



# 2023

Development of wellness practices to promote healthy eating and physical activities that support student achievement

## Local Wellness Policy

### **Nutrition Education**

Every year, all students, K-8 shall receive nutrition education that is aligned with the Arizona Health *Education Content Standards*. Nutrition education that teaches the knowledge, skills, and values needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors shall be integrated into the curriculum. Nutrition education may include education around the local food system (i.e. gardening). Nutrition education information shall be offered throughout the school campus including, but not limited to, school dining areas and classrooms. Staff members who provide nutrition education shall have the appropriate training.

### **Nutrition Standards**

The district shall ensure that reimbursable school meals meet the [Nutrition Standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs](#). The district shall encourage students to make nutritious food choices.

The district will ensure to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced priced lunch (FRPL). The district will include information about qualifying for FRPL as part of the registration packet each school year. The district will handle unpaid meal balanced without stigmatizing students by contacting the guardians directly via direct message and/or a printed letter.

The district shall monitor all food and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside the federally regulated child nutrition programs. All foods and beverages sold a la carte, sold in school stores, served or sold before and after school, will meet the Smart Snack Standards. The school also aims to limit exemptions for fundraisers.

The district director shall continually evaluate vending policies and contracts. Vending contracts that do not meet the intent and purpose of this policy shall be modified accordingly or not renewed.

### **Physical Education and Physical Activity Opportunities**

The district shall offer physical education opportunities that include the components of a quality physical education program. Physical education shall equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for lifelong physical activity. Physical education instruction shall be aligned with the *Physical Education Content Standards and benchmarks*.

Every year, all students, K-8, shall have the opportunity to participate regularly in supervised physical activities, either organized or unstructured, intended to maintain physical fitness and to understand the short- and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

### **Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness**

The district may implement other appropriate programs that help create a school environment that conveys consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity.

### **Implementation and Measurement**

The district director shall implement this policy and measure how well it is being managed and enforced. The district superintendent shall develop and implement administrative rules consistent with this policy. Input from teachers (including specialists in health and physical education), school nurses, parents/guardians, students, representatives of the school food service program, school board members, school administrators, and the public shall be considered before implementing such rules. A sustained effort is necessary to implement and enforce this policy. The district director shall report to the local school board, as requested, on the district's programs and efforts to meet the purpose and intent of this policy.

### **Administrative Rules Regarding Mexicayotl Academy, Inc. Local Wellness Policy**

In order to enact and enforce Mexicayotl Academy, Inc. Local Wellness Policy, the director and administrative team, with input from teachers (including specialists in health and physical education), parents/guardians, students, representatives of the school food service program, school board members, school administrators, and the public, will have developed these administrative rules.

To assist in the creation of a healthy school environment, the District shall establish a Coordinated School Health Team that will provide an ongoing review and evaluation of the Mexicayotl Academy Local Wellness Policy and these administrative rules.

The Director shall appoint a member of the administrative staff of the District to organize the Coordinated School Health Team and invite appropriate District stakeholders to become members of the Coordinated School Health Team. A Coordinated School Health Team may include representatives from the following areas:

- Administration.

- Counseling/psychological/and social services.
- Food services.
- Health education.
- Health services.
- Parent/guardian, student and community (including health care providers, hospital and public health department staff, non-profit health organizations, physical activity groups, community youth organizations, and university or other governmental agencies).
- Physical education.

Staff shall be reminded that healthy students come in all shapes and sizes. Students should receive consistent messages and support for:

- Self respect.
- Respect for others.
- Healthy eating.
- Physical activity.

All tobacco-use, including but not limited to cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, cigars, pipes and electronic vapor products, is prohibited for any staff, student, and visitor on campus or any off-campus school related activity.

Tobacco-use is prohibited for all staff, students, and visitors during all school and non-school hours.

Tobacco-use is prohibited for all staff, students, and visitors in all school buildings, outside on school grounds, including parking lots and playing fields, on school buses or any vehicles used to transport students, and at all off-campus school-sponsored events.

