

# Friendship Academy of the Arts

## Wellness Policy

As part of the state and national effort to curb childhood obesity, improve children's health and enhance student learning, new state and national legislation has created stronger standards for food and beverages sold or provided at school. The new legislation impacts all districts.

### **Preamble**

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, 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, only 2% of children (2-19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Whereas school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, the Friendship Academy of the Arts School District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Friendship Academy of the Arts School District that:

- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.

## **School Health Council:**

Established to as a resource to the school to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity polices.

Committee Members: Mrs. Nell Collier (Executive Director), Mary Riley (Business Manager), Verlon Laird Stevenson (Office/Administrative Support), Marian Langley (Office Support), Shuneisha Pearson (Food Service Professional), Jenna Reynolds (Board Member/Teacher), Anna Nelson, (Mentor/Lead Teacher)

## **School Meals**

School 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, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- will serve only fat-free milk (chocolate (or) white) and nutritionally-equivalent non dairy alternatives (to be defined by (USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain;
- share the nutritional content of meals with parents and students (this information will be available on menus, the website, cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials).

## **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:

- the school will operate the School Breakfast Program;

- the school will arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation;
- the school will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program;
- the school will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

**Free and Reduced-price Meals:** The 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. Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children regardless of income; promote the availability to school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as “grab-and-go” or classroom breakfast.

**Meal Times and Scheduling:** The school:

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- will schedule meal periods between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- will not schedule tutoring, club or organizational meeting or activities during meal times, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g. orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff:** Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school’s responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria works, according to their levels of responsibility.

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages:** The school will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times. This will alleviate concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children’s diets.

**Celebrations:** The school will not permit any food or snack items (i.e. cake, cup cakes, cookies, candy, juices or any other snack items) for birthday celebrations or Valentine’s Day. Therefore, birthday celebrations may not be held at school. Students do have the option to send in cards (ONLY) for Valentine’s Day.

***School districts across the country recognize that healthy eating behaviors and regular physical activity are essential for students to achieve their full academic and life potential, and that they have a responsibility to provide a healthy learning environment by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity. Wellness policies promote life-long wellness behaviors, and link healthy nutrition and exercise to students' overall physical well-being. School wellness policies are an important tool to address obesity and promote healthy eating and physical activity through changes in school environments.***

**Parents, following is information that may be helpful in preparing snacks for your child:**

We want to ensure that our students are receiving a consistent message from all of us at school and at home.

**Thank you for helping us to promote a healthy school environment!**

**Healthy Food Ideas:**

- Dried Fruit (raisins, cranberries, apricots, banana chips)
- Fresh Fruit (fruit and cheese kabobs, fruit salad)
- Frozen fruit (frozen bananas, frozen grapes)
- Vegetable Tray with a low fat dip (carrot sticks, cucumber strips, etc.)
- Whole grain crackers with low-fat cheese, string cheese or hummus
- Low-fat yogurt (squeezable yogurt, yogurt parfaits, yogurt topped with fruit)
- Low-fat breakfast or granola bars (Cliff Bars, Luna Bars, fruit bars)
- Nuts and seeds (pumpkin seeds, almonds, walnuts)
- Ready-to-eat, whole grain cereals such as toasted oat cereal.
- Try a whole-grain snack chip, such as baked tortilla chips.
- Popcorn, a whole grain, can be a healthy snack with little or no added salt and butter.
- Low-fat trail mix
- Fruit juice must be less than 50 percent sugar
- Drinking water should have no added sweetener
- Milk (white or chocolate) should be nonfat.

**Rewards:** The school will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

**School-sponsored Events** (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances): Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages outlined above.

## Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

**Nutritional Education and Promotion:** The Friendship Academy of the Arts School District aims to teach, encourage and support healthy eating by students. The school will provide nutrition education and engage in 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;
- that 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;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- 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 (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 physical education class.

Toward 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 school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. The school will 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 parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the school will provide opportunities 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 a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, 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 outlined above. School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fat-free dairy products is encouraged.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low nutrition food products; in-school television, such as Channel One; free samples or coupons and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; sales of fruit for fundraisers; and coupons for discount gym memberships.

**Staff Wellness.** The Friendship Academy of the Arts School District 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 materials provided to families will be made available to staff, and staff participation will be recognized and encouraged.

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

**Daily 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 daily 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. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g. 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.

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

The school will discourage extended periods (i.e. 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, the school will give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

**Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School:** The school will offer extracurricular physically activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. Schools 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.

After-school child care 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.

**Physical Activity and Punishment.** Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g. running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g. recess, physical education) as punishment.

**Safe Routes to School.** The school district will assess, and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal “safe routes to school” funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements. The school district will encourage students to use public transportation when available and appropriate for travel to school, and will work with the local transit agency to provide transit passes for students.

**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. These spaces and facilities will be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

## **Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring:** The superintendent or 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 superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal). In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the district has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the district will request from the that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every three years on the school's compliance with the established nutrition nutrition and physical activity wellness policy. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, the school principals, and school health personnel.

**Policy Review.** The school will conduct an assessment of existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies every two years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school will review 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. The school, with assistance from the school wellness council will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.