

Wellness Policy

Runnelstown Elementary School



Revised April 2025

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Rationale:

The link between health of students and learning is well documented. If children are to be successful in school they cannot be tired, hungry, sick, suffering from drug abuse, or worried that school is an unsafe environment in which they could become a victim of a violent act. It has become apparent that problems such as poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, substance abuse, depression, teen

pregnancy, obesity, bullying, and more – can adversely affect not only a child’s health, but also his or her *ability to learn!* And that is precisely why a coordinated approach to school health can make a difference! A coordinated approach to school health improves kids’ health and their capacity to learn through the support of families, schools, and communities working together. At its very core, a coordinated approach to school health is about keeping students healthy over time, reinforcing positive healthy behaviors throughout the school day, and making it clear that *good health and learning go hand in hand.*

Goal:

All students in Runnelstown School shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices that promote healthy lifestyles. All staff at Runnelstown Elementary School are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

To meet this goal, Runnelstown Elementary School adopts this school wellness policy with the following commitments to implementing a coordinated approach to school health. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.

In determining these goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness, the Runnelstown School Health Council has reviewed and considered evidence-based strategies.

Nutrition Environment and Services

Runnelstown Elementary School will:

- **Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.**
- **Offer school breakfast and snack programs (where approved and applicable) with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.**
- **Promote participation in school meal programs to families and staff.**
- **Operate all Child Nutrition Programs with school foodservice staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code 2001).**
- **Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code 2002).**

- **Include goals for nutrition promotion, nutrition education, physical activity and other school based activities to promote student wellness.**
- **Implement Nutrition Standards as adopted by the State Board of Education in accordance with the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4011),**
 - **Healthy food and beverage choices;**
 - **Healthy food preparation;**
 - **Marketing of healthy food choices to students, staff and parents;**
 - **Food preparation ingredients and products;**

- **Minimum/maximum time allotted for students and staff lunch and breakfast;**
 - **Availability of food items during the lunch and breakfast periods of the Child Nutrition Breakfast and Lunch Programs;**
 - **Methods to increase participation in the Child Nutrition School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.**
 - **Establish guidelines in accordance with the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. (See Nutrition Environment and Services section of the Tools That Work- Your guide to Success for Building a Healthy School toolkit that is found on the Office of Healthy Schools website at <http://www.mdek12.org/OHS>)**
 - **Establish standards for all foods and beverages provided but not sold to students during the school day (e.g. in classroom parties, classroom snacks brought by parents, or other foods given as incentives).**
 - **Establish guidelines in accordance with USDA Smart Snacks in Schools for the sale of food items for fundraising.**
 - **Use Smart Snacks Resources to educate the school community about the importance of offering healthy snacks for students and staff members.**
 - **<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>**
- Smart Snacks Product Calculator:**
- **The Alliance for a Healthier Generation Smart Snacks Product Calculator is an effective online instrument that has been determined by the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service to be accurate in assessing product compliance with the federal requirements for Smart Snacks in Schools. The calculator can be used for food and beverage products.**
<https://www.healthiergeneration.org/>

Food Safe Schools

Runnelstown Elementary School will:

- **Implement a food safety program based on HACCP principles for all school meals, as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs and ensure that the food service permit is current for the school site. HACCP Principles for K-12 schools can be downloaded at https://fns-prod.asureedge.us/sites/default/files/Food_Safety_HACCPGuidance.pdf**
- **Develop a food safety education plan for all staff and students, consistent with Fight Bac® (www.fightbac.org) and other national standards for safe food handling at home and in school.**
- **Ensure that all staff has received instructions to support food safety on the school campus. Food Safety resources have been developed by the Office of Child Nutrition to assist with the training of school staff members. These resources which include a training power-point presentation, food Safety Post Test and Food Safety Post Test Answer Key can be found on the Office of Healthy Schools website at <http://www.mde.k12.org/OHS>**
- **All school personnel (school board members, administrators, teachers, school nurses, instructional and health services paraprofessionals, foodservice staff, custodians and facilities managers, and administrative support staff) will receive copies of the Local School Wellness Policy to include food safety policies and procedures and relevant professional development.**

- **Adequate access to hand washing facilities and supplies will be available whenever and wherever students, staff, and families prepare, handle, or consume food.**
- **The food safety assurance plan must address strategies that minimize risks for students and staff who have food allergies and intolerances.**
- Establish a cafeteria environment conducive to a positive dining experience, with socializing among students and between students and adults; with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct and voice level; and with adults who model healthy habits by eating with the students.
- Eliminate use of food as rewards for student accomplishment and the withholding of food as punishment (e.g., restricting a child's selection of flavored milk at mealtime due to behavior problems). Also do not use any type of physical activity as a means of punishment.

