Student Wellness Policy

The Governing Board of Voices College-Bound Language Academies (“Voices” or the “Charter School”) recognizes the link between student health and learning and desires to provide a comprehensive program by promoting healthy eating and physical activity for the Charter School students. The principal or designee may support coordinated school health program that reinforces health literacy through health education, physical education, health services, nutrition services, psychological and counseling services, health promotion for staff, a safe and healthy school environment, and parent/guardian and community involvement.

For all foods available on each school site during the school day, the Charter School shall adopt nutritional guidelines which are consistent with 42 USC 1773 and 1779 and support the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. (42 USC 1758b)

The Board believes that foods and beverages available to students at the Charter Schools should support the health curriculum and promotes optimal health, taking consideration the needs of students with special dietary needs. Nutritional standards adopted by the Charter School for all foods and beverages sold to students shall meet or exceed state and federal nutrition standards.

This Policy outlines Voices’ approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this Policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in Voices have access to healthy foods throughout the school day—both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the Charter School campus—in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards.
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors.
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after the school day.
- The Charter School engages in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness.
- Charter School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school.
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of Voices in creating continuity between Charter School and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits.
- The Charter School establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of this Policy and its established goals and objectives.

This Policy applies to all students and staff in Voices. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.
School Wellness Committee

Voices may invite parents/guardians, students, board members and public to comment or be a part of the wellness committee that will meet twice during the school year.

The wellness committee shall provide updates to the public. The committee will also assess the wellness policy once every three years and provide updates via the Charter School website: voicesacademies.org. To the extent possible, the wellness committee will include representatives from each Voices school site and reflect the diversity of the community.

The COO or designee(s) will convene the wellness committee and facilitate development of and updates to the Policy and will ensure each Charter School’s compliance with the Policy.

Additionally, the designated official for oversight of the wellness committee is:

Director of School Operations
(408) 791-1609

Nutrition Education and Physical Activity Goals

Physical Activity
The Centers for Disease Control ("CDC") recommends that all children and adolescents participate in a minimum of sixty (60) minutes of physical activity every day. The CDC recommends that aerobic activity make up the bulk of such physical activity, with vigorous-intensity aerobic activity on at least three days per week. The Charter School has the following specific goals to promote student wellness, consistent with this Policy:

• Physical activity is supported throughout the school day and integrated into the curriculum.
  o Recess during the day for all grade levels
  o Enrichment during the school day for all grade levels
  o [Describe participating in state assessment for physical education]

• Voices aims to teach, model and encourage healthy eating by students.
  o Notorious food choices offered during breakfast and lunch
  o Fresh fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods offered to all students

• Voices will promote to families the benefits and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity.
In developing these goals, the Charter School reviewed and considered evidence-based strategies and techniques and parent input. Voices will work toward achievement of these goals by providing all students in grades TK-8 opportunities to be physically active on a regular basis. Opportunities for moderate to vigorous physical activity may be provided through enrichment, recess, school athletic programs, programs encouraging students to walk or bicycle to and from school, in-class physical activity breaks, and other structured and unstructured activities. At any time, physical fitness will not be withheld as a form of punishment.

Nutrition Guidelines for Foods Available at School

**Charter School Meals**

Voices participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (“NSLP”), the School Breakfast Program (“SBP). The Charter School also operates additional nutrition-related programs and activities including Breakfast in the Classroom, Mobile Breakfast carts, Grab ‘n’ Go Breakfast, or others. The Charter School is committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students.
- Are appealing and attractive to children.
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings.
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations (The Charter School offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards).
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least the following Smarter Lunchroom techniques:
  - Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.
  - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal.
  - Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas.
  - Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. Voices will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. Students are allowed to bring and carry approved water bottles at the school.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

The Charter School is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the Charter School campus during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold to students on campus during the school day (including the period from the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day) and served outside of the Charter School meal programs (e.g., “competitive” foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits.

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable School meal programs that are sold to students on the School campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, à la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and snack or food carts.

The principal or designee shall encourage staff to serve as positive role models. To encourage consistent health messages between the home and school environment, the Principal or designee may disseminate health information and/or the Charter School student wellness policy to parents/guardians through school newsletters, handouts, parent/guardians meetings, school web sites, and other communications. Outreach to parents/guardians shall emphasize the relationship between student health and academic performance.