These rules are subject to ongoing administrative review and modification as necessary to help assure compliance with the purpose and intent of Mexicayotl Academy, Inc. Local Wellness Policy. Any District stakeholder wishing to express a viewpoint, opinion, or complaint regarding these rules should contact:

**Veronika Garcia, School Principal**

2059 N. Grand Ave.  
 Nogales, Arizona 85621  
 Telephone: (520) 287-6790  
 Fax: (520) 287-0037

Students, staff, and community will be informed about the Local Wellness Policy annually.

### **Nutrition Education**

Nutrition education, a component of comprehensive health education, shall be offered every year to all students of the District. The District may offer age-appropriate nutrition education classes. In addition, nutrition education topics shall be integrated into the entire curriculum when appropriate.

The District shall implement a quality nutrition education program that addresses the following:

#### *Curriculum:*

- Has a curriculum aligned with the *Health Education Content Standards and benchmarks*.
- Equips students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to engage in sound nutrition behavior.

#### *Instruction and Assessment:*

- Aligns curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Builds students confidence and competence in making healthy nutrition choices.
- Engages students in learning that prepares them to choose a healthy diet.
- Includes students of all abilities.
- Is taught by "highly qualified teachers of health education.

#### *Opportunity to Learn:*

- Includes students of all abilities.
- Provides adequate instructional time to build students' confidence and competence in health-enhancing skills.

Nutrition education should also be made available to parents/guardians and the community. This nutrition education may be provided in the form of handouts, wall or bulletin board posters or banners, postings on the District website, community and student oriented presentations or other communications focused on promoting proper nutrition and healthy lifestyles.

### **Nutrition Standards**

The District shall offer school meal programs with menus meeting the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The District shall encourage

students to make food choices based on the most current Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Food and beverages that compete with the District's policy of promoting a healthy school environment shall be discouraged.

Each school building in the District shall offer and promote the following food and beverages in all venues outside federally regulated child nutrition programs:

- Whole and enriched grain products that are high in fiber, low in added fats and sugars, and served in appropriate portion sizes consistent with the current USDA standards.
- Fresh or dried fruits and vegetables using healthy food preparation techniques, and 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice in 12-ounce servings or less.
- Nonfat, low-fat, plain flavored milk and/or fruit yogurt, nonfat and/or low-fat real cheese, rather than imitation cheese. Offer the following serving sizes: yogurt in eight-ounce servings or less, milk in 16-ounce servings or less, cheese in 1.5-ounce (two-ounce, if processed cheese) servings or less.
- Nuts, nut butters, seeds, trail mix, and/or soybean snacks in one-ounce portions or less; portions of three ounces or less of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish using healthy food preparation techniques.
- Accompaniments (sauces, dressings, and dips), if offered, in one-ounce servings or less.

The District shall monitor food service distributors and snack vendors to ensure that they provide predominantly healthy food and beverage choices that comply with this policy's purpose in all venues.

The District shall encourage serving healthy food at school parties. Notices shall be sent to parents/guardians either separately or as part of a school newsletter, reminding them of the necessity of providing healthy treats for students and/or encouraging the use of non-food treats for classroom birthday or award celebrations.

The District shall encourage healthy fundraisers as alternatives to fundraising that involve selling food items of limited nutritional value, such as candy, cupcakes, or sugary beverages. Example: Sales of candy items (candy bars, sugar coated chocolate snacks, or the like) as a school or grade-level fundraising project should be replaced with healthy food and beverage choices that comply with this policy's purpose.

*(Example: Vending sales of soft drinks, artificially sweetened drinks, and candy will not be permitted on school grounds prior to the start of the school day or throughout the instructional day, but may be permitted at special events that begin after the conclusion of the instructional day.)*

### **Physical Education and Physical Activity Opportunities**

Developmentally appropriate physical education shall be offered every year to all students of the District. In addition, physical education topics shall be integrated into the entire curriculum when appropriate.

The District shall implement a quality physical education program that addresses the following:

#### *Curriculum:*

- Equips students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for lifelong physical activity.
- Has a curriculum aligned with the *Physical Education Content Standards and benchmarks*.
- Influences personal and social skill development.

#### *Instruction and Assessment:*

- Aligns curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Builds students' confidence and competence in physical abilities
- Engages students in curriculum choices that prepare them for a wide variety of lifetime activities.
- Includes students of all abilities.
- Is taught by a certified physical education teacher trained in best practice physical education methods.
- Keeps all students involved in purposeful activity for a majority of the class period.

