

EARLY CHILDHOOD  
WELLNESS POLICY

I. POLICY

In accordance with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, the Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (ECBMRDD) establishes this policy to provide guidance for student wellness as part of the school curriculum—including nutrition education, physical activity, other school-based activities, and nutrition guidelines. This policy provides as assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Staff will not use foods, beverages, or the opportunity for physical activity as reward for performance or good behavior and will not withhold foods, beverages, or the opportunity for physical activity as punishment.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Evaluation and Monitoring

1. The children's services director, or designee, shall be responsible for the implementation of the activities outlined in this policy.
2. This policy shall be reviewed annually and revised as appropriate.

B. Nutrition Guidelines

1. Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:
  - a. be appealing and attractive to children;
  - b. be served in clean and pleasant settings;
  - c. meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
  - d. offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
  - e. serve only low-fat (1-2%) milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy alternative (defined by USDA) unless specifically required as part of a child's nutritional needs as prescribed by a licensed physician or dietician; and
  - f. ensure that whole grains are incorporated into the monthly menu.
2. A goal of the ECBMRDD early childhood wellness program will be to develop menus that meet nutrition standards as established by the USDA, conform to good menu planning principles, and feature a variety of healthy choices that are attractive, of good quality, and served at proper temperature. To accomplish this goal the following will occur:
  - a. the school food manager will attend a minimum of one (1) workshop/training per year related to standards and
  - b. the menu will be reviewed by a licensed dietician to develop food analysis.
    - i. Monthly menus will be sent home with each full-day student.

- ii. A menu analysis is available to parents, family, and community members upon written request.

C. Nutrition Education

1. The board will support parent's efforts to provide a healthy diet for their children by:
  - a. sending home nutrition information;
  - b. posting nutrition information in the facility and on the website as appropriate;
  - c. providing a list of appropriate snacks and foods that meet the standards, as well as ideas, for healthy celebrations/parties, etc; and
  - d. encouraging parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks.
2. The goal of the ECBMRDD early childhood wellness program will be for children in early childhood center-based programs to receive developmentally-appropriate nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors. To accomplish this goal the following will occur:
  - a. children attending full-day programs will review lunch menus and identify, as appropriate, applicable food groups and
  - b. snack choices will be available to enable children to identify and match a minimum of one (1) food from two (2) or more food groups.

D. Physical Activity

1. The board will support parents' efforts to provide opportunities for daily physical activities for their children by:
  - a. sending home information about age-appropriate physical activity and
  - b. sharing information on community activities which promote physical activity for their children.
2. The goal of the ECBMRDD early childhood wellness program will be for children enrolled in a center-based program for more than two (2) hours per day to have a minimum of twenty (20) minutes of gross motor activity each day. This does not preclude staff from allowing additional time as appropriate to meet student needs. To accomplish this goal the following will occur:
  - a. all equipment used will be safe and age appropriate;
  - b. children will be supervised by the minimum staff required by ODE licensing; and
  - c. opportunities for physical development will be incorporated into classroom activities outside of the regularly scheduled time for gross motor development.

E. Other School-based Activities

1. The board supports the incorporation of applicable nutritional guidelines for:
  - a. any fundraising activities and

Erie County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

Health and Safety

June 2006

- b. classroom activities. Classroom activities shall include no more than one food or beverage per day that does not meet nutrition standards. Teachers and families will work together to determine snacks for classroom activities.
2. The goal of the ECBMRDD early childhood wellness program will be for policy goals to be considered in planning all school-based activities. To the extent possible healthy foods, snacks, and beverages will be identified and encouraged when planning and providing refreshments.