

Universal Academy

Nutrition and Wellness Plan

I. Purpose

To establish a plan that addresses nutrition education goals, physical activity goals, nutrition standards for all foods available on school campuses during the school day when school is in session, and other school-based activity goals designed to promote student wellness.

II. Policy Statement

Universal Academy is committed to providing a school environment that enhances the learning and development of lifelong wellness practices. We recognize that good health fosters student attendance and achievement. We also recognize the vital part that the schools play in influencing and promoting wellness, protecting children's health, and supporting their ability to learn through healthy eating and physical activity. In addition, we recognize that a healthy school environment goes beyond nutritious meals in the cafeteria, and engages staff and community in the pursuit of activities and strategies to improve the long-term health and well-being of our students. It is within this frame of reference that this plan is designed and will be implemented.

III. Definitions

- A.** Nutrition education goals: designed to exert a positive influence on student's eating behaviors
- B.** Physical activity goals: to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, to maintain physical fitness, to regularly participate in the physical activity, and to understand the short and long-term benefits of physically active and healthful lifestyle.
- C.** Nutrition standards: to ensure that reimbursable school meals meet the program requirements and nutrition standards set forth under the United States Department of Agriculture. Additionally, these standards will address all food and beverages sold or served to students during the school day while school is in session, including those available outside of the school meal programs.
- D.** School-based activity goals: to create and maintain a school environment that provides consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity.

IV. Nutrition and Wellness Policy

Universal Academy will comply with Section 204 of the Federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and the federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010.

A. Nutrition Education Goals

1. Universal Academy will follow health education curriculum standards and guidelines as stated by the Texas Education Agency.
2. Schools will link nutrition education activities with the existing coordinated health program, CATCH (S.B. 1357).

3. Students will have access to valid and useful health information health promotion products and services.
4. Students will have access to health information related to nutrition that will allow them to make informed decisions about their food choices.
5. The district will maintain a School Health Advisory Council which reviews and advises the Board of Trustees and superintendent on nutrition issues and other topics related to health education.

B. Physical Activity Goals

1. The time allotted for physical activity will be consistent with research and state standards.
2. The physical education curriculum will provide opportunities for a wide variety of experiences in movement and rhythmic activities. 135 minutes per week of physical activity will be incorporated into elementary student schedules. Sixth through eighth grade students will participate in daily physical activity for at least 30 minutes daily for at least four semesters during these grade levels.
3. Schools will help students understand the short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.
4. The district will provide opportunities for students to become competent in physical activities they can use throughout their lifetime.
5. Elementary and Junior High grades link physical education and physical activities with the coordinated health program, CATCH (S.B. 1357). This program is designed to help prevent obesity, cardiovascular disease, and Type 2 diabetes.
6. The district will make information accessible to families that encourage them to teach their children about the benefits of physical activity and a healthy lifestyle.

C. Recommendations on Recess for Elementary School Students

1. Recess should not replace physical education. Recess is unstructured playtime in which children have choices, develop rules for play and release energy and stress.
2. Physical education provides a sequential instructional program with opportunities for children to learn about and participate in regular physical activity, develop motor skills and use skills and knowledge to improve performance.
3. Universal Academy elementary grades should develop schedules that provide for supervised, daily recess in grades pre-kindergarten through grades five for a minimum of fifteen minutes (not including travel time to and from the playground).

4. Recess is recommended (not required) to take place prior to lunch. Research indicates that this is a better time for physical activity than after lunch.
5. Recess should not be viewed as a reward, but as a necessary educational component for all children.
6. Although depriving a student from recess is not encouraged, if it is deemed necessary, the time shall not exceed five minutes.
7. Indoor recess should be held when the heat index is 100° or above or when the temperature is 40° or below.
8. Universal Academy should provide the facilities, equipment and supervision necessary to ensure the recess experience is productive, safe and enjoyable.
9. Adults should direct or intervene when a child's physical or emotional safety is an issue. Bullying or aggressive behavior shall not be tolerated and all safety rules shall be enforced.

D. Nutrition Standards

1. Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will
 - a. meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal regulations
 - b. be appealing to students
 - c. be served in clean and pleasant settings
2. To the extent practical and possible, schools will share information about nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information may be on the district's website, menus, or other materials.
3. Schools will remain in compliance with all state and federal policies as amended, which establish nutrition standards for foods distributed or sold to students during the school day. Any changes made to the state policy or USDA Child Nutrition regulations will automatically become a part of the Universal Academy Wellness Policy.
4. All foods made available by the food service department or other sources must comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are in place district-wide.
5. School meals may not be withheld from students as a punishment.
6. For the protection of our students with severe allergic responses and to reduce the spread of illness, the sharing of food during meal service is strongly discouraged.

E. Other School-Based Activity Goals

1. Schools will foster a school environment that is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity.
2. Teachers are encouraged to consider the nutritional content of snacks provided to students under their supervision.
3. All school-based activities will be consistent with the local wellness policy goals. This includes field trips, assemblies, and special events that occur during the school day.
4. All fundraising organizations shall only use non-food items or foods designed for delivery and consumption after school hours as fund-raisers. High schools will be allowed to sell competitive foods outside of the school cafeteria and designated eating areas one time per year in support of school club day. Proper documentation of the nutritional content of all other foods sold during the school day must meet Smart Snack guidelines and be saved for 5 years for audit purposes.
5. Wellness will be promoted through district and campus-based activities such as Health Fairs, preventative screenings, flu shots, Diabetes Walk, Jump Rope for Heart, Relay for Life, etc.

F. Marketing

1. Nutrition Services will seek input and feedback from students through the use of student surveys and/or product testing.
2. Schools will promote healthy food choices and will not allow advertising that promotes less nutritious food choices in the dining areas.

V. Monitoring of the Nutrition and Wellness Plan

1. The Superintendent or his designee will ensure district compliance with the wellness policy. In each school, the principal or his/her designee will ensure compliance with the policy.
2. Universal Academy's Child Nutrition Director or designee will ensure compliance with nutrition requirements within school food service areas.
3. The Superintendent or his designee will review the policy every three years on compliance with this established nutrition and wellness plan, based on input from the School Health Advisory Council. Updates will be shared with the public.
4. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent or his designee has the operational responsibility for enforcing this plan by communicating it to all relevant parties and by providing necessary instructions and/or administrative procedures as appropriate to all staff members.

Exempt Fundraisers

Texas schools who participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program may sell food and/or beverages as part of a fundraiser that does not meet the Competitive Foods Nutritional Standards during the school day for up to six (6) days per school year on each school campus. These foods may not be sold in an area where program meals are sold or consumed.

Charge Policy

Students will have a two (2) day grace period to charge meals after prepaid funds are exhausted. A la carte items may not be charged. After the grace period, if funds are not replenished in the account, an alternate meal will be given to the student consisting of a sandwich and carton of juice.

Parents and students are asked to monitor accounts so funds are not depleted. Notices will be sent out to parents in the elementary schools and a verbal reminder will be given to secondary students.