

Assessment on the Implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy New Heights Charter School

As stated in the school's Wellness Policy, the Governing Board reviews the school's status in meeting the Wellness Policy goals.

- 1. Recommendations for improving the delivery and cost effectiveness of food services.**
 - a. At the launch of each school year, the Food Director and office manager in charge of enrollment will meet regularly to determine adequate numbers of meals to be ordered.
 - b. Throughout the school year, the Food Director will institute more consistency in checking the numbers of students eating lunch each day and revising the number of orders to ensure the school does not order too many extra lunches.

- 2. Assist the Director of Child Nutrition Services in the development and implementation of the Outreach and Promotion Marketing plan.**
 - a. The outreach and marketing strategies for the program have been successful to date, so the recommendation is to continue marketing through the multiple family orientations prior to the start of each school year.

- 3. Recommend to the Governing Board strategies to eliminate potentially harmful food additives and processes, and to increase the amount of fresh, local produce offered through the School Meal Program.**
 - a. The school's choice of food vendor is based on this goal and the school is satisfied with the vendor's efforts in this area.

- 4. Solicit student preferences through taste tests, surveys, and interviews, and through student participation on the school Wellness Committee.**
 - a. Food staff consistently solicit student input regarding taste preferences.
 - b. The food vendor offers taste tests when introducing new items.
 - c. Students don't formally participate with the adults in the Committee, but their views are expressed through the lunch staff members.

Goals: Nutrition Education and Promotion

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals are *consistently met*:

- No student in New Heights goes hungry during school;

- An economically sustainable meal program makes available a healthy and nutritious breakfast, lunch, and after-school snack to every student at every school so that students are prepared to learn to their fullest potential;

- Staff shall integrate hands-on experiences in gardens and/or enriched activities such as farm field studies, farmers' markets tours, and visits to community gardens, with core curriculum so that

students begin to understand how food reaches the table and the implications that has for their health and future;

- Sampling and tasting in school gardens or farmers markets shall be encouraged as part of nutrition education;
- Eating experiences, gardens, and nutrition education are integrated into the core academic curriculum at all grade levels;
- School shall promote food-centered activities that are healthful, enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and participatory,
- Lunch periods shall be scheduled so that students do not have to eat lunch unusually early or late, and ideally, so that they come after periods of exercise;
- All school eating areas shall contain free, safe, drinking water sources and facilities for washing hands;
- Students shall play a role in a recycling program that begins with the purchase of recycled products and maximizes the reduction of waste by recycling, reusing, and/or composting;
- Students will not be involved in the sale of candy, sodas, cookies and sweets at any school sponsored event or for any fundraising activity;
- Nutrition promotion will be implemented through the following avenues: Healthy food posters, the annual Health Fair, distribution of the Wellness Policy, posting of the Wellness Policy Summary, and healthy eating newsletters shared with our school community.

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals are *in the process of being met*:

- New Heights will establish and maintain an instructional garden of sufficient size to provide students with experiences in planting, harvesting, preparation, serving, and tasting foods, including ceremonies and celebrations that observe food traditions, integrated with nutrition education and core curriculum, and articulated with state standards.
 - a. Progress Toward Goal: initial gardens have been installed and students are waiting for harvest. More vegetables will be planted throughout the year.
 - b. Staff will develop ideas for celebrating food traditions inside of the school's Annual Health Fair.
- Meals will be attractively presented and served in a pleasant environment with sufficient time for eating, while fostering good eating habits, enjoyment of meals, good manners, and respect for others.
 - a. Staff are continuously designing and redesigning the food eating areas to be more pleasant for students. Staff are working to instill good manners...this is an ongoing effort.

Goal: Physical Activity

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals are *consistently met*:

- Physical education teachers shall implement a curriculum that connects and demonstrates the interrelationship between physical activity, good nutrition, and health;
- The staff will participate in professional development;
- An appropriate alternative activity shall be provided for students with a physical disability that may restrict excessive physical exertion;
- Physical education staff shall appropriately limit the amount or type of physical exercise required of students during air pollution episodes, excessively hot weather, or other inclement conditions.

