

**Round Valley Joint Elementary School District**  
**Wellness Policy and Statement of Responsibility**

**Reviewed and Board Approved 12/16/2024**

The Round Valley Joint Elementary School District (RVJESD) recognizes that there is a link between nutrition education, the food served in schools and physical activity, and that wellness is affected by all of these components. The Board also recognizes the important connection between a healthy diet and a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school.

The Board recognizes that it is the district's role, as part of the larger community, to model and actively practice, through policies and procedures: the promotion of individual and family health, physical activity and good nutrition.

The Governing Board further recognizes that sharing and enjoyment of food, and participation in physical activities, are fundamental experiences for all people and are a primary way to nurture and celebrate our relationships and traditions. These fundamental human experiences are vital bridges for building friendships, forming inter-generational bonds, and strengthening communities.

**Wellness Policy Preamble**

- Whereas, a healthy diet is connected to a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school;
- Whereas, each day, students and their parents trust that the food offered at school is wholesome and safe, and that the Governing Board is responsible for ensuring the safety of foods provided at school;
- Whereas, fresh and seasonal foods are a primary and recommended source of nutrition for growing children, and pre-packaged, highly processed foods will be discouraged and minimal;

Whereas, the ritual of sharing meals is becoming more scarce in our busy lives, RVJESD will maintain the goal of providing two events a year inviting current RVS families to share a nutritious meal provided by the

school. The shared meals will generally accompany a school event or holiday.

- Whereas, public school is an excellent place to nurture and preserve America's food traditions through storytelling, recipe swapping, exposure to new foods, cooking classes, garden experiences and food served in the cafeteria. RVJESD will make it a goal for these connections to be integrated in the core curriculum of science, math, language arts, history, geography, and social studies.

## **Wellness Policy Requirement 1**

### **Set goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness**

#### **Nutrition Education**

To help ensure the health and wellbeing of each student attending RVJESD, the Governing Board encourages teachers, administration, and classified staff to recognize the lunch period as an integral part of the educational program of the district, and work to implement the goals of this policy.

#### The Governing Board will ensure that:

- No student in the Round Valley Joint Elementary School District goes hungry during school
- RVJESD participates in the Universal Meal Program and makes available a nutritious breakfast and lunch, to every student at school so that students are prepared to learn to their fullest potential. These meals are provided free of cost to the families.
- RVJESD shall establish an instructional garden (raised bed and/or container), of sufficient size to provide students with experiences in planting, harvesting, preparation, serving, and tasting foods, integrated with nutrition education and core curriculum, and articulated with state standards.
- Staff shall encourage hands-on experiences in the gardens and occasionally the school kitchen for all grade levels. In addition, studies will be exposed to farm/ranch tours and farmers' markets tours, when possible,

with core curriculum so that students begin to understand how food reaches the table and the implications that it has for their health and future.

- Sampling and tasting in school gardens and classrooms shall be encouraged as part of nutrition.
- Staff is encouraged to utilize food from school gardens and local farms in instruction.
- Schools shall use food as one of the components of education about human events, history, and celebrations, and shall encourage classes to use food and cooking as part of a learning experience that sheds light on the customs, history, traditions, and cuisine of various countries and cultures.
- RVJESD shall promote food-centered activities that are healthful, enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and participatory, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, school gardens, and cafeteria kitchen visits
- All school eating areas shall contain free, safe, drinking water sources and facilities for washing hands.
- The district shall provide information to employees about wellness resources and services that support health, safety, and well-being.
- Meals will be attractively presented and served in a pleasant environment with sufficient time for eating, while fostering good eating habits, enjoyment of meals, good manners, and respect for others.

## **Physical Activity**

The Governing Board recognizes the positive benefits of physical activity for student health and academic achievement. Recognizing that physical education is a crucial and integral part of a child's education, the district will provide opportunities to ensure that students engage in healthful levels of vigorous physical activity to promote and develop the student's physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. Besides promoting high levels of personal achievement and positive self-image, physical education activities should teach students how to cooperate in the achievement of common goals. The components of the district's physical education program shall include a variety of kinesthetic activities, including team, individual, and cooperative sports and physical activities.

The Governing Board will ensure that:

- Physical education staff and teachers shall develop and implement a standards-based curriculum that connects and demonstrates the interrelationship between physical activity, good nutrition, and health.
- The district shall enhance the quality of physical education curricula and increase training of physical education teachers/staff through site-based and countywide staff development.
- Students shall have opportunities to enjoy physical activity through participation in gardening programs.
- All students, Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, shall have the opportunity to participate in ski P.E., with approximately 5 ski days during the school calendar year (weather permitting), at no cost. Transportation and instruction provided through RVJESD.
- An appropriate alternative activity shall be provided for students with a physical disability that may restrict excessive physical exertion.
- When inclement weather prohibits outdoor activities, the school will make every attempt to offer alternate physical activity indoors.
- The school shares information with families regarding the opportunities for physical activities such as AYSO, Bishop Swim Team, and Little League Baseball and ICOE summer camps.
- Physical education staff shall appropriately limit the amount or type of physical exercise required of students during air pollution episodes, excessively hot weather, or other inclement conditions.
- Staff is deterred (discouraged or prevented) from using or withholding physical activity to punish or manage behavior.
- In addition to required physical education, students at the elementary level have the opportunity to participate in daily recess and physical activity. The district shall provide daily recess period(s) for elementary school students, featuring time for unstructured but supervised active play during which students are encouraged (verbally and through the provision of space and equipment) to engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

## **Physical Activity Exemptions**

The Superintendent or designee may grant temporary exemption from physical education under any of the following conditions:

- The student is ill or injured and a modified program to meet his/her needs cannot be provided.

