



POLICY

SUBJECT: Wellness and Nutrition Service Policy
NUMBER: HC-337-25
APPLICABLE TO: Residential Facility Staff at DJS Operated Facilities

APPROVED: 
Betsy Fox Tolentino, Acting Secretary

DATE: October 21, 2025

I. POLICY

This Wellness and Nutrition Service Policy (Wellness Policy) describes how the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) addresses both youth and staff health in its Residential Facilities, in line with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)'s Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model.

II. AUTHORITY

- A. Code of Federal Regulations 7 C.F.R. § 210.31 (National School Lunch Program)
- B. 42 U.S.C. § 1751 *et seq.* (42 U.S.C. § 1758b, Local School Wellness Policy; Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010)
- C. Md. Code, Human Services, § 9-203 and § 9-204
- D. COMAR 13A.04.18.01
- E. COMAR 13A.04.13.00, *et seq.*
- F. COMAR 13A.06.01.01
- G. USDA [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025](#)

III. DIRECTIVES/POLICIES RESCINDED

Wellness and Nutrition Service Policy, HC-337-22

IV. FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to comply with a Department's Policy and Procedure shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

V. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Standard operating procedures have been developed and are attached to this policy.

VI. REVISION HISTORY

DESCRIPTION OF REVISION	DATE OF REVISION
Old policy, <i>Wellness, Physical Activity and Nutrition Service Policy, HC-2-06</i> rescinded and new policy issued in its place. Recreation procedures removed and newly revised policy on recreation issued.	8/11/15
Old Policy, <i>Wellness and Nutrition Service Policy, HC-302-15</i> , rescinded and updated policy (HC-327-21) issued in its place New procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Added definitions for smart snacks, school day, nutrition staff ● Added procedure to prohibit education staff from providing special foods, and/or any snacks for celebrations and/or behavioral incentive programming available to youth during the school day. ● Updated the DJS Wellness Plan 	3/30/22
Policy and Procedures revised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed Smart Snacks from policy and procedures. No snacks are sold to youth during the school day. All snacks are provided to all DJS youth free of charge and are not required to be Smart Snack compliant. (Smart Snacks are food and beverages sold to youth in schools during the school day.) ● Policy number updated ● Removed Smart Snacks from Appendix 1 ● Revised Appendix 2 to include, “other medical conditions requiring medical nutrition therapy.” 	9/19/24
Policy and Procedures revised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed mention of Smart Snacks throughout document ● Updated definitions ● Replaced Nutritional Guidelines with USDA School BREAKFAST and LUNCH Program Meal Patterns ● Drafted and Attached Revised 2025 Wellness Plan (Appendix 1) and revised policy to align with the new Wellness Plan ● Updated Wellness Plan Goals 	10/21/2025



PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: Wellness and Nutrition Service Policy
NUMBER: HC-337-25
APPLICABLE TO: Residential Facility Staff

APPROVED: Mathew E Fonseca
Mathew Fonseca
Acting Deputy Secretary of Residential Services

DATE: October 21, 2025

I. PURPOSE

This Wellness Policy outlines the Department of Juvenile Services's (DJS or Department) steps to ensure an environment and the opportunity for all youth to engage in healthy eating, physical activity, and programs that promote wellness. This policy applies to all students and staff within DJS's residential facilities. It also demonstrates DJS's commitment and approach to staff wellness.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Dietary Staff* means the Facility Food Service Administrator, Cooks, Food Service Workers, the DJS Registered Dietician, and the DJS Nutritionist.
- B. *Direct care employee* means a Resident Advisor or in the Resident Advisor Series who provides daily supervision, support, and care of youth.
- C. *DJS Health Administrator* means the individual who oversees the DJS Dietary and Nutrition Services Department and is responsible for overseeing the creation and implementation of the DJS Wellness Plan.
- D. *Health Education* means education that includes planned learning experiences and opportunities extending across developmental stages and is based on student and community health needs.
- E. *Healthy Foods* means foods and beverages that meet or exceed federal and state

nutrition standards.

