

## WHY IS HYDRATION IMPORTANT?

According to the National Drinking Water Alliance, more than **half** of school-age children are not properly hydrated. Many of them choose to drink sugary beverages like soda, fruit drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks, and sweetened tea instead of water.

Proper hydration is essential for overall health and can positively impact students' cognitive performance. Research has shown that mild dehydration can result in poor concentration and short-term memory problems, as well as moodiness and anxiety.

Improved access to drinking water in schools may improve children's ability to learn by improving attention, concentration, and short-term memory.




## WHAT DOES THE DISTRICT'S WELLNESS POLICY SAY?

*SDP Policy 145: Student and Staff Wellness* states that "drinking water shall be available and accessible to students, without restriction and at no cost to the student, at all meal periods and throughout the school day."

In addition, product selection for schools must be made from the following guidelines:

- Drinking water with no additives
- Unflavored low-fat and nonfat milk
- 100% fruit and/or vegetable juice
- No caffeinated beverages
- No artificial sweeteners, flavors, or colors

## DID YOU KNOW?

-  The city of Philadelphia has excellent drinking water, tested at the source for safety every day. It meets or exceeds state and federal water quality standards.
-  SDP tests its drinking water outlets for lead to a stricter safety standard than is required by the EPA. Every outlet in every school was tested in 2016-17 and is being retested on a rolling basis every 5 years. View results at [philasd.org/waterresults](http://philasd.org/waterresults)
-  Every District school now has four hydration stations. The stations provide chilled, filtered water and are good for the environment - schools saved a total of 1.4 million plastic bottles from landfills during the first year of using them!



# TAKE ACTION!

## WHAT YOU CAN DO:

### ✓ CREATE HYDRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Allow students to have reusable water bottles or cups that can be filled at hydration stations. Create a system for cleaning and storing them in the building
- Allow students to access water fountains and hydration stations during class and classroom breaks. You can also build regular water breaks into the school day!
- Allow students to only bring beverages that meet Wellness Policy guidelines into school (i.e., water, unflavored milk, 100% fruit juice)

### ✓ MAINTAIN HYDRATION STATIONS

- Keep water fountains and hydration stations clean to encourage use
- Alert your Building Engineer if a hydration station has any problems or needs a new filter. Look at the indicator light: green means the filter is working, yellow means it should be replaced soon, and red means it should be replaced ASAP

### ✓ PROMOTE HYDRATION

- Be a hydration role model by drinking only water in front of students
- Incentivize drinking water - have a "mystery" staff member give out reward tokens to students when they see them drinking water, rotate staff every week
- Offer healthy drink options at school events, like infused water
- Set a monthly goal for your hydration stations' digital counters (number of plastic bottles saved from landfills) and reward students if they reach the goal
- Hold a school-wide hydration campaign and get students involved!

## WHAT EAT RIGHT PHILLY CAN DO:

- Educate students on the importance of hydration and choosing healthy beverages
- Assist with school-wide hydration campaigns
- Provide chilled, infused water tastings
- Provide hydration posters, signs, and other materials. We may also be able to provide reusable water bottles for all students.
- Brainstorm with you on more ways to promote healthy hydration habits in your school!



### CONTACT US TODAY TO GET STARTED!

Reach out to your Eat Right Philly Educator or visit our website to find out which partner is working in your school and access their contact information.