



What's in a Wellness Policy? **School Meals!**

Local Resources

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): School Meal Nutrition Standards	https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards Describes school meal nutrition standards as required in the 2010 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.
California Smarter Lunchrooms Movement	https://www.healthyeating.org/slm Provides training and technical advising for school food service on the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement theory and practices created by the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Program. Contact Heather Berkoben htroska@dairycouncilofca.org
Hunger Free Kids San Diego Hunger Coalition	https://www.sandiegohungercoalition.org/hunger-free-kids-report Hunger Free Kids provides free, hands-on assistance and ongoing guidance for any person, school, district, or organization that wants to end child hunger. Maximizing school meal participation is a key strategy.
CalFresh Healthy Living County of San Diego	USDA-funded K-12 program includes healthy eating and physical activity PSE** change support for schools with at least 50% FRPM*.
School Nutrition for Academic Success: A LCAP Guide Nourish CA (formerly California Food Policy Advocates)	https://nourishca.org/ChildNutrition/ChildNutrition_CFPAPublications/CFPA_LCAP_Booklet_FINAL_16_12_05.pdf Includes research linking nutrition strategies to measures of academic achievement and health, actions school districts can take to support students' nutritional health and academic achievement, and pre-filled LCAP templates with sample language and nutrition actions.
Water in Schools	http://www.waterinschools.org/ Provides information on water access requirements, resources, and case studies on how access to water can be improved in schools.

* FRPM: Free and Reduced Price Meals

** PSE: Policy, systems, and environmental (changes)

More resources:

San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

<https://sdcoi.org/focus-areas/schools-and-after-schools/resources/>

Live Well Schools Tools for Schools

<https://www.livewellsd.org/i-want-to/learn-more/schools/live-well-schools/tools-for-schools-resources-page>

How Does Your District's Wellness Policy Compare to Model Wellness Policies?

Model Policy: *Live Well Schools*

4. School Meals

All reimbursable school meals will meet or exceed current nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and the school meal nutrition standards specified by the United States Department of Agriculture and the California Department of Education. The meal patterns and dietary specifications for Breakfast and Lunch will be followed as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Meals served within federally reimbursable meal programs will be designed to feature fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods from local sources to the greatest extent possible.

Schools will provide substitutions for students with dietary restrictions, special dietary needs, or cultural or ethnic variations in food preferences to the greatest extent possible.

Schools will exceed the school meal nutrition standards by providing only water or unflavored low-fat or fat-free white milk in school meals, and by prohibiting juice products of all kinds from being served as part of school meals.

Schools shall share information about the nutritional content and ingredients of meals with parents and students. Such information will be made available on the school website, cafeteria menus or menu boards, and by other means available to communicate with the school community.

In addition to encouraging participation in the free and reduced-price meal program, schools 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 will 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.

Students will be offered school meal choices that do not differ from other students' meal choices, whether or not the student has money to pay or owes money. Schools will contact families of students as soon as they begin to accrue meal debt to see if the student is eligible for free or reduced-price meals or to make payment arrangements. At no point will the student be communicated with directly about meal debt or be denied a meal.

To the maximum extent practicable, all schools will participate in available federal school meal programs (i.e., School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, and CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program).

Model Policy: *Live Well Schools* (continued)

- **School Breakfast Program**

Schools will communicate the importance of healthy breakfast to parents and will notify them of the availability of the School Breakfast Program. Schools will, to the extent possible, encourage participation in school breakfasts by ensuring that meals are convenient and that students have adequate time to eat them. This will be accomplished by arranging bus schedules to allow students to obtain breakfast once they are on campus and have at least 10 minutes to eat it, as well as by serving breakfast in the classroom, preparing "grab-and-go" breakfasts, or providing breakfast during morning break or recess.

- **Free and Reduced-Price Meal and Afterschool Snack Program**

Applications for free/reduced price meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year. The application is also available on the district website.

Districts will utilize the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) to the greatest extent possible in order to serve all students at that school meals and snacks at no charge.

- **Summer Food Service Program**

Schools in which more than 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for at least six weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year, and preferably throughout the entire summer vacation. All meals served as part of the Summer Food Service Program will also meet school meal nutrition standards established by the US Department of Agriculture.

- **CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program**

Schools with an on-campus afterschool enrichment programs, and in which more than 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, will offer the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper Program to all students on campus during meal service hours to the extent possible. These meals may be provided by district nutrition services or by another CACFP afterschool supper sponsor.

Local Sourcing of Food

The district shall foster a culture of support for growing and procuring fresh, local produce through community engagement, opportunities for school gardens, Farm- to-School and Garden-to-Cafeteria programs, farmers markets, fundraising, and food distribution at school sites. The program will set goals to increase procurement of local produce and other foods made or sourced from San Diego County and the state of California.

The Child Nutrition Program will participate to the extent possible in programs such as The Center for Ecoliteracy's California Thursday Network, the San Diego County Farm to School Task Force, and The Center for Good Food Purchasing's Good Food Purchasing Program.

Water

Schools shall provide access to free, potable water during meal times in the food service area in accordance with Education Code 38086 and 42 USC 1758, and shall encourage students' consumption of water by educating them about the health benefits of water and serving water in an appealing and

Model Policy: *Live Well Schools* (continued)

convenient manner (e.g., water fountains designed to easily refill cups and reusable water bottles, 5-gallon water dispensers placed in central locations in the cafeteria, signage promoting water use, etc.).

Availability and consumption of water is supported throughout the day. Students are allowed to bring drinking water into the classroom provided that the container is capped, such as a recyclable or reusable bottle. These vessels are not to be shared among students.

Drinking fountains should be inspected and maintained on a regular schedule.

District will support efforts to purchase and install water stations (with filters if contaminants are a concern) that can accommodate the filling of reusable water vessels.

Meal Periods and Scheduling for Schools

District schools will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, i.e., lunch will be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. The district shall not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.

Schools shall, when possible, schedule lunch meal times to follow lunch recess times at elementary sites to promote meal consumption and decrease food waste.

District schools will provide students with at least 20 minutes to eat lunch after sitting down and at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast.

Meal Settings

The district has a closed campus policy. School staff may not provide permission for students to leave campus for the purpose of obtaining lunch.

All students will be guaranteed a clean, safe, and pleasant lunch setting on campus in which there is adequate space and appropriate adult supervision.

In addition to providing a clean and safe environment, students and staff shall have access to hand washing, preferably with soap and water. Hand sanitizers may be used only where sinks are not available.

Sharing of Food and Beverages

Schools should strongly discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, due to concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Oral Health

Schools should 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 the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, continuing professional development for all school nutrition professionals will be provided in accordance with the USDA Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition Programs

Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Food Safety & Sanitation

All food items brought on campus by parents/guardians or other volunteers or school staff for celebrations should be store-bought, prepackaged, and pre-wrapped items with an ingredients label so students with food allergies are protected from accidental exposure. No home-cooked meals should be served to students in order to minimize the risk of foodborne illnesses.

Food service equipment and facilities must meet applicable local and state standards for health, sanitation, and safety. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines⁶ shall be implemented to prevent foodborne illness in schools.

All food handlers must meet the food safety certification requirements established by the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health.