

Independence Charter School

Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Date Adopted: May 13, 2020

Previously adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 11, 2018. Revised May, 2020.

The Board of Trustees of the Independence Charter School, in combination with students, parents, administrators, faculty, and staff, is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating habits and physical activity. As a means to fostering such a school environment, the Board of Trustees of Independence Charter School sets forth the following goals and adopts the following Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition.

The CEO (or designee from the Educational Services Provider) will have the responsibility for ensuring compliance with the policy.

The Wellness Policy will be assessed at least once every three years. The assessment will be made available to the public and include the following components. An example (although not mandated) tool would be the Center of Disease Control's School Health Index:

1. Compliance with the policy
2. Comparison of the policy to a model school Wellness Policy; and
3. Progress made in attaining the goals of the policy

School Health Council

- The Charter School shall create a School Health Council consisting of individuals representing the community, including, but not limited to, parents, students, administrators, members of the Board of Trustees, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, and other members of the public. The School Health Council will be charged with assisting in the development, implementation, monitoring, and reviewing of nutrition and physical activity goals for the school community.
- The School Health Council will send newsletters to students, parents, staff, and the public on a periodic basis via email and the school website. Any updates to the school Wellness Policy will be highlighted in the newsletters. Newsletters will be created at least one time per year.
- The School Health Council will assist in evaluating the implementation of the Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition as measured and informed by data collection and analysis. This evaluation will be conducted, at minimum, biennially.

School Meals

- To the extent practicable, all meals served to Charter School students through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will meet or exceed the minimum nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal law, as well as Dietary Guidelines published by the federal government or an appropriate governmental agency.
- The Charter School will make efforts to eliminate the social stigma attached to, and to prevent the identification of, students who are eligible for free and/or reduced-price school meals.
- The Charter School will schedule meal periods at reasonably appropriate times, and will provide students with a minimum of twenty (20) minutes to enjoy their meals. In addition, the Charter School will discourage the scheduling of meetings or activities during meal times, including, but not limited to, tutoring, club meetings and/or organization meetings, unless the students will be permitted to eat during those meetings or activities.
- The Charter School will provide facilities for appropriate hygiene, such as hand-washing and brushing of teeth.
- Students will be discouraged from sharing foods and/or beverages with others.
- There are no food fundraisers during the school day.
- Food is not used as a reward and cannot be used/taken away as a punishment.
- All foods and beverages sold to students during the school day shall comply with the federal smart snacks in school nutrition standards
- Salads are available as a meal or side dish.
- A La Carte snack items sold in the cafeteria shall comply with the federal smart snacks in school nutrition standards.
- Milk (1% or less) and 100% fruit juice are may be sold in the cafeteria. Beverages sold will not exceed 12 ounces. Soda is not available.
- Water, via filler or fountain, will be available to all students in the cafeteria and throughout the school grounds.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables such as salads, carrot sticks, and the like are available daily.
- The majority of milk and yogurt are low fat (1% or less). The majority of cheese is reduced fat or low fat.
- Due to food allergies, Independence Charter School takes safety precautions in the cafeteria to ensure everyone's wellbeing and follows a strict policy limiting access to potentially dangerous foods to anyone with such allergies.
- Whole grains products are available daily.
- Food served a la carte will be single serving size; no larger than the school lunch portion.
- Healthy foods and beverages such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, and plain water will be promoted through marketing, nutrition education, and pricing. Healthier choices will be marketed by increasing selections of these items, displaying them attractively, making them easily available, and pricing them lower than less healthy choices. Foods and beverages that do not meet Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards will not be promoted or advertised.
- Parents/guardians and teachers can occasionally bring in food for parties, birthdays, fairs, celebrations, and/or curriculum theme related projects. Independence Charter School will provide a list of healthy ideas for such activities and celebrations.

Nutrition Education & Nutrition Promotion

- Nutrition education will be integrated into other areas of the curriculum, such as math, science, language arts, and social studies at all grade levels.
- Nutrition education will be developmentally appropriate, interactive, and will teach skills needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education materials will be reviewed by a qualified and credentialed nutrition professional, including, but not limited to, a School Food Nutrition Specialist or Registered Dietitian.
- Faculty and staff that teach nutrition education will have appropriate training.
- Informational materials will be provided to students and families to encourage sharing of health and nutrition information and to encourage healthy eating in the home.
- Any marketing of foods and/or beverages undertaken by Independence Charter School will be consistent with established guidelines and/or standards.

Physical Activity

- Physical activity will be integrated across curricula with activities that are safe, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate for all students.
- All students will be given opportunities before, after, and throughout the school day for physical activity through physical education, recess periods, and integration of physical activity into the curriculum.
- All students may be given periodic “movement breaks” to prevent prolonged sedentary periods.
- Faculty and staff will be appropriately trained in integrating physical activity into the various curricular areas.
- Students will be encouraged to participate in physical activity outside of the school environment, in both competitive and non-competitive environments.
- Organized physical activity will be offered and encouraged at school-sponsored or school-related events.
- To the extent practicable, school facilities will be made available to students, faculty, staff, and the community for the purpose of offering physical activity and/or nutrition programs.
- Physical activity will not be used or withheld as punishment.