

School Wellness Committee Meeting Agenda

Date: Jan 25th, 2024

Time: 9:45am - 10:15am (30min)

Location: MS Workroom Meeting Space

Members Present: Will Palmer, Meghan Wagner, Dawn Bowler, Melanie Berube, Sarah Funke, Xavier Fowler, Kate Parsons

Welcome & Why We Are Here:

Our Goal: To foster a healthy environment for our students by reviewing school policies around nutrition and overall health.

- 1. Review and Discuss the updated school wellness policies (below). Identify any areas that may need revision or improvement.**

Current policy: Meals from Home / *Healthy Food Policy*: ([SPCS Student and Family Handbook 23-24, p.30](#))

The proposed updated policy, to be submitted for board approval:

Meals from Home / Balanced Food Policy SY 24-25

Families may send breakfast, lunch, and snacks to school with their child provided it is in one bag or lunch box labeled with the student's name. Students will not have access to a refrigerator or microwave. When sending lunch to school please keep in mind nutritious foods that do not interfere with student learning. Please consider packing colorful fruits and vegetables (blueberries, cantaloupe, carrots, and celery sticks), whole grains (such as those found in wheat bread or brown rice), lean protein (such as chicken), and 100% fruit juices.

Note: A small, sweet treat (e.g., a cookie or brownie) is allowed when accompanying a lunch.

The items listed below are prohibited at Springfield Prep:

- Candy or sweets (except for a small, sweet treat to accompany lunch)
- Sodas (including diet sodas)
- Beverages/anything containing caffeine (excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk which contains trivial amounts of caffeine)

If any of the above-listed items are brought to school, students will be required to refrain from eating or drinking them in school.

Students cannot share foods or beverages brought from home due to allergies and other health concerns. Springfield Prep reserves the right to prohibit additional food items as allergy needs necessitate.

At lunch students may receive a 2-minute warning, at the end of their mealtime to signify that lunch is coming to an end.

All Springfield Prep students will have access to school breakfast, lunch, and snacks every day at no cost to the family, and to water throughout the day.

^^Include note about Vending Machine^^ Middle school students during select times.
Supplementing meals costs money, not always available every day.

2. Review and Discuss updates to [Staff Implementation](#) of the current policy:

Proposal that we send out an update/reminder to staff. What is the best way to ensure this *lands* with staff? Any messaging should include the following information:

- ❖ We understand that students and families face several considerations when choosing food to send to school and that enforcing strict food policies can be difficult. Based on feedback from staff members, students, and families, we have updated Springfield Prep's balanced Food Policy (above).
- ❖ Please see below for guidance and reach out to the health office for clarification when needed (nurse@springfieldprep.org).
- ❖ We are no longer sending slips home because we believe a conversation is a better way to enforce this policy and provide clarification and rationale.
- ❖ **When a student brings lunch to school that violates our food policies, please:**
 - Follow the steps below (send home, provide a school meal option, and explain to the student why they cannot eat what they brought).
 - **If the student repeatedly brings food that does not meet the policy or is upset with the policy**, contact the health office (nurse@springfieldprep.org). The health office can support contacting the family to discuss the policy.
- ❖ **Note:** At **lunch or afternoon snack only**, students **are permitted to eat chips or a small, sweet treat** (e.g., a cookie or brownie) as part of their meal.
- ❖ If a student brings a large candy bar, bag of chips, or other food or snack that goes against balanced food policies, please tell the student to take only a **reasonable portion** and put the rest away in their backpack. Explain that this food is not allowed in school.
- ❖ Should you notice that a student has a lunch composed primarily of chips, candy, or other less nutritious food, please provide the student with a school-provided lunch in addition to their home lunch to promote a balanced meal. (Provided they do not have allergies - you can ask the nutrition team if you do not know).
- ❖ **Do not throw away a student's prohibited food.** Instead, send the food home in their backpack whenever possible.
- ❖ When an elementary student arrives at school late with home food, they'll be asked to eat the food in the cafeteria for 5 minutes with Ops supervision. This is in an effort to minimize class disruption associated with outside food (e.g. Dunkin Donuts or Mcdonald's breakfast).
- ❖ Late students who eat school-provided breakfast may go directly to class to eat there until **8:15**, after this time they will be invited to sit in the cafeteria to eat breakfast before joining class

- ❖ Families are not permitted to bring in food to share with other students or for class consumption (i.e. cookies for the last day of school, birthday treats, etc.)

3. Brainstorm ideas and initiatives to promote wellness within the school.

- Discuss strategies for communicating wellness initiatives to the school community
 - During the week of Feb 5th the health office will send a reminder to all families reminding them of policies ahead of Valentine/Friendship Day.
- Prioritize and select specific initiatives to pursue. In the last meeting, we discussed:
 - Posters/advertisements in cafes (My Plate etc.)
 - Include posters about Water/hydration
- Assign responsibilities for each initiative
 - Review language around the 'weight loss' incentive offered by BCBS. Is this aligned with our BALANCED language policy.

4. Reduction of Food Waste

- We offer *leftover* snacks and other suitable items to be used by students in afterschool programs (these snacks are not included in food counts or claimed through NSLP)
- When we have a surplus Ops have periodically donated to food banks including a church in Belchertown and at the Amherst Survival Center. We are looking into re-partnering with Rachel's Table & Springfield Rescue Mission to set up pick-ups of food items we do not use at school.
- Other ways to

5. Any other Business

- Please raise any additional items, suggestions, or concerns.
- SUNBUTTER & JELLY SARNIES as an option
- Sugar content of snacks
- **Hot breakfast items?**
- Sample menu for students showcasing protein alternatives // outside of what is offered at lunch & meals.