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals are *in the process of being met*:

- Students shall have opportunities to enjoy physical activity through participation in gardening programs.
 - a. Since the garden is small, just a handful of students have participated in planting and weeding activities to date.

Goal: School-Based Learning Experiences

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals are *consistently met*:

- Staff is encouraged to integrate garden, nutrition education, cooking and eating experiences, and energy and renewable energy experiences into the curriculum for math, science, social studies and language arts at all grade levels;
- Students are encouraged to recycle, conserve materials, water, and energy, use biodegradable materials when possible, and dispose of wastes in an environmentally sound way at school, in the eating area, in the school garden, and in all classroom-based activities;
- Students shall be offered the opportunity to participate in outdoor education programs that make connections between diet, health and the environment, and the interdependence of living things.

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals are *in the process of being met*:

- Food service and teaching staff shall work cooperatively to integrate experiences in eating areas, instructional gardens, and farm field trips with the formal learning experience of all students.
- School food service will work with community partners to facilitate student understanding and appreciation of fresh, local, sustainably grown food.

Goal: Professional Development

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals are *in the process of being met*:

- Regular professional development will be provided, at least annually, to teachers and the Food Service Staff on basic nutrition, nutrition education, and benefits of sustainable agriculture.
 - a. The school's food vendor provides professional development and veteran teachers have participated in professional development in the past, but new teachers will need to be involved in the spring of 2014.

Goal: Waste Reduction

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals *have not yet been met*:

- Meals prepared at school utilize fresh, whole, unpackaged, unprocessed or minimally processed ingredients, to the maximum extent possible, in order to preserve nutritional content and reduce packaging waste.
 - a. Although the school requested "home style" meal presentation, the vendor continues to provide fresh, but packaged lunches. The school will continue to work with the vendor to reach this goal

Goal: Nutrition Guidelines

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals are *being met*:

- All qualified children will become eligible for free meals, through frequent checking and coordination with county social services;
- Maximum participation in the school meal program will be achieved by developing a coordinated, comprehensive outreach and promotion plan, and by putting systems in place that ensure the elimination of the stigma of accepting "free" lunch (such as a card swipe system);
- A shift from food-based planning to nutrient-based planning (as set forth in USDA guidelines) will be considered when it allows for more flexible food selection;
- The nutritional value of the food served will significantly improve upon USDA Dietary

Guidelines through provision of nutritious, fresh, tasty, locally grown food that reflects community and cultural diversity;

- Schools will provide students with at least 20 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 30 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- School will use a develop a “Healthy Snacks” and “Healthy Parties” policy, and provide parents and teachers with a list of healthy, affordable food choices for snacks and parties;
- Foods offered to students and employees of the during the day as a snack, an incentive, or in school offices, whether provided by parents or staff, shall be consistent with the goals of the policy;
- Schools shall limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to shared monthly birthday celebrations, and should discourage serving foods and beverages that do not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually;
- The foods used during classes as part of the learning process, for fundraisers that take place at school, for at-school parties, or school-sponsored events, should follow the nutrition guidelines for snacks at school, and should be healthy, safe, and delicious;
- Parents and staff are encouraged to provide party snacks that are consistent with the goals of the policy, and to see to it that such items are served after the lunch hour whenever possible;
- Foods exposed to potentially harmful food additives and processes, such as bovine growth hormone, irradiation, high fructose corn syrup, excessive salt, artificial flavors and colors, hydrogenated oils (transfats), preservatives, and genetic modification, shall be reduced and/or eliminated;
- Schools shall offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, at least two non-fried vegetables and fruit each day,
- No unhealthy food or beverage item may be advertised on school grounds, and fast food and “branded” food items shall not be offered for sale as part of any school meal program or as à la carte items;
- The school will not have vending machines or school stores accessible by students;

Goal: Tobacco-Free Workplace

A review of the implementation of the Wellness Policy shows that the following policy goals are *being met*:

New Heights Charter School will provide a smoke-free workplace within all buildings owned or leased by the New Heights Charter School and follow all requirements, including postings, in accordance with law.

