



## **School Wellness Program**

The Linwood Center identifies the connection between health and wellness and student achievement. Our students need nourishing foods and physical activity in order to grow, learn, and thrive. Linwood recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for all students. And that staff wellness is also an integral part of a healthy school environment. Promoting staff wellness fosters improved health status, improved morale, greater commitment to the health of students, and positive role modeling opportunities.

Linwood acknowledges the necessity for a collaborative and coordinated approach to school health. This policy ensures that the school environment promotes and protects students' ability to learn by providing nutrition education, physical activity, and a variety of healthy food and beverage choices.

### **I. Implementation Procedures Statement**

Coordinated school health is a systematic approach to improving students' health and well-being so they can participate and succeed in school. Developing habits for healthy eating and regular physical activity can have a lifelong positive impact on students' health. A coordinated approach calls for the Cabinet and members of the Linwood staff to work together, engage families and communities, and commit to consistent modeling of healthy behaviors. Attention to the physical, social, emotional, and mental health of our students and staff involves the entire community, including students, parents, counselors, teachers, health professionals, administrators, and more.

In order to successfully implement this policy, the Linwood Center is committed to engaging and educating the community, staff, and students of the importance of health and well-being to academic achievement.

### **II. Nutrition**

Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choice and availability of good foods in our school. Healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability, and ability to learn.

The Linwood Center will provide access to a variety of nutritious and appealing meals that accommodate the health and nutrition needs of all students. The following standards apply to all foods and beverages made available to students at school during the school day.

#### **1. General**

- a. All foods will meet safety guidelines (as outlined in the Howard County Health Department Regulations).

- b. Foods and beverages will not be consumed as part of the instructional program except as defined in the curriculum and/or when indicated in a student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP).
  - c. Foods and beverages will not be offered as a reward or withheld as punishment, except when indicated in a student's IEP or 504 Plan.
  - d. All students and employees will have free access to clean and safe drinking water throughout the school day and at after-school activities. Linwood promotes the consumption of water as an essential element that plays a role in overall health and wellness.
2. School Meals
- a. The Linwood Center will provide the opportunity for all students to begin the school day with a nutritious breakfast.
  - b. The HCPSS School Food and Nutrition Service Office, in consultation with the HCPSS registered dietitian, will make meal pattern lunches available to students each day that school is in session (including early dismissal days), as well as a la carte and snack/dessert items.
  - c. School nutrition programs will reflect the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the Healthier US Schools Challenge Standards, and the Institute of Medicine Nutrition Standards. Nutritional information will be posted on the Linwood Center Meals website.

### **III. Physical Education Program**

The goal of The Linwood School Physical Education Program is designed to highlight physical fitness and encourage healthy, active lifestyles.

Linwood's physical education curriculum is based upon the national standards set forth by the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America and the Maryland State Physical Education curriculum. The curriculum also includes resources from Special Olympics® (<https://resources.specialolympics.org/health/fitness/fit-5?locale=en>) and Autism Fitness® (<https://autismfitness.com>). Physical fitness is a key part of the mission in P.E. Department. Fitness is the state of optimal health and performance through adequate physical activity, nutrition, and hydration. In order for our students to be fit, they must practice healthy habits year-round and lifelong. Fitness programming empowers students and their supporters to take charge of their own health and fitness by providing necessary education, and social support. The focus of the Linwood Physical Education program is to ensure that all students will:

- Demonstrate competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns that are needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
- Apply knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance.
- Exhibit responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.
- Recognize the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social interaction.

#### **IV. Health Education Program**

Students at the Linwood School will receive health education in multiple formats with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for making health-promoting decisions, achieving health literacy, adopting health-enhancing behaviors, and promoting healthy lifestyles. The National Health Education Standards form the framework for health education curriculum. The National Standards are used by the school to support programs that allow students to become healthy and enable them to succeed academically.

The health education curriculum will include nutrition education for students. Nutrition education will provide students with developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities to develop student understanding of the food system and to experience a variety of tastes.

The other areas in the Health curriculum are sequential and based on the developmental level of the students.

- Students will have the opportunity to practice behaviors that enhance health and/or reduce health risks during the school day.
- Students will be taught communication, goal setting, and decision making skills that enhance personal, family, and community wellness.

##### **A. Social and Emotional Well-Being**

Linwood offers, as part of the Health Curriculum, programs and services that support and value the social and emotional well-being of the students, families, and staff to build a healthy school environment.

- Linwood shall provide a supportive environment that includes a **Transition Specialist\*** and school Social Worker services that encourage students, families, and staff to request assistance when needed and links them to school and community resources.
- Students shall be provided the skills to express thoughts and feelings in a responsible manner and give and receive support from others.
- Students shall be taught to understand and respect the differences in others and how to build positive interpersonal relations.

##### **B. Staff Health and Wellness**

1. The Linwood Center will provide opportunities for staff members to improve their health status through the Wellness Program which includes activities such as health assessments, health education, and health-related fitness activities.
2. The Employee Wellness Program will be overseen by the Employee Wellness Council consisting of representatives from all employee groups.

3. All staff members are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity.
4. The Employee Wellness Council will review the program philosophy, vision, mission, goals, and objectives of the Linwood Employee Wellness Program, evaluate the needs of the school, recommend specific programs, determine needed resources, and establish evaluation outcome measures. In partnership with the **Wellness Coordinator**, Employee Wellness Council members will act as champions of wellness by promoting participation of all employees in healthy lifestyle activities.
5. The Employee Wellness Council will support the goal of the Linwood Employees Wellness Program, which is to provide opportunities, support, and encouragement for employees to seek healthy lifestyle choices that enhance physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being.
6. The Employee Wellness Council members will represent a variety of school departments. The Employee Wellness Council will also act on behalf of those departments not represented and will seek input from those departments through regular communication. All departments will have an opportunity to have representation on the council as members are rotated off and are replaced bi-annually.
7. The Employee Wellness Council will present an annual report to the Board to include information such as program highlights, details of activities conducted, participation data, future plans, measures of results, and return on investment data.