NEW ROOTS CHARTER SCHOOL

Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Background

In the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, the U.S. Congress established a requirement that all school districts with a federally-funded school meals program develop and implement wellness policies that address nutrition and physical activity by the start of the 2006-2007 school year.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture published a final rule on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) standards for the school nutrition programs in the December 15, 2009 issue of the Federal Register.

The New Roots Charter School Wellness Policy is based on a national model of nutrition and physical activity policies which meet the federal requirement. Our School Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition is based on nutrition science, public health research, and existing practices from exemplary states and local school districts around the country.

In addition, the New Roots Charter School has developed a food safety system that implements the HACCP standards.

Preamble

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, national averages indicate that 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;

Whereas, national averages indicate that only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;
Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, the NEW ROOTS CHARTER SCHOOL is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children’s health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the NEW ROOTS CHARTER SCHOOL that:

- Our SCHOOL will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing our nutrition and physical activity policies.

- All students in grades 9-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

- 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, and the National School Lunch Program).

- Our 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 school meal programs, and with related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served

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;¹

¹ To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.
serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and

ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

Our SCHOOL will attempt to 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, our SCHOOL will attempt to share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information may 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:

- Our SCHOOL will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
- Our SCHOOL will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including "grab-and-go" breakfast.
- Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals*.** Our SCHOOL 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, Our SCHOOL 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".

*Currently New Roots Charter School is part of CEP and does not charge students for meals.

**Meal Times and Scheduling.** Our SCHOOL:

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- will schedule meal periods at appropriate times;
- will attempt to not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- 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 our school meal programs. As part of our SCHOOL’s responsibility to operate a food service program, we will attempt to provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in our SCHOOL. Staff development programs

---

2 As recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005.
3 A whole grain is one labeled as a "whole" grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include "whole" wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal.
4 It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or "paid" meals.
will attempt to include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.  

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. Our SCHOOL will 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.

FOODS AND BEVERAGES SOLD INDIVIDUALLY
(i.e., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

High Schools. In our high school, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, or vending machines) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

Beverages
- **Allowed:** water or seltzer water\(^6\) without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);
- **Not Allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners.

Foods
- A food item sold individually:
  - will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
  - will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars;\(^7\)
  - will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.
  - A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).\(^8\)

Portion Sizes:

---

\(^5\) School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute.

\(^6\) Surprisingly, seltzer water may not be sold during meal times in areas of the school where food is sold or eaten because it is considered a “Food of Minimal Nutritional Value” (Appendix B of 7 CFR Part 210).

\(^7\) If a food manufacturer fails to provide the added sugars content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from total sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from added sugars), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods from this total sugars limit.

\(^8\) Schools that have vending machines are encouraged to include refrigerated snack vending machines, which can accommodate fruits, vegetables, yogurts, and other perishable items.
• Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:

• One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;

• One ounce for cookies;

• Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;

• Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;

• Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;

• Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and

• 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.

 Rewards. Our SCHOOL 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. Our SCHOOL will attempt to 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 beverages sold individually (above). Our SCHOOL will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

II. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

 Nutrition Education and Promotion. NEW ROOTS CHARTER SCHOOL aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Our SCHOOL will attempt to 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);

---

9 Unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP).
• 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.

Food Marketing in Schools. School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, our SCHOOL 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 (above).10 School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages11 is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; in-school television, such as Channel One; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; sales of fruit for fundraisers; and coupons for discount gym memberships.

III. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Daily Physical Education (P.E.) 9-12. All students in grades 9-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education for the entire school year. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess. Our SCHOOL should discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, our SCHOOL should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

---

10 Advertising of low-nutrition foods and beverages is permitted in supplementary classroom and library materials, such as newspapers, magazines, the Internet, and similar media, when such materials are used in a class lesson or activity, or as a research tool.
11 Schools should not permit general brand marketing for food brands under which more than half of the foods or beverages do not meet the nutrition standards for foods sold individually or the meals are not consistent with school meal nutrition standards.
**Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School.** Our SCHOOL will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. Our SCHOOL will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

**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.

**Safe Routes to School.** Our SCHOOL 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. When appropriate, our SCHOOL will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. Our SCHOOL will explore the availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements. Our SCHOOL will encourage students to use public transportation when available and appropriate for travel to school, and will work with the local transit agency to provide transit passes for students.

**Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours.** School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

**IV. Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring.** The principal or designee will ensure compliance with established school nutrition and physical activity wellness policy. The principal or designee will ensure compliance with this policy and will report on the school's compliance to the school board.

School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the principal.

The principal or designee will develop a summary report every three years on our SCHOOL’s compliance with our established nutrition and physical activity wellness policy. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to the school’s health council, parent/teacher organization, and school health services personnel in our SCHOOL.
V. Resources for Local School Wellness Policies on Nutrition and Physical Activity

Crosscutting:


- *Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance*, the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, <www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=22596>


- *Cardiovascular Health Promotion in Schools*, American Heart Association [link to pdf]

School Health Councils:

- *Promoting Healthy Youth, Schools and Communities: A Guide to Community-School Health Councils*, American Cancer Society [link to PDF]

**Nutrition:**

**General Resources on Nutrition**


**School Meals**


- *Local Support for Nutrition Integrity in Schools*, American Dietetic Association, [www.eatright.org/Member/Files/Local.pdf](http://www.eatright.org/Member/Files/Local.pdf)


- *Breakfast for Learning*, Food Research and Action Center, [www.frac.org/pdf/breakfastforlearning.PDF](http://www.frac.org/pdf/breakfastforlearning.PDF)


- *Arkansas Child Health Advisory Committee Recommendations* [includes recommendation for professional development for child nutrition professionals in schools], [www.healthyarkansas.com/advisory_committee/pdf/final_recommendations.pdf](http://www.healthyarkansas.com/advisory_committee/pdf/final_recommendations.pdf)
Meal Times and Scheduling

- *Eating at School: A Summary of NFSMI Research on Time Required by Students to Eat Lunch*, National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) [Attach PDF file]

Nutrition Standards for Foods and Beverages Sold Individually

- *Nutrition Integrity in Schools*, (forthcoming), National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity
- *School Foods Tool Kit*, Center for Science in the Public Interest, <www.cspinet.org/schoolfood/>

Fruit and Vegetable Promotion in Schools

- National Farm-to-School Program website, hosted by the Center for Food and Justice, <www.farmtoschool.org>
- Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program Resource Center, hosted by United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association, <http://www.uffva.org/fvpilotprogram.htm>
- Produce for Better Health Foundation website has downloadable fruit and vegetable curricula, research, activity sheets, and more at <www.5aday.org>
Fundraising Activities


Snacks

- *Healthy School Snacks*, (forthcoming), Center for Science in the Public Interest
- Materials to Assist After-school and Summer Programs and Homeless Shelters in Using the Child Nutrition Programs (website), Food Research and Action Center, <www.frac.org/html/building_blocks/afterschsummertoc.html>

Rewards

- *Prohibition against Denying Meals and Milk to Children as a Disciplinary Action*, U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service [Link to PDF]

Celebrations


Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing:

Health Education

Nutrition Education and Promotion

- U.S. Department of Agriculture Team Nutrition website (lists nutrition education curricula and links to them), <www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Educators/index.htm>


- Nutrition Education Resources and Programs Designed for Adolescents, compiled by the American Dietetic Association, <www.eatright.org/Public/index_19218.cfm>

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

- Brain Breaks, Michigan Department of Education, <www.emc.cmich.edu/brainbreaks>

- Energizers, East Carolina University, <www.ncpe4me.com/energizers.html>

Food Marketing to Children


- Marketing Food to Children (a report on ways that different countries regulate food marketing to children [including marketing in schools]), World Health Organization (WHO), <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2004/9241591579.pdf>


Eating Disorders

- Academy for Eating Disorders, <www.aedweb.org>


- Eating Disorders Coalition, <www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org>


Protecting Our Assets: Promoting and Preserving School Employee Wellness, (forthcoming), Directors of Health Promotion and Education (DHPE)

Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education:

General Resources on Physical Activity

- Guidelines for School and Community Programs to Promote Lifelong Physical Activity among Young People, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00046823.htm>

Physical Education


Recess

- Recess Before Lunch Policy: Kids Play and then Eat, Montana Team Nutrition, <www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfood/recessBL.html>
Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

- The Case for High School Activities, National Federation of State High School Associations, <www.nfhs.org/scriptcontent/va_custom/vimdisplays/contentpagedisplay.cfm?content_id=71>

Safe Routes to School


Monitoring and Policy Review:

- School Health Index, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/shi/>