- F. *JSEP* means the Juvenile Services Education Program
- G. *Nutrition Education* means an aspect of health education that teaches knowledge and skills related to healthy eating, nutrition, and physical activity to establish and maintain healthy eating patterns and practices, based on the current federal Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate.
- H. *Nutrition Environment* means all areas of the facility where food and beverages are accessible to students.
- I. *Nutrition Promotion* means Food of the Month initiative, monthly in-service topics for food service staff, cafeteria specials, nutrition education posters and flyers, monthly wellness announcements.
- J. *Nutrition Staff* means clinical staff responsible for the DJS Child Nutrition Program's administrative practices (including training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures), to address program integrity or other critical issues. For the purposes of this policy, this includes ONLY certified registered dietician/nutritionist staff, and the Department's Health Administrator and Medical Director.
- K. *Registered Dietician* means a credentialed healthcare professional who applies evidence-based information about nutrition and diet to contribute to the health and wellness of individuals, groups, and communities.
- L. *Rewards* means incentives offered to students in recognition of good behavior or performance whether offered before, during or after school. Includes individual rewards from teachers or other school employees, as well as small or large group events rewarding attendance, academic achievement, etc.
- M. *School Campus* means all areas of the Facility property that are accessible to students during the school day.
- N. *School Day* means a day, including a partial day, when youth within DJS's residential facilities are required to be in attendance for instruction. The Juvenile Services Education Program (JSEP) shall provide six hours of instruction on non-partial school days.
- O. *Superintendent* means the facility administrator responsible for the management of daily operations in a DJS detention facility/treatment program.

III. PROCEDURES

The DJS approach to promoting wellness among its students and staff, is outlined in the 2025

DJS Wellness Plan (Wellness Plan) (Appendix 1) and hereby incorporated into this policy. The Wellness Plan follows the ten (10) components of the Center for Disease Control and Preventions's Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model.

A. Nutrition Environment and Services.

1. Generally

- a. The DJS Registered Dietician and/or the DJS Nutritionist shall provide Dietary Staff with consistent guidelines regarding meal planning and meal preparation and the nutritional requirements.
- b. Dietary Staff shall follow USDA guidelines when purchasing or providing snacks and preparing foods on approved DJS menus. (See USDA School BREAKFAST Program (SBP) Meal Pattern, LUNCH Program (NSLP) Meal Pattern, and NSLP AFTERSCHOOL SNACK Meal Pattern Guidance (Appendix 2)).
- c. DJS promotes the use of non-food, health-minded incentives for youth, e.g., extra recess, leadership opportunities, public acknowledgment of achievements, etc. Staff shall not make special foods, and/or any snacks for celebrations and/or behavioral incentive programming available to youth during the school day unless implemented as part of an approved educational program or plan. Examples include:
 - (1) Students who have Individualized Education Programs ("IEP"), Behavior Plans, and/or other special accommodations may receive food-related incentives and/or rewards, if allowed by their program or plan.
 - (2) Food may be incorporated into school activities to support educational and developmental goals when implemented thoughtfully and in compliance with health and nutrition standards.
 - (3) Within the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework, food may be incorporated into celebrations that recognize positive student behavior and achievement. These activities reinforce positive behavior, school climate, and social connectedness.
- d. Food and/or beverages may not be marketed or sold to students during the school day or extended school day. There shall be no vending machines for student use. Food and/or beverage fundraising initiatives are prohibited on school campuses.
- e. Direct care employees mandated to supervise youth during meal service shall eat only those foods served to youth when eating with youth, as part of the planned menus unless employees have a special dietary need which has been verified by a medical authority or approved by the Superintendent.

2. Nutrition Education - All youth shall receive nutrition education focused on the skills needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors and lifelong wellness practices.

- a. DJS Dietary staff shall collaborate with educational staff to educate students about healthful food choices based on guidelines set forth by the USDA and the current federal Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

