

Integrated Day Charter School
Governing Board



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Instruction

School Wellness Policy

Policy included on following pages.

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INTEGRATED DAY CHARTER SCHOOL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Healthy School Nutrition Environments:

Promoting Healthy Eating Behaviors

The American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Dietetic Association, National Hispanic Medical Association, National Medical Association, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) call on schools and communities to recognize the health and educational benefits of healthy eating and the importance of making it a priority in every school. At the same time, the associations are encouraging their members to provide leadership in helping schools promote healthy eating for our Nation's children. Establishment of local policies that create a supportive nutrition environment in schools will provide students with the skills, opportunities, modeling, and encouragement they need to adopt healthy eating patterns.

KEYS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING IN SCHOOLS

- ❑ School meals will meet the USDA nutrition standards as well as provide sufficient choices, including new foods and foods prepared in new ways, to meet the taste preferences of diverse student populations.
- ❑ All students will have designated lunch periods of sufficient length to enjoy eating healthy foods with friends. These lunch periods will be scheduled as near the middle of the day as possible.
- ❑ Schools will provide enough serving areas to ensure student access to school meals with a minimum of wait time.
- ❑ Space that is adequate to accommodate all students and pleasant surroundings that reflect the value of social aspects of eating will be provided.
- ❑ Students, teachers and community volunteers who practice healthy eating will be encouraged to serve as role models in the school dining area.

1. Purpose and Goals

Healthy Eating and Physically Active Lifestyle

All students shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious and enjoyable food choices for a lifetime. Students shall also possess the knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors necessary to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness (or physically active lifestyle). In addition, staff is encouraged to model healthy eating and a physically active lifestyle as a valuable part of daily life. School leaders shall prepare, adopt, and implement a comprehensive plan to encourage healthy eating and a physically active lifestyle that includes:

- a food service program that employs well-prepared staff who efficiently serve appealing choices of nutritious foods;
- pleasant eating areas for students and staff with adequate time for unhurried eating;
- a sequential program of nutrition and physical education instructions that is integrated within the comprehensive school health education curriculum and coordinated with the food service program that encourages a physically active lifestyle; is taught by well-prepared and well-supported staff, and that is aimed at influencing students' knowledge, attitudes, eating habits and physical activity habits;
- an overall school environment that encourages students to make healthy food choices and to be physically active each day (or make physical activity a regular part of their daily routine)
- opportunities and encouragement for staff to model healthy eating habits and regular physical activity;
- services to ensure that students and staff with nutrition-related health problems are referred to appropriate services for counseling or medical treatment;
- a physical education program that employs well-prepared staff who provide educational experiences for students (staff and families) to provide age-appropriate and culturally sensitive instruction in physical education that helps students (develop the knowledge.....behaviors to adopt, maintain and enjoy a physically active lifestyle) or demonstrate several activities related to each component of health-related fitness, recognize and assess the physiological indicators during physical activity and know the health benefits of physical activity
- a sequential program of physical education instruction that is integrated within the comprehensive school health education curriculum that encourages a physically

active lifestyle that is aimed at influencing students' knowledge, attitudes, and physical activity habits;

- opportunities for staff, students and their families to be educated and/or participate in a variety of health-related fitness activities in and out of school time
- strategies to involve family members in the healthy eating and fitness programs development and implementation.

The school nutrition and fitness programs shall make effective use of school and community resources and equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in cultural norms.

2. Nutrition Education

Instructional Program Design:

Nutrition education topics shall be integrated within the sequential comprehensive health education program taught at every grade level, pre-kindergarten through eighth. The nutrition education program shall focus on students' eating behaviors, be based on theories and methods proven effective by published research, and be consistent with the state health education framework. Nutrition education shall be designed to help students learn:

- nutrition knowledge, including but not limited to the benefits of healthy eating, essential nutrients, nutritional deficiencies, principles of healthy weight management, the use and misuse of dietary supplements, and safe food preparation, handling, and storage;
- nutrition-related skills, including but not limited to planning a healthy meal, understanding and using food labels, and critically evaluating nutrition information, misinformation, and commercial food advertising; and
- how to assess one's personal eating habits, set goals for improvement, and achieve those goals.

Nutrition education instructional activities shall stress the appealing aspects of healthy eating and be participatory, developmentally appropriate, and enjoyable. The program shall engage families as partners in their children's education.

