



# Local Wellness Policy

2022-2023 School Year

## Preface

In accordance with 7 CFR 210.31(c), a Local Education Agency that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) must establish a Local School Wellness Policy for all schools under its jurisdiction. As of June 30, 2017, Local Wellness Policies must meet the minimum requirements set forth in the Final Rule: Local School Wellness Policy Implementation Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

Local Wellness Policies are a valuable tool in the promotion of student health and wellness through the NSLP and SBP. Schools play an essential role in preparing students for successful futures, and proper nutrition and physical activity are key to creating constructive learning environments. Local Wellness Policies provide guidance to further support schools efforts to provide students with a successful and happy future.

## Wellness Policy Committee

### **Wellness Policy Committee Members**

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# Wellness Policy Committee Responsibilities

## **Public Involvement**

Pacifica School District permits and encourages public involvement in Local Wellness Policy development, implementation, updates, and reviews. Therefore, Pacifica School District shall invite a variety of stakeholders within the general public to participate in Local Wellness Policy processes. The following methods of communication will be utilized to notify the general public of the opportunity to participate in these processes:

- The Governing Board will establish a Wellness Committee that is diverse and inclusive. Membership will include District and site administrators, parents, classified and certificated employees, members of local agencies, and the Manager of Child Nutrition Services.
- The Committee will meet at least semi-annually with sufficient time to conduct the group's business
- Committee meetings will be open to the public and advertised through the District website, school newsletters, and additional means.

## **Assessments**

Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, assessments of the Local Wellness Policy must occur no less than every three years. Pacifica School District shall conduct assessments of the Local Wellness Policy every three years, beginning in 2026 and occurring every 3 years thereafter. These assessments will:

- Ensure the wellness policy is in compliance with USDA, State, and Local rules and regulations
- Compare Pacifica School District's wellness policy to model wellness policies
- Measure the progress made in achieving the goals as outlined in the Pacifica School District's wellness policy

## Updates

The Wellness Policy Committee must update the Local Wellness Policy as appropriate in order to fit the needs and goals of the Pacifica School District. Pacifica School District shall make the following available to the public:

- The Local Wellness Policy, including any updates to the policy, on a yearly basis
- The triennial assessment, including progress toward meeting the goals outlined in the wellness policy

Through the following channels:

- District Website
- Principal and Superintendent's newsletters
- Copies made available to the public at school sites

## Records

The Pacifica School District shall maintain a record of the Local Wellness Policy. This includes keeping a copy of the current wellness policy on file and maintaining documentation of the following actions:

- The most recent assessment of the policy
- Availability of the wellness policy and assessments to the public
- Reviews and revisions of the policy, including the individuals involved and the efforts made to notify stakeholders of their ability to participate in the process.

# Nutrition

Pacifica School District recognizes the important role nutrition plays in academic performance as well as overall quality of life. The National Education Association references numerous articles supporting the effects of nutrition on the classroom, for example, hunger often has a negative impact on students' success, attendance, and behavior. Pacifica School District also acknowledges that schools play a vital role in childhood nutrition and fitness and as part of the larger community, schools have a responsibility to promote family health and provide a strong foundation for children's future health and well-being. Through participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's School Nutrition Programs, Pacifica School District commits to serving nutritious meals to students in order to prevent both overconsumption of nutrient-poor foods and food insecurity to give students the best chance to succeed inside and outside the classroom.

## **Nutrition Standards**

### Meals

All reimbursable meals served for the purposes of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must meet or exceed USDA nutrition standards and regulations. This includes meeting standards for each of the meal pattern components (i.e. Grains, Meat/Meat Alternates, Fruits, Vegetables, and Milk) as well as meeting or exceeding the limitations set for calories, sodium, sugar, saturated fat, and trans fat. The district will also strive to provide a fresh fruit and/or fresh vegetable with each meal.

### Competitive Foods

At this time Pacifica School District is not offering any competitive foods and beverages.

### Other Foods and Beverages

Parents/guardians are encouraged to support the Pacifica School District's nutritional education efforts by considering nutritional quality when selecting any snacks they may donate for occasional class activities, rewards, or celebrations. For this reason, only foods that meet the Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards will be permitted for these purposes. Smart Snack Nutrition Standards are as follows per serving:

Calories - 200 calories or less (snack) or 350 calories or less (entree),

Sodium - 200mg or less (snack) or 480mg or less (entree),  
Total fat - 35% of calories or less  
Saturated fat - less than 10% of calories  
Trans fat - 0%  
Sugars - 35% by weight or less.

## Fundraisers

All fundraisers promoting food and/or beverage items that are held on school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day) must meet Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards (see above). The district shall also utilize non-food fundraisers to promote healthy habits and well-being.

