



IDEA Public Schools – Louisiana Wellness Policy

Updated June 3, 2021

Preamble

IDEA Public Schools (“IDEA”) is committed to the optimal academic and personal development of every student. IDEA believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve success we need to create positive, safe, health-promoting learning environments throughout the school year.

This Wellness Policy outlines IDEA’s approach to advance student health, reduce childhood obesity, and promote the general wellness of students by implementing measurable goals to promote sound nutrition and health through nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities. IDEA strives to ensure environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day. Specifically, this Policy establishes guidelines to ensure that:

- IDEA students have access to healthy foods throughout the school day;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during, and after school;
- IDEA schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student, family, and staff wellness; and
- IDEA staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school.

This policy applies to all students, staff, and schools in IDEA’s Louisiana charter school network.

I. Wellness Policy Implementation

Federal law requires that certain stakeholders be involved in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. IDEA has chosen to use the local school health advisory council (SHAC) to review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in order to develop and implement nutrition guidelines and wellness goals as required by federal law.

IDEA’s wellness plan must address, at a minimum:

- 1) Strategies for soliciting involvement by and input from individuals interested in the wellness plan and policy;
- 2) Activities, benchmarks, and objectives for implementing wellness goals;
- 3) Methods for measuring implementation of wellness goals;
- 4) IDEA’s standards for foods and beverages provided (but not sold) to students during the school day and while on campus; and
- 5) Methods for communicating to the public information about IDEA’s local wellness plan.

In developing, implementing, and reviewing the guidelines and goals of IDEA’s Wellness Policy and plan, the SHAC will allow participation by parents, students, representatives of IDEA’s food service provider, physical education teachers, school health professionals, Board members, administrators, and members of the public. The SHAC will also solicit involvement and input of these other interested persons:

- 1) Executive Director
- 2) VP Student Performance & Advocacy
- 3) VP of Program Innovation
- 4) VP of Auxiliary Services
- 5) Healthy Kids Here Program Manager
- 6) Managing Director of The Child Nutrition Program
- 7) Director of Health & Wellness
- 8) Athletic Director
- 9) Nurse Practitioner

All schools in IDEA's Louisiana charter school network shall implement the Wellness Policy. Individual schools may choose to implement a more restrictive local policy, but must, at a minimum, meet these standards.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Served on Campus

IDEA's nutrition guidelines for reimbursable school meals and other foods and beverages sold or marketed to students during the school day are designed to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity and shall be at least as restrictive as federal regulations and guidance, except when IDEA allows an exemption for allowable fundraising activities.

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Feeding Program, or any additional meal programs added will:

- Be served in clean and pleasant settings
- Meet or Exceed USDA nutritional standards
- Offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, including food grown from IDEA Farms, when possible

Breakfast. To ensure that all children are offered breakfast in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- Schools will operate universal breakfast which is offered at no cost to students
- Schools will, to the extent possible, utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that maximize participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom or hallway, "grab-and-go" breakfast, or breakfast during morning break or recess.

Mealtimes and Scheduling. To ensure that all children have meals with adequate and reasonable time to consume them:

- Schools will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down with their food in front of them for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down with their food in front of them for lunch
- Schools will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities
- School meals will not be withheld as punishment
- Schools will provide students access to hand washing stations and will advocate for hand washing before they eat meals or snacks
- Schools will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk)

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. To ensure the health and safety of children with food allergies, intolerances, special diets, and religious beliefs, schools will prohibit students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times. IDEA strives to honor 100% of special diet requests when forms are completed by a U.S. licensed physician.

III. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold on Campus

Smart Snacks. To ensure that snacks make a positive contribution to children’s diets and health, all schools will emphasize serving fresh fruits and vegetables as the primary snack and water as the primary beverage.

