

## Syracuse Arts Academy Wellness Policy



### Preamble

Syracuse Arts Academy (the “School”) is committed to the optimal development of every student. The School believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social success, it needs to create positive, safe and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism and better performance on cognitive tasks. Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students. In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education and extracurricular activities do better academically. Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.

This policy outlines the School’s approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the School have access to healthy foods throughout the school day—both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school—in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school;
- The School engages in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the School in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- The School establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all School students and staff. Specific measureable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.



## **School Wellness Committee**

### ***Committee Role and Membership***

The School will convene a wellness committee (the “Committee”) that meets at least one time 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 wellness policy (the “wellness policy”).

The Committee membership will represent all school levels and include, to the extent possible, but not be limited to stakeholders such as: parents and caregivers; students; 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, and mental health and social services staff); School administrators; School board members; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. To the extent possible, the Committee will include representatives from each School campus building and reflect the diversity of the community.

### ***Leadership***

The Lead Director or designee(s) will convene the Committee and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure compliance with the policy.

The Lead Director will make available to the School community each Committee member’s name, contact information, and role on the Committee.

The Lead Director will designate a wellness policy coordinator who will ensure compliance with the policy.

## **Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement**

### ***Implementation Plan***

The School will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines; and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where and when; as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the School campuses, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. The School will use the Healthy Schools Program online tools (<https://schools.healthiergeneration.org>) to complete an assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s School Health Index, create an action plan that helps ensure implementation of the policy, and generate an annual progress report.

This wellness policy and the progress reports will be provided on the School’s website.



### ***Recordkeeping***

The School will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the School's main office and/or on the School's central computer network. Documentation maintained in this location(s) 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 wellness policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the School uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the Committee;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy; and
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy has been made available to the public.

### ***Annual Notification of Policy***

The School 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. The School will make this information available via the School website and/or School-wide communications such as email, phone calls, texts, and school marquee. The School will provide information about the school nutrition environment, such as specific programs and activities along with lunch menus related to the wellness policy implementation. Annually, the School will also provide notice through the school website of the name and contact information of the School personnel leading and coordinating the Committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the School wellness committee.

### ***Triennial Progress Assessments***

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

- The extent to which the School is in compliance with the wellness policy;
- The extent to which the 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 the School's wellness policy.

The Lead Director is responsible for managing the triennial assessment.

The Committee will monitor compliance with this wellness policy.

The School will notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report through the school's email and website.



### ***Revisions and Updating the Policy***

The Committee will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index (<https://schools.healthiergeneration.org>) and triennial assessments and/or as School 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***

The School is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The School will actively communicate ways in which representatives of Committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means. The School will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the School's website, 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.

The School will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. The School will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

## **Nutrition**

### ***School Meals***

The School is committed to serving healthy meals to children, 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 school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, 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.

The School participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The School is committed to offering school meals through the NSLP program that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;

Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (The School offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals>))



- The school will promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following Smarter Lunchroom techniques (<https://healthy-food-choices-in-schools.extension.org/the-60-strategies-of-the-smarter-lunchrooms-scorecard/>):
- Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans).
- Sliced or cut fruit is available daily.
- Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.
- All available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names.
- Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab-and-go meals available to students.
- All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal.
- White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers.
- Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas.
- A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.).
- Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor and promotional ideas.
- Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
- Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options.

### ***Water***

The school will promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. The School will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. Students will be allowed to bring and carry water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the school day.

### ***Competitive Foods and Beverages***

The School is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on School property 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 student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits. A summary of the standards and information, as well as a Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools are available at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school>. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks available at <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/>.

These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, à la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, in-school fundraisers, School stores and snack or food carts.



## ***Celebrations and Rewards***

All foods offered, but not sold, on School property will meet or exceed the following requirements:

1. Celebrations and parties. The School will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas are available from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation ([https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take\\_action/schools/snacks\\_and\\_beverages/celebrations/](https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/celebrations/)) and from the USDA ([https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/nutrition/celebrations\\_rewards.htm#print](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/nutrition/celebrations_rewards.htm#print)).
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. The School will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
3. Rewards and incentives. The School will provide teachers and other relevant School staff a list of alternative ways to reward children ([https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take\\_action/schools/snacks\\_and\\_beverages/non-food\\_rewards/](https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/non-food_rewards/)). Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

## ***Nutrition Promotion***

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout School buildings, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by School staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

The School will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur by ensuring that 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Additional promotion techniques that the School may use are available at <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/>.

