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## NEW HORIZONS COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL LOCAL WELLNESS/NUTRITIONAL POLICY

According to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, today about 1 in 3 kids is overweight or obese. And studies show that overweight kids are likely to become overweight and obese adults.

Obese and overweight children are at risk for a number of serious health problems such as:

**Diabetes:** Type 2 diabetes was once called adult-onset diabetes. Now with the rise in childhood obesity, there is a dramatic rise in the number of children suffering from type 2 diabetes. Untreated, this can be a life-threatening condition.

**Asthma:** Extra weight can make it harder to breathe and can inflame the respiratory tract. There is a rise in childhood asthma and children with serious asthma are more likely to be overweight.

**Heart Failure:** Being overweight makes the heart work harder. Overweight children are more likely to grow up to be overweight adults who develop heart problems.

Thus, the **NEW HORIZONS COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL (NHCCS)** is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating habits and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the New Horizons Community Charter School 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 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages have to comply with the HHKFA (Healthily Hunger Kids Free Act) Smart Snack Standards and the current USDA meal patterns.
- 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, our school will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch

- Program).
- 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 the school meal program, and with related community services.

## **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

### **I. School Health Councils**

The school 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 council also will serve as a resource to the school for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.)

### **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 all the served grains are whole grain.

Our school 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 should 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, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

**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:

- NHCCS will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
- NHCCS will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- NHCCS 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.** NHCCS 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, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as "grab-and-go" or classroom breakfast.

#### **Meal Times and Scheduling.**

- NHCCS will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- NHCCS will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- NHCCS will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- NHCCS will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages.** Schools should 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.

#### **Beverages**

- Allowed: water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain 100% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; and milk 1% unflavored and/or non-fat flavored.
- Not allowed: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 100% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

**Foods Fundraising Activities.** To support children's health and school nutrition-education

efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition guidelines.

**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. NHCCS 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 district will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

**Rewards.** NHCCS 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.

**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 beverage. NHCCS will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

**School-sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances).** Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages.

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

**Nutrition Education and Promotion.** NHCCS aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. NHCCS 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;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- 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 (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) 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;
- 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.** NHCCS will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should 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. The school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The school 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.

**Staff Wellness.** NHCCS highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

#### **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.)** All students, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 150 minutes/week for elementary school students for the entire school year. 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 students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

**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.** The school principal will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

The principal will develop a summary report each year on school-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. That report will be provided to the school board and parent/teacher organizations. Progress will be assessed and areas in need of improvement will be determined for future follow-up action.