## **Professional Development**

The Governing Board recognizes that using the local food system as a context for learning, and embedding nutrition education in a school's curriculum, generates new content for students to learn. It also requires teachers to learn new content and new strategies for teaching it. For food service personnel, new menus require new ways of purchasing, preparing, and presenting foods. The transition to an educational model that makes food and health central parts of the academic curriculum requires professional development.

The Governing Board will ensure that:

- Regular professional development will be provided to enable the Cafeteria Staff to become full partners in providing excellent school meals.
- Nutrition Services Staff and district teachers will receive professional development jointly, when available and appropriate, to facilitate a more coordinated approach to integrating classroom lessons with experiences in gardens, kitchen classrooms, and the cafeteria.

## **Waste Reduction**

The Governing Board will ensure that:

- Meals prepared at school utilize fresh, whole, unpackaged, unprocessed, or minimally processed ingredients, to the maximum extent possible, in order to preserve nutritional content and reduce packaging waste.
- Students and staff are allowed and encouraged to carry and fill refillable water bottles. Safe and clean drinking water is conveniently available to all individuals on campus.

## **Wellness Policy Requirement 2**

### **Establish nutrition guidelines for all foods available on campus during the school day.**

Part of the educational mission of the Round Valley Joint Elementary School District is to improve the health of the entire community by teaching students and families' ways to establish and maintain life-long healthy eating habits. The mission shall be accomplished through nutrition education, physical education, garden-based learning experiences, core academic content in the classroom, and the food served in schools.

#### The Governing Board will ensure that:

- All students are provided 2 free and nutritious meals per day of the calendar school year.
- A shift from food-based planning to nutrient-based planning (as set forth in USDA guidelines) will be considered when it allows for more flexible food selection.
- Schools will provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down for breakfast and lunch.
- Nutrition Services Staff will coordinate their menus with seasonal production, and with production in school gardens, so that school meals will reflect seasonality and regional agriculture, whenever possible.
- Teachers will encourage “Healthy Snacks” and “Healthy Parties” options for snacks and parties.
- Foods used during classes as part of the learning process, for fundraisers that take place at school, for at- school parties, or school-sponsored events, shall be encouraged to follow the nutrition guidelines for snacks at school, setting an example of healthy, safe, and delicious.
- Parents and staff are encouraged to provide party snacks that are consistent with the goals of the policy, and to see to it that such items are served after the lunch hour whenever possible.
- RVJESD shall not have vending machines or school stores accessible by students.

### **Wellness Policy Requirement 3**

#### **Assure that guidelines for school meals are not less restrictive than those set at the federal level by the Secretary of Agriculture**

- The RVJESD Administration and cafeteria director will review this policy and ensure that the policies are not less restrictive than those set by the Secretary of Agriculture or state law.

### **Wellness Policy Requirement 4**

#### **Establish a plan for measuring the impact and implementation of the local wellness policy.**

The School Board recognizes that the Wellness Committee is responsible for addressing food-related topics of concern to the school community and making Wellness Policy recommendations to the Board of Education.

In conjunction with the adoption of a district Wellness Policy, the district shall establish a standing Wellness Committee, to remain actively engaged with food service in monitoring the implementation of the Wellness Policy and in presenting recommendations to the Governing Board. The following guidelines pertain to the duties and responsibilities of standing Wellness Committees and food service to work cooperatively in evaluating success.

The standing Wellness Committee shall present to the Governing Board an Annual communication each year on the status of meeting the Wellness Policy goals. In the communication the Wellness Committee shall develop an evaluation summary that shall:

- Contain recommendations for improving the delivery and cost effectiveness of food services if applicable.
- Ensure that all students, as specified in the policy, are considered by the School Wellness Committee.
- Solicit school family input through surveys, and interviews, and information gathered be forwarded to the district Wellness Committee.

## **Public Policy**

The School Board will work cooperatively with the Wellness Committee and through Children's Advocates throughout the state to advance goals of wellness.

## **Wellness Policy Requirement 5**

Invite parents, students, and representatives of the school authority, the school board, and school administrators, and the public, to provide input/feedback regarding the local Wellness Policy.

## **Establishing a Wellness Committee**

The Board shall initiate a process to establish a Wellness Committee as a working group of the district. The Wellness Committee shall review the existing Wellness Policy annually providing input and feedback on the policy's successes and goals. The process to form the Wellness Committee shall be openly announced, accessible, equitable, and inclusive. The Wellness Committee shall be a diverse and inclusive working group, representative of the demographics of the school district as a whole.

The following guidelines pertain to the establishment of Wellness Committees.

The Wellness Committee shall meet annually at hours convenient for public participation, and for sufficient time to conduct the group's business.

## **Wellness Policy Requirement 6**

### **Mental Health**

The Governing Board recognizes the importance of mental health in our school system as well as in our community. We commit to supporting and increasing access to both prevention and treatment services whenever possible.

The RVJESD will assist with referrals and appointments of school based counseling services at the school site for students experiencing social and/or emotional difficulties.



The district will provide a drug and tobacco free environment and prevention education programs appropriate to age.

The *Healthy Kids Survey* will be administered to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade annually.

### **Equal Opportunity**

The Governing Board recognizes that Round Valley Joint Elementary School District is an Equal Opportunity Provider

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