- b. DJS residential facilities and programs shall provide on-site opportunities for youth to receive nutrition education based on the federal Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - c. Youth can participate in “Wellness Announcement” during school hours where DJS’s Registered Dietician presents both verbal and written information on a nutrition topic that students have requested (e.g. sports drinks).
 - d. A DJS Nutritionist shall provide educational flyers or placemats on youth’s food trays featuring information on a variety of healthy eating topics at least once per month.
 - e. DJS’s medical team shall refer students with certain nutritional needs to the Registered Dietician and/or Nutritionist, who shall provide personal consultations with students, focusing on nutrition education and health promotion etc. Students may also self-refer.
 3. **Nutrition Promotion** - All facilities shall host special activities to encourage youth to make healthy food choices consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - a. Youth shall be allowed to choose and plan one (1) to two (2) Youth Choice Meals per month to be served at their respective facility.
 - b. Youth shall participate in gardening in the facilities that have gardens and showcase the produce they grow in the dining halls.
 - c. Youth shall participate in taste tests of new menu items on a semi-annual basis, and will be given the opportunity to provide feedback and input on menu development.
 4. **Cultural Responsiveness and Youth Voice in Menu Planning**
 - a. DJS Food Services shall incorporate culturally responsive menu planning that respects the diverse backgrounds, ethnic foods, and religious dietary practices of all youth.
 - b. A formal, annual Youth Feedback Mechanism shall be established and documented (e.g., Youth Advisory Council consultation, regular surveys) to inform menu cycles, taste testing, and the cultural relevance of nutrition education materials.
- B. Physical Education and Physical Activity** - Residential facilities shall integrate physical activity into the daily schedule to ensure that each student receives at least sixty (60) minutes of “large muscle” activity per day.
1. The Superintendent shall ensure that all youth have the opportunity for daily, scheduled physical activity as part of wellness and health programming in accordance with the *DJS Recreational Activities Policy and Procedure*, RF-722-15.
 2. Physical activity may include: Field Days (athletic competitions between facilities), intramural sports (competitions between facilities), and staff vs. youth competitions as part of physical activity events.

C. Responsibilities

1. The DJS Health Administrator is responsible for overall oversight of DJS's Wellness Policy to ensure that each facility is compliant with the policy and is working towards the goals outlined in the **DJS Wellness Plan** (Appendix 1).
2. Each Facility Superintendent or designee shall:
 - a. Include in the Facility's Operating Procedures (FOP) the requirements of this Wellness Policy and **DJS Wellness Plan** (Appendix 1).
 - b. Ensure that each facility has a Wellness Committee consisting of a representative from food service, education, nursing, behavioral health, and recreation and/or physical education. This committee shall meet quarterly to plan, implement, and monitor health, nutrition and physical activity programming in accordance with the **DJS Wellness Plan** (Appendix 1).
3. Each DJS Food Service Administrator and/or Food Service Manager shall:
 - a. Monitor and ensure that youth receive daily meals and snacks during the school day in accordance with the requirements of the **DJS Wellness Plan** (Appendix 1); and
 - b. Monitor the availability and quality of planned snacks offered to youth.
4. The DJS Recreational Coordinator shall provide physical activity programming in compliance with the **DJS Wellness Plan** (Appendix 1) and the *DJS Recreational Activities Policy and Procedure*, RF-722-15.
5. JSEP shall provide nutrition education in compliance with this Wellness Policy, ensuring that it is a part of the health education curriculum.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

The Facility Superintendents are responsible for implementation and compliance with this procedure.

V. INTERPRETATION

The Acting Deputy Secretary of Residential Services, with the concurrence of the Secretary, shall be responsible for interpreting and granting any exceptions to these procedures, consistent with the requirements of applicable State laws, regulations, and guidelines.

VI. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED

Yes.

VI. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED

Yes.

VII. DIRECTIVES/POLICIES REFERENCED

Recreational Activities Policy and Procedure, RF-722-15.

VIII. APPENDICES

1. 2025 DJS Wellness Plan (October 2025)
2. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards/nslp-meal-pattern>



DJS POLICY AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Statement of Receipt and Acknowledgment of Review

SUBJECT: Wellness and Nutrition Service Policy
NUMBER: HC-337-25
APPLICABLE TO: Residential Facility Staff
EFFECTIVE DATE: October 21, 2025

I have received and reviewed a copy (electronic or paper) of the above titled policy and procedures. I understand the contents of the policy and procedures.

I understand that failure to sign this acknowledgment form within five (5) working days of receipt of the policy shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

I understand that I will be held accountable for implementing this policy even if I fail to sign this acknowledgment form.

SIGNATURE

PRINT FULL NAME

DATE

WORK LOCATION

SEND THE ORIGINAL, SIGNED COPY TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE DJS OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES FOR PLACEMENT IN YOUR PERSONNEL FILE.



