

# SCS LOCAL WELLNESS POLICY

## 2025-2026

### **BACKGROUND AND LWP COMMITTEE**

In June 2004, the Child Nutrition and WIC Re-authorization Act was signed into law, making it mandatory for all local education agencies participating in the Federal School Meal Programs to create a local wellness policy by the school year 2006.

As required by law, a local wellness policy, at minimum, shall include:

NUTRITION EDUCATION

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO PROMOTE WELLNESS

The law requires LEAs to actively reach out to the following representatives to elicit their participation in the Local Wellness Policy Committee: the school food authority, a parent, a student, a member of the general public, a school board member, and physical education teachers. The Southside Community School (SCS) Local Wellness Policy Committee is comprised of the following:

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Board Member – Christine Curtis

NSLP Director – Brian Johnson

NSLP Manager – Kathy VonCannon

Physical Education Teachers – Randy Cohen,

Parents, Students, General Public – open

### **GOALS FOR NUTRITION PROMOTION**

School will encourage participation in school meal programs.

School will implement the following Smarter Lunchroom Techniques:

- At least two kinds of fruits are offered most days.
- Sliced or cut fruit is offered.
- Fruit is offered in at least two locations at or around the point of service.
- At least two kinds of vegetables are offered, including both hot and cold.
- A serving of vegetables is incorporated into an entrée item at least once a month.
- Milk cases/coolers are kept full throughout meal service.
- White milk is organized and represents at least 1/3 of all milk in each designated milk cooler.
- Creative, descriptive names are used for featured items on the monthly menu.
- Students can pre-order lunch in the morning or day before.
- Cafeteria staff smile and greet students upon entering the service line and throughout meal service.
- Attractive, healthful food posters are displayed in dining and service areas.
- Cleaning supplies or broken/unused equipment are not visible during meal service.
- All lights in the dining and meal service areas work and are turned on.
- Compost/recycling and trash cans are at least 5 feet away from dining students.
- There is a clear traffic pattern. Signs, floor decals, or rope lines are used when appropriate.
- Trash cans are emptied when full.
- Student artwork is displayed in the service area or dining space.
- Students, teachers, or administrators announce today's menu in daily announcements.
- Students provide feedback to inform menu development.
- A monthly menu is posted in the main office.
- A monthly menu is provided to students, families, teachers, and administrators.
- Information about the benefits of school meals is provided to teachers and administration at least annually.
- Smarter Lunchrooms strategies are included in the Local School Wellness Policy.

School meal program menus will be posted in a public and visible location at the school site.

Participation in meal programs will be promoted to families.

## **GOALS FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION**

The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students' eating behaviors. This education may be defined as “any set of learning experiences designed to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being.” (ADA 1996) Building knowledge and skills helps children make healthy eating and physical activity choices.

Nutrition education is taught as part of physical education and health education classes.

Lessons promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low fat and fat free dairy, and healthy food preparation, with emphasis on caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure.

Media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing is taught in grades 6-9.

Nutrition education is offered in all grade levels as part of sequential, comprehensive standards-based health education curriculum. Opportunities are provided for students to practice or rehearse the skills taught through the health education curricula.

Health education lessons include the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- Relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention.
- Food guidance from My Plate.
- Reading and using the FDA's nutrition fact labels.
- Eating a variety of foods every day.
- Balancing food intake and physical activity.
- Eating more fruits and vegetables and whole grain products.
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain trans fat.
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugar.
- Eating more calcium rich foods.
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks.
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices.
- Accepting body size difference.
- Food safety.
- Importance of water consumption.
- Importance of eating breakfast.
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants.
- Eating disorders.
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Reducing sodium intake.
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, press and peers.
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully.
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior.

## **GOALS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

Experts recommend school-aged youth engaged in at least sixty minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day. The research strongly recommends that exercise has beneficial effects on muscle and bone health, cardiovascular/heart health, body weight in overweight youth, and blood pressure in teens with high blood pressure.

### **Physical Activity**

- Physical activity during the day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks, or physical education) will not be used or withheld as punishment for any reason.
- The school provides teachers and other school staff with a list of ideas for alternative ways to discipline students.
- To the extent practical, the school will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available for all students to be active.

- The school will ensure that inventories of physical activity supplies and equipment are known and, when necessary, will work with community partners to ensure sufficient quantities of equipment are available to encourage physical activity for as many students as possible.
- Physical activities include opportunities to build aquatic skills (summer community pool use).
- Any student excluded from physical activity must be excused by either a verbal or written parent or physician's directive, or due to an obvious injury, ie. leg in a cast or documented limitations such as asthma.
- The school also offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity after school, such as soccer, basketball, volleyball organized sports, and folkloric dance.

### **Physical Education**

- The school will provide students with formal, age-appropriate physical education, consistent with national and state standards.
- Physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness or activity assessments.
- Students will be moderately to vigorously active for at least 50% of class time during most or all physical education class sessions.
- All physical education teachers are required to participate in professional development at least once per year.
- All physical education classes in the school are taught by licensed teachers who are certified or endorsed to teach physical education.
- Physical education primarily consists of sustained physical activity for each 40-55 minute period and will begin with stretching and preparatory movements. Teachers will ensure physical education involves basic movement skills; physical fitness; rhythms and dance; games; team, dual and individual sports; tumbling and gymnastics.
- At least twice weekly, students will run laps on a track, followed by an organized game such as kickball, soccer, lacrosse, basketball, hockey or capture the flag.
- At the conclusion of every physical activity session, students will engage in a cool down period and stretching period, accompanied by a water and bathroom break.
- Teachers serve as role models by being physically active alongside students whenever possible.