The school health staff shall assess all nutrition education curricula and materials for accuracy, completeness, balance, and consistency with the state's educational goals and standards. Materials developed by food marketing boards or food corporations shall be examined for inappropriate commercial messages.

Staff Qualifications:

Staff responsible for nutrition education shall be adequately prepared and regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned.

Educational Reinforcement:

School personnel shall not offer food as a performance incentive or reward and shall not withhold food from students as punishment.

School instructional staff shall collaborate with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent messages to students and their families. Guest speakers invited to address students and/or parents shall receive appropriate orientation to the relevant policies of the school.

School staff are encourage to cooperate with other agencies and community groups to provide opportunities for student volunteer work related to nutrition such as assisting with food recovery efforts. School officials should also disseminate information to parents, students and staff about community programs that offer nutrition assistance to families.

Staff as Role Models:

School staff members are encouraged to model healthy eating behaviors. Schools should offer wellness programs that include personalized instruction about healthy eating and physical activity.

3. The Food Service Program

Intent:

The state legislature, state board, local school board acknowledges that the feeding of children is primarily a family responsibility. To supplement their efforts, every school shall operate a food service program to ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn well.

Program Requirements:

During each school day the school food service program shall offer lunch. In particular, the school shall make efforts to ensure that families are aware of need-based programs for free or reduced-price meals and those eligible families are encouraged to apply. The program shall maintain the confidentiality of students and families applying for or receiving free or reduced-priced meals.

The school food service program shall operate in accordance with the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1996 as amended and applicable laws and regulations of Connecticut. Schools shall offer varied and nutritious food choices that are consistent with the federal government's Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Menus should take into account students cultural norms and preferences. Food-pricing strategies shall be designed to encourage students to purchase nutritious items. Procedures shall be

in place for providing to families, on request, information about the ingredients and nutritional value of the foods served.

Upon a physician's written request, modified meals shall be prepared for students with food allergies or other specific food needs.

All food service equipment and facilities must meet applicable local and state standards concerning health; safe food preparation, handling, and storage; drinking water, sanitation; and workplace safety.

Eating as a Positive Experience:

Students and staff shall have adequate space to eat meals in pleasant surroundings and shall have adequate time to eat, relax, and socialize; at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch. Safe drinking water and convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene shall be available.

Staffing:

Each district/school shall employ a food service director, who is properly qualified and certified according to current professional standards, to administer the school food service program and satisfy reporting requirements.

All food service personnel shall have adequate preservice training and regularly participate in professional development activities that address strategies for promoting healthy eating behavior, food safety, and other topics directly relevant to the employee's job duties.

Dining room supervisory staff (i.e. teachers, paraprofessionals) shall receive appropriate training in how to maintain safe, orderly, and pleasant eating environments.

Contracted Services:

Specified elements of the school food service program may be contracted out to food service management companies or other vendors following established open bidding procedures. The contractor(s) shall fully comply with the nutritional standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for school food programs and be subject to district auditing processes. A school official shall be responsible for administering the contract. The school retains the responsibility for meeting all USDA requirements.

Coordination with Other Programs:

The food service program shall be coordinated with nutrition instruction to allow students to apply critical thinking skills taught in the classroom. Food service staff shall also work with those responsible for other components of the school health program to achieve common goals.

4. Other Food Choices at School

Students' eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of food and drink that are available to them. Policies that are intended to promote healthy eating need to address all food and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside of the school meals program.

Nutritious Food Choices:

Nutritious and appealing foods, such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, and low-fat grain products, shall be available wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at school. Schools shall take efforts to encourage students to make nutritious food choices and monitor portion size.

Food Sales:

The sale of all foods on school grounds shall be under the management of the school food service program, except foods sold as part of a fundraising activity.

Students shall not have access to food or beverages sold in vending machines or school stores.

5. Nutrition-Related Health Problems

School counselors, fitness coordinator/physical education teacher, and school health services staff shall consistently promote healthy eating and fitness to students, families and other staff. These professionals shall be educated to recognize conditions such as obesity, eating disorders, and other nutrition-related health problems among students (and staff) and be able to refer them to appropriate services.

Food Allergies/Sensitivities:

School staff shall be made aware of food allergies in the student population and shall take precautions to insure the safety of food sensitive students. This may include but is not limited to monitoring snacks eaten in class and providing allergen-free lunch spaces.

6. Monitoring

Monitoring:

- The director or designee will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.
- School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the director.
- The physical education teacher will monitor physical fitness letters through the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment report.