

Chicago International Charter Schools Wellness Policy

Chicago International Charter Schools (CICS) is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the SFA and its recipient agencies that:

- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet at a minimum, the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all campuses in our school will participate in available federal school meal programs including the School Breakfast Program, the National School Lunch Program, the After School Snack Program and the CACFP At Risk Supper Program at various sites.
- The school will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. Wellness Advisory Council

SFA will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The councils also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. The council will consist of students, staff, parents and the FSMC.

The Food Service Director will convene the advisory council at least 3 times per year and will facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy.

CICS will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the network office.

At least once every three years, CICS will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy. CICS will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or as CICS 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. **The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.**

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals

CICS is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams *trans* fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All schools within CICS participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and any additional programs the individual schools may elect.

Meal Times and Scheduling

- will aim to provide students with at least 15 minutes to eat for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch.
- will aim to schedule meal periods at appropriate times.
- when feasible, will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
 - will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. CICS will hire a Food Service Management Company to administer the school meal programs. As part of the food service management company's responsibility to operate a food service program, they will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in school. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, 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, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

All a la carte items will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snack requirements.

Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. - Schools are encouraged to share successful healthy celebrations/activities through social media or school newsletters.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. CICS aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. The School will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition 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;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and 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;

Communications with Parents. The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. 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.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

CICS will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. CICS will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

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.

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.

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- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
program.intake@usda.gov
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442 (3) email:

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