### **Recess**

- At least 20 minutes of recess is offered to all elementary school students on all days during the school year.
- Recess is offered outdoors when weather is feasible.
- Recess is considered a compliment not a substitute for physical education class.
- Recess monitors encourage students to be active.

### **Active Academics**

- Students will be offered periodic opportunities to be physically active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week.
- The school will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for classroom physical activity breaks.
- Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible, and will do their part to reduce sedentary behavior during the day.

### **Physical Activity Topics in Health Education**

- Health education is required in all grades.
  
- Health education lessons include the following essential topics on physical activity:
  - Relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention.
  - Food guidance from My Plate.
  - Reading and using the FDA's nutrition fact labels.
  - Eating a variety of foods every day.
  - Balancing food intake and physical activity.
  - Eating more fruits and vegetables and whole grain products.
  - Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain trans fat.
  - Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugar.
  - Eating more calcium rich foods.
  - Preparing healthy meals and snacks.
  - Risks of unhealthy weight control practices.
  - Accepting body size difference.
  - Food safety.
  - Importance of water consumption.
  - Importance of eating breakfast.
  - Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants.
  - Eating disorders.
  - The Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
  - Reducing sodium intake.
  - Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, press and peers.
  - How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully.
  - Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior.

### **Active Transport**

- The school supports active transport to and from school such as walking or biking. Secure bicycle racks are provided for students who use this transportation method.
  
- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety is provided to students.

### **GOALS FOR OTHER WELLNESS ACTIVITIES**

The school will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches to healthy eating and physical activity throughout the year.

School will use electronic and non-electronic mechanisms to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

The school promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs, such as Field Day and organized sports.

The school will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and schools.

### **POLICIES FOR SCHOOL MEAL STANDARDS**

SCS participates in the National School Lunch Program, National School Breakfast Programs, and the Afterschool Care Snack Program.

Meals meet or exceed the current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations.

Meals are served at a reasonable and appropriate time of the day.

Students are allowed at least 20 minutes to eat meals.

Meals are appealing and attractive to students.

Meals are accessible to all students, and are served in clean and pleasant settings.

Local and/or regional products are incorporated into the school meal programs.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are served 5 times per week.

Flavored milk is not served; school offers only low fat and fat free plain milk.

Menus are created by a certified nutrition professional.

School meals are administered by a team of nutrition professionals.

The district child nutrition program accommodates students with special dietary needs.

Free, potable water is made available to all students during the meal period.

Water sources and containers are maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene and health safety standards.

Students are allowed to bring and carry approved water bottles with only water in them throughout the day.

### **POLICIES FOR CELEBRATIONS AND REWARDS**

Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. Schools must establish standards to address all foods and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside of school meal programs. The standards should focus on increasing nutrient density, decreasing fat and added sugars, and moderating portion size.

The district will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.

The district will provide parents a list of foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

The district will provide teachers and other school staff with a list of alternative ways to reward students.

### **DISTRICT WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

District convenes a representative district wellness committee (DWC).

DWC includes representatives from all school levels including all school levels, representatives from school nutrition programs, physical education teachers, health education teachers, administrators, and school board members. Interested parents, students, and members of the general public are also invited to participate.

Contact Brian Johnson at [bjohnson@scstucson.org](mailto:bjohnson@scstucson.org) for meeting dates and times or for other ways you can be involved.

### **REVISIONS AND UPDATING THE POLICY**

Policy will be assessed and revised tri-annually and updated to reflect changes in district priorities, community needs, wellness goals, newly emerging health science research, and newly issued state or federal guidance/standards.

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Parents are key partners in developing healthy school environments. Parents and family members remain the greatest influence on a child's eating habits, and the school is a valuable ally in promoting a healthy childhood and the establishing of wise nutrition and lifestyle choices and habits. Healthy lifestyles, positive nutrition and physical activity should be a part

of children and adults' lives every day, throughout the day, not just during school hours or on school days. Parents are important role models for their children, and particularly at younger ages, have a critical influence on food choices and physical activity opportunities available to their children.

District is committed to being responsive to community input. District will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the DWC and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the policy through a variety of means appropriate for the district.

District will inform parents of improvements to school meal standards, how to apply for meal benefits, a description of and compliance with the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, updates to the policy at least annually, and annual and triennial reports and assessments. Communications will occur via newsletters and other information sent home, and will include culturally and linguistically appropriate language.

Additional resources related to nutritional information, shopping guides and ideas for active lifestyles, posters, fliers, books, etc. will also be sent home as available and appropriate.

Parents receive copies of school breakfast and lunch menus and have opportunities to sample some of the foods provided by the caterer at family events such as Reading Night, holiday presentations, and Thanksgiving.

SCS relies on parents to provide important information on the health needs of their children, such as food allergies or other special dietary needs. Opportunities are provided for this information to be provided including initial enrollment information, teacher conferences, notes and phone calls from caregivers to the school, and faculty dialogue with students themselves.

Parents are provided information about the implementation of physical education in their student's daily schedule through letters home, phone calls, teacher conferences, and report cards.

A copy of the Local Wellness Policy is provided to parents at the beginning of each school year and/or is displayed in the front office for visitors to view. The most recent Local Wellness Policy evaluation is also available in the front office upon request. Information related to the Local Wellness Policy, implementation or modifications will be distributed at family events as it becomes available.

### **For questions or comments:**

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