#### *Opportunity to Learn:*

- Builds students' confidence and competence in physical abilities.
- Has a teacher-to-student ratio consistent with those of other subject areas and/or classrooms.
- Has enough functional equipment for each student to actively participate.
- Includes students of all abilities.
- Offers instructional periods totaling 150 minutes per week (elementary) and 225 minutes per week (middle and high school).
- Provides facilities to implement the curriculum for the number of students served.

The District should offer 30-40 minutes a day for unstructured physical activity, commonly referred to as recess, for all students K through six. Recess should be in addition to physical education class time and not be a substitute for physical education. Each school shall provide proper equipment and a safe area designated for supervised recess in the elementary setting. School staff should not withhold participation in recess from students or cancel recess to make up for missed instructional time. Schools should provide opportunities for some type of physical activity for students in grades seven through eight apart from physical education class and organized sports. Physical activity opportunities might include: before- and after-school extracurricular physical activity programs, Safe Routes to School Programs, and use of school facilities outside of school hours. The district will promote teachers' use of physical activity "brain breaks" during classroom time.

### **Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student-Wellness**

The District shall strive to create a healthy school environment that promotes healthy eating and physical activity. In order to create this environment, the following activities shall be implemented:

#### *Dining Environment*

- The school district shall provide:
  - o a clean, safe, enjoyable meal environment for students,
  - o enough space and serving areas to ensure all students have access to school meals with minimum wait time,
  - o drinking fountains in all schools, so that students can get water at meals and throughout the day,
  - o encouragement to student for participation in school meal programs, and
  - o Identity protection of students who eat free and reduced-price meals.

#### *Time to Eat*

- The school district shall ensure:
  - o adequate time for students to enjoy eating healthy foods with friends in schools,
  - o that lunch time is scheduled as near to the middle of the school day as possible, and

#### *Consistent School Activities and Environment*

- The school district shall:
  - o ensure that all school fundraising efforts support healthy eating and physical activity
  - o provide opportunities for on-going professional training and development for foodservice staff and teachers in the areas of nutrition and physical education,



- o make efforts to keep school or district-owned physical activity facilities open for use by students outside school hours,
- o encourage parents/guardians, teachers, school administrators, students, foodservice professionals, and community members to serve as role models in practicing healthy eating and being physically active, both in school and at home,
- o encourage and provide opportunities for students, teachers, and community volunteers to practice healthy eating and serve as role models in school dining areas,
- o encourage all students to participate in school meal programs, (i.e., the National School Lunch, including snacks for After School Program, and School Breakfast programs).
- o Assure schools will use physical activity as a reward and not use physical activity as punishment (ex., pushups as punishment).
- o Ensure that food and beverage marketing on school property, in educational materials, where food is purchased, in school media, and/or in fundraisers must meet Smart Snack guidelines.

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### **Implementation and Measurement**

- The written wellness policy and results of the triennial assessment (described below) are made available to the public (ex. on the district website).
- An assessment is completed every 3 years that includes (1) a comparison of the Mexicayotl policy against a model policy (this WellSAT meets that requirement!) and (2) a description of progress made in implementing the policy across schools.
- The district plans to review and/or update the policy based on results from the triennial assessment.

All employees of the District are encouraged to be a positive healthy lifestyle role model for students by following, at a minimum, these administrative rules. Students can learn healthy lifestyle habits by observing the food and physical activity patterns of school personnel and other adults who serve as role models in their lives. In order to send consistent messages to students, all adults in the school environment are encouraged to make healthy food choices and engage in physical activity. The District shall work through its Coordinated School Health Team and

building level staff to find cost effective ways to encourage staff wellness.

**Local Wellness Policy  
Writing and Review Team Members**

- Baltazar Garcia, Director
- Ana Laura Prado, Principal (Nogales Site)
- Lynn Valenzuela- Principal (Tucson Site)
- Cathy Ramirez, NSLP School Coordinator
- Maria Hernandez, NSLP School Coordinator/Parent
- Jose Luis Herrera, University of Arizona Extension Office-Nutrition Outreach
- Brenda Picasso, University of Arizona, AZ Health Zone Cooperative Extension – Nutritional Sciences