



SAMPLE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY: FARM TO SCHOOL

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Introduction

As society becomes more aware and concerned about the health of children, communities are turning to schools for solutions. Schools are one of the most powerful influences in the lives of students, and can significantly help to create and promote healthy habits and behaviors in children. Schools with a healthy nutrition environment foster improved student health. Farm to school programs can promote a healthy nutrition environment, which fosters improved student health. Freshly harvested garden produce can contribute to a student's nutrition, especially if it is integrated into school meals and snacks. The Minnesota School Boards Association ("MSBA") has a model school wellness policy that many school districts use as a guide when developing their individual school wellness policy. The MSBA model policy does not address school gardens. Therefore, the Public Health Law Center developed the following, more detailed language to insert into a school wellness policy.

Farm to School Sample Language

Farm to School Program

1. *The school district will support the development of farm to school programs to help students eat more nutritious foods and promote healthier lifelong eating patterns; support the local economy and local farmers; and teach students about the origins of their foods and how their food is grown.*
2. *The school district supports the integration of a farm to school program into the school food program and the curricular and co-curricular activities as appropriate to facilitate the nutritional and educational goals of the school district.*
3. *Farm to school programs enhance the nutritional and educational experience of school children by providing:*
 - a. *Nutritious, locally grown food as part of the school food program;*
 - b. *Opportunities for school children to visit local farms and learn about the origins of their food and how their food is grown; and interdisciplinary teaching tool to influence student food choices and lifelong healthy eating habits.*
4. *The school district will support the sustainability of a farm to school program through activities including, but not limited to, fundraising, solicitation of community donations, use of existing resources, and allocation of school district funds.*
5. *Farm to school programs provide students with the opportunity to eat healthy, locally grown foods and be exposed to a variety of fresh produce that reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the student population.*

6. *The superintendent has the authority to approve a farm to school program and the integration of the farm to school program into the school food program and the curricular and co-curricular activities of schools. The superintendent will ensure that the development of a farm to school program includes necessary coordination with appropriate representatives of the school food authority.*

7. *The superintendent, with the assistance of the School Health Council [aka School Wellness Committee], will develop guidelines for a farm to school program. These superintendent guidelines will include:*

a. *Explanation of how the farm to school program fits the standards-based curriculum and curriculum guidelines of the school district;*

b. *How the costs of the farm to school program will be funded; and*

c. *How the food obtained through a farm to school program will be used.*

8. *The superintendent or designee will review existing school board policy and recommend updates to any other school board policies to incorporate the goals and objectives of the farm to school program, including the school food program, curriculum and community use policies.*

Other Policy Options

In the majority of the school districts around Minnesota, the superintendent has the power to implement and enforce existing school board policy. Therefore, a superintendent can issue protocols/procedures/guidelines to implement the school wellness policy. The above language can be used by the superintendent to implement the overall goals of most school wellness policies. For an example, please refer to our School Health Council Policy Reference Guide, located at www.publichealthlawcenter.org.



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