

**ECHO Charter School
WELLNESS POLICY
2018-2019**

533 WELLNESS

[Sec. 204 Local Wellness Policy: *Not later than the first day of the school year beginning after June 30, 2006, all school districts that receive funding from the federal school lunch program are required by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 ("the Act") to have a Wellness Policy that includes nutrition guidelines, goals for nutrition education, physical activity to promote student wellness, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote wellness. The Act requires the involvement of parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in the development of the wellness policy. The Act also requires a plan for measuring implementation of the policy and the designation of at least one person charged with operational responsibility for ensuring the school district is in compliance with the policy. The Act provides for technical assistance and information from the Secretary of Agriculture to aid state and local educational agencies and school food authorities in establishing healthy school nutrition environments, reducing childhood obesity, and preventing diet-related chronic diseases.]*

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The ECHO Charter School is committed to providing a healthy school environment because:

- A. The school board recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education.
- B. The school environment should promote and protect students' health, well being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.
- C. The school district encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, food service staff, school board, school administrators, and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school district nutrition and physical activity policies. A Wellness Committee shall be formed to plan, implement and improve the school district's nutrition and physical activity in the school environment.
- D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive and to achieve academic success.
- E. All students in PreK-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

- F. Qualified food and nutrition services personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings with adequate time for students to eat.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Foods and Beverages Served/Sold During the School Day

[The Act requires that school districts have nutrition guidelines, selected by the school district, for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing student obesity.]

1. All foods and beverages made available on campus (including concessions, vending, beverage contracts, and a la carte cafeteria items) will be consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - a. Food and beverages offered over the course of a school week will be nutrient-dense, including whole grain products and fiber-rich fruits and vegetables to provide students a variety of choices to maintain a balanced diet.
 - b. Foods and beverages available during the school day will include a variety of healthy choices that are of excellent quality, appealing to students, and served at the proper temperatures.
 - c. Foods and beverages available during the school day minimize the use of trans and saturated fats, sodium and sugars as defined by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - d. **Elementary School.** The Food and Nutrition Services Department will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools will be sold as balanced meals. Food and beverages will not be sold individually to students, except low-fat milk, fruits and non-fried vegetables.
 - e. **Middle/Junior High and High School.** All foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold ala carte - if and when it is offered, vending machines, or fundraising activities) during the school day or through programs for students before or after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards.

Beverages

- Allowed: 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; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk.
- A variety of health choices will be offered within vending machines allowed use only before school, lunch times and after school. The healthier choices mentioned above will be sold at a lesser price. Carbonated beverages; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweetener will be sold at a higher price. The availability of these less healthy choices will continue to be monitored with fewer choices each year.

Foods:

- Foods and beverages available during the school day will minimize the use of trans and saturated fats, sodium and sugar as defined by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered where meals and food is served/sold. Such items will include, but not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit and vegetable juice; cooked, dried or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, frozen and canned vegetables.

Portion Sizes:

- Food and beverages will be offered in modest portion sizes age-appropriate for elementary, middle, and high school students, respectively. Extra servings of fruits and vegetables will be made available at no extra cost.
2. Food service personnel will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meet or exceed all federal, state, and guidelines.
 3. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.
 4. ECHO Charter 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. Food service will utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide breakfast meals for PreK-6 grade students at no charge, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as “grab-and-go” or classroom breakfast.

[Note: The Act requires that the school district’s wellness policy provide an assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to the Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.) and sections 9(f)(1) and 17(a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(f)(1), 1766(a), as those regulations and guidance apply to schools.]

5. The school will provide student access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
6. The school will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day. ECHO Charter School will:
 - a. Provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 15 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
 - b. Schedule meal periods at appropriate times i.e. lunch should be scheduled between 10:50am and 1pm; and
 - c. Work to schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary schools) to increase student nutrient intake and reduce food waste.
 - d. Provide dining areas that are attractive and have enough space for seating all students.

7. The school will discourage tutoring, clubs, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
8. The students will be discourage from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meals or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.
9. ECHO Charter School will 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:
 - a. The school will, to the extent possible or by regulation, operate the School Breakfast Program.
 - b. The School will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom or cafeteria, "grab-and-go" breakfast, or breakfast during morning break or recess.
 - c. The school will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
10. **Snacks.** Snacks served during the school day (including breakfast and/or enrichment programs) will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health; will emphasize serving whole grains, fruits, vegetables and dairy as the primary snack items. The school will disseminate a list of healthful snack items.
11. **Field Trips.** When planning a field trip that will occur during the scheduled lunch periods the classroom teacher will, to the extent possible, collaborate with Food and Nutrition Services to provide the student the option of receiving a meal from School; being mindful of the number of students on free/reduced priced meals who may not be able to provide a lunch from home.
12. **Rewards.** ECHO Charter School will limit use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan or behavior intervention plan), and will not withhold food and beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment. Rewards and incentives will be used that do not undermine the health of students and/or reinforce unhealthful eating habits. Non-food rewards and incentives will be used as the first choice to encourage positive behavior. The district will disseminate a list of positive, non-food rewards.
13. **Celebrations.** The school will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Classroom celebrations, especially in elementary schools, should encourage healthy choices and portion control. The celebration should take place during the last hour of the school day so it will not interfere with school meals. When celebrations occur during the scheduled lunch periods, the classroom teacher will to the extent possible collaborate with Food Services. The district will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.
14. **Fundraising.** To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, ECHO Charter School will encourage fundraising that promotes the sale of non-food and nutritious food items; being mindful of food safety. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The district will make

available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

15. **School-sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances).** Concessions sales can be a great opportunity to provide and promote healthy choices. Concession sales can be profitable and contribute to the health and well being of students. Research shows that students will buy and consume healthy foods and beverages when the options are tasty, accessible and affordable. To the extent possible, healthy choices will be made available.
16. Promotional activities will be limited to programs that are requested by school officials to support teaching and learning. All promotional activities in schools will be connected to activities that encourage physical activity, academic achievement or positive youth development.
17. Advertising messages are consistent with and reinforce the objectives of the education and nutrition environment goals of the school. Advertising of foods or beverages in the areas accessible to students during meal times must be consistent with standards established for the school environment.

