Chaplin Elementary School and Parish Hill Middle/High School Student Wellness Policy

It is the belief of the Chaplin Elementary School and Parish Hill Middle/High School to strive to make a significant contribution to the general well-being, mental and physical capacity and learning ability of each student and afford them the opportunity to fully participate in the educational process. The Board of Education promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, health education, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. The district supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of exceptional nutrition and physical activity, our schools contribute to the basic health status of our students. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that no child is left behind.

Part 1: Nutrition Education:

Our district is committed to nutrition education. Nutrition lessons are integrated into the health education program and are consistent with the State of Connecticut's health education standards/guidelines/framework. The district's goals are to provide the knowledge and skills necessary to promote overall health and wellness. All elementary school and middle/high school students receive comprehensive nutrition education, which is incorporated into health class from grades K-12. At the middle/high school level, nutrition education is also integrated into the culinary arts program. At the elementary school level, students can be involved in the school greenhouse club.

Part 2: Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals:

Our district assures compliance with USDA nutrition standards for all reimbursable school meals. Schools will always comply with UDSA meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for the ages and grade levels served.

Breakfast Program: Both schools will provide breakfast through the USDA school breakfast program. Morning bus routes will be scheduled to allow students to arrive at school in time to eat breakfast.

Protecting Privacy of Students/Handling Unpaid Balances: Application for free/reduced priced meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year. The application is also available on the district websites. An income guideline form is sent home with the application so families can see where they fall on the scale and if they may qualify. The district will take steps to ensure that students qualifying for free or reduced-price meals are not overtly identified in any way. A student and family's privacy is protected by having one person (the application processor) designated to collect and review applications. The information is then shared with the food service director only. The school will reach out to families via phone to let them know if the application was approved. A students status will never be displayed at the point of sale. It is prohibited for students with unpaid balances to be shamed in any way. Schools must serve students a full reimbursable meal, regardless of whether the student has money to pay or owes money on their account. Schools will reach out to the family of a child with an unpaid balance to assess whether the child is eligible for free or reduced priced meals.

School meals shall be made attractive to students by appealing to their taste preferences. After obtaining their food, students will have at least 20 minutes to eat lunch. Chaplin Elementary School gets a 30-minute lunch break and Parish Hill gets a 21 minute lunch break. Free water will be available to all students. Water fountains or water filling stations are located either in the cafeteria or the immediate area.

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutrition Professionals. School nutrition personnel will also be up to date with ServSafe Certifications.

Part 3: Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages

Chaplin Elementary School and Parish Hill Middle/High School comply and follow Healthy Foods Certification standards and USDA nutrition standards for all food and beverages sold to students outside of a school meal. The district follows all federal and state nutrition standards for ALL foods served in schools. All food items/beverages served or offered to students during the school day (from midnight prior, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day) will meet all federal, state, and local standards for all nutrient and competitive food guidelines.

All fundraising projects involving the sale of food and beverages to students on school premises are required to always follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverage requirements of the state statute. There will be no competitive foods or beverages sold during the school day, there are no exemptions.

Beverages containing caffeine will not be sold on either campus. Only, milk, water, and 100% juice drinks shall be sold during the school day.

Healthy snacks such as those following the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (limiting portion size, total fat, saturated fat, and grams of added sugar) are strongly encouraged at class parties or other school celebrations. Although non-food alternatives are encouraged as an alternative. The use of food or candy as a classroom award is prohibited.

Snacks are not sold at after school programs or before school care. Students are asked to bring their own snack when attending after school club. Free drinking water is always available throughout the school day. Students and staff have access to drinking fountains and water bottle filling stations. Students are also encouraged to bring in bottled water from home.

Section 4: Physical Education and Physical Activity

The physical education curriculum for grades K-12 will be aligned with established state physical education standards. As recommended by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), a school certified leader of physical education shall guide students through a process that will enable them to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness through the following:

1. Expose students to a wide variety of physical activities.
2. Teach physical skills to help maintain a lifetime of health and fitness.
3. Individualize intensity of activities.
4. Focus feedback on doing your best rather than on product.
5. Be active role models.

