

## **WELLNESS POLICY VISION GUIDELINES:**

Vision Charter School strives to support a school environment that enhances the ability of students to learn and achieve. Since it is well established that health and well-being are key components to a student's ability to learn and achieve<sup>1</sup>, this district shall work to provide students with a healthy environment. The goal of the board is to encourage a healthy lifestyle for students by providing nutrition education, promoting healthy food choices, providing opportunities for physical activity, and other school-based wellness activities. The district will engage individuals from the district and community to participate in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing this and other related school wellness policies.

## **SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS**

The district's school nutrition programs will prepare and serve nutritious, well-balanced, and age-appropriate meals, à la carte foods, snacks, and beverages that comply with current USDA regulations. In order to adhere to these nutrition standards, the school nutrition program will serve a variety of whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and low fat dairy products. Water will be available to students at no charge in the place where meals are served during meal service.

The district will consult with a dietitian to review the menu and ensure that it meets federal guidelines. The Food Service Director shall solicit feedback from students, staff, and parents regarding the offered foods and beverages. Nutritional information such as calories, saturated fat, and sodium content of foods shall be made available in the cafeteria and district website.

Vision Charter will provide adequate time to eat during meal periods. Vision Charter will develop schedules that allow students at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch once they are seated. When possible, lunch will follow the recess period to better support the consumption of healthy foods and improve learning opportunities. To the extent possible, school, recess, and transportation schedules will be designed to encourage participation in school meal programs. Teachers are discouraged from scheduling tutoring, club or organizational meetings, or activities during mealtimes, unless the student(s) may eat during such activities.

The Food Service Director will utilize a full Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) Plan to ensure food safety practices are implemented and followed.

To the maximum extent practicable, Vision Charter School will participate in available federal school meal programs, including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Afterschool Snack Program.

School meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will meet or exceed nutrition and meal pattern requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations.

**Free and Reduced Price Meals:** The district will provide free and reduced-price breakfasts and lunches to students according to the terms of the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs and the laws and rules of the state.

## **All Foods and Beverages Sold in Schools**

All foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day will comply with Smart Snack Regulations. This includes food items sold through à la carte lines, vending machines, snack bars, student stores, and fundraising activities. The district will utilize the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Smart Snack Product Calculator to determine product compliance when considering food items to sell to students during the school day. Per USDA,

the school day is defined as midnight the night before to 30 min after the end of the instructional day. Food and beverage marketing and advertising will be limited to only those foods and beverages that align with the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans except for Administratively approved exempted fundraisers.

## **FUNDRAISING**

All foods sold to students must be tracked and compared to Smart Snack standards. If foods and beverages do not follow the Smart Snacks regulations, the fundraising organization must request an exemption from the appointed district administrator. Per Idaho policy, a district may have ten (10) exempted fundraisers per school year per school site. Fundraisers requiring an exemption may not be longer than four (4) consecutive days in duration and exempt food and beverage items may not be sold in district food service areas during meal service. A designee of the School

Wellness Committee will be available to meet with student fundraising organizations to communicate Smart Snacks standards should case-specific questions arise.

The Smart Snacks regulations do not apply to items sold during non-school hours, weekends, off-campus fundraising events, or foods intended to be consumed or prepared outside of school.

## **OTHER FOODS AND BEVERAGES IN SCHOOLS**

### **Celebrations and Snacks**

Classroom celebrations and snacks served during the school day or in after-school programs will emphasize healthy choices, such as fruits and vegetables, as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage.

Schools will determine when to offer snacks based on the schedule for school meals, the nutritional needs of students, student age, and other pertinent factors. Schools that provide reimbursable snacks through after-school programs will follow the federal guidelines for the Afterschool Snack Program.

The school wellness committee will develop a list of recommended healthy snack and beverage items to provide to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents. This list will be utilized when planning classroom snacks, school sponsored parties, social events, and school functions.

### **Food as Rewards**

Teachers are discouraged from using food as a reward for students and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment. The school wellness committee will develop guidelines for appropriate alternative reward systems that incorporate social rewards, recognition and praise, privileges, and opportunities for classroom physical activity or additional recess.

## **NUTRITION PROMOTION**

***The wellness policy includes specific/measurable goals for nutrition promotion using evidence-based strategies.***

Vision Charter School will encourage students to make healthy food choices using a variety of nutrition promotion techniques which may include:

1. Encouraging staff to model healthy eating/drinking behaviors
2. Utilizing Smarter Lunchrooms techniques, such as signage and product placement, when appropriate and attainable
3. Sharing nutrient information with students, staff, and parents at the point of service and district website

4. Offering taste-testing and menu planning opportunities to students to teach them about healthy fruits and vegetables options and solicit input on preferences
5. Participating in Farm to School activities and/or implementing a school garden

## **NUTRITION EDUCATION**

***The wellness policy includes specific/measurable goals for nutrition education using evidence-based strategies***

The school board will adopt and implement a comprehensive health and physical education curriculum in line with the Idaho standards for health and physical education. Additional standards-based nutrition education will be offered in each grade as either a stand-alone unit or integrated into other core subjects, such as math, science, language arts, and social sciences.

