



Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Mission

Arizona Charter Academy (ACA) is committed to building students' nutritional knowledge along with stressing the importance of a daily exercise routine. Our school believes that a good nutritional and exercise program will help to provide students with healthier living behaviors and choices, now and in the future.

Preamble

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, the Success School District is committed to providing a school environment that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Success School District that:



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- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school during school hours and 30 minutes after school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and the nutritional standards of the *Alliance for a Healthier Generation*.
- The school will provide students with access to affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, our school will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks]).
- School will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Health Council

Arizona Charter Academy will create, strengthen, or work to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The council also will serve as a resource to school site for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and will include parents, students, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.)



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II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, meet the New Meal Pattern requirements;
- offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and non-fat chocolate milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that all of the served grains are whole grain or enriched grains.

School will engage students through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, school will share information about the school meals with parents and students. Such information will be made available on menus, a website, or other point-of-purchase materials.

Breakfast. To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- School will operate the School Breakfast Program.
- School will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- School will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals

At the beginning of the school year, the school will disseminate applications for free and reduced-price meals to parents via mail, online, and at the school offices. Front office school personnel will be trained to educate parents about the process and to direct questions to qualified staff. Eligibility guidelines will be posted online and school offices for parents to access. Free and Reduced Meal Applications will be available during the annual update online via the parent portal to make it easily accessible to parents.



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School will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Toward this end, the school will utilize electronic identification and payment systems; will use false balances for students to prevent the identification who qualify for free and reduced-price meals; will give access of students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals only to designated, trained staff; promote the availability of school meals to all students.

Meal Times and Scheduling. School:

- will make accessible to all students free, potable water during meal periods.
- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 15 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will schedule lunch periods to precede or follow recess periods (K-8);
will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks;
- will be a closed campus to encourage students to eat in the cafeteria or bring healthy food from home;
- will allow students who leave campus prior to lunch and who return after designated lunch time to have an adequate amount of time to obtain lunch from the cafeteria or eat their lunch brought from home; and
- will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (*e.g.*, orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition director, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility. It will also ensure that Food Caterer that contracts with the school has qualified personnel, including a person responsible for the nutritional analysis.



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Sharing of Foods and Beverages. Schools will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.*, foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

Elementary Schools. The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

Middle School. In middle school, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

Beverages for K-12:

- Plain water (with or without carbonation)
- Unflavored low fat milk
- Unflavored or flavored fat free milk and milk alternatives permitted by NSLP/SBP
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice with or without carbonation (8 oz for Elementary and 12 oz for Middle School and High School) and
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation; 8 oz for Elementary and 12 oz for Middle School), and no added sweeteners.

Foods

Any food sold in schools must:

- Be a grain product that contains 50 percent or more whole grains by weight (have a whole grain as the first ingredient); or
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or
- Be a combination food that contains at least $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; or
- The food must meet the nutrient standards for calories, sodium, sugar

Foods must also meet several nutrient requirements:



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- Calorie limits:
 - Snack items: 200 calories or less
 - Entrée items: 350 calories or less
- Sodium limits:
 - Snack items: 200 mg or less
 - Entrée items: 480 mg or less
- Fat limits:
 - Total fat: 35% of calories or less
 - Saturated fat: Less than 10% of calories
 - Trans fat: 0 grams
- Sugar limit:
 - 35% by weight or less

Fundraising Activities. To support children’s health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities during the school day will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. The school will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

Snacks. Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children’s diets and health, with an emphasis on serving grains, fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water and or juice as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children’s nutritional needs, children’s ages, and other considerations. The school will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

- The school will provide snacks through after-school programs and will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

Rewards. School will only use foods or beverages that meet the USDA’s Smart Snacks in School guidelines. In K-5, it will use paw parties to promote physical activity (Dance- offs, extra recess)

Celebrations. All school-sponsored celebrations will only serve food and beverages that meet the USDA’s Smart Snacks in School guidelines. School shall limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than three parties per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually



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(above). The school will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

Miscellaneous Areas of Wellness Plan

- Drinking fountains will provide students with access to water throughout the school day including during meal times.
- Hand washing equipment and/or sanitizers are in a convenient place so that students can wash their hands before eating.
- Red Ribbon Week – Each year the school dedicates one week to promoting healthy choices through a “Say No to Drugs Program” implemented by the high school student council or National Honor Society.
- Increase parental awareness and involvement through informative newsletters and invitations to attend special school events concerning health and fitness including parent workshops.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. ACA aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. The school will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects; promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services; teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting. For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to



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fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- all physical education class lessons will be designed to meet and/or exceed Arizona State Standards. Lessons will also be designed to help develop physical skills, flexibility, and agility when performing tasks. Most importantly, the activities will be designed to encourage participation by all students thus motivating them to exercise.
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.
- After school sports will also be offered to all students in grades 6-8. Sports available include basketball, volleyball, flag-football, cross country, baseball, soccer, softball and cheer.

Communications with Parents. The district/school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The district/school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.

The district/school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Food Marketing in Schools. School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.



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Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; in-school television, such as Channel One; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; sales of fruit for fundraisers; and coupons for discount gym memberships.

Staff Wellness. Success School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The school should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, local hospital representative, dietitian or other health professional, recreation program representative, and employee benefits specialist. (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the school health council.) The committee will develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan will be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the school health council annually.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Daily Physical Education (P.E.). All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will have a minimum of 135 minutes of structured physical activity per week for the entire school year. In K-5, the student teacher ratio for physical education classes will not exceed 26:1 and in grades 6 – 8 it will not exceed 32:1. The school will offer other Physical Education related course as an elective for grades 6-8. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (*e.g.*, interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess. All elementary school students will have at least two supervised recess periods and middle school students will have at least one supervised recess period, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

ACA will discourage extended periods (*i.e.*, periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long



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periods of time, the school shall give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School. 6-12 grades will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs, intramural or interscholastic sports programs. School sports available include basketball, volleyball, flag football, cross country, football, baseball, soccer, softball and cheer. The school will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs. K-8 after school enrichment programs will incorporate physical activity by offering a recess prior to the start of the program or will schedule as a part of the program.

The school has partnered and will continue to partner with nationwide organizations such as Girls on the Run and Susan G. Komen to provide students opportunities to be physically active during after school activities and groups. After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

Physical Activity and Punishment. Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (*e.g.*, running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (*e.g.*, recess, physical education) as punishment.

Safe Routes to School. The school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the school will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school will explore the availability of federal “safe routes to school” funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements. Currently, those funds have been made available to ACA and it will be used to promote safe routes for students who walk or ride their bikes to school.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours. School spaces and facilities are available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities are also available through a partnership with the City of Surprise offering physical activity and nutrition programs to ACA students and other children from the community. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.



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V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. The COO or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In the school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the COO.

School food service staff, at the school level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal). In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the school has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past three years, the district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The COO will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from school. This policy and summary report will be available to review via the school's website (www.azcharter.com) and available in the school's front offices.

Policy Review. To help with the initial development of the school's wellness policies, the school will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of the school assessments will be compiled to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The school will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

Comments/Feedback/Participation

If you would like to comment, give back or participate in our Local Wellness Policy Committee please make an inquire by mail, e-mail or phone call to Gloria Ramos, 16011 N Dysart Rd, Surprise, AZ 85374, gramos@azcharter.com or 623-974-4959 ext. 330.