## ***Nutrition Education***

The School will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. The School will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is 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 integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens;





- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services;
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

### ***Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education***

The School will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 of the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- Relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention;
- Food guidance from MyPlate (<https://www.choosemyplate.gov>);
- Reading and using FDA's nutrition fact labels;
- Eating a variety of foods every day;
- Balancing food intake and physical activity;
- Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grain products;
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain trans-fat;
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars;
- Eating more calcium-rich foods;
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks;
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices;
- Accepting body size differences;
- Food safety;
- Importance of water consumption;
- Importance of eating breakfast;
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants;
- Eating disorders;
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/dietary-guidelines>);
- Reducing sodium intake;
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers and culture;
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior;
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully;
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior; and
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior.

### ***Food and Beverage Marketing in the School***

The School is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while



minimizing commercial distractions. The School strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on School property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the School is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of the School to protect and promote students' health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the School campus(es), consistent with the School's wellness policy.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on School property during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions. Food and beverage marketing often includes oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors.
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on School equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards or backboards (Note: immediate replacement of these items are not required; however, the School will replace or update scoreboards or other durable equipment when existing contracts are up for renewal or to the extent that is in financially possible over time so that items are in compliance with the marketing policy.)
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered or sold by the School.
- Advertisements in School publications or School mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

### **Physical Activity**

Children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive school physical activity program (CSPAP). A CSPAP reflects strong coordination and synergy across all of the components: quality physical education as the foundation; physical activity before, during and after school; staff involvement and family and community engagement. The School is committed to providing these opportunities and will ensure that these varied physical activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in "*Physical Education*" subsection). The School may participate in *Let's Move!* Active Schools ([www.letsmoveschools.org](http://www.letsmoveschools.org)) in order to successfully address all CSPAP areas.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. The





School will provide teachers and other School staff with a list of ideas for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, the School will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The School will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

### ***Physical Education***

The School will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the “*Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education*” subsection). The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. The School will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

**Elementary students** will receive physical education for at least 60-89 minutes per week throughout the school year.

**Secondary students** are required to take the equivalent of one academic year of physical education.

The School physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments (via the Presidential Youth Fitness Program (<http://www.pyfp.org>) or other appropriate assessment tool) and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

### ***Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education***

Health education will be required in all elementary grades, and the School will require secondary students to take and pass at least one health education course. The School will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 the following essential topics on physical activity:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity;
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight;
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process;
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease;
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition;
- Differences between physical activity, exercise and fitness;
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout and cool down;
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity;



- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching;
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community;
- Preventing injury during physical activity;
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while being physically active;
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity;
- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan;
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan;
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids;
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture;
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness;
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity; and
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity.

### ***Recess (Elementary)***

The School's elementary campus(es) will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all days during the school year. If recess is offered before lunch, the campus(es) will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

**Outdoor recess** will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event that the School must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines established by the administration that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

### ***Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)***

The School recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **periodic opportunities** to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. The School recommends teachers provide short (3-5-minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time at least three days per week. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

The School will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for classroom physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through USDA (<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/resources/nutrition-education-materials/physical-activity>) and the



Alliance for a Healthier Generation <https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take-action/schools/wellness-topics/physical-activity>.

### ***Active Academics***

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

The School will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

### ***Before and After School Activities***

The School offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods. The School will encourage students to be physically active before and after school.

### ***Active Transport***

The School will support active transport to and from school, such as walking or biking, to the extent it is safe and feasible. The School will encourage this behavior by engaging in *six or more* of the activities below:

- Designate safe or preferred routes to the School;
- Promote activities such as participation in International Walk to School Week, National Walk and Bike to School Week;
- Secure storage facilities for bicycles and helmets (e.g., shed, cage, fenced area);
- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students;
- Promote safe routes program to students, staff, and parents via newsletters, websites, local newspaper;
- Use crossing guards;
- Use crosswalks on streets leading to the School;
- Use walking school buses;
- Document the number of children walking and or biking to and from school; and
- Create and distribute maps of the School environment (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, roads, pathways, bike racks, etc.).

### **Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness**

The School will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. The School will



coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

Teachers are encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the School or the School's curriculum experts.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the Committee.

All School-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy guidelines. All School-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

### ***Community Partnerships***

The School will develop relationships with community partners (e.g., hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, SNAP-Ed providers and coordinators, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

### ***Community Health Promotion and Family Engagement***

The School will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in School-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

As described in the "*Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications*" subsection, the School will use electronic mechanisms (e.g., email or displaying notices on the School's website), as well as non-electronic mechanisms, (e.g., newsletters, presentations to parents or sending information home to parents), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in School-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

### ***Staff Wellness and Health Promotion***

The Committee will have a staff wellness subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff.

The School will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. The School promotes staff member participation in health



promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

### ***Professional Learning***

When feasible, the School will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help School staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing academic improvement plans/efforts.

SAA Wellness Policy  
**REVISION B**  
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