1. Curriculum will link nutrition education with the school food environment and focus on behavior-focused skills, such as meal planning, recognizing food groups, and reading food labels to evaluate the quality of different foods.
2. Classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, and dining areas will utilize regularly updated nutrition and health posters and signage to educate students on nutrition concepts.
3. Nutrition curriculums will utilize culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate opportunities to apply learning in school-wide activities such as contests, surveys, promotions, food demonstrations and taste-testing, voting for recipe names, cafeteria design or décor challenges, farm visits, and school gardens.
4. Schools shall provide families with materials that allow parents and students to apply health and nutrition lessons at home.

## **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

This district's goal is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge, skills, and capacity to be physically active throughout their life. This includes providing opportunities to maintain physical fitness; reduce sedentary time; and develop and enhance social skills and self-esteem for students of all levels of physical ability.

The physical education curriculum will be aligned with state and national standards for physical education and be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Class sizes will be limited to a maximum of thirty (35) students per instructor and be offered one to two times per week. Waivers, exemptions, and substitutions will be considered on a case by case basis. A student substituting for physical education must demonstrate proficiency of physical education standards.

In addition to physical education, the district will provide other opportunities for physical activity for each grade by utilizing a comprehensive physical activity program plan which may encompass:

1. Active transportation to and from school.
2. Opportunities for physical activity before and after school, by providing intramural programs, interscholastic sports, competitive and non-competitive clubs with a physical activity emphasis.
3. Daily recess for elementary students and classroom-based physical activity breaks to increase focus or teach academic content via physical movement for all students.
4. Engaging staff, families, and communities to join and support physical activity initiatives.
5. To promote physical fitness for students, parents, and community members, the district may enter into joint or shared-use agreements with governmental entities and community

organizations that allow school and/or community-based organizations to use the school facilities for physical activity and recreation programs outside of school hours. Teachers and other school personnel are prohibited from withholding an entire recess or physical education as punishment.

## **OTHER SCHOOL-BASED WELLNESS ACTIVITIES**

District goals regarding other school-based wellness activities shall include some or all of the following:

1. Providing professional development related to health, nutrition, and physical activity to staff
2. Developing and implementing a staff wellness program that encourages school staff to serve as role models to students and practice healthy eating, physical activity, and other healthful activities
3. Sponsoring health fairs, no screen time week, school-supported races or fun runs, family activities
4. Implementing and sustaining a school garden or activities that promote healthy eating via student participation
5. Evaluating the barriers to implementing Safe Routes to School to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school
6. Initiating and sustaining a recycling/environmental stewardship program
7. Providing students, parents, and staff with mental health resources and prevention program information

## **MONITORING**

Building principals or a designee will monitor and ensure adherence to the wellness policy in their school and will report rates of compliance to the superintendent or designee. The food service director will monitor and ensure that the school nutrition program complies with federal and state nutrition and meal pattern guidelines and report such compliance to the superintendent or designee. The superintendent or designee is responsible for monitoring and ensuring compliance with this policy. Reporting of adherence to the wellness policy shall take place quarterly.

## **ASSESSMENT**

At least once every three years the wellness committee will conduct an assessment and develop a summary report on district compliance. The assessment and report will include the extent to which the charter is in compliance with this policy, the extent to which this charter's wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies, and the progress made in attaining the measurable goals of this policy. The report will be made available to the public at the district office and posted on the district's website, as well as provided to the school board, the school wellness committee(s), parent/teacher organizations, school administrators, and school health services personnel in the district.

## **NOTICE**

The district will annually include this policy, and any updates in the student handbook and provide each student and parent/guardian with a copy of the student handbook upon enrolling in classes. The policy and the results of the triennial assessment will also be posted on the school website.

## **Healthy School Party Snack Suggestions**

Students are taught in the classrooms about good nutrition and the value of healthy food choices. However, many times foods served in the classroom, in the case of a class party, are low in nutrients and high in calories. Below are some suggestions for healthier party treats: 100% juice, water/flavored water, fresh fruit assortment, fruit and cheese kabobs, 100% fruit snacks, vegetable trays, string cheese/cheese cubes, pretzels, low-fat popcorn, angel food cake, apples with fat-free caramel dip, yogurt parfaits (yogurt, berries, granola, layered), yogurt smoothies, yogurt in a tube (gogurts), quesadillas with salsa.

## **Alternatives to using food as a reward**

Kids learn preferences for foods made available to them, including those that are unhealthy. Poor food choices and inadequate physical activity contribute to overweight and obesity. Kids naturally enjoy eating healthy and being physically active. Schools and communities need to provide them with an environment that supports healthy behaviors. Below are some alternatives for students to enjoy instead of being offered food as a reward at school for performance or behavior:

- Sit by friends
- Watch a video
- Read outdoors
- Teach the class
- Have extra art time
- Enjoy class outdoors
- Have an extra recess
- Play a computer game
- Read to a younger class
- Get a no homework pass
- Make deliveries to the office
- Listen to music while working
- Play a favorite game or puzzle
- Earn play money for privileges
- Walk with a teacher during lunch
- Eat lunch outdoors with the class
- Be a helper in another classroom
- Eat lunch with a teacher or principal
- Dance to favorite music in the classroom
- Get “free choice” time at the end of the day
- Listen with a headset to a book on audiotape
- Have a teacher perform special skills
- Have a teacher read a special book to the class