



Wellness Policy

Grove Christian Academy Wellness Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to communicate our vision and goals regarding the promotion of student wellness, preventing and reducing childhood obesity, and ensuring that school meals and snacks made available at school during the school day are consistent with applicable minimum local, state, and federal standards. It is our goal to not just meet these standards but exceed them with a level of excellence that demonstrates our commitment to provide our students with our very best.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The school board recognizes that nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness are essential components of the educational process, fostering quality learning, and development of the whole student.
- B. We, as a school, understand that it is the responsibility of our school to prioritize a student's health and well-being by promoting proper nutrition and physical activity.
- C. We commit to prioritizing physical activity and providing opportunities for students to get up and move at consistent and intentional intervals throughout the school day.
- D. It is our responsibility to provide students with access to a variety of nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutritional needs of the student.

III. WELLNESS GOALS

A. Nutrition Promotion and Education

- 1. Grove Christian Academy will intentionally introduce new healthy snack options that students may not otherwise be exposed to in an effort to expand their palate and desire to nutritious snacks. We will do this by:
 - a. Having snack options recommended by a local dietician

- b. Offering a “Taste-It Tuesday” initiative that partners with local farmers to build relationships and access new types of produce
 - c. Provide cross-curricular opportunities in its implementation so as to incorporate this initiative into all subject areas.
- 2. The school will incorporate opportunities for students to enhance their understanding of proper nutrition and exercise through Enrichment Day activities.
 - a. Quarterly Enrichment Day activities will include healthy cooking/baking classes and exposure to types of physical activity.
 - b. Enrichment days will provide students with engaging hands-on, experiential activities to enhance their knowledge of nutrition and physical activity.

B. Physical Activity

- 1. Students will be provided multiple opportunities for daily physical activities that exceed PE requirements. To accomplish this the following actions will be incorporated:
 - a. Classroom schedules will be designed to ensure that students do not sit for more than 30 minutes at a time.
 - b. A minimum of 20 minutes of recess will be included in all grade level schedules (Pre-K – 8th Grade)
 - c. Brain breaks and physical activity breaks will be included at the classroom level and will be scheduled throughout the academic day.

IV. STANDARDS AND NUTRITION GUIDELINES

A. School Meals

- 1. The school will provide a healthy and safe school meal program that fully complies with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.

2. Food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutritional needs of students.
3. Food service personnel will work to provide diverse food options for the student body in meal planning.
4. Food service personnel will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
5. Food service personnel will make every effort to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meets or exceeds all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations and reimbursable school meals meet USDA nutrition standards.
6. Food service personnel shall adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.
7. The school will provide students with access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
8. The school will provide students with enough time to eat after sitting down for meals.

B. School food Service Program/Personnel

1. The school will designate a highly qualified person to be responsible for the food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA guidelines.
2. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school will provide opportunities for continuing professional development for all food service personnel in schools in accordance with the School Nutrition Program requirements.

C. Competitive Foods and Beverages

1. All foods and beverages sold on school grounds to students, outside of reimbursable meals, are considered “competitive foods.” Competitive foods include items sold a la carte in the cafeteria, from vending machines, school stores, and for in-school fundraisers.
2. All competitive foods will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School (Smart Snacks) nutrition standards and applicable state 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.
3. Before and Aftercare (childcare) programs must also comply with the school district’s nutrition standards unless they are reimbursable under USDA school meals program, in which case they must comply with all applicable USDA standards.

D. Other Food and Beverages Made Available to Students

1. Student wellness will be a consideration for all foods offered, but not sold, to students on the school campus, including those foods provided through:
 - a. Celebrations parties. The school will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
 - b. Classroom snacks brought by parents. The school district will provide parents with suggested foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
2. Rewards and incentives. Schools will not use food or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student’s individual education plan or behavior intervention plan) and will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.
3. Fundraising. The school district will make available to parents and teachers a list of suggested healthy fundraising ideas.

E. Food and Beverage Marketing in School

1. School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion.
2. Our school will restrict food and beverages marketing to the promotion of only those foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

V. WELLNESS LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A. Wellness Coordinator

1. The Head of School is the wellness coordinator and will oversee the school's wellness-related activities (Wellness Coordinator). The Wellness Coordinator will ensure that the school implements the School Wellness Policy Action Plan
2. The Wellness Coordinator will give regular reports to the Head of School verifying that the plan is continuing along with successful implementation.

B. Public Involvement

1. The Wellness Coordinator will permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy.
2. The Wellness Coordinator will hold meetings, from time to time, for the purpose of discussing the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. All meeting dates and times will be posted on the school's website and will be open to the public.

VI. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

A. Implementation and Publication

1. After approval by the school board, the wellness policy will be implemented throughout the school.
2. The school will post its wellness policy on its website, as well as provide a copy to a stakeholder upon request.

B. Annual Reporting

The Wellness Coordinator will annually inform stakeholders about the content and implementation of the wellness policy and make the policy, and any updates to the policy, available upon request.

C. Triennial Assessment

1. At least once every three years, the school will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and create a report that includes the following information:
 - a. The extent to which the school is in compliance with the established wellness policy;
 - b. The extent to which the school's wellness policy compares to model wellness policies around the state; and
 - c. A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the school's wellness policy.
2. The Wellness Coordinator will be responsible for conducting the triennial assessment.
3. The triennial assessment report will be posted on the school website or otherwise made available to the school stakeholders in a timely manner.

D. Recordkeeping

The school will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy. The records to be retained include, but are not limited to:

1. The school's written wellness policy.
2. Documentation demonstrating compliance with school community involvement requirements, including requirements to make the school wellness policy and triennial assessments available to school stakeholders.
3. Documentation reflecting that the triennial assessment of the school wellness policy has been conducted (including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the school uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the Wellness Committee.)

Local Resources:

Minnesota Department of Education, www.education.state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Health, www.health.state.mn.us

Essentia Health Dietician

United States Department of Agriculture, www.fns.usda.gov