

# **WACO CHARTER SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

## **WELLNESS GOALS: NUTRITION EDUCATION**

Waco Charter School (WCS) 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, the Board of Directors has adopted the following policy for Waco Charter School:

- Waco Charter 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 in grades PK-5 will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Waco Charter School shall implement, in accordance with the law, a coordinated health program with both a nutrition education component and physical activity and shall use health course curriculum that emphasizes the importance of proper nutrition.
- Food and beverages sold or served at WCS will meet the nutrition recommendations of the 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 healthy 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, WCS will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program and Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) for the after-school evening meal instead of snack and the Summer Food Service Program.
- WCS 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.
- Accommodations are available for any child requiring a special diet prescribed by a licensed medical physician. Parents should contact the school nurse on campus as soon as possible at 254-754-8169.

## **STUDENT WELFARE: WELLNESS AND HEALTH SERVICES POLICY**

- **SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES** – WCS has established the following goals to “create an environment that is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity”. These goals are also established to express a consistent wellness message through other school-based functions.

- **WELLNESS** – WCS shall follow nutrition guidelines that advance student health, reduce childhood obesity, and promote the general wellness of all students through nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities.
- **DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES AND GOALS** – WCS has developed nutritional guidelines and wellness goals in consultation with the local school health advisory council with involvement from representatives of the student body, school food service, administration, school board, parents and the public.
- **NUTRITION GUIDELINES** – WCS shall ensure that nutritional guidelines for reimbursable school meals are compliant with state-federal regulations and guidance and include all foods available in accordance with the National School Lunch Program.
- **WELLNESS GOALS** – WCS shall implement, in accordance with the law, a coordinated health program with a nutrition education component and shall use health course curriculum that emphasizes the importance of proper nutrition.
- **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY** – WCS shall put into place, in accordance with current law, a health program with physical education and physical activity components. We will offer at *least* the state-required minimum amount of physical activity for all grade levels.
- **STUDENT WELFARE: WELLNESS AND HEALTH SERVICES** – WCS will encourage parents to support children's participation, to include physical activities in family events, and to be active role models in the fight against childhood obesity. Physical Education (P.E.) classes will continuously emphasize moderate to vigorous activity. P.E. classes also include activities that further student awareness of healthy food choices and wellness. Annually, guest speakers from the McLennan County Public Health District will be invited to P.E. classes for instruction. These speakers will cover topics such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity. EOAC WCS will always provide an environment that ensures safe and enjoyable fitness activities for all students.

### **I. School Health Advisory Committee**

- The School Nurse will be named as the overseer of implementation of this policy and shall develop procedures for periodic measures of the implementation of the wellness policy, in collaboration with the School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC).
- WCS will create, strengthen or work within the existing SHAC to implement, monitor, review and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies.

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

### **School Meals**

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

- Be appealing and attractive to children;
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal statutes and regulations;

- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;<sup>1</sup>
- Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.<sup>2, 3</sup>

The school 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 could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards or other point of purchase materials.

### **Cafeteria**

WCS participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program and CACFP and is operating under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). WCS provides breakfast and lunch to all enrolled students at no charge, made possible by Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The school cafeteria provides a healthy breakfast and lunch each day and hopes that families will take advantage of this valuable opportunity. WCS 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.<sup>4</sup>

### **MEALS**

**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:

- WCS will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program;
- WCS will, to the extent possible, utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation;
- WCS will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program; and
- WCS will encourage parents through memos, take-home materials or other means to provide a healthy breakfast for their children.

The breakfast meal includes choices from the following daily components:

- Grain
- Grain or meat
- Fruit and/or juice
- Milk

Students must select at least three items from the four components for breakfast and one item must be one-half cup of fruit or juice.

**Lunch.** The lunch meal includes choices from the following components each day:

- Meat/Meat Alternate
- Vegetable
- Fruit
- Grain
- Milk

Students must select at least three items from the five components for lunch and at least one item must be one-half cup of fruit or one-half cup of vegetable. The required number of items must be selected for breakfast and lunch OR students will be charged a la carte prices for each individual item.

**After-School Evening Meal.** Students participating in the WCS After-School Program will be offered a full meal matching the lunch meal choices and requirements. This meal is provided at no additional cost to the family.