OCTOBER 2025

DJS Wellness Plan

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<https://djs.maryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

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Introduction

The Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) understands that promoting health and wellness for students and staff contributes to a positive learning environment, as well as encouraging life-long healthy habits. In collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), we have developed our Wellness Plan to provide guidelines on both student and employee wellness. Our Wellness Plan covers the ten (10) components of wellness as outlined by the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

- Health Education
- Physical Education and Physical Activity
- Nutrition Environment and Services
- Physical Environment
- Social and Emotional Climate
- Counseling, Psychological & Social Services
- Health Services
- Employee Wellness
- Family Engagement
- Community Involvement

The Ten WSCC Components:

1) Health Education

Comprehensive health and nutrition education is provided to DJS students in a variety of formats. Students acquire the knowledge and skills that encourage health-promoting and health-enhancing behaviors and decision-making, while promoting health literacy.

- A. Our comprehensive health and nutrition education aligns with state regulations (COMAR 13A.04.18.01), the National Health Education Standards (NHES), and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Health Education Framework.
 1. Health and nutrition education includes developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and participatory activities.
 2. The comprehensive curriculum considers the diverse needs of our students (e.g., social, economic, cultural, emotional) and needs identified by the Juvenile Services Education Program Superintendent and Board.
 3. Health and nutrition education is provided by teachers trained in nutrition and the benefits of physical activity.
 4. Health and nutrition education is integrated into other subjects within the general education curriculum to reinforce learning.
 5. The Juvenile Services Education Program (JSEP) principal (or their designee), monitors and ensures that nutrition education is a part of the health education curriculum, meeting state high school graduation requirements.

Appendix 1

- B. Students are offered planned learning experiences within the comprehensive health and nutrition education to encourage them to acquire health knowledge, improve health literacy, and develop health-enhancing behaviors.
- C. School dining environments reinforce nutrition education with posters and signs containing nutrition facts, illustrations of healthy portion sizes, and information about the importance of a healthy diet.

2) Physical Education and Physical Activity

Physical education gives students knowledge and skills for lifelong wellness. All students receive education on the benefits of physical activity in conjunction with health and nutrition education.

- A. JSEP provides a physical education curriculum that aligns with state regulations (COMAR 13A.04.13), national standards, and the state (MSDE) Physical Education framework.
 - 1. The physical education curriculum provides age-appropriate activities and education to optimize students' development physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially.
 - 2. Physical education instruction is provided to high school students to enable them to meet graduation requirements.
- B. **General Guiding Principles:**
 - 1. Physical education teachers receive training and education before teaching physical education.
 - 2. The physical education program adheres to MSDE's no-exemption guidance, providing appropriate accommodations to ensure that **all** students, including those with disabilities, have an equal opportunity to participate.
 - 3. The Facility Superintendent ensures that all youth have the opportunity for daily, scheduled physical activity as part of wellness and health programming in accordance with the *DJS Recreational Activities Policy and Procedure, RF-722-15*.
 - 4. The DJS Recreational Coordinator at each facility provides physical activity programming in compliance with the *DJS Recreational Activities Policy and Procedure, RF-722-15*.
 - 5. In addition to a variety of physical activity opportunities on campus, DJS develops and hosts athletic competitions for DJS students and staff from all sites.
 - 6. DJS prohibits the use or withholding of physical activity, including recess, as a punishment.
 - 7. DJS seeks to create an environment that encourages healthy body image, shape, and size for all students and staff members.

3) Nutrition Environment and Services

Positive nutrition information is readily available through the posting of menus, healthy portion guides, and other educational materials throughout our schools and facilities.