All snacks sold must follow Smart Snacks rules¹ and should meet the following Smart Snacks standards:

Foods

- Be a grain product that contains 50% or more whole grain; or
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or
- Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; or
- Meet the nutrition standards for calories, sodium, fats, and sugar as indicated below:

Nutrient	Snack
Calories	200 calories or less
Sodium	200 mg or less
Total Fat	35% of calories or less
Saturated Fat	Less than 10% of calories
Trans Fat	0g
Sugar	35% by weight or less

Beverages

- Allowed: Plain water (with or without carbonation), unflavored low-fat milk, unflavored fat free milk and milk alternatives, 100% fruit or vegetable juice, 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water and no added sweeteners.
 - There is no portion size limit for plain water.
 - Elementary schools may sell up to 8-ounce portions of milk and juice.
 - Middle and high schools may sell up to 12-ounce portions of milk and juice.
- Not allowed: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners or artificial sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks or any that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine.

Smart Snacks Calculator

- To find out if your snack meets the smart snacks requirements visit:
<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>

Portion Sizes

When not using the Smart Snack calculator, limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to:

- 1.25 ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky
- 1 ounce for cookie
- 2 ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items

¹ <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school>.

- 4 oz. for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream
- 8 oz. for non-frozen yogurt

The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion size limits.

Fundraising Activities. To support children’s health and school nutrition education efforts, school fundraising activities, during and after the school day, will only sell non-food items or foods and beverages that meet or exceed the Smart Snacks nutrition standards. Schools will also encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

To support this initiative, the National Healthy Kids Here Committee will provide schools with a fundraiser toolkit. This toolkit will include a list of compliant fundraising ideas, and steps to execute such events. Schools are encouraged to use this toolkit as a list of suggestions and should not feel limited to the ideas provided.

IV. Rewards, Celebrations, and Events

Food as reward. Schools will not use foods or beverages as reward.² Behavior plans that use food as reward will need to be approved by the respective VP of Schools and District SHAC Coordinator.

Food as punishment. Schools will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.

Celebrations during the school day. There will be no nutrition exemptions for special events. Schools are encouraged to be creative in holding celebrations without food, or solely involving foods that meet the Smart Snacks standards (see Section III). It is suggested that schools leverage some of the ideas in the fundraiser toolkit for school celebrations as well.

School-sponsored Events. Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside of school meal programs during the school day and during the extended school day (including out-of-school time/before and after school) will, at minimum, meet the nutrition standards enumerated in Smart Snacks (See section III).

V. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education Goals. IDEA has established the following goals for nutrition education:

- 1) Students will receive nutrition education that fosters the adoption and maintenance of healthy eating behaviors.
- 2) Nutrition education will be a system-wide priority and will be integrated into other areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.
- 3) Staff responsible for nutrition education will be adequately prepared and will participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the program as planned.
- 4) The food service staff, teachers, and other school personnel will coordinate the promotion of nutrition messages in the cafeteria, the classroom, and other appropriate settings.
- 5) Educational nutrition information will be shared with families and the general public to positively influence the health of students and community members.

Nutrition Education and Promotion. IDEA aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Offers each grade level a nutrition program at least once a semester which promotes and protects

² <https://squaremeals.org/Portals/8/files/publications/Non%20Food%20Ways%20to%20Reward.pdf>.

their health

- Includes but is not limited to contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy, low sodium products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (moderate to vigorous physical activity/exercise);
- Connects school meal programs with nutrition-related community services;
- Additionally, all food service staff, teachers, and other school personnel shall consistently promote healthy nutrition messages in cafeteria, classrooms, and other appropriate settings.

Communication with Parents. IDEA will support and encourage parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.

- Schools will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities available before, during, and after the school day.
- Schools will share results of FitnessGram twice a year, pretest and posttest, with parents
- Schools will share their individual wellness policies that, at a minimum, meet the standards set out in this policy.
- Schools will share ideas and recommendations for allowable awards and celebrations.
- Schools will share guidance on what foods/snacks are allowable for parents to bring to campus.
 - Food deliveries for students (including snacks) that do not meet Smart Snack guidelines will not be accepted on campus.
 - Schools will not be responsible for replacing or refunding any non-approved food items discarded on campus.

Additionally, IDEA shall share educational nutrition information with families and the public to promote healthy nutrition choices and positively influence the health of students.

Food Marketing in Schools. School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually that meet Smart Snacks standards (See section III).

VI. Physical Education and Health Education

Physical Education (P.E.) K-12. To ensure the health and wellness of our students and compliance with state's physical education requirements.