Physical Activity/Physical Education

Runnelstown Elementary School will:

- **Provide 150 minutes per week of activity-based instruction for all students in grades K-8 (in accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference -2014 Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards 27.1.**
- **Provide Physical Education/Activity in accordance with the Physical Education Rules and Regulations as approved by the State Board of Education in compliance with the Mississippi Healthy Students Act (State Board of Education Policy 4012).**
- **Require fitness testing for all 5th grade students.**
- **Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities, which are student centered and taught in a positive environment.**
- **Instruction must be based on the 2013-2014 Mississippi Physical Education Framework.**
- **Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007 (Senate Bill 2369).**
- Provide staff-monitored recreational activities that promote moderate physical activity during all outdoor and indoor recess times.

STATE REQUIREMENTS MONITORED BY THE OFFICE OF HEALTHY SCHOOLS:

Health Education

Runnelstown Elementary School will:

- **Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007, which requires 45 minutes per week of health education instruction as defined by the State Board of Education grades K through 8.**

- Instruction must be based on the Mississippi Contemporary Health for grades K-8.

Health Services

Runnelstown Elementary School will:

- Ensure all school nurses are working under the guidelines of the 2013 *Mississippi School Nurse Procedures and Standards of Care*.
- Provide for teachers and staff training regarding signs and symptoms of asthma. (MS Code Sections 37-11-71 and 73-25-37)
- Every child who has been diagnosed with asthma must have an asthma action plan on file in the school office.
- Know the district anaphylaxis policy. Providing training by a healthcare professional, preferably a school nurse, for the individuals that will be responsible for implementing the policy at the school site. (MS Code Sections 37-11-71 and 73-25-37)
- The School nurse should attend at least one MDE sponsored training each school year.

Counseling, Psychological and Social Services/Social and Emotional Climate

Runnelstown Elementary School will:

- Adhere to the details outlined in the Licensure Guidelines (436 or 451) when hiring guidance counselors and psychologists. The state does not have a policy specifically outlining the requirements for a school social worker. For licensure as a social worker in the state of Mississippi, a candidate must: provide verification of a baccalaureate degree in social work from a college or university accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) or Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and scores a minimum of 70 on the ASWB basic exam.
- Abide by Mississippi Code 37-9-79 (Amend 2014) as the school provides for counseling and guidance for students.
- Hire school guidance counselors with a minimum of a Master's Degree in Guidance and Counseling, or in an emergency situation, an appropriate certification as determined by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development. MS Code 37-9-79- (Amended 2014-Senate Bill 2423)
- Hire school counselors who agree to abide by the American School Counselor Association Code of Ethics.
- Ensure that all school guidance counselors provide comprehensive counseling services such as:
 - Academic and personal/social counseling
 - Student assessment and assessment counseling
 - Career and educational counseling
 - Individual and group counseling
 - Crisis intervention and preventive counseling
 - Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, the State Department of Education shall require that local school districts conduct in-service training on suicide prevention education for all school district employees. Thereafter, only new employees are required to have training.

The Mississippi Department of Mental Health will be responsible for developing the

content of the training (HB 263)

- **Referrals to community agencies**
- **Educational consultations and collaborations with teachers, administrators, parents and community leaders**
- **Education and career placement services**
- **Follow-up counseling services**
- **Conflict resolution**
- **Professional school counselors must spend a minimum of eighty percent (80%) of their contractual time to the delivery of services to students as outlined by the American School Counselor Association**
- Hire qualified counselors who will address the mental health, academic, and career needs of students in the school setting.

Family Engagement and Community Involvement

Runnelstown Elementary School will:

- **Invite parents and community members to participate in school health planning by serving on the local School Health Council.**
- **Establish methods to inform and update the public regarding the LSWP and the assessment of the LSWP**
- Invite family or community to eat a meal at the school.

Employee Wellness

Runnelstown Elementary School will:

- Make as a Requirement that all staff are aware of the Mississippi State and School Employees' Health Insurance Plan that has been enhanced to include **My Active Health**, a wellness and health promotion program designed to help individuals live a healthy lifestyle and increase their overall wellness benefit- www.MyActiveHealth.com/Mississippi.
- Encourage after school health and fitness sessions for school staff.

Marketing a Healthy School Environment

Runnelstown Elementary School will:

- Eliminate advertising or promoting unhealthy food choices on the school campus. Advertising must be restricted to only those foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks in School Nutrition Standards.
- Provide positive, consistent, and motivating messages about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting.

Implementation:

Runnelstown Elementary school will:

- **Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.**
- **Designate one or more persons to ensure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written. Runnelstown School designates school nurse for this purpose.**
- **Establish and support a School Health Council (SHC) that addresses all aspects of a coordinated school health program, including a school wellness policy (Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated, Section 37-13-134).**
- **Conduct a review of the progress toward school wellness policy goals each year to identify areas for improvement.**
- **Prepare and submit a yearly report to the school board regarding the progress toward implementation of the school wellness policy and recommendations for any revisions to the policy as necessary to update and modify the program as appropriate.**

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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;
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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