

Excalibur Charter School District's Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Preamble

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, lean, 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, 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;

Whereas, only 2% of children (3 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 Thus, the Excalibur Charter School district 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 Excalibur Charter School District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- The school food service director 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, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program.

- Schools 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 meals programs and with related community services.

To Achieve These Policy Goals:

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, nutritional requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables
- Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free mild and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA): and
- Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain

Schools should engage students and parents, 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, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information should be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards.

Breakfasts. 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:

Schools will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program

- Schools will, utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation.
- Schools that serve breakfast to student will notify parents and students of the availability of the school breakfast program
- Schools 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. Schools 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.

Meal Times and Scheduling School:

- Will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- Should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, i.e., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- Will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary schools);
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and

- Should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

School Food Service Staff. 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 training programs for child nutrition directors, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of foods and Beverages. Schools should 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

Elementary schools. The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to student in elementary schools. 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, frits and non-fried vegetables.

Middle and High Schools. In middle and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through vending machines, student stores or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for student after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

Beverages

- **Allowed:** water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; sports drinks (12 oz. or less); unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA):
- **Not Allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks (more than 12 oz.); iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods

- A food item sold individually:
 - Will have not more that 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
 - Will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars;
 - Will contain no more that 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.

Portion Sizes:

- Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:
 - One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
 - One ounce for cookies;
 - Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
 - Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to low-fat or fat-free ice cream;

- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt:
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water.

Fundraising Activities. To support children’s health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

Rewards. Schools will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment.

Celebrations. Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party 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.

Nutrition and Physical activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. Excalibur School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students, Schools should 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 student with 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, such as contest, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and healthy enhancing nutrition practices;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activities/exercise);
- 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 (at least 60 minutes per day) and for student to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, student need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Towards 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; and classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communications with Parents. The schools will support parents’ efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district’s snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, and rewards, through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials.

Physical activity Opportunities and Physical Education

- **Physical Education (P.E.)** K-12 All students in grades K-12, will receive physical education as directed by the principals of the schools.

- **Daily Recess.** All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. The designee will ensure compliance with established district-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 school district designee.

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 school principal.

The designee will develop a summary report every three years on compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the school board, principals and parent/teacher organizations.

Policy Review. 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 district will review the nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity, and nutritional and physical education policies and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

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