



2024-2025 Wellness Policy

Preamble/Statement of Responsibility

The Anchor School (TAS) desires to provide our scholars the needed access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive. TAS believes that good health fosters good habits of scholar attendance, a scholar's ability to learn effectively and to achieve high standards in school academics. TAS has developed a Wellness Policy aimed at fighting childhood obesity by providing opportunities to enhance learning, contribute to healthy growth and development by promoting lifelong healthy habits.

In compliance with Local School Wellness Policy requirements as written in 7 CFR 210.31. TAS is committed to providing an environment that promotes and protects our scholar's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of TAS that:

TAS will engage scholars, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members to work within the school's health and wellness committee to review and make suggestions regarding nutrition and physical activity policies.

- All scholars in grades 6-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- TAS will provide scholars with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of scholars; TAS will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the scholars' body in meal planning; and will provide a clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for scholars to eat.
- TAS will participate in available federal school meal programs, if applicable.
- TAS will provide nutrition, education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity.
- TAS will establish linkages between health education, mental health awareness and school meal programs, and with related community services.

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Nutrition, Nutrition Standards, and Health Education

The Anchor School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating. The school will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designated to provide scholars with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.

- TAS will not only provide health education classes but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, and social studies.
- TAS will promote local fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products.
- TAS will ensure healthy food preparation methods and foster health-enhancing nutrition practices.
- TAS will emphasize health and wellness education in caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure through physical activity/exercise.
- TAS will ensure context of impact with the school meal program, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services.
- The Anchor School will only market/advertise those foods and beverages that meet the nutrition guidelines and Smart Snack standards.

Physical Activity

All scholars in grades 6th - 12th, including scholars with disabilities, will receive daily physical education (or 200 minutes/week for middle school scholars) for the entire school year. Scholars' involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Scholars will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

TAS will discourage extended periods (i.e., periods longer than 2 hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for scholars to remain indoors for long periods of time, TAS will give scholars periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

TAS's After-School Program will provide and encourage – verbally and through provision of space, sanitized equipment, and activities – periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

School Meals

TAS is committed to serving healthy meals to scholars, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams trans-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meeting the nutrition needs of scholars within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of scholars to help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

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TAS' Food Vendor participates in USDA child nutrition Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP). TAS also operates additional nutrition-related programs and activities including Farm to School and Grab 'n' Go and Offer vs. Serve meals.

TAS is committed to following The Healthy, Hunger- Free Kids Act of 2010 which requires USDA to establish nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold to scholars on campus during each school day. TAS will encourage all scholars to participate in eating more school meals daily by providing:

- Appealing and attractive meals to scholars
- A clean and pleasant setting to be served
- At a minimum, nutritional requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations with flexibilities allowable by USDA.
- A variety of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Two milk options containing 1% fat content or less: and
- Meals with half of the served grains are whole grain.

TAS will engage scholars 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, TAS will share (upon request) information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and scholars.

Breakfast & Lunch: To ensure that all scholars have breakfast or lunch, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- TAS will utilize methods to serve school breakfast and lunch that encourage participation.
- TAS will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast and lunch for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other social media outlets.
- TAS will discourage scholars from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack time, given concerns about the current pandemic, allergies and other restrictions in some children's diets.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all scholars throughout the school day and throughout school campus.

TAS will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

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678-503-4880

- All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene and health safety standards. Such sources and containers may include drinking fountains that allow every scholar to fill their personal water jugs and hydration stations.
- Students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

Mental Health and Social Services

TAS is committed to serving our disadvantaged families and providing opportunities for meals and social services, if necessary. It is our goal to provide a wide range of services to assist our families and scholars. By establishing the linkage between how nutrition and lack of physical activity can affect the mental health of our scholars, we are committed to breaking those barriers by;

- Having an full-time on staff Social Worker
- Providing opportunities for referrals in the front office and school website
- Clearly listing the services offered to stakeholders

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

The Anchor School will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, scholars who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals through yearly training for staff.

Fundraising, Vending, and Other Opportunities to Promote Healthy Eating

Healthy food and beverage choices will be encouraged for vending. TAS will work with vendors to provide choices and selection for healthy food and beverages. A healthy school environment should not be dependent on revenue from high-fat, low nutrient foods to support school programs. Decisions about the sale of competitive foods should be based on nutrition goals for scholars, not for profit making.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

TAS is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to scholars on school campus during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (e.g., "competitive" foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum.

