# Seacoast Charter Academy's Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Seacoast Charter Academy is committed to providing an education environment that promotes and protects the health and well-being of its students by supporting a healthy eating and physical activity. Our goal is to enhance the school environment by helping students develop lifelong health and wellness practices in the areas of nutrition, health, physical activity and food service.

Thus, Seacoast Charter Academy 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 Seacoast Charter Academy 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-5 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet 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; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

- To the maximum extent practicable, our school will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program).

- Seacoast assures that the guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issues by USDA.

- Seacoast 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. School Health Councils

Seacoast Charter Academy has created a school health committee that has developed and will implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. This committee will serve as a resource to our school for implementing those policies. (Our committee is comprised of parents, students, board members, and school and food representatives).

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

## School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

Seacoast will engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, and school newsletter.

**Breakfast**. To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- Seacoast will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals**. Seacoast will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Toward this end, Seacoast may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; promote the availability of school meals to all students.

**Meal Times and Scheduling**.
Seacoast will make every effort to:

- provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.,* lunch should be scheduled between 10:45a.m. and 1 p.m.;

- not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;

- provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff**. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in school. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages**. **Seacoast** 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.

### Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.,* foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

**Snacks**. Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. The School will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The school will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

**Rewards**. Schools will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

**School – Sponsored Events (such as field day, parent nights, performances).** Food and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will meet the nutritional standards for meals and foods and beverages sold individually.

**Celebrations**. Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above). The district will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

## III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

**Nutrition Education and Promotion**. **Seacoast Charter Academy** aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Seacoast 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;

- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;

- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;

- 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, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;

- includes training for teachers and other staff.

**Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting**. For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity and for students to fully embrace

regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-
  active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- Physical education classes will be offered once a week and recess daily
- Extended day care will provide opportunities for organized play and physical exercise.
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

**Communications with Parents**. Seacoast will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. Seacoast 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. Seacoast will provide parents a list of foods that meet the school's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, Seacoast will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

Seacoast will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

## IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-5**. All students in grades K-5, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity

(*e.g.,* interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**Daily Recess**. All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Schools will discourage extended periods (*i.e.,* periods of two or more hours) of inactivity.

When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools will give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

**Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School**. Seacoast will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

**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.

# V. Monitoring and Policy Review

**Monitoring.** At Seacoast, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. School food service staff, at the school, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the principal. The effectiveness of our school's wellness policy will be evaluated and the results will be presented to the Board of Directors with recommended revisions annually

**Policy Review**. Seacoast will review our current nutrition and physical activity policies and wellness program. Assessments will be completed annually to help review policy compliance, assess progress and determine areas of needed improvement.

To help with the initial development of the schools wellness policies, Seacoast will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those assessments will be compiled to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every year to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The school, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

**Wellness Committee**

Our goal at Seacoast is that all family members, students, Board of Directors, school administrators, staff will be activity involved in the development and review of this school wellness policy. The following people were involved in the developing and monitoring the Seacoast Charter Academy wellness policy: Administrator, Marla Stremmel, Board of Directors Physical Education Teacher, School Food Service Personnel, Parent Group representative (PACTS) and parent, Teachers and Students.