## **Nutrition Education**

In accordance with the California Learning Standards, Pacifica School District shall meet all California requirements and standards for Health Education. Pacifica School District shall include nutrition education within the health education curriculum and integrate nutrition education into other core subjects, as appropriate. Various grade levels and curriculums shall use nutrition education information, research, and materials from the following resources:

- Health Connect
- HMH Science
- Carolina Building Blocks of Science

## **Nutrition Promotion**

Pacifica School District shall implement nutrition promotion techniques through multiple channels, including the cafeteria, classroom, and home. Pacifica School District shall make cafeteria menus and nutrition information available through posting these items in the cafeteria, school newsletters, and on the school district's website.

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement uses behavioral economics to positively influence food choices made by children. The evidence-based techniques implemented through the Movement have been proven to increase children's consumption of nutritious foods. PSD has reviewed the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement and has implemented techniques in accordance with the program such as managing portion sizes, increasing visibility of the food, and increasing convenience.

Farm to School efforts positively impact School Nutrition Programs by serving fresh and nutritious food items. Additionally, Farm to School programs have been linked to

increased consumption of fruits and vegetables. PSD participates in this program by activities such as school gardens, farm-related field trips, and integration of food-related information into classroom curriculum.

## **Marketing**

Pacifica School District will prohibit the marketing and advertising of all foods and beverages that do not meet Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards (as noted above) on the school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day). The marketing standards described above apply, but are not limited to, oral, written, and graphic statements made for promotional purposes. Items subject to marketing requirements include, but are not limited to, posters, menu boards, coolers, trash cans, and other equipment. This policy does not require schools to immediately replace equipment that does not meet this requirement, however, the Pacifica School District shall implement these standards as equipment needs to be replaced in the future.

## **Physical Activity**

Physical activity is a key component of the health and well-being of all students. Physical activity lowers the risk for certain diseases, including obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Physical activity also helps improve brain function, allowing students to perform better in school.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends adolescents get at least 60 minutes of physical activity five days per week. Nearly 79 percent of school-age children fall short of meeting this requirement. Pacifica School District recognizes this connection and commits to promoting and providing opportunities for physical activity during and outside the school day.

## **Physical Education**

In accordance with the California Learning Standards, Pacifica School District shall meet all California state requirements and standards for Physical Education. Pacifica School District shall offer Physical Education class as follows:

Per requirements from the California Department of Education, students in the Pacifica School District receive at least 200 minutes of PE every 10 school days.

The California Physical Education Standards are closely followed during Physical Education instruction at all school sites.

## **Other Opportunities for Physical Activity**

The District shall include additional physical activity opportunities, outside of Physical Education class, during the school day through the following:

- Recess (daily)
- Playworks Paraeducators facilitating organized, physical games and activities (daily)
- Annual Jump Rope Day (yearly)
- “Take a Lap” breaks for 7th and 8th graders (daily)
- Regular movement and dance breaks (daily)
- “Wiggle Room” for sensory breaks (daily)
- Olympics Club (weekly)
- Running Club (after school)
- Psychomotor Class (weekly)
- Legarza Sports (bi-weekly)
- Free play
- Junior Olympics

## **Physical Activity Promotion**

The District shall promote physical activity through the participation in the following initiative(s):

- Bicycle Rodeo
- Color Walk
- Junior Olympics
- Playworks

# Mental Health

The district recognizes the relationship between mental health and academic achievement. Students face high levels of stress due to many factors including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, gun violence, systemic racism, and other individual and societal traumas. Recent data suggests that when students have their physical, psychological, and environmental safety needs met, they perform better academically and are less likely to engage in dangerous or unhealthy behaviors.

**Mental Health Goal:** Pacifica School District will promote a positive school environment and teach students the skills of self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

- **Strategies to promote progress toward this goal:**
  - Caring School Community Social Emotional Learning curriculum implemented by teachers and supported by counselors.
  - Counselors can implement school-wide supports to promote students' self-regulation skills such as regulation zones, peace corners, and visual reminders about self-regulation and coping skills.
  - Schools can implement school-wide strategies for positive behavior
  - Events such as Movie Night on the Field
  - Cross Age Buddies Mentorship program
  - Cooking Club

The District has hired School Counselors for each school site to support the need for resources and supports for students, families, and staff. School Counselors will implement a comprehensive school counseling program based on the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) National Model and adhere to the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors. The comprehensive school counseling program shall focus on prevention, early intervention, and easing the process of securing support for families to outside agencies. School Counselors advocate, collaborate and coordinate with school and community stakeholders to meet the needs of the whole child and to ensure students and their families have access to mental health services. School Counselors are mandated reporters and must report any instances of child abuse to the Department of Child and Family Services. They support students in crisis and follow district policies for evaluating threats and determining needs for continued student safety.

