

THE WHITNEY ACADEMY WELLNESS POLICIES ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION

INTRODUCTION

As a standard of care, The Whitney Academy recognizes that children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Good health fosters student attendance and educational progress. In designing the Whitney Academy's Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition, the following is taken into consideration: that obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and that physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity; that heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and that the major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity are often are established in childhood.

The Whitney Academy is committed to providing a school and residential environment that promotes and protects children's health, wellbeing, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Whitney Academy that:

All students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

Foods and beverages served will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

The Food Services Department / Cook / Registered Dietitian will provide students with access to a variety of nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students. Whitney Academy will provide a clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

The Medical, Residential, Education and Recreational Therapy staff 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 residential meal program.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Served At The Whitney Academy School / Residential Meals.

Meals served will:

Be appealing and attractive to students;

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;

Offer alternatives to students with specific medically based nutritional restrictions or needs

Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA)

Ensure that at half of the served grains are whole grain.

The Food Services Department / Cook will be responsible for the program which includes but is not limited to:

1. At least three meals and two snacks will be provided daily constituting a nutritionally adequate diet.
2. Meals shall be prepared and served in a manner, amount and at times appropriate to the nutritional needs of the students.
3. The Whitney Academy diet designations are the House Diet, Lowfat house Diet, House Diet Plus Extra Portions and the House Diet Plus Ovaltine Or Carnation Instant Breakfast. Individualized diets will be maintained for students if they have medical conditions that require this.

The Whitney Academy will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents, guardians and students upon request.

Meal Times and Scheduling

Meals are scheduled for 30-minute periods at appropriate times, (*breakfast between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m.; lunch between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; supper between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.*).

Meals should not be scheduled during tutoring, groups, student organizational meetings or activities.

Lunch periods proceed or follow Structured Recreation or Physical Education periods.

Students will be provided access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks

Staff 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).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer/review and monitor the school meal programs. As part of the Whitney Academy's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for staff involved in the preparation and serving of food.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages.

The Whitney Academy does not allow students the sharing of 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/Beverages Sold Individually

The Whitney Academy does not provide Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.*, foods sold outside of school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.). Students are, at times, allowed to purchase food/beverage items while off grounds during field trips or other events. During such times, staff will make every effort to encourage healthy food choices or to limit the quantity of items purchased.

Fundraising Activities

The Whitney Academy does not participate in fundraising activities that involve food.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day 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. When students are on off grounds trips they are encouraged to make healthy food choices and may be restricted in their choices due to health concerns. A registered dietitian 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 dietitian will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers and residential program personnel, and this information is made available to parents and guardians as needed.

II. Nutrition Education and Physical Activity Promotion

Nutrition Education and Promotion

The Whitney Academy aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Whitney Academy provides nutrition education and engages in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential and comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health. This is presented as a component during health education classes.
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences
- 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)

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

In an effort to help students embrace physical activity as a personal behavior, classroom Health education will compliment physical education by reinforcing the knowledge of self management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent of sedentary activities. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated in lessons in other subject areas, when appropriate. Classroom teachers will provide short breaks for physical activity (i.e. Yoga) when appropriate.

III. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Daily Structured Recreation:

All students at Whitney Academy will have at least 30 minutes a day, three days per week, of structured recreation time during the school day. Students will also have 30 minutes per day before and after school of structured recreation time. This time will be outdoors, as appropriate, during which professional staff will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally, through the provision of space and equipment, through offering and brain storming activity ideas and through active involvement with students.

Physical Education:

All students at Whitney Academy will receive 30 minutes per day, two days per week, for a total of 60 minutes of physical education per week. Physical education classes will focus primarily on increasing the activity level of the students, thereby increasing their overall physical fitness level. Beyond this, physical education classes offer opportunities for students to learn, develop and practice various social skills and foster personal growth. These objectives are accomplished through cooperative activities, active games and fitness exercises.

Students learn the major sport skill areas of throwing, kicking, catching and striking, though focus is on the broad sense of the skill, rather than sport-specific skill. Activities tend to be non-traditional to encourage participation of all students, and increase leisure activity awareness. The classes are designed to get the students to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity at least 70% of each class. Participation of all students is expected, as appropriate, and active participation of staff is encouraged.

Physical Activity and Punishment:

The Whitney Academy will not use physical activity (i.e. running, pushups, etc.) or withhold opportunities to participate in Physical Education or other structured recreation activities as a means of punishment.

IV. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring

The Medical Director or designee will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

The Food Services Department will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within food service areas and will report on this matter to the Medical Director or designee. The Medical Director or designee will develop a summary report every year on compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from a registered dietitian and data from each student's Body Mass Index.

Policy Review

To help with the initial development of the Whitney Academy's wellness policies, the medical, residential and education departments will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of will be presented to the Executive Professional Staff Organization (PSO) to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the medical, residential and education departments 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 Whitney Academy, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.