



## Denver Inner City Parish: La Academia School Wellness Policy

The policies outlined in this document are meant to create a school environment that protects and promotes the health of our students. Our commitments to providing nutrition education and regular physical activity, as well as access to nutritious foods for all students, are described here.

### **1. Nutrition Education and Promotion**

Students will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout the school including: in classrooms, in the cafeteria, and school media.

- Teachers will integrate nutrition education into core curricula
- Nutrition promotion will include participatory activities such as contests, promotions, and elective time spent harvesting and planting in the Denver Inner City Parish community garden
- The nutrition education program will be linked to school meal programs, school gardens, cafeteria nutrition promotion, after-school programs, and farm-to-school programs
- Nutrition education will be offered in the cafeteria and in the classroom, allowing for collaboration between food service staff and teachers
- Nutrition education will promote consumption of fresh produce, whole-grain products, low-fat dairy products, healthy methods of food preparation, and appropriate portion sizing
- Students will have the opportunity to taste foods that are low in saturated fats, sugar, and sodium
- Staff members responsible for nutrition education will regularly participate in relevant professional development
- Staff will only use approved nutrition curriculum in the classroom. Curriculum developed by corporate interests is prohibited



- Students may also elect to join cooking classes that will focus on healthy cooking and eating habits

Specifically, the nutrition curriculum will encompass the following:

- Promotion of adequate nutrient intake and healthy eating practices
- Skill development, such as reading food labels to determine the nutrition level of food products, meal planning, and cooking classes

## **2. Nutrition Standards for All Food and Beverages Sold or Served on School Grounds**

### **A. School Meals provided by Denver Public Schools (DPS):**

School meals will include a variety of healthy choices while accommodating special dietary needs as well as ethnic and cultural food preferences. La Academia shall participate in the USDA school breakfast and lunch program.

In addition:

- All reimbursable meals will meet nutrition standards mandated by the USDA, as well as any additional state nutrition standards that go beyond the USDA.
- The school meal program will be administered by a team that will include a business manager and qualified chef to prepare and reheat foods provided by DPS. All cafeteria staff will be provided training on USDA reimbursable meals so that they may properly advise students regarding the meals they must take, along with cooking techniques, recipe implementation, sanitation, and food safety
- Tutoring, club, or organizational meetings will not be scheduled during meal time, unless students may eat during such activities
- Students will have access to hand washing/hand sanitizing facilities before meals and snacks and cafeteria staff will remind students to make use of them
- Information on the nutritional content and ingredients will be available upon request and students and parents will be informed that this information is available to them on request
- Participation in school meal programs will be promoted. Parents will be notified of the availability of the breakfast, lunch, and snack program and will be encouraged to determine eligibility for reduced and free meals

### **B. Competitive Foods and Beverages**

All foods and beverages sold on school grounds to students outside of reimbursable school meals are considered “competitive foods.” Competitive foods include items sold a la carte in the cafeteria, food from vending machines, school stores, and food for in-school fundraisers. All competitive foods must meet the school’s nutrition standards, as well as applicable state and federal standards.



## Denver Inner City Parish/La Academia Nutrition Standards:

The school has adopted the USDA's nutrition standards for competitive foods/beverages. A summary of the standards is listed below.

### To be allowable, competitive foods must:

- Be a grain product that contains 50% or more whole grains, have whole grain as the first ingredient, have the first ingredient as one of the non-main food groups (fruit, vegetables, dairy, or protein), or be a combination food that food that contains at least ¼ cup fruit and/or vegetable
  - Exemptions: fresh fruits and vegetables, canned and frozen fruits without added ingredients packed in 100% juice or light syrup, and canned vegetables with no added ingredients except water or small amount of sugar for processing purposes
- Have less than 35% calories from total fat as served
  - Exemptions: reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters, seafood with no added fat
- Have less than 10% calories from saturated fat as served
  - Exemptions: Same as total fat exemptions
- Have zero grams of trans fat per serving
- Have less than 35% of weight from total sugar as served
  - Exemptions: Dried fruit or dried vegetables
- Have less than or equal to 200 mg sodium per item served
- Have less than 200 calories for competitive food snack items and entrée items sold a la carte must have less than 350 calories
  - Exemptions: Entrée items served a la carte as part of the NSLP or SBP on the day of or day after service (not reimbursable)
- Be caffeine-free when served to middle school students, but may contain caffeine when served to high school students