School Counselors will support the socio-emotional development of K-8 students by supporting teachers through implementation of the socio-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum, promote a positive school climate throughout the school, work within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), and work to remove barriers to access of care.

Throughout the following sections we explain the systems in place that support student mental health and the ways school counselors play an integral role in promoting them.

## **Social Emotional Learning (SEL)**

The counselors will support the implementation of the District's Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum, Caring School Community. By means of Caring School Community, School Counselors will support the education of students in every aspect of the California Social and Emotional Learning Core Competencies (CASEL) framework which includes self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Establishing a positive school climate and respectful learners requires intentional efforts in creating effective classroom routines and incorporating mindfulness practices. As a School Counselor, it is essential to support teachers and staff in creating a school environment that promotes positive social and emotional development of all students. The following headings delineate the CASEL competencies, how they align with the ASCA standards, and examples of ways School Counselors can support SEL for all students.

### **Self-Awareness**

Self-awareness is the ability to recognize one's emotions, thoughts, and values, and how they influence behavior. This competency aligns with the ASCA professional standard A1: Understand that self-concept and self-esteem are formed by an individual's beliefs, feelings, and behaviors. ASCA's Mindset and Behavior Standards M1, M2, and M3 also align with this competency. Students who are self-aware can identify their strengths and weaknesses and are more likely to set achievable goals. They are better equipped to manage their emotions and behaviors and make responsible decisions.

**Example:** Counselors may give a classroom lesson on identity or may provide teachers with lesson plans about student identities.

### **Self-Management**

Self-management is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively. This competency aligns with the ASCA professional standard A2: Use goal-setting and decision-making skills and strategies to enhance academic, career, and personal/social development. ASCA's Mindset and Behavior Standards M4, M5, and M6 also align with this competency. Students who can self-regulate are better able to handle stress, control impulses, and focus their attention. They are more likely to persevere through challenging tasks and achieve their goals.

**Example:** Counselors are able to provide opportunities for staff to learn self-regulation skills and can also teach mindfulness activities. Counselors can implement school-wide resources such as peace corners/regulation zones in classrooms.

### Social Awareness

Social awareness is the ability to understand and empathize with others' feelings and perspectives. This competency aligns with the ASCA professional standard A3: Understand how diverse cultures and individual differences contribute to the student's identity, worldview, and behavior. ASCA's Mindset and Behavior Standards B1, B2, and B3 also align with this competency. Students who are socially aware are more likely to develop positive relationships, show empathy, and respect for others. They are better equipped to navigate diverse social settings and interact effectively with others.

**Example:** Counselors can help teachers incorporate diverse role models and material into their lesson plans to support students in broadening their worldview. Counselors can lead restorative circles and conversations to support students with learning to take responsibility for their actions and words when they cause harm.

### Relationship Skills

Relationship skills refer to the ability to communicate, collaborate, and build positive relationships with others. This competency aligns with the ASCA professional standard A4: Demonstrate the ability to work independently, within groups, and as a member of a team. ASCA's Mindset and Behavior Standards B4, B5, and B6 also align with this competency. Students who possess relationship skills can communicate effectively, resolve conflicts, and work collaboratively with others. They are more likely to build healthy and positive relationships, both in and out of school.

**Example:** Counselors support classroom circles which encourage students to engage with one another and share personal experiences and feelings with their class. Counselors may lead social skills groups for students struggling with peer relationships.

### Responsible Decision-Making

Responsible decision-making involves the ability to make informed and ethical decisions. This competency aligns with the ASCA professional standard A5: Demonstrate critical-thinking skills and the ability to make informed decisions. ASCA's Mindset and Behavior Standards B7, B8, and B9 also align with this competency. Students who are responsible decision-makers can evaluate situations, identify alternatives, and make ethical and effective decisions. They are better equipped to

avoid risky behaviors and make choices that promote their well-being and the well-being of others.

**Example:** Counselors may implement school-wide positive behavior incentive programs (i.e. PAWs program at Ortega). Counselors may implement Peace Makers program to promote peer-to-peer support that promotes responsible decision making and kindness at recess.

## Summary

The CAASEL competencies provide a framework for promoting positive social and emotional development in students. Each competency aligns with specific ASCA professional standards and Mindset and Behavior Standards, which guide the development of students' social and emotional skills. By focusing on developing these competencies, students are better equipped to navigate social settings, develop positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. In turn, these skills prepare students for success in and outside of the K-12 education system.

## **Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**

School Counselors will work collaboratively with the District's Social Emotional Wellness (SEW) Team which include the Behaviorist, School Psychologist, community partners, and the Lead Mental Health Counselor to enact a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) within the school. There are three tiers, and each tier is focussed on addressing specific student needs.