6. Schedule next meeting

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School Wellness Committee Meeting Agenda

Date: Oct 5th, 2023

Time: 9:45am - 10:15am (30min)

Location: MS Workroom Meeting Space

Remote Attendees: WP to call MW on speaker phone

Members Present: Will Palmer, Meghan Wagner (remote), Dawn Bowler, Melanie Berube, Sarah Funke, Xavier Fowler.

Excused: Kate Parsons

Welcome & Why We Are Here:

Our Goal: To foster a healthy environment for our students by reviewing school policies around nutrition and overall health.

7. Review and Discuss the current school wellness policies (below). Identify any areas that may need revision or improvement.

Meals from Home/Healthy Food Policy ([SPCS Student and Family Handbook 23-24, p.30](#))

Families may send breakfast, lunch, and snack to school with their child provided that it is contained in one bag or lunch box which is labeled with the student's name. Students will not have access to a refrigerator or microwave. If you are sending lunch to school with your child, we ask that you send in nutritious foods that do not interfere with student learning. Please pack colorful fruits and vegetables (carrots and celery sticks), whole grains (such as those found in wheat bread or brown rice), lean protein (such as chicken), and 100% fruit juices.

Note: A small, sweet treat (e.g., a cookie or brownie) is allowed if accompanying a lunch.

The items listed below are prohibited at Springfield Prep:

- Candy or sweets (except for a small, sweet treat to accompany lunch)
- Sodas (including diet sodas)
- Beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine)

If any of the above-listed items are brought to school, students will be required to refrain from eating or drinking them in school. Students will have access to water at all times.

Students are not allowed to share foods or beverages brought from home due to allergy concerns. Springfield Prep reserves the right to prohibit additional food items as allergy needs necessitate.

8. Review and Discuss the Staff Implementation of the SPCS Healthy Food Policy, (developed for 2022-23) (below). Identify any areas that may need revision or improvement.

- ❖ We understand that students and families face a number of considerations when choosing food to send to school and that enforcing strict food policies can be difficult. Based on feedback from staff members, students, and families, we have updated Springfield Prep's Healthy Food Policy (above).
 - ❖ Please see below for guidance and reach out to the health office for clarification when needed (nurse@springfieldprep.org).
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Summary:

- ❖ We are no longer sending slips home because we believe a conversation is a better way to enforce this policy and provide clarification and rationale.
 - ❖ **When a student brings lunch to school that clearly violates our Healthy Food Policy, please:**
 - Follow the steps below (send home, provide a school meal option, and explain to the student why they cannot eat what they brought).
 - **If the student repeatedly brings food that does not meet the policy or is upset with the policy**, contact the health office (nurse@springfieldprep.org). The health office will contact the family to discuss the policy.
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Policy Details:

- ❖ **Note:** At **lunch or afternoon snack only**, students **are permitted to eat chips or a small, sweet treat** (e.g., a cookie or brownie) as part of their meal.
- ❖ If a student brings a large candy bar, bag of chips, or other unhealthy food or snack, please tell the student to take only a **reasonable portion** and put the rest away in their backpack. Explain that this food is not allowed in school.
- ❖ Should you notice that a student has a lunch composed primarily of chips, candy or other less nutritious food, please provide the student with the school-provided lunch to promote a balanced meal. (Provided they do not have allergies - you can ask the nutrition team if you do not know).
- ❖ **Do not throw away a student's prohibited food.** Instead, send the food home in their backpack whenever possible.
- ❖ When an elementary student arrives at school late with home food, they'll be asked to eat the food in the cafeteria for 5 minutes with Ops supervision. This is in an effort to minimize class disruption associated with outside food (e.g. Dunkin Donuts or McDonalds breakfast). Late students who eat school-provided breakfast may go directly to class to eat there.
- ❖ Families are not permitted to bring in food for class consumption (i.e. cookies for the last day of school, birthday treats, etc.)

9. Brainstorm ideas and initiatives to promote wellness within the school.

- Discuss strategies for communicating wellness initiatives to the school community
- Prioritize and select specific initiatives to pursue.
- Assign responsibilities for each initiative
 - Moderation. Not labeling for kids.

- Snacks & breakfast might have too much sugar.
 - Suggestions for removal = no more raisins, honey buns,
 - Suggestions for addition = Overnight oats, carrots w/ranch, grapes, popcorn, sun butter jelly sandwich as an alt. meal. Apple SLICES and sun butter, cheese sticks, rice cakes, pita/hummus?, clementines? Caesar salad, no more JUST cheese sandwiches.
 - Explore HOT breakfast options. Protein
 - Can we add pitchers of water to the lunch table?
- Meatless meals on occasion: exposure to '*protein alternatives*'

10. Any other Business

- Please raise any additional items, suggestions, or concerns.
 - Posters/advertisements in cafes (My Plate etc.)
 - Include posters about WATER / hydration

11. Schedule next meeting

In the New Year (Jan). Same time

Springfield Prep Charter School Wellness Committee

Members:

- **Will Palmer**, Director of Student Services Operations
- **Meghan Wagner**, COO
- **Dawn Bowler**, Lead Nurse
- **Melanie Berube**, 4th Grade Teacher & Grade Level Chair
- **Sarah Funke**, Special Education Teacher and Chair
- **Xavier Fowler**, Physical Education Teacher
- **Kate Parsons**, Elementary Assistant Principal