B. School Food and Nutrition Program/Personnel

1. The school will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that strictly comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.
2. The Director of Food and Nutrition Services shall be responsible for the school district's school meal programs, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages served in the cafeterias during the school day to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
3. Food and Nutrition Services programs will aim to be financially self-supporting. However, the program is an essential educational support activity. Budget neutrality or profit generation will not take precedence over the nutritional needs of the students. Food and Nutrition Services will ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need.
4. The school district shall designate an appropriate person, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus outside of the School Meals Program to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
5. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food and nutrition service program, the school district will provide continuing professional development for all food and nutrition service personnel in schools. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for the Director, Head Cooks, and Food and Nutrition Services Staff, according to their levels of responsibility.

C. **Nutrition Education and Promotion**

[Note: The Act requires that wellness policies include goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness in a manner that the school district determines is appropriate.]

1. ECHO Charter School will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:
 - a. Offered as part of a sequential, comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
 - b. Integrated into other areas of the curriculum such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate; and
 - c. Enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, and field trips.
2. The staff responsible for nutrition education will be adequately prepared and participate regularly in professional development activities to effectively deliver an accurate nutrition education program. Preparation and professional development activities will provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with skill practice in program-specific, evidence based activities and instructional techniques and strategies designed to promote healthy eating habits.
3. The Director of Food Services, the School Nurse, Countryside Public Health or Minnesota Extension will be available as a resource in providing nutrition education to the classroom and will be available to review nutrition education information, upon request.
4. The school cafeteria will serve as a “learning laboratory” to allow students to apply nutrition skills taught in the classroom. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low fat dairy products will be encouraged.
5. The school district will provide information to families that encourage them to teach their children about health, nutrition and the importance of daily physical activity.
6. **Staff Wellness.** ECHO Charter School 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 staff should act as role models for good nutrition and physical activity behaviors. The district will establish and maintain a Staff Wellness Committee. The committee will develop, promote and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness.
7. **Farm to School.** As part of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Farm to School Programs will connect schools with local farms. The school district, to the extent possible, will buy and feature farm fresh foods; incorporate nutrition education curriculum; and provide students experiential learning opportunities.

D. Physical Activity

1. **Physical Education (P.E.) K-12.** All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive regular physical education (or its equivalent of 150 minutes/week for elementary school students and 225 minutes/week for middle and high school students) for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. When possible, the physical education curriculum should be coordinated with the health education curriculum. Physical education course will be in the environment where students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills and knowledge. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (i.e. 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.
2. **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 fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond PE (Physical Education) education class. Toward that end:
 - Classroom health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television;
 - Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons (such as science, math and social studies), where appropriate; and
 - Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.
3. **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 to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment. Schools will discourage extended periods (i.e. periods of two or more hours) of inactivity.
4. **Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School.** ECHO Charter School will offer extracurricular physical activity programs and interscholastic sports program. 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.

If offered, After-school childcare 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.

5. **Physical Activity and Punishment.** Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (i.e. running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (i.e. recess, physical education) as punishment. The school district will discourage tutoring, club or organizational meetings or activities during recess or physical education class times.
6. **Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours.** School spaces and facilities will be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations for physical activity and nutrition programs.

E. Communications with Parents

1. ECHO Charter School recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well being.
2. The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

F. Food Safety/Food Security

1. All foods made available at school will comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illnesses in schools.
2. For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the Food and Nutrition Services operations are limited to Food and Nutrition Staff and authorized personnel.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

[Note: The Act requires that the wellness policy establish a plan for measuring implementation of the policy, including designation of at least one or more persons within the school district or at each school, as appropriate, charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements of the wellness policy.]

- A. The CDC's School Health Index will be used to assess the nutrition and physical activity needs of students. Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement.
- B. To satisfy the requirements of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, the Wellness Committee will monitor and evaluate the school district's implementation of the Wellness Policy. Once the policy is approved, the Wellness Committee will meet once or twice a year to review and update the policy. The Wellness Committee will be chaired and coordinated by the Food Service Director and School Health Services.

- C. After approval by the school board, the Wellness Policy will be implemented throughout the school.
- D. Staff responsible for the areas outlined within this policy, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance and will report to the Wellness Committee, as appropriate. An annual report of the school district's compliance with the policy will be given to the School Board.

Legal References: 42 U.S.C. § 1751 *et seq.* (Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act)
42 U.S.C. § 1771 *et seq.* (Child Nutrition Act of 1966)
P.L. 108-265 (2004) § 204 (Local Wellness Policy)
7 U.S.C. § 5341 (Establishment of Dietary Guidelines)
7 C.F.R. § 210.10 (School Lunch Program Regulations)
7 C.F.R. § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Regulations)

Local Resources: Minnesota Department of Education, www.education.state.mn.us
Minnesota Department of Health, www.health.state.mn.us
County Health Departments
Action for Healthy Kids Minnesota, www.actionforhealthykids.org and
www.actionforhealthykids.org/filelib/toolsforteachers/recom/MN-Healthy%20Foods%20for%20Kids%208-2004.pdf

Additional References and Associations involved:

- American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD)
- American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
- Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
- National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
- National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)
- National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)
- National PTA
- National School Boards Association (NSBA)
- School Nutrition Association (SNA)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) – Eating at School Summary
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- United States Department of Health and Human Services