

# SCHOOL IS FOR EVERY BODY: Our Vision for Weight-Neutral Wellbeing in the School Setting

This document can be used for educational and policy purposes



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- Body diversity is accepted and celebrated. Everyone feels welcome and included.
- People can expect that their bodies will not be talked about in the school community.
- Students and staff are valued for their unique strengths, talents, and contributions and not for their appearance.
- Our collective understanding of health is that it is multidimensional and that weight and health are not simplistically linked.
- Schools are safe places for those who may struggle with weight-related issues.
- Schools are free from diet talk and discussions of weight loss or muscle gain. Conversations are free from talk of calories, portion sizes, BMI, kilograms/pounds.
- Conversations about food are done in a neutral manner, referring to the name of the food itself rather than referring to food as “good,” “bad,” or a “treat.” Food is not used as a reward or punishment.
- Lesson materials, media resources, and visuals in the school positively depict bodies of different size, shape, race, ability, and gender.
- Student learning activities focus on food exploration, food literacy, and age-appropriate skill and knowledge development of healthy eating patterns.
- Students are not weighed at school.
- Proactive practices and corrective policies are in place to eliminate weight-based teasing and bullying.
- Wellbeing is cooperative and collective, not competitive and individual.
- School wellness initiatives focus on everyone feeling better from a multidimensional perspective rather than individual activities tracking movement or eating.
- Physical activity is an opportunity for learning, teamwork, and collective joy.
- Physical activity is promoted as an embodied way to feel well, be outdoors, and connect with others and not as a means to lose weight or change our appearance.
- In staff rooms, classrooms, and common areas, people feel safe to eat their food without judgment or commentary.
- Everyone respects the role they play in school mealtime:
  - If providing food, schools determine what is offered in accordance with school nutrition policy or best practice guidance.
  - Schools provide clean and comfortable spaces to eat, and enough time to eat.
  - Staff create a positive and calm eating environment that is free from distractions so everyone can eat according to their own body cues.
  - Students and families choose what food to send to school for lunch or snack. Staff respect the food choices families make.
  - Students feel supported in choosing what and how much to eat of their food, and in the order they choose.
- Food is celebrated as a source of connection and cultural tradition.

*Moving towards this vision of weight-neutral wellbeing is a process that can take time; be kind to yourself and others as you learn more.*