- A. **School Meals** - We recognize that serving healthy meals to students contributes to the improved nutritional diet and health of students, reduces hunger among students and improves students' readiness to learn. DJS participates in the USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) and provides meals that meet the nutrition standards within each.
1. Meals and beverages meet nutrition standards by including:
 - a. A variety of fruits and vegetables that meet required vegetable subtypes (e.g., dark green, red, orange, dry beans, peas, and legumes).
 - b. Grains (whole grain-rich);
 - c. Fat-free and low-fat milk; and
 - d. Access to free, safe, unflavored drinking water during meals in the school dining areas.
 2. Meals comply with USDA, NSLP and SBP standards for nutrient levels and calorie requirements for ages served.
 3. Menus are reviewed by a Registered Dietician or a certified nutritionist.
 4. Menus are posted on the school's website, with nutritional information available upon request.
 5. All meals provide a variety of foods and beverages that are appealing and attractive to students.
 6. A vegetarian food option is available at all meals for vegetarian students.
 7. Eating environments are clean and welcoming.
 8. We provide appropriate food substitutions for students who require dietary accommodations because of a documented medical condition (including a disability), nutrition requirement, or religious or cultural belief.
 9. Students have adequate time to complete meals. Students are allowed at least twenty (20) minutes to eat each meal: breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Time is counted from the time the student has received their meal and is seated.
 10. Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day. There should be at least three (3) hours between the start of breakfast and the start of lunch, and four (4) hours between the start of lunch and the start of dinner, for residential students.
 11. Throughout the year, students can provide input on the menu through written and verbal feedback, as well as through taste tests, comment boxes, surveys, and the Youth Advisory Board.
 12. Dietary leadership adheres to Governor Wes Moore's "Buy Local" initiative, meeting the goal of purchasing 20% locally sourced products.
 13. Dietary leadership adheres to USDA's "Buy American Provision" guidelines.
 14. All food service staff receive nutrition training, aligning with USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals.
 15. Dietary leadership implements farm-to-school activities, such as incorporating local or regional foods into school meal programs, featuring seasonal

local/regional produce items on the daily menu, and supporting school gardens and reflections programs related to farming.

16. Dietary leadership conducts biannual student surveys and taste testing opportunities for purposes of informing menu development

B. Foods and Beverages Provided to Students

1. Students are encouraged to drink water throughout the day. Water cups or bottles are available in dining areas and residential areas at all facilities. All water sources and containers (e.g., drinking fountains, water coolers) are maintained regularly to ensure adherence to health and safety standards.
2. The use of food as a reward is generally discouraged unless specifically identified in a student Behavior Plan or other education program or plan, or implemented within the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework. Within the PBIS framework, food may be incorporated into celebrations that recognize positive student behavior and achievement. These activities reinforce positive behavior, school climate, and social connectedness.
3. Withholding food as a punishment is prohibited.
4. Classroom parties that involve food without consideration of educational and developmental goals are generally discouraged. JSEP incorporates food into school activities to support multiple educational and developmental goals when implemented thoughtfully and in compliance with health and nutrition standards.
5. Healthy food choices are encouraged by making whole fruits available to students throughout the day.

C. Foods and Beverages May Not Be Marketed or Sold to Students - The marketing or selling of foods and beverages to students is forbidden.

1. Guidelines:
 - a. Food and/or beverages may not be marketed or sold to students during the school day or during the extended school day for any reason.
 - b. There are no vending machines for student use.
 - c. Food and/or beverage fundraising initiatives are prohibited on school campuses.

D. Nutrition Promotion - We value the health and well-being of all of our students and staff and are committed to providing an environment that ensures opportunities for all to practice healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school day.

1. **General Guidelines:**
 - a. DJS promotes healthy nutrition practices by providing education on healthy food choice by displaying posters or other media throughout the school, cafeteria, gymnasium, and dormitories that promote healthy eating and lifestyles.
 - b. Our seasonal menu features descriptive names to all available vegetable options, encouraging students to try new items and presenting all foods in

- a positive and enticing way.
- c. DJS promotes the integration of health and wellness into other curriculum areas, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics or making healthy purchases on community-based lessons.
- d. All school-sponsored events, whether before, during, or after school, adhere to Wellness Policy guidelines and include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

2. DJS Staff:

- a. DJS direct care staff are encouraged to model healthful eating and are required to participate in physical activities along with students under their care.
- b. DJS staff are not permitted to consume personal food or beverages in front of students that would not meet the requirements of the Wellness Policy.
- c. Direct care employees who supervise youth during meal service must eat the same food being served to youth as part of the planned menus when eating with youth, unless the employee has a special dietary need which has been verified by a medical authority or approved by the Superintendent.

4) Physical Environment

The physical learning environment impacts student learning and promotes and improves learning by ensuring the health and safety of students and staff. We recognize the connection between physical environment and student outcomes and believe that safe, positive, respectful learning environments promote greater student engagement. DJS is committed to implementing and maintaining standards to ensure a healthy school physical environment for staff and students.