### Beverages allowed to be served outside of school meals:

- High School:
  - Plain water or plain carbonated water (no size limit)
  - Unflavored, low-fat milk (less than or equal to 12 fl oz.)
  - Flavored or unflavored, non-fat milk (less than or equal to 12 fl oz.)
  - 100% fruit/vegetable juice or 100% juice diluted with water and no added
  - Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages (less than or equal to 20 fl oz) with a label designating less than or equal to 5 calories per 8 fl oz. or less than or equal to 10 calories per 20 fl oz.



- Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages (less than or equal to 12 fl oz) with a label designating less than or equal to 40 calories per 8 fl oz. or less than or equal to 60 calories per 12 fl oz.

### **C. Additional Foods Available to Students**

#### Fundraising

- Foods sold for fundraising purposes inside the school must meet the school's nutrition standards
- Out-of-school fundraising may include select restaurants that meet the school's nutrition standards (i.e. Chipotle) and invites the local community to participate
- Fundraisers that promote physical activity are encouraged

#### Access to Drinking Water

- Students and school staff members will have access to free, clean drinking water at all times throughout the school day. Students may also bring water from home into the classroom.
- Water will be promoted as a substitute to sugar-sweetened beverages
- School staff will be encouraged to model drinking water consumption
- Regular maintenance will be performed on all water fountains regularly to ensure appropriate hygiene standards of drinking water

### **3. Other**

#### Marketing

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, the following guidelines apply:

- Schools will restrict food and beverage marketing to the promotion of only those foods and beverages that meet the nutrition requirements set forth in the school wellness policy

Examples of marketing techniques include the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos, or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or on its container
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors
- Corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on cups, posters, book covers, school supplies, or educational materials



- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings
- Sponsorship of school activities, fundraisers, or sports teams
- Educational incentive programs such as contests, or programs that provide schools with supplies or funds when families purchase specific food products
- Free samples or coupons displaying advertising of a product

#### Food Used as Reward or Punishment

Research indicates that the use of food to reward/reinforce desirable behavior and academic performance has negative, unintended consequences. The use of food as a reward and withholding food as a punishment is strictly prohibited.

#### **4. Physical Activity**

All students will receive daily physical education (225 minutes per week) for the entire school year. Physical education will be integrated in classroom curriculum and working towards aspects like motor skills, concepts and strategies, engagement in and benefits of physical activity, physical fitness, and responsible behavior. Physical education programs will meet the needs of all students, including those who are not athletically gifted and actively teach cooperation, fair play, and responsible participation.

Students may also elect to sign up for special elective courses that focus on physical activity, such as Capoeira, boxing, Yoga, Zumba, in which consultants teach the students.

#### **5. Evaluation and Enforcement**

This wellness policy was adapted for Denver Inner City Parish/La Academia from a model school wellness policy provided on the USDA website. While there currently is not a wellness committee who meets to discuss the issues outlined in this policy, the school is looking to involve parents as well as the community to see how the school is meeting its goals set by this policy as well as any aspects that should be added or changed. These committee meetings will be made open to the public and the meeting times will be advertised appropriately.

The principal of the school will ensure compliance within the school and will report on compliance to the executive director and to the wellness committee when one is formed. An annual report will also be created that illustrates the following: (1) the extent to which the school is in compliance with the wellness policy; (2) a comparison of the school's policy to model local wellness policies; (3) the progress made in attaining the goals of the policy; (4) any recommended changes to the policy; (5) a detailed action plan for the following school year to achieve annual goals and objectives; and (6) any additional information required by the USDA. The annual report will be made available to families before the following school year.



Policy revisions will take into account new research and evidence on health trends, new national and state standards and guidelines, new state and federal initiatives, local evaluation data, changing priorities of the school, and other issues.