6. Physical activity opportunities shall be provided at each school for families and community members.
7. Introduce developmentally appropriate components of a health-related assessment (CT Physical Fitness Assessment) to the students at an early age to prepare them for future assessments. Physical fitness data will be collected and analyzed over time.
8. Students shall have the opportunity to be physically active in after school activities, including physical activity clubs and intramurals.

All students in grades PreK-6 are provided two 40-minute physical education classes per week. Physical education classes in middle/high school are 50 minutes each. Students take a minimum of 200 minutes of PE per week. High school students need 1 full credit of PE to graduate.

Exemptions: Schools will not allow students to be exempt for required physical education class time or credit. For example, it is not permitted for a student to not take PE class because of enrollment in other courses such as math, science, or vocational training.

Substitutions: Schools will not allow substitutions for the physical education time requirement. For example, students are not allowed to be exempt from PE class because they are engaged in another physical activity such as school sports.

Physical education for grades Pre-K through 12 is required to be taught by a certified/licensed teacher who is endorsed to teach physical education. The school district shall provide all physical education teachers with annual professional development opportunities that are focused on physical education/physical activity topics and competence specifically for physical education teachers.

Recess (pertains to Chaplin Elementary only) provides opportunities for physical activity, which helps students stay alert and attentive in class and provides other educational and social benefits. A minimum of 20 minutes of supervised recess time shall be provided for all students. Active play and socialization should be encouraged. Staff members shall not deny participation in recess or other physical activity opportunities as a form of discipline or punishment. Physical activity may not be assigned to students because of poor behavior or punishment for any reason. Teachers may use physical activity as a reward (extra recess when time allows).

Section 5: Wellness Promotion and Marketing

School staff are encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. A fitness room is available to all students and staff to utilize before or after school at the middle/high school location. To support the health and well-being of our staff, blood pressure monitors have been placed in designated staff areas. These monitors are available for employees to check their blood pressure as needed, promoting awareness and proactive management of their health. Staff are encouraged to utilize this resource as part of their personal health routine. As part of our commitment to fostering a healthy and supportive workplace we provide access to WellSpark a wellness program designed to help employees achieve their personal health goals. WellSpark offers resources such as digital wellness tools, health coaching and educational sessions to support mental and emotional well-being. Employees are encouraged to engage with WellSpark to enhance their overall wellness and take advantage of the available programs tailored to their needs. Fit and Fun family engagement nights also take place twice a year promoting fun physical activities for students, their families and staff.

Physical Activity Rewards/Punishments: Students shall not be required to engage in physical activity as punishment. For example, students may not be singled out to run extra laps or perform other physical activities that the entire class is not engaged in, as a behavioral consequence. Also, physical activities (including recess and PE) will not be withheld from students as a punishment for poor behavior or incomplete class work.

Wellness Marketing: The healthiest choices, such as fruit, vegetables, and salads are prominently displayed and promoted in the cafeteria. Posters and menus are displayed around the school and cafeteria to promote healthy school meals. Information is also posted on bulletin boards about the importance of eating healthy and where our milk comes from. Marketing on school campus will be limited to those products that are allowed to be sold according to the district's nutrition standards. For example, there will not be signs promoting soda or candy.

Criteria for selecting educational materials for the classroom shall be expanded to include review of advertising content. Every effort will be made to select materials free of brand names/logos and illustrations of unhealthy food. The district will not expose students to food marketing of any kind. All advertising in school publications and school media outlets, for example, in-school television or public announcements, must be approved by the principal.

Section 6: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

A school wide Wellness Committee is established for the purpose of monitoring the implementation of the school's Wellness Policy and it's nutrition and physical activity components through the superintendent or his/her designee. The members of this committee include, school administrators, food service directors, physical and health education teachers, health care professionals, parents, PTO members, and interested community members. The committee meets a minimum of twice per school year to review nutrition and physical activity policies, evidence on student health impact, and effective impact on programs. Triennially, the policy will be reviewed, and any appropriate changes or revisions will be made to increase its effectiveness. This report along with a copy of the wellness policy will be posted on each school's website.

The compliance designee is Superintendent Andrew Skarzynski. In addition, Principal Kevin Chavez (Chaplin Elementary School) and Principal Tom McKenna (Parish Hill Middle/High School) will be responsible for the implementation, evaluation, and effectiveness of this policy.