A. General Guidelines:

- 1. A healthy and safe physical school environment promotes learning by ensuring the health and safety of students and staff.
- 2. DJS's maintenance department designs, constructs, and maintains facilities to ensure a clean, safe, and healthy physical environment for learning.
- 3. All construction projects are scheduled to minimize disruption of the school learning environment.
- 4. Each Facility Superintendent develops and maintains a site-based emergency plan, which should be updated annually.
- 5. Each Facility Superintendent identifies members of the emergency response team who will be responsible for implementing the site-based emergency plan.

5) Social and Emotional Climate

A. General Guidelines:

- 1. Every facility must provide prevention and intervention programming, as well as student support services. Topics covered include social-emotional learning, positive behaviors, bullying/cyberbullying, substance use, and suicide.

Appendix 1

2. Each school has a Student Support Team that includes teachers, case management, and counselors/therapists to support students.
3. Each school provides a safe and supportive environment that promotes learning, health, and growth and fosters engagement between students and staff.

6) Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services

All of our students have access to licensed behavioral health professionals, with education and training in social work, professional counseling, and/or clinical psychology.

A. General Guidelines:

1. Behavioral health professionals may be employed by DJS or by a community-based organization that contracts with DJS. They collaborate with teachers, administrators, parents/caregivers, residential staff, and medical staff to provide support to address students' acute and ongoing behavioral health needs in a positive, supportive atmosphere.
2. Principals and teachers are trained to identify, approach, and refer students in psychological distress to the Behavioral Health team in their facility.
3. School staff are trained on identifying, responding to, and reporting acts of sexual harassment, sexual assault, including mandatory reporting requirements under state and federal law.

- B. Each facility has a designated space for the delivery of behavioral health services that ensures student privacy.

7) Health Services

Health services contribute to a culture of health and wellness in schools. DJS provides health services to prevent, remove, and/or mitigate the impact of health barriers to learning and development.

A. General Guidelines:

1. All students have access to somatic health services including medical providers and nursing care.
2. Each facility has an assigned nursing team which is on site during school hours. Some schools have nursing care during off-hours, also.
3. The DJS Health Service program supports student wellness by:
 - a. Providing emergency care for illness or injury;
 - b. Providing treatment for acute and chronic medical conditions;
 - c. Preventing and controlling communicable disease;
 - d. Providing health promotion for students, staff, and school community.
4. Emergency medication will be made available (including epinephrine for anaphylaxis and naloxone for overdose) for students in emergency situations.

8) Employee Wellness

A. General Guidelines:

Appendix 1

1. Employees are encouraged to maintain their own health and well-being to model healthy habits for students, families, and co-workers.
2. To support employees, we provide them with access to programs, activities, and resources. Some examples include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Wellness walks during Mental Health Awareness Month (May)
 - b. Mindfulness moments which can be accessed through the DJS intranet led by DJS Behavioral Health Staff.
3. Employee wellness is supported by the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
 - a. EAP is a free, voluntary program that provides support and resources to employees and their families who may be facing challenges such as mental health and substance use issues, stress and burnout, family problems, financial and legal concerns, workplace conflict, and critical incident stress.
4. DJS employees receive a monthly electronic Wellness Newsletter through their state email address.

9) Family Engagement

We value family voice when developing and implementing wellness policy goals to support the creation of a policy that meets the needs of our students and school community. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to be involved in the development and implementation of the wellness policy.

A. General Guidelines:

1. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to participate in the development and updates to the Wellness Policy through the DJS website, where there is an e-mail to provide feedback.
2. Parents and caregivers are invited to participate in Treatment Team meetings and youth support team meetings, to provide input on the care of their child as well as on wellness-related services provided by DJS.
3. Parents and caregivers are given information by their youth's Case Manager about opportunities to give input and feedback through participation on the Facility Advisory Board.

10) Community Involvement

Engaging community stakeholders in the development of a wellness policy process provides valuable support for the school community.

A. General Guidelines:

1. DJS departments that may provide valuable support and insight include dietary and nutrition services, education, recreation, somatic health, behavioral health, residential and support services.
2. Input from staff representing all of these departments helps create the safe, healthy learning environment that students need to thrive.
3. Any staff member may join their facility Wellness Committee and/or provide

- feedback on the Wellness policy, which is available online.
4. DJS is committed to accepting and implementing feedback and support from the community both within and outside of DJS.
 5. DJS's Wellness Policy and Plan are posted on the DJS intranet as well as its website where anyone may access and send feedback.

Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

A. Implementation Responsibilities:

1. The DJS Health Administrator is responsible for the overall oversight of DJS's Wellness Policy to ensure that each facility is compliant with the policy.
2. Within each facility, the Facility Superintendent is responsible for implementation and oversight of the Wellness Policy at the facility level. The Facility Superintendent supports implementation of the Wellness Policy in their facility by:
 - a. Establishing a facility-wide Wellness Committee consisting of representation from food service, education, nursing, and recreation and/or physical education departments;
 - b. Collaborating with the Facility's School Principal, Food Service Administrator, and Director of Behavioral Health to ensure that the areas of policy that they are each involved in are carried out;
 - c. Working with the Health Administrator to make sure that the Wellness Policy is made available to community members and stakeholders and that opportunities to provide feedback are available; and
 - d. Reporting quarterly to the Health Administrator regarding compliance by their Facility.

B. Wellness Committee: Each facility's Wellness Committee is diverse in its composition and may consist of representatives from the following groups: Facility leadership (including the Superintendent, Principal, Food Service Administrator, and Director of Behavioral Health), students, nutrition and dietary services, behavioral health, medical/nursing, recreation department, and residential services.

1. This committee shall meet quarterly to plan, implement, and monitor health, nutrition, and physical activity programming in accordance with the DJS Wellness Policy and Plan.
2. Wellness Committee meeting minutes shall list attendees for each meeting and be distributed to committee members. Minutes will also be made available to stakeholders.
3. The Wellness Committee shall seek input from members of the Facility Advisory Board on ways to increase and improve wellness activities throughout the facility.
 - a. Parents/caregivers shall be given information on how they can participate in the Facility Advisory Board by their youth's Case Manager upon the youth's admission to the facility.
4. The Wellness Committee shall monitor compliance with the Wellness Policy and

- Plan, and help determine annual facility-wide goals and updates related to the policy.
5. The Wellness Committee shall assess the facility's progress towards meeting the Wellness Plan's goals at each quarterly meeting. Assessment may include touring the facility and meeting with youth and staff.
 6. Wellness Committee members should be in regular contact with leadership from the residential, dietary, education and health services departments to keep apprised of updates to their programming that may affect wellness promotion.
 7. Every three (3) years, the Wellness Committee will perform its own "Triennial" Assessment of the Wellness Policy using the Well Sat 3.0 tool. The DJS Health Administrator is responsible for managing this assessment, developing the report, and monitoring DJS's compliance with this Wellness Policy and Plan.
- C. MSDE Triennial Assessment: The MSDE triennial assessment will evaluate the following:
1. DJS's compliance with the Wellness Policy and Plan;
 2. How well the policy compares to model wellness policies; and
 3. Progress towards attaining the policy's goals
 - a. This assessment will be made available to staff through the DJS intranet and to the public through the DJS website.
- D. Communication, Progress Reports & Triennial Assessments
1. Communication of DJS's Wellness Policy and Plan
 - a. The DJS Wellness Policy and Plan are posted on both its public website and its intranet for employees.
 - b. The DJS website provides an email where parents, caregivers, and other interested parties can send feedback on the Wellness Policy and/or Plan.
 2. Annual notification, review and feedback
 - a. Feedback can be provided throughout the year through the designated email address. As feedback is received, the DJS Health Administrator will review suggestions and update the Wellness Plan accordingly, in consultation with the DJS Medical Director, DJS Director of Nutrition and Dietary Services, and Facility Superintendents.
 - b. Stakeholders can also provide feedback on the Wellness Plan at quarterly Wellness Committee meetings, as well as at Facility Advisory Board Meetings.
 - c. Updates to the Wellness Plan will be uploaded to both the DJS intranet and internet as they are made but no less than once per year, and will include a description of what changes were made.
 3. MSDE assesses the DJS Wellness Policy and Plan every three (3) years.
 - a. This triennial assessment shall evaluate compliance with federal Wellness Plan guidelines and compare its policy and plan to model Wellness Policies and Plans developed by MSDE. It will evaluate DJS's progress in attaining the goals of the DJS Wellness Plan.
 4. DJS's Wellness Committee makes appropriate changes to the Wellness Policy and Plan.

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- a. Updates to the Wellness Policy and Plan may apply to its content, implementation, and future review process.
- b. Changes to the Wellness Policy and Plan are determined by input received from a variety of sources including: the triennial report; Facility Wellness Committee leadership and members; feedback from youth and staff; comments by parents/caregivers on the Facility Advisory Boards; input on the DJS website and intranet; and relevant changes or updates in federal and state policy.

