



Student Wellness Policy

The Board of Directors of Alpha Public Schools (“Alpha,” or “APS,” or the “Charter School”) which operates Alpha Cornerstone Academy; Alpha: Blanca Alvarado School; Alpha: Jose Hernandez School; and Alpha: Cindy Avitia High School is committed to the optimal development of every student. APS believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social success, we need to create positive, safe and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students. In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education and extracurricular activities – do better academically. Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.

This Policy outlines APS' 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 APS 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 APS 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 APS. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

I. Charter School Involvement in Developing the Policy

Involvement in Developing the Policy

APS will convene representatives of the Charter School or work within an existing school health committee that meets at least one (1) time per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of this Policy.

To the extent possible, APS will include representatives from all grade/school levels (elementary and secondary schools) and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., school nutrition director); physical education teachers, and mental health and social services staff [e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators; school board members; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. To the extent possible, APS will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community in developing this Policy.

Leadership

The Principal or designee(s) will facilitate development of and updates to the Policy and will ensure each Charter School's compliance with the Policy.

II. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

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

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

Recordkeeping

APS 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

APS 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. APS will make this information available via the Charter School website and/or Charter School-wide communications. APS 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.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, APS will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the Policy and include:

- The extent to which the Charter School is in compliance with this Policy;
- The extent to which the Charter School's Policy compares to model wellness policies; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the Charter School's Policy.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is:

Joceline Plantillas, Regional Operations Associate,
jplantillas@alphapublicschools.org.

The Principal or designee will monitor the Charter School's compliance with this Policy.

APS will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

APS will update or modify this Policy as appropriate based on the results of the annual Charter School Health Index 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

APS is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the Policy. APS will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the Charter School and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of this Policy through a variety of means. APS 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.

APS will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the Charter School's website, 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 of 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. APS will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

III. Nutrition

Charter School Meals

APS participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program ("NSLP"), the School Breakfast Program ("SBP"), and the *Summer Food Service Program* ("SFSP"). 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).
- Lunch is served a reasonable time for all students.
- Menus are reviewed by a nutritionist.
- Menus are posted and shared with families.
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using many of the following Smarter Lunchroom techniques:
 - Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans).
 - Sliced or cut fruit is available daily.
 - Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.

- All available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names.
- Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab-and-go meals available to 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.
- White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers.
- Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas.
- A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.).
- Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor and promotional ideas.
- Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
- Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. APS will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

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.

Celebrations and Rewards

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

1. Celebrations and parties. APS will develop a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. APS will share a list on the website for parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
3. Rewards and incentives. APS 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 APS campus during the school day. APS will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas.

Nutrition Promotion

APS will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- Implementing at least ten evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using Smarter Lunchroom techniques described above; and
- Ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in Charter School nutrition standards.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards such that only those foods that comply with or exceed those nutrition standards are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students.

As the Principal or designee reviews existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment and product purchasing (and replacement) decisions should reflect the applicable marketing guidelines established by this Policy.

IV. Physical Activity

The Centers for Disease Control (“CDC”) recommends that all children and adolescents participate in 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 CDC also recommends that physical activity include muscle strengthening activities, such as gymnastics or push-ups, on at least three days per week, and bone strengthening activities like jumping rope or running at least three days per week. The Charter School has the following specific goals to promote student wellness, consistent with this Policy:



- All students receive at least 15 minutes of recess daily on full days;
- TK-8 students receive at least 60 minutes of physical activity through PLT/PE two or more times per week.

In developing these goals, the Charter School reviewed and considered evidence-based strategies and techniques and parent input. APS will work toward achievement of these goals by:

- Working with our staff, PLT and PE teachers to ensure that proper activities are implemented as part of the PE/PLT curriculum.

V. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

APS will integrate wellness activities across the entire Charter School setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. APS will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of this Policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the parents and the community.

All Charter School-sponsored events will adhere to this Policy's wellness guidelines. All Charter School-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

Community Partnerships

APS 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.

Professional Learning

When feasible, APS will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help APS staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing district reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.