School staff shall encourage parents/guardians or other volunteers to support the Charter School’s nutrition education program by considering nutritional quality when selecting any snacks, which they may donate for occasional class parties. Occasional class parties or celebrations shall be held after the lunch period whenever possible.
Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the Charter School campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Charter School nutrition standards, including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. Charter School will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.

2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. Charter School will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

3. Rewards and incentives. Charter School will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Charter Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the Voices’ campus during the school day. Voices will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas.

A special exemption is allowed for the sale of food and/or beverages that do not meet the competitive food standards for the purpose of conducting an infrequent school-sponsored fundraiser (7 CFR section 210.11(b)(4)). No specially exempted fundraiser foods or beverages may be sold in competition with school meals in the food service area during the meal service.

The principal or designee shall encourage school organizations to use healthy food items or non-food items for fundraising purposes. He/she also shall encourage school staff to avoid the use of non-nutritious foods as a reward for students’ academic performance, accomplishments, or classroom behavior.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The Board prohibits the marketing and advertising of foods and beverages that do not meet the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards, through signage, vending machine fronts, logos, scoreboards, school supplies, advertisement in school publications, coupon or incentive programs, free give-aways, or other means.

As the COO reviews existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment, and product purchasing (and replacement) decisions should reflect the applicable marketing guidelines established by this Policy.
Program Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

Using the steps outlined below, Voices will ensure the Charter School meets legal obligations regarding implementation of this Policy.

This Policy and the progress reports can be found at: voicesacademies.org

Recordkeeping

Voices will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of this policy in the main office. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written Policy.
- Documentation demonstrating that the Policy has been made available to the public.
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements and community involvement requirements.
- Documentation of the triennial assessment of the Policy.
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

Voices will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this Policy, including its content, any updates to the Policy, and implementation status. Voices will make this information available via the Charter School website and/or Charter School-wide communications. Voices will provide as much information as possible about the Charter School nutrition environment. This will include a summary of Charter School’s events or activities related to Policy implementation.

Annually, Voices will also publicize the name and contact information of the Charter School official(s) leading and coordinating the Wellness Committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the Wellness Committee.
**Triennial Progress Assessments**

The COO or designee shall inform and update the public, including parents/guardians, students, and others in the community, about the contents and implementation of this policy, as well as policy compliance, at least once every three (3) years. The COO may periodically measure and make available to the public an assessment of the extent to which the Charter Schools are in compliance with this policy, the extent to which this policy compares to model wellness policies available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy. (42 USC 1758b)

To determine whether the policy is being effectively implemented at each Charter School, the following indicators may be used.

1. Results of the State’s Physical Fitness Test
2. An analysis of the nutritional content of meals served based on a sample of menus
3. Student participation rates in school meal programs
4. Percentage of students participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program
5. Feedback from the nutrition service personnel, school administrators, parents/guardians, students, teachers, and/or other appropriate persons
6. A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the Charter School’s Policy and
7. Any other indicators recommended by the COO and approved by the Board of Trustees

**Revisions and Updating the Policy**

Voices will update or modify this Policy as appropriate based on the results of the annual and triennial assessments and/or as Charter School priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. This Policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three (3) years, following the triennial assessment.

**Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications**

Voices is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the Policy. Voices will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the Wellness Committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of this Policy through a variety of means. Voices will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in Charter School nutrition standards.
Voices may use electronic mechanisms, such as email or Parent Square, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified the content of, implementation of, and updates to this Policy, as well as how to get involved and support the Policy. The Charter School will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community and accomplished through means similar to other ways that other local schools are communicating important school information with parents.

The Charter School will actively notify the public about the content of, the implementation of, and any updates to the Policy annually, at a minimum Voices will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

Community Involvement

Voices will develop relationships with community partners (e.g., hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, SNAP-Ed providers and coordinators, etc.) in support of this Policy’s implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with this Policy and its goals.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at the Filing a Program Discrimination Complaint as a USDA Customer page, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form.
To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

a. (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

b. (2) fax: 202-690-7442; or

c. (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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