

# Rankin Elementary School Wellness Policy

## **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!* 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 at Rankin Elementary shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy choices that promote healthy lifestyles. All staff members at Rankin Elementary are encouraged to model a lifestyle of healthy eating patterns and moderate physical activity as a valuable part of their daily lives.

To meet this goal, Rankin Elementary 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.

## **Commitment to Nutrition**

### **Rankin Elementary 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.
- Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales.
- 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.
- Establish guidelines in accordance with the Mississippi Beverage and Snack Regulations for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.

- 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.

## **Commitment to Food Safe Schools**

### **Rankin Elementary 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.
- Develop a food safety education plan for all staff and students, consistent with Fight Bac® ([www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org)) and other national standards for safe food handling at home and in school.
- Ensure that all staff has viewed the video developed by the Office of Healthy Schools to support food safety on the school campus.
- 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.

## **Commitment to Physical Activity/Physical Education**

### **Rankin Elementary will:**

- Provide 150 minutes per week of activity-based instruction for all students in grades K-8.
- Create opportunities for students to voluntarily participate in before- and after-school physical activity programs like intramurals, clubs, and at the secondary level, interscholastic athletics.
- 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.
- Require fitness testing for all 5<sup>th</sup> 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 2013-2014 Mississippi Physical Education Frameworks.
- Implement the requirements of the Mississippi Healthy Students Act of 2007.

## **Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education**

### **Rankin Elementary 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 for grades K through 8.
- Instruction must be based on the Mississippi Contemporary Health for grades K-8.
- Host a School Health Fair for students.

## **Commitment to a Healthy School Environment**

### **Rankin Elementary will:**

- Ensure that there are no pad locks or chains on exit doors; exits should never be obstructed.
- Ensure that all exit signs are illuminated and clearly visible.
- Ensure that all chemicals are stored properly
- Ensure that fire extinguishers are inspected each year and properly tagged.
- Complete yearly maintenance of the heating and cooling system in your school; check coils, filters, belts, etc. in order to maintain safe operation and healthy air quality.
- Conduct at least one emergency evacuation drill per month.
- Every school will have an anti-bullying policy that outlines procedures for dealing with bullying situations in the school.
- Ensure that two means of egress are available in each classroom in case of an emergency; if there is only one door, designate a window (properly sized) as a means of egress.
- Never use extension cords as a permanent source of electricity anywhere on a school campus.
- Provide facilities that are clean.
- Provide facilities that are safe.
- Provide proper signage that explains tobacco, weapons, and drugs are prohibited on the school campus and at school functions.
- Provide operational facilities that are equipped and functional to meet the instructional needs of students and staff.
- Provide air conditioning in all classrooms.

Comply with the requirements for Safe and Healthy Schools:

- Maintain a comprehensive School Safety Plan on file that has been approved annually by the local school board.
- Prohibit the possession of pistols, firearms or weapons by any person on school premises or at school functions.
- Prohibit students from possessing tobacco on any educational property.

## **Commitment to Quality Health Services**

### **Rankin Elementary 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.
- 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.

## **Commitment to Providing Counseling, Psychological and Social Services**

### **Rankin Elementary will:**

- Provide counseling and guidance for students.
- Provide additional services to improve students' mental, emotional, and social health.
- Ensure that all elementary school students have access to qualified student support personnel such as: guidance counselors, social workers, nurses, psychologists, psychometrists, and others.
- Ensure that all school guidance counselors provide comprehensive counseling services.

## **Commitment to Family and Community Involvement**

### **Rankin Elementary will:**

- Invite parents and community members to participate in school health planning by serving on the local School Health Council.
- Invite family or community members to eat a meal at school.
- Schedule school health fairs and invite parents and the public to attend.
- Sponsor a Family Fitness Night.
- Increase PTA/PTO Membership.

## **Commitment to Implementation**

### **Rankin Elementary will:**

- Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.
- Designate one or more persons to insure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written.
- Establish and support a School Health Council (SHC) that addresses all aspects of a coordinated school health program, including a school wellness policy.
- 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.