

Revised 9/8/06

## **East Longmeadow Schools Wellness Policy Questions and Answers**

Q. How does the Wellness Policy effect what I send in my child's lunchbox?

A. It does not effect parents. Parents may send any lunch items they want for their child- the Wellness Policy only effects what schools can serve students.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect what a PTO offers for food at evening meetings?

A. No, the Wellness Policy only effects what schools can offer. PTOs are not under school policy in non-school hours.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect the High School Café East in what they can sell to students and staff?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect the last day of school special events?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect the High School Prom?

A. No- our policy can not mandate what commercial diners serve.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect school dances?

A. Yes – if a school sponsors the dance, No- if outside agency sponsors the dance

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect the High School Senior Ziti Dinner?

A. Yes- for the meal itself, No for deserts since parents do as boosters and it is after hours.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect foods at the Fine Arts concerts?

A. No- the foods are after hours and are part of Fine Arts boosters.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect extra credit projects in school?

A. Yes, if food items are used for rewards for extra credit.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect Jog-a-thon fund raisers?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect school fundraisers?

A. Yes, if done by students, in the name of the school.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect Valentines Day which is a National event?

A. No, this day is exempted due to national expectations

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect Easter and chocolate bunnies, etc?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect sporting events and what is sold?

A. No, our parent boosters do the selling. Yes- if students do a fundraiser.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect staff professional development days?

A. No, these days are exempt since they are not “student school days”.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect school open house events?

A. Yes- open house is an official school function.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect special MCAS breakfasts served by schools?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect field trips?

A. No, field trips are exempt since we do not control what commercial sites serve for food.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect family pizza nights at schools?

A. No, these events are sponsored by PTOs, our policy does not effect PTOs.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect PTO meetings held at schools?

A. No.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect birthday celebrations for students?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect annual Teacher Appreciation Luncheons?

A. No, these are sponsored by the PTO for staff.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect Administration also?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect Booster organizations?

A. No.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect Ginger Bread houses during Christmas time class activities?

A. No- This activity will be exempt.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school events?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect Thanksgiving celebrations and classroom events?

A. Yes

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect vacation weeks that adults work?

A. No.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect ELPS Employees lunches they buy?

A. Yes. It does not effect what employees bring from home for lunch.

Q. Does the Wellness Policy effect religious holidays?

A. Certain holidays are exempt from the policy due to national and world-wide expectations. These holidays include: Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa, Halloween, Valentines Day, and Ramadan.

Q. Why did the school district change school lunch sold to students?

A. East Longmeadow Public Schools developed a committee to create the wellness policy in compliance with Section 204 of Public law 108-265 of the Child Nutrition Act and WIC Reauthorization Act.

Q. As a parent, where can I find information about school lunch and menus?

A. On the **eastlongmeadow.org** web page, under schools, in district documents, click on Lunches. It will give the menu and nutrients.

Q. Can my child still bring snacks to school?

A. Yes, but we discourage students from sharing their snacks with others mainly do to the increase in food allergies.

Q. My child is given a snack daily as an IEP requirement; will this policy change that current practice?

A. No, special circumstances will still be met as ordered in an individual education plan.

Q. Will this policy stop food from being brought into the classroom by teachers to be used as rewards for students?

A. Yes, Teachers are asked to find other rewards outside of candy and treats for students. Healthy snacks can be used instead of candy.

Q. Will this change the cost of school lunch?

A. No, this policy does not change the cost of lunch.

Q. Does the new Wellness Policy effect how many lunches my child can purchase?

A. No. Students my purchase meals and A-La-Cart items, as always.

Q. Why do snacks and beverages served at dances have to comply with the Wellness Policy?

A. If the dance is sponsored by the school- all food items must comply with the Wellness Policy. If an outside agency sponsors the dance- our policies only cover the school- not outside agencies.

Q. Can I send food in for a class treat that does not comply with the policy?

A. No, all food, other than for your own child's lunch, must comply with the new Wellness Policy.

Q. Will there still be a variety of food sold at school lunches for my child to eat?

A. Yes. We will continue to offer a variety of foods- all of which will comply with the new Wellness Policy.

Q. My child is eligible for free lunches at school. Will the new Wellness Policy effect his eligibility for free lunches?

A. No, the new Wellness Policy will not effect eligibility for free lunches.

Q. Does the food prepared in Family & Consumer Science classes have to meet the new policy?

A. No, ingredients used in baking, as a culinary arts course, may not meet all standards, but the cooking is a lesson, not a service of sales.

Q. Can diet soda be sold in the vending machines?

A. No, most sodas, even diet ones, contain too many ingredients that do not comply with the new Wellness Policy.

Q. Can teachers sell the honor snacks in the Teacher's Lounge?

A. No. All foods sold must adhere to the new Wellness Policy.

Q. Can school clubs have bake sales?

A. Yes- as long as the baked items comply with the new Wellness Policy.

Q. Can teachers consume personal food items that don't comply with the new Wellness Policy?

A. Yes- what a teacher brings to school to eat, like what parents send to school for lunches, is not regulated by this policy- only what schools serve to students is regulated by the new Wellness Policy.

Q. Can students or staff consume personal food items in the classroom that don't comply with the Wellness Policy?

A. No. Personal food items must not be consumed in the classroom- lunch room only.

Q. Can I order a pizza for my child and have it delivered to the school?

A. Yes- only if this is your child's lunch- and your child does not share this food- it must be a personal food item only.

Q. Will my child be getting more Physical Education because of this new policy?

A. No. Current levels of Physical Education and daily exercise, including recess, comply with the guidelines established by this policy.

Q. Will there be Health class in my child's elementary school now because of this policy?

A. This year we are not able to bring all positions back that were cut two years ago, but the school committee is working hard to reinstate the elementary health program as soon as possible.

Q. Can I pick up my child's PTO food fundraiser order at school during school hours?

A. Yes. This will be possible- but see your school principal for details.

Q. Can my child bring in cupcakes for his/her birthday for the class?

A. No. This type of food can no longer be shared with an entire class. You may send a cupcake in your own child's lunch. However, all group foods must comply with the new Wellness Policy.

Q. Why doesn't Gatorade or ice tea fit the new policy?

A. Because they contain too much sugar in the ingredients.

Q. Will the schools be explaining the new Wellness Policy to students at school?

A. Yes. The school will be working with students and parents to ensure they understand the new wellness policy. This webpage is one example of how we are trying to get the information out to all parents and citizens.

Q. Can staff bring in goodies for other staff members and leave them in the faculty rooms for all to eat?

A. No. Staff agreed to abide by the same wellness policy that the students abide by. Staff can bring anything they want for their own lunches, but may not bring items to share among staff members unless it qualifies under the wellness policy -- such as fresh fruits and vegetables, etc.

Q. Can a parent bring in goodies for the entire class to eat?

A. Yes, provided it meets the wellness policy guidelines- such as fresh fruits and vegetables. Cupcakes and such do not qualify. If a parent is unsure, they can submit the ingredients and recipe to the administration 30 days in advance and we will communicate if it qualifies or not under the wellness policy.

Q. Will there be an "approved list" of foods that parents may bring in to share with classrooms for snacks, etc?

A. Yes. In time, we will accrue a list of approved items. As the year gets started remember that fresh fruits and vegetables are always approved to share as class snacks and celebrations. Cupcakes and sweets are not allowed under the new wellness policy.