



## **Neighborhood Charter Schools Wellness Policy**

Neighborhood Charter Schools is committed to providing school environments 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 SFA and its recipient agencies that:

- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of 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, the school will participate in available federal school meal programs including the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks].
- The 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. Wellness Advisory Council**

SFA will create, strengthen, or work within the school advisory committee to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The council will also serve as resources to school sites for

implementing those policies. The council will consist of staff, parents and board members.

## **II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Served on Campus**

### **School Meals**

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

- Provide nutritious, tasty, and visually appealing meals.
- Provide fresh vegetable with every lunch and supper meal, when applicable.
- Provide fresh fruit with every breakfast, lunch and supper meal. No canned/frozen fruits.
- No hydrogenated oils.
- No tropical oils (coconut palm oils).
- No artificial trans fats.
- No high fructose corn syrup.
- No artificial preservatives, colors, flavors or sweeteners.
- Provide low fat or nonfat milk with each breakfast, lunch and supper meal.
- Milk shall be rBST-free.
- No BHA & BHT.
- Whole grains must be offered.
- Use unbleached flour.
- Provide a daily vegetarian option.
- The School will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students upon request.

### **Water**

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day\* and throughout every school campus. The SFA will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

### **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:

- The School will operate the School Breakfast Program.
- The School will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation.
- The School will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- The 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**

The SFA participates in the Community Eligibility Program. All students receive a breakfast, lunch, and snack at no cost.

### **Meal Times and Scheduling**

- Will provide students with at least 15 minutes to eat for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch.
- Should schedule meal periods at appropriate times.
- Should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- Will provide student's access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

### **Qualifications of School Food Service Staff**

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in school. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

### **Sharing of Foods and Beverages**

The School 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.

### **Snacks**

Snacks will be served during an extended school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs to make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and milk as the primary beverage. The School 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 pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

## **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

### **Nutrition Education and Promotion.**

SFA 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;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities;

- 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;

### **Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting**

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity and for students to 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;
- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons.

### **Communications with Parents**

The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The School will 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 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.

## **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

### **Physical Education Twice a Week - K-12**

The SFA understands the importance of physical activity on the health of its students and provides physical education to its students, considering space restrictions and including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings.

### **Daily Recess**

The SFA makes an effort to provide elementary students at all sites with at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, during which school should encourage moderate

to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

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

### **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.

## **V. Monitoring and Policy Review**

### **Monitoring**

The Food Service Director will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each 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 Food Service Director.

The School food service staff, at the school or 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 Food Authority will report on the most recent State School Nutrition Program (SNP) review findings and any resulting changes. If the school has not received a SNP review from the state agency within the past five years, the school will request from the state agency that a SNP review be scheduled as soon as possible.

Parents are welcome to join the wellness committee. If you are interested, please contact Massiel Rodriguez at [mrodriguez@ncschools.org](mailto:mrodriguez@ncschools.org).