Smart Snacks aim to improve scholar health and well-being, increase consumption of healthy foods during the school day and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating

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habits. A summary of the standards and information, as well as a Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools are available at: Smart Snacks in School | USDA-FNS.

To support healthy food choices and improve scholar health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to scholars on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These standards will apply to all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, à la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and snack or food carts.

- TAS will encourage parents to send in healthy snacks. Examples might include yogurt, fruit snacks, boxed raisins, frozen fruit bar, fruit, granola bars, etc. Teachers will send home a list of healthy food item suggestions to parents.
- At any TAS function (parties, celebrations, festivals, etc.), healthy food choice options will be available to scholars. Snacks served during the school day for class parties, birthdays, award incentives, etc. should include healthy choices and should promote a positive nutrition message.

Other School-Based Activities

It is the goal of TAS to promote the scholars' physical, emotional, and social wellbeing through a coordinated and comprehensive school health program. This includes providing a healthy physical and psychological environment, nutritious school meals, health education, and opportunities for physical education and activity.

The Anchor School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. TAS encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value.

Environmentally friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, and no biodegradable food trays.

Measurement and Evaluation

TAS will conduct an assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environment and policy to be reviewed during a triennial evaluation to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the health and wellness committee will review 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.

School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

TAS will organize a wellness committee that meets at least four times per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of this district-level wellness policy.

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The TAS committee will represent all school levels and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; scholars; representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (e.g., health education teachers, school health services staff [e.g., nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services], and mental health and social services staff [e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators (e.g., superintendent, principal, vice principal), school board members; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. When possible, the committee will also include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education coordinators. To the extent possible, TAS will include representatives that reflect the diversity of the community.

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Leadership

The Head of School or designee(s) will convene the wellness committee and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy.

The name(s), title(s), and contact information (email address is sufficient) of this/these individual(s) is (are):

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title / Relationship to the School or District</u>	<u>Email address</u>	<u>Role on Committee</u>
Kynea Griffith	Director of School Operations	kyneagriffith@anchorschool.org	Leads in the evaluation of the wellness policy implementation (Wellness Policy Coordinator)
Josh Pinto Taylor	Head of School	joshpintotaylor@anchorschool.org	Convenes with the wellness committee to develop updates of the plan to communicate to board members
Jasmine Salley	Physical Education/Dance Instructor	jasminesalley@anchorschool.org	Convenes with the wellness committee to ensure schools health and physical education program meets the needs of the overall wellness goals
Nickwenscia Joseph	Office Coordinator	njoseph@anchorschool.org	Leads in the implementation of the committee meetings set ups
Andrea Mayfield	School Nurse	andreamayfield@anchorschool.org	Convenes with the wellness committee to ensure the school's health department meets the needs of the overall wellness goals.
TBD	School Social Worker	TBD	Convenes with the wellness committee to ensure the school's Social Services Department meets the needs of the overall wellness goals.

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Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

TAS will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan defines roles, responsibilities, actions; and includes information about who will be responsible to make changes, by how much, where and when; as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. TAS uses the Action for Healthy Kids Health Index Score to complete a school-level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index, that helps foster implementation and generate an annual progress report.

Recordkeeping

TAS will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy TAS Nutrition Office and/or on TAS shared network drives. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Local Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the district uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the wellness committee;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

TAS will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status.

TAS will make this information available via the home website and/or school-wide communications.

TAS will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of TAS' events or activities related to wellness policy implementation.

TAS will also publicize the name and contact information of the schools officials leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the school wellness committee through our parent engagement specialist.

Triennial Progress Assessments

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At least once every three years, TAS will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which TAS are in compliance with the wellness policy;
 - The extent to which TAS wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy; and
 - A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of TAS' wellness policy.
- The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is
Director of School Operations: Kynea Griffith email: kyneagriffith@anchorschool.org
phone:678-503-4880
- TAS will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness policy.
 - TAS will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

TAS will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as TAS' priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

- TAS is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy.
- TAS will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the wellness committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for the charter school. TAS will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- TAS will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the home website or ParentSquare, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy.
- TAS will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community and accomplished through communicating important school information with parents.
- TAS will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum.
- TAS will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

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