**Tier 1** refers to evidence-informed, schoolwide prevention programs and practices that teach positive behaviors, promote social emotional development, and ensure a school climate conducive to learning. Tier 1 programs and practices are implemented by all staff in the school setting. 75-90% of the student population is served and this is delivered by all staff. This includes the SEL curriculum, PBIS, and Teacher/Staff consultation. School and class wide interventions address prevention, teaching positive behaviors, and promoting social/emotional development. They support classroom-wide and school-wide incentive programs and can make referrals to community-based resources. Counselors and teachers can work together to deliver guidance lessons on areas of need. Topics could include goal setting, study skills, peer conflict resolution, college and career exploration, and Social-Emotional Learning.

School Counselors may teach classroom lessons, mindfulness practices, and provide consultation to staff. Mindfulness includes strategies that help kids be present in the moment, as well as being aware of their own thoughts, reactions, and mindsets. Mindfulness helps students be mindful of others, their thoughts, and the feelings they

have. People who practice mindfulness are able to focus their attention and the information they receive through all of their senses and build strategies for reducing stress. Strategies can include breathing exercises, meditation, reflective thinking, kindness activities, and mind and body awareness.

School Counselors help lead circles with classes as well as teach advisory lessons that support the SEL curriculum being utilized by the school. Circles and restorative practices create a safe place for students to explore important topics, help students resolve conflict, foster a safe and trusting classroom environment, Reduce and prevent harmful behavior, and build trusting relationships between students and teachers.

**Example:** Counselors may consult with teachers to support them with implementing Universal Design for Learning, a district-wide program that promotes teaching strategies that support students with diverse needs and learning styles.

**Tier 2** refers to a more specific support that is needed than a Tier 1 approach can address. Tier 2 accounts for 10-25% of the student population. Tier 2 interventions are primarily provided by the SEW Team (school counselors, school psychologists, and other school-based mental health therapists). School Counselors provide personalized, targeted, short-term interventions, typically lasting six sessions, when students don't respond to Tier 1. Examples include short-term targeted groups, individual counseling support, and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs help identify the problem behaviors and explain goals for addressing the behaviors.)

Counselors will utilize a method for managing their caseload which includes a referral process and informed consent. Counselors will keep proper records and consult with the Director of Special Education and Student services regularly. A lead mental health counselor will support the counselors in securing resources and referrals for students.

**Example:** Counselors provide a safe and supportive environment for students where students can meet with them to discuss a variety of complex issues. These issues may include stress, trauma, suicide, depression, bullying, grief, self-esteem, family life, drug and alcohol use, relationships, transitions, gender identity and LGBTQ+ identity.

**Tier 3** refers to a small percentage of students, 1-5% of the population, that receive special services. These are provided by SEW Team specialists— mental health counselor, Behavior Program Staff (i.e. behaviorists), occupational therapy, Speech therapy, and outside mental health counselors. Examples include assessment-driven, intensive services based on IEP goal(s) and are specifically for when students don't respond to Tier 1 or 2 interventions. To start a referral for a Tier-3 intervention there must be evidence of attempting Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions.

If a student is in need of Tier 3 intervention in the academic domain only, the student should be referred for an IEP assessment. If a student is in need of Tier 3 intervention in the social-emotional domain only, they should be referred to a school-based or community-based therapist. If a student is in need of Tier 3 intervention in both the academic and social-emotional domains, they should be referred for an IEP assessment and Education Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS).

**Example:** If a student meets with the counselor for over 6 sessions within a 2 month period and is still demonstrating significant emotional needs, the counselor can consider referring the student to a longer-term therapist or recommending them for an IEP assessment. Tier 3 mental health support is most often provided by a district ERMHS therapist or by a community agency that partners with the school district. The district Mental Health Lead can support counselors with identifying Tier 3 referrals.

## Other School-Based Activities

Just as it takes a comprehensive curriculum to provide education to support students' futures, Pacifica School District's wellness approach must also be comprehensive in its intent to provide students with the tools they need to live a healthy lifestyle. In order to further establish positive behaviors related to nutrition, physical activity, and health, Pacifica School District commits to making additional wellness-based activities available to all students beyond the cafeteria and gymnasium.

Pacifica School District shall offer other school-based activities to support student health and wellness, including coordinated events and clubs. The following events shall be organized and promoted each year:

- Unity Day
- Outdoor Education
- BMX Assembly
- Spirit Assemblies
- Monthly character traits and focus
- Student of the Week
- Spark Poetry
- Clubs
- Family Day
- Buddies
- Red Ribbon Week (promoting health choices)
- Say No to Bullying assembly/program
- Anti-bullying Pledge
- Kindness Challenge

- Peer Mediation
- Diversity Week
- Ability Awareness Week
- Mental Health Awareness week

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