- All students in PE grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive an average of 135 minutes/week of physical education for Academy students and 225 minutes/ 2 weeks for College Preparatory students.
- Students will spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- All students taking PE will be evaluated twice a year using FitnessGram to evaluate for performing in the Healthy Fitness Zone. (Pretest and Posttest)

Space. To ensure that students participate in school physical education class, the campus will, to the extent possible, provide an environment that is safe, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate for all students, whether or not they are participating in the physical activity taking place during physical education.

Clothing. To ensure that students participate in physical activity during physical education class and that students' hygiene is maintained during the school day, student will to the extent possible be provided with a space to change clothing. This applies to the general population of students in College Prep. Grades 6th-12th; academy students are not permitted to alter uniform/clothing.

Health Education: To meet the coordinated health program component of the state's education requirement:

- Schools will deliver health education at least once a semester that fosters the adoption and maintenance of healthy habits
- Schools will make health education a priority and shall integrate it into other areas of the curriculum as appropriate
- IDEA shall provide annual professional development so that teachers and other staff responsible for health education programming are adequately trained to deliver the program

VII. Physical Activity Opportunities

Recess. All Academy school students will have at least 30 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, equipment, and choice play.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School. All schools will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as athletics, non-competitive physical activity clubs and/or intramural programs. Every effort will be made by the school to provide ample opportunity before and after the school day for students to participate.

Physical Activity and Punishment. Campus administrators will not endorse or authorize campus personnel, especially teachers to use physical activity or withhold of opportunities for physical activity as a form of behavioral punishment.

Safe Routes to School. IDEA will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school.

Additional Physical Activity Opportunities. School teachers and staff are also encouraged to integrate physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate. Additionally, IDEA will offer appropriate training and other activities annually to employees to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity for IDEA employees and students; schools shall do the same.

Communication with Parents. Schools will encourage parents to support their children's participation, to be active role models, and to include physical activity in family events. Additionally, schools shall include parents in before- and after-school programs involving physical activity, when appropriate.

Moreover, schools shall encourage all students, parents, staff, and community members to use their recreational facilities (such as tracks, playgrounds, fields, etc.) that are available outside of school hours.

VIII. Health Services

Clinic Responsibilities. To respect the privacy of students and make the health services team available to respond to emergencies, should any arise at the campus:

- School clinics will be used primarily for the medical attention of students.
- School clinics will operate during school hours. The clinic will be closed daily for a lunch break or may be covered by a back-up staff member.
- If the clinic needs to close for health-related events such as state-mandated screenings, appropriate signage will be posted on the clinic door indicating when the clinic will reopen.
- If the campus health aide or clinic staff member is absent, school administration or hired personnel is responsible for providing staff to manage the clinic.
- School clinic personnel will not administer any over the counter medication without written permission from parents and/or a physician (the student's personal physician).
- School clinics will not provide or administer the treatment for pediculosis capitis, head lice unless

- included in the district's Standing Orders or provided through a telemedicine partner.
- Only health services staff or an administrator may enter the clinic after hours and in the case of an emergency.
- Health Services staff will follow exclusionary criteria set forth by the CDC and State Administrative Code.

IX. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. The National Healthy Kids Here Committee listed above will ensure compliance with established IDEA's nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the campus designee or Principal will ensure compliance with those policies in their school and will report on the school's compliance to the National Healthy Kids Here Committee.

IDEA will develop a summary report every three years on compliance with IDEA's established wellness policies based on input from all IDEA schools. That report will be provided to the Board of Directors and distributed to school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel.

Policy Review. IDEA shall comply with federal requirements for evaluating this policy and the wellness plan. Generally, IDEA's compliance with the well ness plan shall be assessed at least once every three years. The evaluation will consider the extent to which each IDEA school is compliant with the wellness policy, a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy, and the extent to which the wellness policy compares with any state- or federally designated model wellness policies. IDEA will use measures aligned with Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Gold Award to track schools' compliance and progress.

IDEA must annually inform and update the public about the content and implementation of the Wellness Policy, and make the policy and any updates, along with the wellness plan and program assessments, available to the public.