**Snacks.** In addition to healthy meals, students may purchase a variety of snacks which comply with the “Smart Snacks Sold in School” regulation. Please note that snack items and extra items which are part of the meal must be purchased a la carte and **no charges are allowed.** Students pay for snacks as they come *through* the serving line or by using credits from depositing money into a student account. Snack money will not be collected in the classrooms. Parents or students may give the snack money to the cafeteria cashier or pay in line daily. All students are issued a 3-digit PIN and will be required to enter this number when they receive a meal or purchase snacks.

All outside snacks must comply with the healthy snack regulation above - low in sugar, salt and fat. Candy is not allowed nor are hot, spicy snacks including Takis, hot fries, hot Cheetos, etc.

**Lunch Guests.** Once the campus may be reopened to visitors, if you plan to join your student for the meal from the cafeteria, please notify the classroom teacher in advance so you can be added to the daily lunch count.

Outside food is not allowed in the student dining area during lunch time. A special family area must be used if parents bring outside food when joining their student(s) during breakfast or lunch.

**NOTE:** *During the fall semester of SY 2020-21, the campus will not be open for family members to join students for meals. The evolving pandemic status will determine if a change is possible for the annual Thanksgiving meal and the spring semester.*

The cost of the meal is as follows:

<b>Students meals</b>	
Breakfast	FREE
Lunch	FREE
<b>Adult Meals</b>	
Breakfast	\$3.00
Lunch	\$4.00

**\*Prices are subject to change\***

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.** Trained staff will administer the school meal programs. As part of the responsibility to operate a food service program, WCS will provide continuing staff development through ESC Region 12 for nutrition service

personnel in the 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.<sup>5</sup>

**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 (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.** 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.

**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.

**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 fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages and other considerations.

**Rewards.** WCS will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic, performance or good behavior,<sup>6</sup> and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school means) as a punishment or consequence.

**Celebrations.** WCS limits celebrations that involve food during the school day to the hour before dismissal and encourage limiting celebrations to one per month per class. Food and beverages that do not meet nutrition standards for items sold individually should be limited to one per party.

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

**Nutrition Education and Promotion.** WCS 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 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, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits and school gardens;

- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise); and includes training opportunities through ESC Region 12 staff development 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 fully to embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students 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.

**Communications with Parents.** The district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district will provide nutrient analyses of school menus upon request. The school 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 school will provide an opportunity for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

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 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).<sup>7</sup> School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages<sup>8</sup> is discouraged. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

**Staff Wellness.** WCS highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and encourages activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The school may establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of staff members.

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

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.) PK-5.** Students in PK-5, including students with disabilities and special health-care needs will receive 45 minutes daily physical

education for the entire school year. 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 supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which WCS staff should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

The school should discourage extended 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, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

**Physical Activity as Punishment.** Teachers and other school and community personnel may use physical activity (*e.g., running laps, pushups*) and may withhold opportunities for physical activity (*e.g., recess, physical education*) as punishment.

#### **IV. Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring.** The principal or designee will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The principal will ensure compliance with those policies in school and will report on the school's compliance to the EOAC Executive Director or designee.

**Policy Review.** The Superintendent will review the policy with the WCS Board of Directors annually and submit recommended changes to the Board for revisions and approval. As part of that review, WCS 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. WCS will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetables and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.

<sup>2</sup> As recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010*.

<sup>3</sup> A whole grain is one labeled as a “whole” grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include “whole” wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice and oatmeal.

<sup>4</sup> It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for fee, reduced-price or “paid” meals.

<sup>5</sup> School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute.

<sup>6</sup> Unless this practice is allowed by a student’s individual education plan (IEP).

<sup>7</sup> Advertising of low-nutrition foods and beverages is permitted in supplementary classroom and library materials, such as newspapers, magazines, the Internet and similar media, when such materials are used in a class lesson or activity or as a research tool.

<sup>8</sup> Schools should not permit general brand marketing for food brands under which more than half of the foods or beverages do not meet the nutrition standards for foods sold individually or the meals are not consistent with school meal nutrition standards.

<sup>9</sup> Useful self-assessment and planning tools include the *School Health Index* from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), *Changing the Scene* from the Team Nutrition Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and *Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary, Middle, and High School Physical Education* from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.