences will strive to infuse nutrition education lessons into the curriculum to complement and enhance the comprehensive school health education objective.

- Schools are encouraged to seek enhancement of nutrition education through the many opportunities that exist within the school and the community. Examples may include coordinated school health initiative, cafeteria based nutrition education, after school programs and nutrition promotions, events and initiative such as school/community health fairs and school gardens.

### **Nutrition Procedures**

- Food & Nutrition Services has, since 1997, required all new cafeteria employees be required to take and pass the Connecticut Food Operators Examination. Terms for permanent employment require a passing grade within the first six-month of employment.
- The cafeteria staff will maintain a pleasant dining environment for students. Cafeteria assistants (2 hour employees) will be hired as needed to facilitate this standard
- School Administrators are encouraged to allocate a daily lunch period of not less than (20) twenty minutes for all full day students.
- School Administrators are encouraged to schedule lunch waves to allow 5 to 8 minutes between lunch waves to allow cafeteria staff time to properly clean the dining room tables.
- Parents must be partners in the Wellness Policy. Parents will be made aware of the meal programs, especially breakfast, through PTO meeting, report card conference days and menus.
- Food & Nutrition Services will offer special promotion breakfast buffets in the cafeteria before the start of the school day. The cafeteria will send announcements/invitations home inviting parents and faculty to participate, at minimal cost. The Breakfast Buffets will be served on rotating bases.
- Food & Nutrition Services will strive to expand the “Breakfast on the Playground” Program to schools that have a significant number of students who report early to school to play in the playground. Breakfast on the Playground offers breakfast to those students who prefer to exercise prior to the start of the school day.

### **Physical Activity Procedures**

- All schools will strive to offer all full day students in kindergarten to fifth grade a recess period daily rain or shine.
- The Administrators will strive to schedule the recess period in the school day for 20 minutes. It is encouraged that students have their recess period prior to their scheduled lunch wave. Studies indicate that physical activity prior to lunch can increase the nutrient intake and reduce food waste.
- The District will encourage an exercise activity, such as stretching, for students who have remained indoors for extended periods of time. This exercise is particularly important on district testing days. Students need to stretch their bodies as well as their minds on these days

- Elementary schools with a junior high component will offer intramural sports for both boys and girls. Coaches and faculty should encourage all students to participate in tryouts.
- The schools will offer and faculty will encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Schools will work in conjunction with neighborhood community to encourage students to use outdoor facilities such as a basketball courts and the school playgrounds after the school day is over.

### **Measurement and Evaluation**

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure compliance with the established district-wide Wellness Policy.

- In each school building the principal or designee shall ensure compliance with the Wellness Policy and shall report on their school's compliance to the Wellness Policy Committee annually.
- The Bridgeport Wellness Committee will monitor, review and revise as necessary the Wellness Policy.
- The Bridgeport Wellness Committee will provide an evaluation report annually to the Bridgeport Board of Education.