Wellness Plan Goals

The DJS Wellness Plan establishes goals for DJS residential facilities in the areas of nutrition education, nutrition promotion, physical activity, and other activities that promote wellness. The Wellness Plan outlines the responsibilities of each facility's Wellness Committee, as well as how the Wellness Policy and Wellness Plan are reviewed and updated.

I. Wellness Plan Goals

Goal 1: Nutrition Education

Goal: Youth receive nutrition education focused on the skills needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors and lifelong wellness practices.

Activities to reach goal:

- a. Youth participation in "Wellness Announcement" during school hours where DJS's Registered Dietician presents both verbal and written information on a nutrition topic that students have requested (e.g. sports drinks).
- b. DJS's Nutritionist provides educational flyers or placemats on youth's food trays featuring information on a variety of healthy eating topics at least once per month.
- c. DJS's medical team refers students with certain nutritional needs to DJS's Registered Dietician and Nutritionist who provide personal consultations with students, focusing on nutrition education and health promotion etc. Students may also self-refer.

Goal 2: Nutrition Promotion

Goal: All facilities host special activities to encourage youth to make healthy food choices consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Activities to reach goal:

- a. Youth choose and plan one (1) to two (2) Youth Choice Meals per month to be served at their respective facility.
- b. Youth participate in gardening in the facilities that have gardens and showcase the produce they grow in the dining halls.
- c. Youth participate in taste tests of new menu items on a semi-annual basis, and will be given the opportunity to provide feedback and input on menu development.

Goal 3: Physical Activity

Goal: Residential Facilities integrate physical activity into the daily schedule in order to ensure that each student has at least sixty (60) minutes of "large muscle" activity per day.

Activities to reach goal:

- a. Youth at every facility participate in physical activity daily under the supervision of a DJS staff member unless otherwise ordered by a medical provider.
- b. A Recreational Specialist provides physical activity during regular working hours. On days when a Recreational Specialist(s) is unavailable, a Resident Advisor or designee shall provide the required daily physical activity.

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- c. DJS holds Field Days consisting of athletic and intellectual competitions between facilities.
- d. Intramural sports competitions shall be held between facilities.
- e. DJS holds occasional staff versus youth physical activity/team sport competitions.

Goal 4: Stress Reduction: DJS will promote stress reduction by increasing students' knowledge of mindfulness and physical activity and ways to include both in their lives more regularly.

Activities to reach goal:

- a. During scheduled Physical Education and Nutrition Education classes, students do a brief (<3 minute) mindfulness or stress reduction activity at least once a month. The specific activity will be determined by staff based upon students' ages and interests.
- b. Physical Education Staff participate in the monthly Wellness Announcement on a quarterly basis to promote physical fitness and exercise.
- c. Youth help design and participate in activities for Mental Health Awareness month.

Goal 5: Residential Staff Wellness Participation: DJS Residential staff (including but not limited to Residential Advisors, Group Life Managers and Recreational Specialists) will model healthy eating, physical activity and overall wellness while working with youth.

Activities to reach goal:

- a. Staff will participate with youth in competitive team sports and other exercise activities.
- b. Direct care employees who supervise youth during meal service should eat the same foods served to youth as part of the planned menus (unless employees have a special dietary need which has been verified by a medical authority or approved by the Superintendent) to model healthy eating.

Goal 6: Health Services Staff Wellness Participation: DJS Health Services staff (including but not limited to nurses, physicians, nurse practitioners, behavioral health providers, dentists, dietitians and nutritionists) will facilitate and participate in wellness-promoting activities.

Activities to reach goal:

- a. DJS Health Services staff participate in facility wellness and exercise events.
- b. DJS Health Services staff lead health education groups as determined by the Wellness Committee and/or upon youth request.
- c. DJS Health Services staff promote influenza prevention by holding annual vaccination clinics where vaccines will be administered and influenza prevention information provided to youth.
- d. DJS Health Services staff shall provide youth with individual care and one-on-one health education counseling on wellness topics tailored to their age, developmental stage, health needs, and interests.
- e. DJS Behavioral Health staff shall provide a range of services to youth related to behavioral health including group sessions about mental health and substance use topics.